



NJDOE News

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For Release: July 5, 2005

Passing Rate on GED Exam Shows Dramatic Increase After Cutoff Scores are Modified

- [GED Fact Sheet](#)
- [GED Sample Items](#)

New Jersey test-takers passed the GED exam in dramatically higher numbers in May 2005, the first full month of testing after new passing scores on the exam were set by the State Board of Education. In that month, 1,282 of 2,500 test takers, or 51.28 percent, passed the exam, compared with passing rates of 38.64 percent in April 2005 and 36.17 percent in May 2004.

In New Jersey, a person who successfully passes the national test of General Education Development is issued a state-endorsed high school diploma. Most GED candidates are adults who for a variety of reasons were unable to successfully complete their high school career and have returned to attain their high school credential.

"This is great news for everyone who believes in second chances," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "The people who take GED exams are people who have recognized the value of the opportunity the exam presents and are making an earnest effort to turn their lives around."

"Since we are in the business of helping all students grow into successful members of society, we want to create a climate that fosters multiple and diverse paths to success," the Commissioner said. "The higher passing rate for the GED in May serves as initial proof that our former passing rates were unrealistic and unjustified."

In April, the State Board of Education set passing scores on the GED that matched the national standards: A total passing score of 2250, a minimum average score of 450, and no single test score below 410 on any of the five tests that make up the exam. Prior to that, New Jersey had higher passing scores that gave it the second-lowest pass rate in the nation. For example, in 2002, only 4,304, or 52.2 percent, of 8,752 New Jersey test takers passed the exam.

Commissioner Librera had recommended that New Jersey align its scores with the national average because there is no research-based evidence to support the higher scores.

In addition to aligning its GED passing scores with the national average, New Jersey is working on other ways to improve the second-chance capability of students who are motivated to improve their lives. Two new GED testing centers have opened since April, bringing the total number of centers in the state to 30. The Department of Education is also contacting representatives of various county colleges throughout the state to discuss how they could benefit from hosting a GED test center on their campuses.

Commissioner Librera urged students who did not pass the GED exam in earlier attempts to contact a testing center and make arrangements for re-testing.

Attached is a current list of GED testing centers in New Jersey, a fact sheet about the GED, and sample questions from the GED exam. For more information about the national GED testing program, visit the following Web-site:

<http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=GEDTS>