



NJDOE News

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Department of Education Administers HSPA and ESPA Field Tests

The new High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) is being field tested, today, Friday October 15, 1999. The field tests are being administered to all New Jersey eleventh graders in the subject areas of math, language arts literacy and science. The HSPA will officially be administered as a graduation test to eleventh graders beginning in the 2001-2002 school year.

Field tests are intended to sample various types of exam items for future potential use and to allow school staffs to become familiar with administering the tests. Information gleaned from the field test is often used by the Department of Education to improve future administrations of the test and to make any necessary adjustments to actual test questions. During the field test students do not take complete exams and not all students take the same exam.

The department will also be administering Elementary School Proficiency Assessments (ESPA) to fifth graders in the subjects of social studies and visual and performing arts on Monday October 26th. Originally assessments in these content areas has been scheduled to be administered to fourth graders, but the decision was made to offer a portion of the ESPA in fifth grade to lighten the testing load on the state's fourth graders. In future years, math, science and language arts literacy will be given in the spring of fourth grade. Social studies, world languages, visual and performing arts and comprehensive health and physical education will be administered in the fall of fifth grade.

"These are far more difficult tests than our students are used to taking and will make sure that our children are meeting the state's rigorous academic standards," said Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "We need to give these field tests to continue the test development and administration process so that the final exam we administer is the most accurate measure of each child's ability.

"We have continually sought public input so that we can make whatever improvements are necessary in our testing program. These field tests will allow us to make continued improvements so that we can be most responsive to school administrators, parents and children."

Note: [Sample questions for the HSPA and ESPA are attached.](#)

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