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Contact: Jeanne Bliss  
(202) 457-8100  
[jbliss@lipmanhearne.com](mailto:jbliss@lipmanhearne.com)

## Statement of Dr. Barbara Garvin-Kester, President of the Core Knowledge Foundation, on the 2005 NAEP Reading Results

**Curriculum void in schools is hurting reading comprehension. Filling that void is critical to improving reading achievement for US students.**

Charlottesville, VA – “While saddened, we are not surprised by the disappointing results of the scores for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Assessment just released today. Government officials are right to be concerned about these results, particularly at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

“Research shows that students who are provided a rich, solid, specific, and sequenced curriculum that includes math, reading, social studies, history, geography, and science do much better than other students do on reading assessments over time. Access to a rigorous curriculum in the early years reverses the decline in reading scores in later years by providing students with the background knowledge that is essential to reading comprehension.

“Too often, schools feel they need to narrow the curriculum to improve reading scores, when in fact studies show that just the opposite is true. We applaud states, districts, and schools for the efforts they are making to focus on improving reading, but implore them to look to strong, content-based curricula rather than to one that narrowly focuses on reading.”

To learn more about Core Knowledge’s recent report, *Filling the Curriculum Void*, go to [http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/Press\\_Release\\_091305.pdf](http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/Press_Release_091305.pdf) (press release and report highlights)

[http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/Filling\\_the\\_Curriculum\\_Void.pdf](http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/Filling_the_Curriculum_Void.pdf) (full report)

### About the Core Knowledge Foundation

*Dedicated to excellence and fairness in early education, the Core Knowledge Foundation is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded in 1986 by E. D. Hirsch, Jr., professor emeritus at the University of Virginia and author of many acclaimed books, including **Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know** and **The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them**. The Foundation conducts research on curricula, develops books and other materials for parents and teachers, offers workshops for teachers, and serves as the hub of a growing network of Core Knowledge schools. For more information, please visit our website at [www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org).*

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