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**STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY ON RESULTS OF THE NAEP
TRIAL URBAN ASSESSMENT**

Today's results demonstrate that in many cities across the nation, the hard work of students, teachers, and school leaders is beginning to pay off. Such progress is hopeful, but it's clear that our work is far from over. Student achievement is still static in reading, and we have a long way to go to eliminate achievement gaps. In today's increasingly competitive economy, we must do better. America deserves better. We must ensure that our students, teachers, and schools have the resources they need to succeed and rise to the challenges of a global economy.

I'm especially proud of the progress made in Boston, which scored among the top four large city school districts in the nation at grade eight, and among the top six districts in grade four. Boston has outpaced the national average with respect to improvements made in mathematics, showing the greatest gains among African-American and Hispanic students.

These results show that in most of our nation's largest school systems, African-American and Hispanic students perform on par or better than their peers at the national level. This data -- and areas of improvement like those Boston -- dispel the myth that improving America's city schools is an impossible task. Progress is possible if we dedicate the resources needed to carry out effective reforms.

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