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Quality Counts puts Kentucky 19th in student achievement

EdWeek released its 2011 Quality Counts report today, offering highly respected grades of states on multiple aspects of education conditions, policies, and results.

On achievement results, EdWeek is a tough grader, giving the country as a whole a D+.

On that scale, Kentucky's C- came with a score that put us 19th among the 50 states.

That score came from scores in ten areas and improvement over time in each of those areas.

So, here are Kentucky's current rankings among the states on those indicators, which come from the 2009 NAEP test unless another source is indicated:

- 11th in percent proficient in grade 4 reading
- 12th in gap in grade 4 reading scale scores between students who qualify for the federal lunch program and those who do not
- 14th in gap in grade 8 mathematics scale scores between students in those same groups
- 19th in percent proficient in grade 8 reading
- 26th in in 2009 Advanced Placement scores of 3 or higher per 100 students in grades 11 and 12
- 28th in 2007 high school graduation rate (calculated using the EPE Research Center's Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) formula)
- 35th in percent proficient in grade 4 mathematics
- 38th in percent proficient in grade 8 mathematics
- 40th in in percent advanced in 2009 grade 8 mathematics

And then, here are the changes, reflecting 2003 to 2009 NAEP scores unless otherwise noted:

- 3rd in increase in percent proficient in grade 4 mathematics
- 4th in increase in percent proficient in grade 4 reading
- 7th in increase in high school graduation rate (2000 to 2007)
- 21st in increase in AP scores of 3 or higher per 100 students in grades 11 and 12 (2000 to 2009)
- 22nd in decrease in scale score gap in grade 8 mathematics
- 26th in increase in percent proficient in grade 8 reading
- 28th in increase percent proficient in grade 8 reading
- 36th in decrease in scale score gap in grade 4 reading
- 44th in increased percent advanced in grade 8 mathematics

Overall, these numbers show a state in the Top 20 in more categories than our history would lead us to expect (highlighted in green), and closing on that level in some others.

Shown this way, they show the weakest results (highlighted in red) to be clustered heavily in mathematics, and especially grade 8 mathematics.

I'll add one new thought on seeing the numbers this time: the mathematics assessment of learning strategies that the Gates Foundation is developing for middle and high school use could be a great fit for a state with those priorities.