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Texas students earn higher scores on NAEP eighth grade writing exam than their peers nationally

AUSTIN - Students in Texas' major ethnic groups earned higher average scale scores on a national eighth-grade writing exam than did their peer groups nationally, according to results released today by the U.S. Department of Education.

Overall, however, scores on the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) writing exam were relatively stable for Texas' eighth graders who earned an average scale score of 151. That is not significantly different from the average scale score of 152 earned by Texan students in 2002.

Nationally, eighth-grade students received an average scale score of 154 in 2007, compared to 152 in 2002.

The percentage of Texas students who performed at or above the NAEP Basic level was 86 percent in 2007, compared to 83 percent in 2002.

This exam, given to a nationally representative sample of eighth graders, covers narrative, informative and persuasive writing.

Texas' diverse student population performed well in comparison to their peers.

Texas' white students, who made up 37 percent of the eighth-grade population sampled in 2007, received an average scale score of 165, compared to 162 for white students nationally. White students accounted for 58 percent of the eighth-grade class sampled nationally.

Texas' Hispanic students earned an average scale score of 142, compared to a score of 141 for Hispanic students across the country. In this state, 44 percent of the eighth-grade class is Hispanic, compared to 19 percent for all the test-taking population in the country.

Scores for African-American students were 142 for Texas students and 140 nationally. African-Americans make up 15 percent of the Texas class and 17 percent of the group in the United States.

Among Asian/Pacific Islanders, Texas students posted an average scale score of 167, compared to 166 for the group nationally. Asian/Pacific Islander students represent 3 percent of the Texas population and 5 percent of the national population.

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