

# High School Proficiency Assessment Spring 2006

## 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 11<sup>th</sup> graders as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001. Most recently, the Spring 2006 HSPA was administered between March 7 and March 16, 2006 to 98,645 first-time 11<sup>th</sup> 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.

The State Summary includes Cycle II Performance by Demographic Group reports for aggregations larger than school districts, and accompanying data files which include data at the district and school levels. The Cycle II Performance by Demographic Group reports show enrollment and performance data for various demographic groups within the state of New Jersey, within each District Factor Group (DFG), and within the set of Special Needs Districts and the set of Non-Special Needs Districts. The data files show similar data for various demographic groups within the state of New Jersey, within the set of Special Needs Districts and the set of Non-Special Needs Districts, and within each District Factor Group (DFG), district and school.

Only first-time 11<sup>th</sup> grade testers are reported. For each demographic group, the number of students participating, the percentage of students at each proficiency level, and the mean scale score are reported in each content area. 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 at the Partially Proficient level are considered to be below the state minimum of proficiency. 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 Special Education and Limited English Proficient populations, and also groups them by gender, migrant status, ethnicity, 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.

Both Special Education and Limited English Proficient populations are broken out into several subpopulations. Special Education, is broken out further into three subpopulations, depending on whether the student must pass or take the HSPA: Not Exempt From Passing, Exempt From Passing, Exempt From Taking (APA). Limited English Proficient, is broken out into two subpopulations: Current LEP and Former LEP. The number of students enrolled in the Total Students, Special Education and Limited English Proficient populations is always the same across all content areas. However a student may be IEP exempt from passing or taking in one content area, but not the other, so the number of students enrolled in the Exempt From Passing and Exempt From Taking (APA) populations may be different for each content area. Students with only one ethnic code are reported in the appropriate ethnic group. Students with multiple ethnic codes or no ethnic code are counted in the Other group. Some students might not be included in a gender group 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.

The Cycle II Performance by Demographic Group reports include different versions for different aggregations. The statewide report includes every first-time 11<sup>th</sup> grader tested in New Jersey. The Special Needs report includes students enrolled in any one of the 31 Abbott districts. The Non-Special Needs report includes students in all other districts. The DFG reports are mutually exclusive. Most DFGs are a measure of the socioeconomic status of residents in each school district. A few special DFGs, such as R, S and V apply to schools that draw students from widespread areas. Charter schools are grouped together in DFG R rather than in the DFG of the school district they are physically located in. Note that a report for DFG S, which includes students in the Department of Corrections, Department of Human Services and the Juvenile Justice Commission, is not included in the state summary. Students in DFG S are counted in the statewide report, but they do not have a separate report like the other DFGs do. Vocational school districts have a DFG of V.

### Highlights from the Statewide Cycle II Performance by Demographic Group Report

In the Mathematics content area, 49.3% of all students who received a valid scale score scored at the Proficient level and 26.6% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 61.6% of all students who received a valid scale score scored at the Proficient level and 21.9% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. The mean scale score in the Mathematics content area was 223.7. The mean scale score in the Language Arts Literacy content area was 224.8.

In the Mathematics content area, 27.6% of all current LEP students who received a valid scale score scored at the Proficient level and 4.9% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 21.4% of all current LEP students who received a valid scale score scored at the Proficient level and 0.7% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. The mean scale score in the Mathematics content area for current LEP students was 190.4. The mean scale score in the Language Arts Literacy content area for current LEP students was 171.0.

Beginning this year, performance data for former LEP students is reported. As would be expected, former LEP students performed substantially better than the current LEP students. In the Mathematics content area, 43.1% of all former LEP students scored at the Proficient level while 12.4% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 62.5% scored at the Proficient level while 0.9% scored at the Advanced Proficient level.

In the Mathematics content area, 28.3% of SE students who received a valid scale score scored at the Proficient level and 3.3% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. In the Language Arts Literacy content area, 42.6% of all SE students who received a valid scale score scored at the Proficient level and 2.3% scored at the Advanced Proficient level. The mean scale score in the Mathematics content area for SE students was 187.7. The mean scale score in the Language Arts Literacy content area for SE students was 187.0. The SE category includes students exempt from passing the HSPA.

In Mathematics, 24.0% of Female students scored Advanced Proficient and 52.1% scored Proficient compared to 29.2% and 46.6% of Male students scoring Advanced Proficient and Proficient, respectively. The total difference between the number of students reaching at least the Proficient level was larger in Language Arts Literacy, with 26.3% of Female students scoring Advanced Proficient and 60.4% scoring Proficient compared to 17.8% and 62.7% 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 53.7% for Black students to 9.1% for Asian students. In Language Arts Literacy, the span was much narrower, ranging from 35.7% of Black students scoring Partially Proficient to 8.5% for White students.

In Mathematics, 7.6% of Economically Disadvantaged students scored Advanced Proficient and 44.0% scored Proficient compared to 30.7% and 50.4% of Non-Economically Disadvantaged students scoring Advanced Proficient and Proficient, respectively. For Language Arts Literacy, 5.4% of Economically Disadvantaged students scored Advanced Proficient and 57.8% scored Proficient compared to 25.6% and 62.4% 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 Performance by Demographic Group Reports. 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.