



# IDAHO NAEP NOTES . . .

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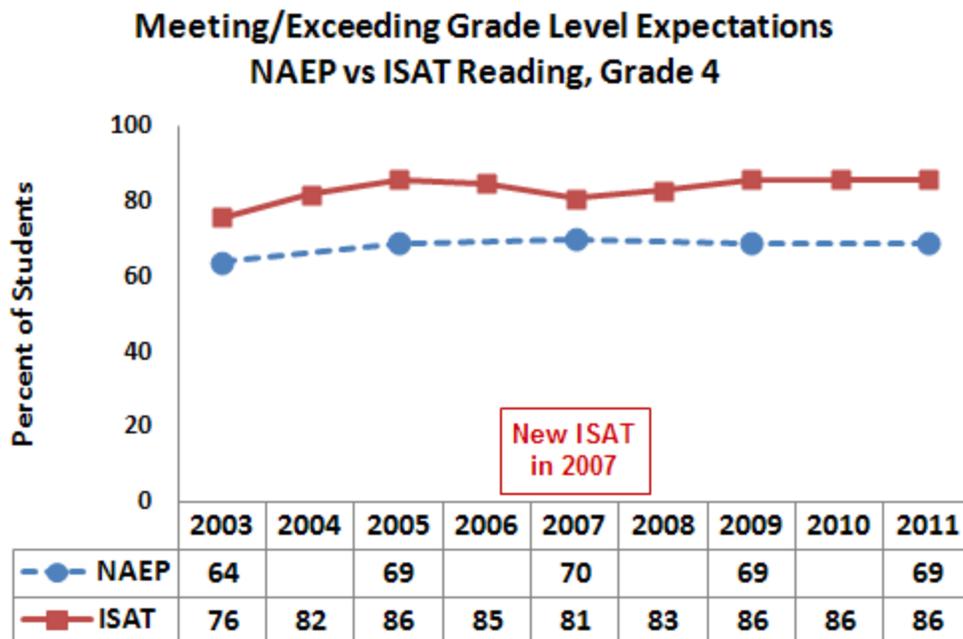
## NAEP vs. ISAT Trends for Reading and Mathematics All Students, Grades 4 and 8, 2003 to 2011

NAEP and ISAT reported achievement levels results for below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. NAEP and ISAT, unfortunately, used different definitions for the achievement levels. For example, NAEP *Basic* achievement level and the ISAT proficient achievement level both estimated grade-level expectations. NAEP and ISAT both reported the percentage of students scoring at or above their cut-scores that defined the minimal performance in each of their achievement levels. *To avoid confusion inherent with using different definitions for achievement levels with the same name, the percent “at or above NAEP Basic” and “at or above ISAT proficient” have been displayed as the percent of students “meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations.”*

### Reading, Grade 4

From 2003 to 2011, as Exhibit 1 illustrates, ISAT reported a percentage of fourth graders who met or exceeded grade-level expectations that consistently was more than 10 percentage points above that which NAEP reported. This consistency is likely related, at least in part, to differences between the NAEP and ISAT reading tests in content and format.

Exhibit 1. Percentage of Idaho’s fourth graders who met or exceeded grade-level expectations for reading as measured and reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) from 2003 through 2011.



NAEP had one reporting category (i.e., reading comprehension), while ISAT had two reporting categories (i.e., the reading process and reading comprehension/interpretation). In grade 4, 25 to 37 percent of the ISAT measured concepts about text, decoding skills using word parts, and vocabulary and concept development. In grade 8, the portion of the ISAT devoted to the reading process dropped to between 20 to 27 percent.

