Press Release

NAEP, COVID-19, and K-12 Learning Loss

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The National Center for Education Statistics recently released the disappointing results of its special 2022 iteration of the National Assessment on Education Progress (NAEP) Long-Term Trend reading and mathematics assessments for 9-year-old students across the United States. In a new insight, Data and Policy Analyst Tom Lee examines the education losses shown in the report – and charts the learning losses across student performance levels.

Key points:

- While NAEP scores were already trending downward prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, average scores declined even further overall from 2020 levels, with the largest declines among lower-performing students.
- This suggests lower-performing students stand to gain the most from any policy actions that seek to restore consistency and stability to K-12 education systems.
- If left unaddressed, the education losses at the K-12 level over the past decades will in the long run translate to losses in labor markets and decreased economic growth and prosperity.

Read the analysis