

Democratic Lawmakers Respond to NAEP Math Report

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), the chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, and **U.S. Rep. Rush Holt** (D-NJ),

issued the following statement after the National Assessment Governing Board released its report on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), which measures the performance of fourth and eighth grade students in math. The report, “The Nation’s Report Card: Mathematics 2009,” studies student achievement in mathematics at the state and national level. The report shows eighth grade students made gains in math, while fourth grade students made no significant improvements from 2007 to 2009 for the first time since 1990.

“Like many of the last few NAEP reports, there is reason for praise and reason for pause. It is encouraging that eighth grade students are making strides, which we should try and replicate but it is alarming and unacceptable that for the first time in 19 years, our fourth graders have not made any yearly gains in math. Math helps students develop both basic and more complex problem solving and critical thinking skills -- skills that students need to compete with their international peers and to succeed today and in the jobs of the future,” said Miller. “This report also underscores the need to ensure that all students -- especially poor and minority students -- have access to excellent teachers who are well-trained in the fields they are teaching. Many math classes in schools with high concentrations of poor and minority students are taught by teachers who did not major in math or a math-related field. If we are serious about creating a strong workforce and lasting economic growth, we have to make sure our students have a solid foundation in math. This report should serve as a wakeup call to how much work lies ahead.”

“We have all the reports we need to know that our nation’s students significantly lag behind others in math and science education. Rather than analyze another report, we need an ‘all hands on deck mentality’ to provide students with a first-rate math and science education,” said Holt, who worked with Chairman Miller to establish the TEACH grants program, which provides up to \$16,000 over four years in college aid to students who commit to teaching science, math, and foreign language education.

The Education and Labor Committee recently held the first in a series of hearings to examine how to ensure equal access to effective teachers for all students. To learn more about the hearing, [click here](#).

Congress enacted the TEACH grants program in 2007, as part of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. The grants provide up-front tuition assistance of \$4,000 a year to college students who commit to teaching in high-need schools, in high-need subject areas, like math, after graduation. For more information, [click here](#) .

###