

## Education results for 2011 are in

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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Dear Fellow Nebraskans

By Gov. Dave Heinemann

Education is a key priority in our state and educating our sons and daughters is an investment that will pay dividends for individuals, families and communities throughout our state. Education success and economic success are directly linked. In Nebraska, we are committed to creating higher paying jobs and developing a highly educated workforce so that our graduates and young professionals are prepared for high-quality, high-skill jobs with Nebraska companies. Fulfilling this vision requires a focused effort on student and school achievement.

I would like to share with you Nebraska high school academic results in several areas. This information includes high school graduation rates, the statewide reading assessment results, the statewide math assessment results, the latest ACT average scores and the college going rate. As you review the information, it is important to note the individual high school results and to recognize student and school growth and improvement over time.

Nebraska schools build on a tradition of excellence. Sharing this information is meant to prompt discussion between educators, parents, and communities about how we continue to improve our schools.

Since Nebraska schools began to administer statewide reading and math assessment tests, Nebraskans are now able to compare their school district with other districts in the state.

This past year Nebraska transitioned to the Four Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate to calculate high school graduation rates. A graduation rate of 90 percent for every high school is our goal. Over time, these results will be informative and useful in identifying schools with consistently high academic achievement and sharing their success stories with all schools. We

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should also be able to identify the schools with the best growth and improvement plans and share their progress with all schools. Its about individual school achievement and school growth. Both are important.

A few weeks ago, I visited a Norris high school and middle school academic achievement pep rally. They celebrated one of the highest aggregate performance levels in the state on the assessment tests and recognized 50 students who achieved a perfect score on the statewide reading or math assessment. At Norris, academic achievement is encouraged and expected. They are doing a great job and I am proud of the emphasis they put on education.

While poverty and diversity are challenges for our schools, we are determined to strengthen Nebraskas education system by eliminating academic achievement gaps. The best opportunity to reduce poverty and to provide every young person hope is with a quality education. We have good schools in our state, but as good as they are we need to do even better in the future.

If you would like to know your high schools scores and rankings go to our website at [www.governor.nebraska.gov](http://www.governor.nebraska.gov) and click on the column icon.

To make it easier for Nebraskans to analyze and understand the results, they are reported by their sports classification (Class A, B, C-1, C-2 and smaller schools). For privacy concerns, federal law does not allow education data to be reported publicly if a high school graduation class has 10 or less students.