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Managing Editor

Gov. Bill Haslam made his way to West Wilson Middle School Thursday to announce that Tennessee had the largest academic growth of any state on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Not only was it the biggest for the year, it was the biggest for any state since the assessment started over a decade ago.

“We literally blew away other states in test results,” said Haslam.

Tennessee saw a 21.8 point jump. The closest was Indiana, who saw a 14.67 point jump. The previous best was Maryland in 2007 with a 18.92 point jump.

Tennessee jumped from 46th to 37th in 4th grade math and 41st to 31st in 4th grade reading. In eighth grade math, Tennessee jumped from 45th to 43rd and in 8th grade reading, the state jumped from 41st to 34th.

“I see this as a step along the way,” said Haslam.

He said that when he became Governor, he told everyone that he is tired of seeing Tennessee in the 40s as far as rankings in education. He said with a strong bipartisan effort, including the foundation laid by former Governor Phil Bredesen, they were able to make this step toward becoming a great education state.

“This really has been a victory for the teachers of Tennessee,” said Bredesen. “Congratulations, this is really your day.”

Both men applauded the work of the teachers, administrators and students in improving the scores.