

Education Minnesota

Reversing racial gaps will require massive new investments in education

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota. Oct. 30, 2019 – Minnesota policymakers are not making the investments in public education necessary to close racial achievement gaps among students, such as the disparities reported Wednesday in the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The test, often called the Nation’s Report Card, showed that Minnesota’s fourth and eighth graders posted about the same scores in math as similar students who took the test two years ago, while reading scores were about flat for fourth graders and down slightly for eighth graders compared to the group that took the test in 2017. The scores of Minnesota students were generally above the national averages.

However, behind the average scores hides a familiar story. The differences between the scores of Minnesota’s white students and African American students were among the largest in the nation, similar to other states with wide socioeconomic disparities.

“Minnesota won’t disrupt the opportunity gaps among our students until our elected leaders find the courage to raise the revenue from the wealthiest Minnesotans and corporations to make the necessary, multi-billion-dollar investments in our public schools,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “Every student, no matter how they look or where they were born, deserves small class sizes, well-trained and experienced educators, modern and welcoming places to learn, and adequate supports inside and outside their schools. It’s past time for our state to stop making excuses and invest fully in the future of its children.”

About Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota’s members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota’s public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota’s community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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