

High School Proficiency Assessment Spring 2004

Executive Summary

The New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) was administered for the first time in March 2002 to students who had become first-time 11th graders as of September 1st, 2001. Most recently, the Spring 2004 HSPA was administered between March 2 and March 11, 2004 to 92,393 first-time 11th graders. The HSPA consists of two content areas: Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy. Satisfactory HSPA performance is a requirement for a high school diploma. Students who do not perform at required levels are provided additional instruction and subsequent opportunities for retesting.

HSPA scores are reported as scale scores in each of the content areas. The scores range from 100–199 (Partially Proficient), 200–249 (Proficient), and 250–300 (Advanced Proficient). The scores of students in the Partially Proficient level are considered to be below the state minimum of proficiency.

The Cycle II Statewide Performance by Demographic Groups Report shows enrollment and performance data for various demographic groups within the state of New Jersey. Only first-time 11th grade testers are reported. For each demographic group, the number of students participating, the percent of students in each proficiency level, and the mean scale score are reported in each content area. Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy are independent content areas and are reported separately.

Students are counted in the Total Students category only once, plus in as many other categories that apply. The report groups students into five different testing populations and six ethnicities, and also groups them by gender, migrant status and economic status. The demographic information originates from the data collected on the students' answer folders. This data is reviewed by the school districts prior to reporting, allowing them to correct any errors.

The five testing populations are mutually exclusive. Students who are IEP exempt from passing or taking receive special education services, but are grouped in their own categories rather than in the Special Education population. Because a student may be IEP exempt from passing or taking in one content area, but not the other, the number of students enrolled in the IEP exempt from passing, IEP exempt from taking, and Special Education populations may be different for each content area. The number of students enrolled in the Total Students, General Education and Limited English Proficiency populations is always the same across all content areas. Some students might not be included in any of the gender and ethnicity groups because of incomplete data.

The performance data includes only students who received a scale score. The other students are tallied in the Not Present and Void categories. Because each content area is independent, students may receive a scale score in one content area, but not the other.

Highlights from the Cycle II Statewide Performance by Demographic Groups Report

In the Mathematics content area, 45.6% of all students who received a valid scale score scored in the Proficient level and 24.5% scored in the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 65.0% of all students who received a valid scale score scored in the Proficient level and 17.2% scored in the Advanced Proficient level. The mean scale score in the Mathematics content area was 218.2. The mean scale score in the Language Arts Literacy content area was 221.6.

In the Mathematics content area, 23.3% of all LEP students who received a valid scale score scored in the Proficient level and 6.0% scored in the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 23.6% of all LEP students who received a valid scale score scored in the Proficient level and 0.5% scored in the Advanced Proficient level. The mean scale score in the Mathematics content area for LEP students was 185.6. The mean scale score in the Language Arts Literacy content area for LEP students was 173.1.

In the Mathematics content area, 37.9% of SE students who received a valid scale score scored in the Proficient level and 8.4% scored in the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 58.5% of all SE students who received a valid scale score scored in the Proficient level and 3.6% scored in the Advanced Proficient level. The mean scale score in the Mathematics content area for SE students was 197.3. The mean scale score in the Language Arts Literacy content area for SE students was 201.6. The SE category does not include students exempt from passing or taking the HSPA.

In Mathematics, 21.3% of Female students scored Advanced Proficient and 47.8% scored Proficient compared to 27.6% and 43.4% of Male students scoring Advanced Proficient and Proficient, respectively. The total difference between the number of students reaching at least the Proficient level was slightly larger in Language Arts Literacy, with 22.4% of Female students scoring Advanced Proficient and 63.9% scoring Proficient compared to 12.2% and 66.2% of Male students scoring Advanced Proficient and Proficient, respectively.

Of the students who attempted the Mathematics section, the percentage of Partially Proficient students ranged from 61.3% for Black students to 13.2% for Asian students. In Language Arts Literacy, the span was much narrower, ranging from 34.6% of Black students scoring Partially Proficient to 10.1% for White students.

In Mathematics, 5.4% of Economically Disadvantaged students scored Advanced Proficient and 37.6% scored Proficient compared to 28.0% and 47.1% of Non-Economically Disadvantaged students scoring Advanced Proficient and Proficient, respectively. For Language Arts Literacy, 4.1% of Economically Disadvantaged students scored Advanced Proficient and 57.1% scored Proficient compared to 19.7% and 66.5% of Non-Economically Disadvantaged students scoring Advanced Proficient and Proficient, respectively.

Reporting Rules for Data File

The accompanying data file contains the same type of information shown on the Cycle II Statewide Performance by Demographic Groups Report. Please note that there may be small discrepancies between the file and the report due to adjustments made to the data after the reporting deadline. Also, in the suppressed version, certain information is not shown in the file according to the following reporting rules:

- Data are not reported where the number of students with valid scale scores for a particular group is less than 11.
- Data are not reported where demographic groups are mutually exclusive (e.g., gender) and there are one or two students with a valid scale score in one of the groups (e.g., male).
- Data are not reported when it is otherwise possible to identify an individual student's performance.