**Key Facts on NAEP scores**

**Overall**

* Commitment to higher academic standards, intense focus on literacy, effective professional development and hard work of teachers and administrators resulted in Mississippi students showing gains on the NAEP assessment.
* Mississippi bucks national trend of flat or declining performance in 4th grade reading and math on NAEP assessments by showing a significant increase in performance.
* Overall, the 4th grade math proficiency rate rose from 26% to 30%.
* The 4th grade reading proficiency increased from 21% to 26%.
* While national proficiency rates declined in 2015, proficiency levels for 8th grade reading in Mississippi remain flat at 20% and math increased from 21% to 22%.
* **Mississippi was the only state that had significant increases in both 4th grade reading and math.**
* Mississippi is closing the gap between the national average performance and state performance in 4th grade math and reading and in 8th grade math.

**About 4th grade math and reading**

* **Mississippi was the only state that had a significant increase in 4th grade math scores compared to 2013. Two jurisdictions, Washington, D.C., and the Department of Defense also showed significant increases in 4th grade math.**
	+ Most subgroups have shown improvements in NAEP proficiency since 2013. This includes students with disabilities, African Americans, females, and economically disadvantaged students. The one exception is performance by Hispanic students.
* **Mississippi was one of 13 states that had a significant increase in 4th grade reading scores compared to 2013.**
	+ All subgroups have shown improvements in NAEP proficiency since 2013.
* **Most of Mississippi’s 4th graders had the benefit of receiving instruction based on the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards since the 2010 when they entered kindergarten. These higher standards helped students achieve better outcomes.**

**About 8th grade math and reading**

* Reading and math scores for 8th grade students also defied national trends. Mississippi students did not decline in performance.
* Over a 10-year period, Mississippi is 7th in the nation for gains in 8th grade math
* 8th grade students started receiving instruction based on the Mississippi College and Career Ready standards in the 5th grade or later. Therefore they did not have the benefit of the standards in elementary school.

**Mississippi NAEP 2015 Summary**

* We have more work to do. We know that. Mississippi is still in the bottom tier of states in both 4th and 8th grade reading and math **BUT we are moving in the right direction. We are on our way up.**
* Public education is running a marathon and not a sprint to the finish line of higher achievement. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the milestones in this marathon. This is certainly one of them.
* The dedication and tireless work of our teachers and administrators and the resilience of our students are worthy of celebration. Parents play a vital role in ensuring our students remain on track to success.
* Our students are just as smart or capable as students in any other areas of the country. They just need to continue to be challenged, encouraged and supported.
* We must continue to keep students at the center of all we do. We must continue to move ahead with our plans to raise student achievement so that parents and communities know that their children are ready for college and the workplace in the 21st century.