



January 29, 2025

For Immediate Release

Contact: Ryan Bartlett, director of communication  
605-201-7950 · ryan.bartlett@schools.utah.gov

## 2024 NAEP Scores Show a Decline in Utah's Eighth Grade Reading Results, Reflecting a National Trend

SALT LAKE CITY – The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2024 scores have been released, showing a largely steady performance for Utah students. However, a notable decline in eighth grade reading scores raises concerns that reflect a broader national trend. Utah's eighth grade reading scores fell by four points compared to the 2022 assessment, a result mirrored in eight other states. No states recorded an increase in this area.

While Utah continues to perform well overall, with only three states or jurisdictions outperforming Utah, the decline in eighth grade reading highlights the challenges schools face in reversing downward trends in literacy proficiency.

“The drop in eighth grade reading scores is part of a broader national trend,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Sydnee Dickson, “More children are falling below the proficient level, underscoring the critical need to double down on effective reading interventions and support for our students.”

In other areas, Utah students held steady. Fourth grade reading levels remained unchanged, and no other significant shifts were observed in the state's scores.

### **A Path Forward**

While efforts are ongoing to identify the underlying causes of the decline in reading scores, the Utah State Board of Education is committed to improving reading outcomes through targeted efforts and proven strategies. Building on the success of existing initiatives, the Board

is expanding resources for reading programs and fostering innovative approaches to literacy education.

“Our focus is on ensuring measurable improvements in reading outcomes by working with schools to equip educators and students with tools and targeted training,” said Darin Nielsen, Deputy Superintendent of Student Learning. “We are committed to implementing evidence-based programs that address reading challenges early, providing intensive support where it’s needed most, and tracking progress to make sure every student has the opportunity to improve and succeed.”

The Utah State Board of Education invites parents, educators, and community members to join efforts to strengthen literacy outcomes statewide.

NAEP tests a representative sampling of students throughout the United States to provide nationally comparative data. In Utah, approximately 2,000 fourth and eighth graders participated in the math and reading portions of the test. There are no individual school or district results. More information is available at: <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>.

## **2024 Utah Snapshot Reports**

[Utah 2024 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics Snapshot](#)

[Utah 2024 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics Snapshot](#)

[Utah 2024 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Snapshot](#)

[Utah 2024 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Snapshot](#)

[www.schools.utah.gov](http://www.schools.utah.gov)