Media may contact: Patrick Gallaway (614) 728-5959

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## Ohio Students Continue to Move Forward in Science on 2009 National Report Card

**Columbus** – Ohio fourth and eighth-grade students continue to perform better than many across the country, according to today's release of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2009 science assessment results. The results place the Buckeye state higher than the nation's average.

NAEP – also known as the Nation's Report Card – is the only nationally representative measure of student academic achievement. The NAEP 2009 results in mathematics and reading, released previously, also showed that Ohio fared well above the national average on these measures.

The percentage of Ohio students in grades four and eight performing at or above the proficient level in science is higher than the nation's public school students. According to NAEP, the term proficient represents solid academic performance, with students at this level demonstrating competency over challenging subject matter. Of Ohio's fourth grade students, 41 percent performed at or above proficient, compared to 32 percent nationally. Of Ohio's eighth grade students, 37 percent performed at or above proficient, compared to 29 percent nationally.

"I am pleased that our students performed well in the NAEP science tests. While Ohio's students have demonstrated proficiency at higher levels than many of their counterparts across the country, we must continue to provide rigorous courses to challenge our students to gain essential content and technical skills," said Deborah Delisle, state superintendent of public instruction. "Science is an essential subject that will help our students – and our state – compete effectively in our complex, 21<sup>st</sup>-century global marketplace. For this reason, Ohio is working collaboratively to actively engage educators and their students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields through such initiatives as the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN)."

OSLN is helping to develop and connect a statewide system of STEM schools and programs of excellence, which are funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Battelle Memorial Institute. The Ohio Business Roundtable. ODE and many business and higher education partners are involved.

On the NAEP 2009 science assessment, 47 states or jurisdictions participated. The assessment produced state and national results for grade 4 and 8, and national results for grade 12. The average scale score in science for Ohio fourth-graders was 157, above the national (public) rate of 149. The average scale score in science for Ohio eighth-graders was 158, above the national (public) average of 149. In Ohio, approximately 3,500 students at each of these grade levels participated in the 2009 NAEP science assessment.

The NAEP 2009 science assessment is based on a new framework. Therefore, state and national 2009 science results cannot be compared to previous scores. NAEP began in 1969 as a national measure of student performance. The NAEP is given in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, economics and the arts. Traditional public schools, community schools and private schools participate nationally in NAEP.

The administration of NAEP 2011 began Monday and will extend through March 4. Approximately 445 Ohio schools will represent students in Ohio and across the nation in these assessments.

For the NAEP website, click <u>here</u>. For Ohio NAEP information, click <u>here</u> or visit <u>education.ohio.gov</u>, and search for keyword: *NAEP*.