

## LITTLE IMPROVEMENT IN READING SCORES IN 21ST CENTURY

(2Q-2023) The average score of Arkansas fourth- and eighth grade students "was not significantly different" from their average score in 1998, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

The Center is affiliated with the U.S. Department of Education, and is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education.

Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders and state legislators enacted the LEARNS Act earlier this year. The act includes new policies to improve Arkansas K-12 student literacy.

### **Fourth Grade Results**

In 2022, the average score of Arkansas fourth-grade students "was 212. This was lower than the average score of 216 for students in the nation. The average score for students in Arkansas in 2022 (212) was not significantly different from their average score in 2019 (215) and in 1998 (209)," according to the National Center.

### **Eighth Grade Results**

In 2022, the average score of Arkansas eighth-grade students "was 255. This was lower than the average score of 259 for students in the nation. The average score for students in Arkansas in 2022 (255) was lower than their average score in 2019 (259) and was not significantly different from their average score in 1998 (256)."

### **Sources:**

[The Nation's Report Card: 2022 Reading Snapshot Report: Arkansas Grade 4 \(ed.gov\)](#)

[The Nation's Report Card: 2022 Reading Snapshot Report: Arkansas Grade 8 \(ed.gov\)](#)

### **Arkansas Versus Other States**

The National Center also reported no states scored higher in fourth-grade public school reading when comparing average scores in 2022 with those from 2019, the previous assessment year.

Twenty-nine (29) states scored *lower* when comparing averages in 2022 with those from 2019. These states were Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Twenty-one (21) states including Arkansas "had no significant change in scores," the Center reported.

Other states in the "no significant change" category were Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

**Source:**

[NAEP Reading: State Average Scores \(nationsreportcard.gov\)](http://nationsreportcard.gov)

-- Greg Kaza