



NJDOE News

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New Jersey Department of Education Releases 2006 School Report Cards

The New Jersey Department of Education today released the 2006 School Report Cards, which contain detailed statistical profiles of all public schools in the state. The annual reports enable members of the public to gauge their local schools' educational progress.

"At the federal and state levels, there is unprecedented emphasis on accountability for steadily improved academic performance for every student in every school," said Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy. "The state-mandated New Jersey School Report Card provides the districts and the public with an annual assessment of how each school is doing in serving our students' academic needs."

The reports also show how well each school is doing in meeting the requirements of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the state's goals for math and language arts literacy.

The report cards, established by legislation in 1995, are produced for all elementary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools, special education schools, charter schools, and Special Services School Districts.

The information is arranged under five categories - school environment, student information, student performance indicators, staff information, and district/charter financial information. Each year, the department makes adjustments to the data fields to accommodate new federal mandates or to clarify the information that is presented in the report. The 2006 version includes two years of NJASK 4 science results, the first year's language arts literacy and math results from the NJASK tests for grades 5, 6, and 7, and SAT essay results.

"I urge all parents and community members to examine their schools' progress closely and take whatever action is necessary," Commissioner Davy said. "We are all responsible for accountability."

In addition to providing useful information on the school level, there are statewide trends that can be identified from the data in the report card. For instance, the 2005-2006 data indicate that:

- The graduation rate has risen nearly two points to 93.2 percent for 2005-06, while the number of students who graduated via the alternative Special Review Assessment dropped from about 15 percent to 12 percent. New Jersey's SAT participation and performance have remained steady and Advanced Placement participation is holding around 15 percent.
- There are 3,953 more students in New Jersey's public schools than there were in the 2004-2005 school year, and 53,276 more students than there were five years ago. The number of classroom teachers grew from about 102,900 to 110,900 in that same five-year period.
- There have been significant increases in the number of Hispanic students, from 214,572 in 2001-02 to 253,487 in 2005-06, for a total increase of almost 40,000 students in the past five years.
- Internet connections for all rooms in the school have steadily risen to an average of 98.7 percent in 2005-06 and the number of students per computer available for supervised instruction has decreased from 3.9 to 3.7.
- Statewide mobility and dropout rates have been holding steady on a state level, but parents, community members and educators are encouraged to look at the number for each school because there are wide variations among districts in the statistics at the school and district levels.

The report cards released today are the twelfth to be produced under the 1995 state law that standardizes much of the information and requires its annual distribution. They also represent the 16th time New Jersey has issued a report on its public schools, since the first report cards were distributed in 1989.

The school report card is on the department's Web site at <http://education.state.nj.us/rc/>.