



Mega-States

ABSTRACT

Report 2011

The National Assessment of Educational Progress' (NAEP) *Mega-States Report* contains data on the performance of students in the five most heavily populated states in the nation: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas. The data reported on is for reading, mathematics, and science for grades 4 and 8 between the years 1990 and 2011. The data contained in this report show that more than half of the nation's English language learners (ELL) and the largest concentration of children from lower-income families participated in this assessment; states represented show the largest increase in the immigrant population over the last decade; and more than one-third of families living below the poverty line live in these mega-states. The assessment, which measured students' comprehension skills by asking them to read selected grade-appropriate materials and answer question based on what they read, showed that fourth-graders in Florida lead gains and Black students in California and Florida made larger gains than their peers nationally. In mathematics, where students in grade 4 in 1992 and grade 8 in 1990 responded to questions designed to measure what they know and can do across five content areas, Florida fourth-graders made larger gains than their national peers; and Black and white students in California made larger gains than their national peers; Texas led in eighth-grade gains, and Black students in Texas posted the greatest gains among mega-states. In science, where students in grade 4 in 2009 and grade 8 in 2009 and 2011 responded to questions designed to measure what they know and can do in three content areas, California trailed the nation and mega-states while Texas led in science scores for 2011. The percentages at or above proficient in Florida and New York were not significantly different from their peers in the nation. The results from the *Mega-States Report* may serve the needs of policymakers and educators as they explore ways to close achievement gaps.



AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN THE FIVE MOST HEAVILY POPULATED STATES IN THE NATION