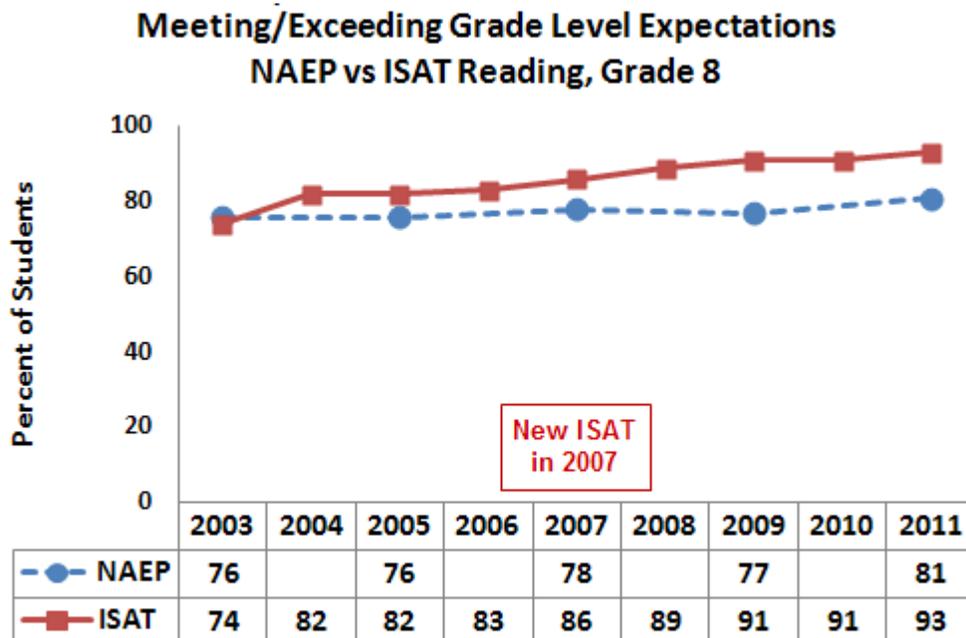
NAEP used multiple-choice and constructed-response items, while ISAT used only multiple-choice items. In grade 4, students used 50 percent of the NAEP testing time on multiple-choice items and 50 percent on constructed-response items. In grade 8, students used 40 percent of their time for multiple-choice items and 60 percent for constructed-response items.

NAEP was a pencil-and-paper test for reading and mathematics, while ISAT was computer delivered.

## Reading, Grade 8

In Exhibit 2, the difference in the percentage of Idaho eighth grade students who met or exceeded grade-level expectations on NAEP and ISAT generally increased over time, from 2003 to 2011, typically favoring the ISAT.

Exhibit 2. Percentage of Idaho's eighth graders who met or exceeded grade-level expectations for reading as measured and reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) from 2003 through 2011.



## Mathematics, Grade 4

Unlike reading, the NAEP and ISAT mathematics tests shared the same reporting categories (i.e., number properties and operations, measurement, geometry, data analysis and statistics, and algebra and functions). However, two important differences did exist between the NAEP and ISAT mathematics tests. NAEP used multiple-choice and constructed-response items, while ISAT used only multiple-choice items. NAEP was a pencil-and-paper test, while ISAT was delivered by computer.

In Exhibit 3, NAEP and ISAT reported similar percentages of fourth grade students who met or exceeded grade-level expectations in mathematics from 2003 to 2011, especially after the new vendor implemented an updated, improved ISAT in 2007.

## Mathematics Grade 8

In Exhibit 4, NAEP and ISAT percentages of eighth grade students who met or exceeded grade-level expectations in mathematics changed with the implementation of the new ISAT in 2007. Before the new ISAT in 2007, the ISAT percentages were struggling to catch up with the NAEP percentages. After the new ISAT, the percentages NAEP and ISAT seemed to trend together.

Exhibit 3. Percentage of Idaho's fourth graders who met or exceeded grade-level expectations for mathematics as measured and reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) from 2003 through 2011.

