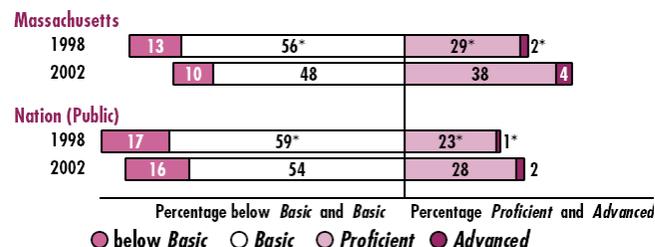


The writing assessment of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measures narrative, informative, and persuasive writing—three purposes identified in the NAEP framework. The NAEP writing scale ranges from 0 to 300.

Overall Writing Results for Massachusetts

- The average scale score for eighth-grade students in Massachusetts was 163. This was higher¹ than the average score (155) in 1998.
- Massachusetts' average score (163) was higher than that of the nation's public schools (152).
- Students' average scale scores in Massachusetts were higher than those in 41 jurisdictions², and not significantly different from those in 5 jurisdictions.
- The percentage of students who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 42 percent. This percentage was greater than 1998 (31).

Student Percentage at Each Achievement Level



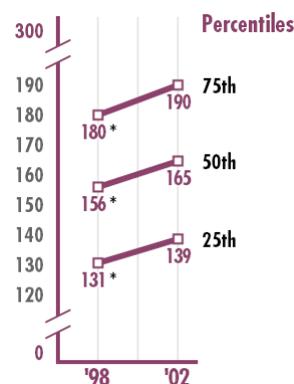
Performance of NAEP Reporting Groups in Massachusetts

Reporting groups	Percentage of students	Average Score	Percentage of students at			
			Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Male	53	155 ↑	13	55 ↓	30 ↑	2
Female	47	173 ↑	6	41 ↓	46 ↑	7
White	75	171 ↑	5	46 ↓	44 ↑	5 ↑
Black	9	139	25	57	18	1
Hispanic	10	132	27	63	10	#
Asian/Pacific Islander	5	167	10	45	38	7
American Indian/Alaska Native	#	---	---	---	---	---
Free/reduced-priced school lunch						
Eligible	29	141 ↑	22	58	19 ↑	1
Not eligible	69	173 ↑	5 ↓	44 ↓	46 ↑	6 ↑
Information not available	2	161	6	64	27	3

Average Score Gaps Between Selected Groups

- Female students in Massachusetts had an average score that was higher than that of male students (18 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (22 points).
- White students had an average score that was higher than that of Black students (32 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (26 points).
- White students had an average score that was higher than that of Hispanic students (39 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (38 points).
- Students who were not eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch had an average score that was higher than that of students who were eligible (32 points). This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1998 (31 points).

Writing Scale Scores at Selected Percentiles



Percentage rounds to zero.

--- Reporting standards not met; sample size insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

* Significantly different from 2002.

↑ Statistically significantly higher than 1998.

↓ Statistically significantly lower than 1998.

¹ Comparisons (higher/lower/not different) are based on statistical tests. The .05 level was used for testing statistical significance.

² "Jurisdictions" includes participating states and other jurisdictions (such as Guam or the District of Columbia).

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Score gaps are calculated based on differences between unrounded average scale scores. Performance changes across years should be interpreted in the context of changes in rates of exclusion of special-needs students, which occurred in some states. See *The Nation's Report Card: Writing 2002* for additional information.

Visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/> for additional results and detailed information.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 and 2002 Writing Assessments.