



For immediate release
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“Civics Report Card” shows Students are Failing

Topeka, Kansas – The National Assessment Governing Board hosted a press conference and web cast Wednesday (May 4, 2011) where it released the 2010 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) “Civics Report Card.”

The NAEP civics assessment measures the knowledge and skills critical to the responsibilities of citizenship in America’s constitutional democracy. Comparing the results from the 2010 civics assessment to results from 1998 and 2006 shows how students’ knowledge and skills have progressed over time.

The 2010 report showed that 4th graders posted the highest civics score since 1998, with the percentages of students at or above the *Basic* and *Proficient* achievement levels higher than in 2006 and 1998. However, high school seniors scored lower in 2010 than in 2006, and had a lower percentage at or above *Proficient* compared to 2006. There was no significant change in the overall score for 8th graders compared to 2006 and 1998.

This report also stated 12th grade girls scored lower in 2010 compared to the civics assessments in 2006 and 1998. Hispanic students made gains with average scores increasing from 1998 to 2010 in all grades.

Twenty-seven percent of 4th graders, 22 percent of 8th graders and 24 percent of 12th graders performed at or above the Proficient level in civics in 2010. To be Proficient in 4th grade students had to identify the purpose of the U.S. Constitution, recognize the role performed by the Supreme Court in 8th grade and as 12th graders define the term “melting pot” and argue if it applies to the U.S. Young people are not learning about how to become educated, engaged citizens.

Kids Voting USA (KVUSA) is a national, nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that works with more than 4.5 million K-12 students in civic education and citizenship with a particular focus and a national standard based curriculum that promotes informed voting, technology and media literacy, and service learning and community engagement. It is this combination of classroom instruction, family dialogue and an authentic voting experience that makes KVUSA a powerful strategy for achieving long-term change in voting behavior.

Rachel Willis, Executive Director of Kids Voting USA, agrees with statements made by Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor at the press conference: “The report is a clarion call for action to restore the civic mission of our nation’s schools. We can and must do better in providing civic education to all of our nation’s school students.”

The complete report card can be downloaded at <http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>.

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Kids Voting USA is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to secure the future of democracy by preparing young people to be educated, engaged citizens. KVUSA operates through a national network of community-based affiliates that partner with schools and election officials to offer more than four million K-12 students a wide range of opportunities for civic learning. For more information, visit www.kidsvotingusa.org.

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