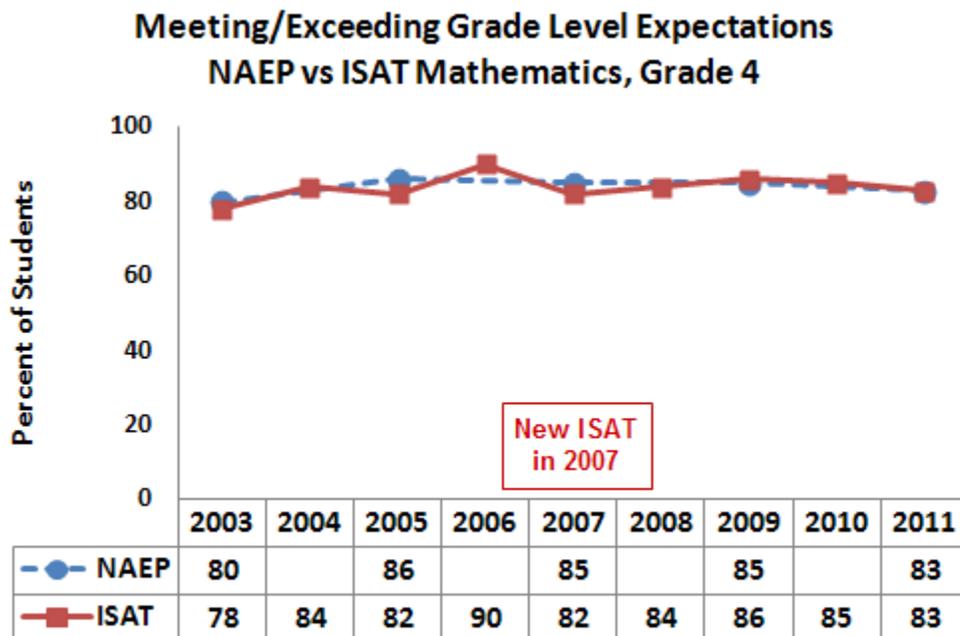
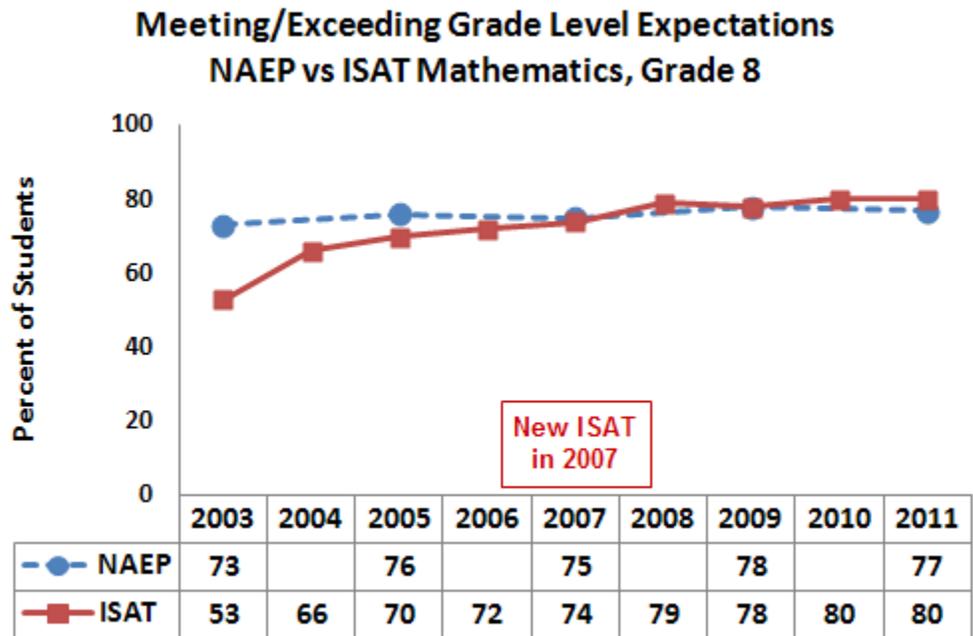


Exhibit 4. Percentage of Idaho's eighth graders who met or exceeded grade-level expectations for mathematics as measured and reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) from 2003 through 2011.



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**NAEP "Proficient" is not the same as ISAT "proficient."**

State assessments often define “proficiency” as solid grade-level performance, often indicating readiness for promotion to the next grade. NAEP's policy definition of its “Proficient” achievement level is “competency over challenging subject matter” and is implicitly intended to be higher than grade-level performance.

-- Andrew Kolstad, Senior Technical Advisor, Assessment Division, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009.

For more about using NAEP to confirm state test results or to rank order the states go online to <http://pareonline.net/genpare.asp?wh=4&abt=stoneberg>