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## [NJDOE News](#)

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### **Results of 2001 Fourth and Eighth Grade Assessments Show Gains in Student Performance**

- [\*\*2001 Preliminary Statewide Results Grade 11 High School Proficiency Test\*\*](#)
- [\*\*2001 Preliminary Statewide Results Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment\*\*](#)
- [\*\*2001 Preliminary Statewide Results Elementary School Proficiency Assessment\*\*](#)

Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. today released the preliminary results of the fourth grade Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) and the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) both of which showed a solid overall performance by New Jersey's children as they strive to reach the state's rigorous academic standards.

"I am pleased to report proficiency scores for the total student population increased from last year on all three sections of the ESPA test," said Gagliardi. "Of all the fourth graders who took the test, 79.1 percent achieved the proficient or advanced proficient level on the language arts literacy section of the test (compared to 55.1 percent last year). On the math section of the test, 65.9 percent achieved the proficient or advanced proficient level (compared to 65.8 percent last year) and on the science test 87.1 percent achieved the level of proficiency or advanced proficiency (compared to 86 percent a year ago)."

The Commissioner also reported that GEPA test scores rose in the areas of math and science while declining slightly in language arts literacy. In math, 61.9 percent achieved the level of proficiency or advanced proficiency (compared to 59.7 percent last year); in science, 74.7 percent achieved a level of proficiency or advanced proficiency (compared to 73.7 last year), and in language arts literacy, the results dipped slightly with 73.3 percent of those who took the test achieving levels of proficiency or advanced proficiency (compared to 75.1 percent last year).

"I would like to congratulate all the administrators, teachers, parents and children across New Jersey for their efforts that culminated in the success we have seen on these statewide assessments," said Gagliardi. "The state's academic standards have been in place for the last five years, and it is clear that our school districts have appropriately aligned their curricula with those standards and that the children of New Jersey are receiving a high quality education."

The Department of Education also released today the results of the High School Proficiency Assessment for eleventh graders that was administered in October 2000. In math, 88.2 percent of those tested received passing grades (compared to 88.4 percent the year before). In reading, 83.5 percent achieved a passing grade (compared to 84.1 percent the year before). Finally, in writing 93.1 percent passed the test (compared to 85.8 percent in 1999). The new High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), will replace the HSPT as the state's graduation test in the spring of 2002.

New Jersey established its rigorous standards and assessment system five years ago when the State Board of Education adopted academic standards in the seven subject areas of math, science, language arts literacy, comprehensive health and physical education, world languages, visual and performing arts, social studies, and the five cross-content workplace readiness areas. The new ESPA test was given for the first time in the 1998-99 school year, the GEPA test was given for the first time the 1998-99 school year and the new graduation test, HSPA (High School Proficiency Assessment), will be given for the first time in the spring of 2002. Also, for the first time, a social studies exam will be given to New Jersey fifth graders this fall and to eighth graders next spring.

"It is also important to remember that accountability is an integral part of our system," said Dr. Gagliardi. "The only way that we can measure whether our children are meeting the state standards is through our state assessments. As time goes on and districts align more and more of their curricula to the state standards student performance on the state assessments will continue to rise."

"We have come a long way since the first assessments were given two years ago. However, it is important to remember that we still have much room for improvement. Our children are depending on us to make sure that they acquire the knowledge necessary for them to graduate from high school, compete at a high level in college

and succeed in the work force. I pledge to continue to work as hard as I can to ensure that our children receive the highest quality education possible."