



NJDOE News

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GEPA Testing Begins Next Week

More than 92,000 eighth-grade students throughout New Jersey will participate next week in the fourth official administration of the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA). The test is designed to measure how well students are meeting the state's academic standards.

Tests will be administered between March 11 and March 14. Students will be tested in three areas: science, mathematics and language arts literacy.

"Each year, GEPA provides our eighth-grade students with an important opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "I encourage educators and parents to review of the results of this test with the students to help ensure that they will be well prepared for success in high school."

GEPA testing begins on March 11 with the science portion, which will last for 1 hour, 57 minutes. The science test consists of 60 multiple choice and 4 open-ended questions.

GEPA testing continues on March 12 with the mathematics section, which will last for 2 hours, 27 minutes. Students will be asked to respond to 40 multiple choice and 8 open-ended questions.

Testing concludes on March 13-14 with language arts literacy. On March 13, students will have 2 hours, 12 minutes to respond to 10 multiple choice and 2 open-ended questions, as well as 1 writing task. On March 14, students will have 2 hours, 2 minutes to respond to 10 multiple choice and 2 open-ended questions, and 1 writing task.

The GEPA is not designed to promote students from one grade to the next. It is a diagnostic tool that tells teachers and parents whether students are on track to obtain the skills and knowledge they will need as 11th graders to pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). Passing the HSPA is a requirement for receiving a high school diploma.

Student scores on the GEPA will place them in one of three categories: advanced proficient, proficient, or partially proficient. Students in the advanced proficient range will not need remedial help. Students in the partially proficient range must receive special instruction to improve identified areas of weakness, and students in the proficient range may or may not need remedial help.

All students are required to take the GEPA, except for certain special education students and limited English proficient students whose learning disabilities or lack of fluency exempt them from the exam.

The Department of Education has developed guides for parents about the GEPA. The guides, along with sample test items, are available from the department's web site:

www.state.nj.us/education