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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **NAEP MATH STANDARDS WEAK Testimony shows that U.S. expects less of its students**

**(Washington, DC 9/24/01)** The Center for Education Reform (CER) today offered testimony to the National Assessment Governing Board recommending changes on the draft 2004 Mathematics Framework for NAEP, to help shape the questions that 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students will face in the NAEP 2004 Math test. That testimony is available by calling CER or going to <http://www.edreform.com>.

Speaking on CER's behalf, mathematician John Hoven, the co-president of the Gifted and Talented Association of Montgomery County analyzed and compared what is asked of U.S. students to what is asked of their counterparts in Singapore, the world leader in mathematics. The difference is stark.

"There is a chasm of difference in expectations between NAEP and the problems used by world-class mathematicians," noted Hoven speaking for CER. "By lowering our expectations we lower their incentive to achieve." The stark disparity in the difficulty levels and complexity between Singapore and NAEP questions illustrate Singapore's expectations that all children should acquire mastery of the math skills needed for algebra and beyond. That expectation is not present in NAEP questions.

NAEP classifies its problems as "easy" "medium" or "hard." Those problems considered to be "hard" in 8<sup>th</sup> grade by NAEP's measure match those given to 5<sup>th</sup> graders or below on Singapore exams.

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The Center for Education Reform is a national, independent, non-profit advocacy organization providing support and guidance to individuals, community and civic groups, policymakers and others who are working to bring fundamental reforms to their schools.