

# U.S. students lose ground on academic tests

By Joy Resmovits, Los Angeles Times

For the first time in about a decade, steady academic progress has halted for fourth- and eighth-grade students nationally and locally, according to new standardized test results released Wednesday.

After years of small but steady increases in scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress since its first administration nationally in 1990, the trend began to reverse this year.

The results were interpreted differently across the education spectrum. "The overall news from this round isn't good," said U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "Anyone who claims to have this all figured out is peddling a personal agenda."

Duncan theorized that the changing trend is due to an "implementation dip" caused by chaos from curricular changes in schools as districts teach new academic standards.

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