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College Board Releases New Jersey's SAT Scores; State Near Top of Nation in Student Participation, Advanced Placement Results Embargoed Until Noon, Tuesday August 28, 2001

The average scores of New Jersey high school students taking this year's SAT exam rose by one point on the verbal section of the test. The average math score remained the same as last year. In the latest exam, the average score on the verbal section of the test rose to 499 from 498 last year. The score on the math section of the test remained the same at 513, however the math score is the highest of any state in the middle states region.

New Jersey continued to have one of the highest student participation rates in the nation with 81% of high school seniors taking the latest test. Connecticut led the nation with 82% of seniors taking the exam—nearly double the national average of 45%.

"I am pleased with the performance of our high school seniors on the latest SAT," said Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. "Not only did New Jersey's verbal score show an increase, which was in line with the national average, but the score increased at a time when we had the second highest student participation rate in the nation. I believe one of the reasons for the steady increase is the fact that the implementation of our rigorous academic standards is being taken seriously by teachers administrators and students.

"I would like to congratulate students, teachers and school officials for their performance on the latest SAT exam. It is important for college bound seniors to take the SAT, and I am pleased that New Jersey school district officials continue to encourage their students to take the test and move forward on a college-bound track."

During the last ten years, New Jersey has shown solid gains on the SAT, with scores rising by 6 points on the verbal section of the test and by 18 points on the math section. During that time New Jersey's participation rate has continued to be near the top of the nation.

New Jersey's high school students also continued their outstanding performance on advanced placement exams. Those taking AP exams had an average score of 3.2 (on a scale of 5), the fifth highest in the nation. Among public school students only, the average score was 3.22, the second highest in the nation next to Illinois.

In 2001, 26,930 students took 47,031 advanced placement exams. This is a 7.7% increase in the number of students and an 8.4 percent increase in the number of exams. Overall, students received grades of between three and five (a passing grade resulting in college credit), on 32,814 of the exams taken, or 70%, a 6.6 percent increase from 2000.