



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

Jon Zlock

Richard Vespucci

Ron Rice

609-292-1126

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GEPA Testing Begins Next Week

More than 100,000 eighth-grade students throughout New Jersey will participate next week in the sixth 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 8 and March 11. Students will be tested in three areas: science, mathematics and language arts literacy. GEPA testing begins on March 8 with the science portion, which will last for approximately 2 hours. The science test consists of 60 multiple choice and 4 open-ended questions.

GEPA testing continues on March 9 with the mathematics section. Students will be asked to respond to 40 multiple choice and 8 open-ended questions. Testing concludes on March 10-11 with language arts literacy. On March 10, students will have approximately 2 hours to respond to 10 multiple choice and 2 open-ended questions, as well as 1 writing task. On March 11, students will respond to 10 multiple choice and 2 open-ended questions, and 1 writing task.

Students who miss one or more days of testing due to illness are tested during the make-up period of March 15-18.

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 eleventh 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 students with severe disabilities who are assessed through the Alternate Proficiency Assessment (APA).

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

www.state.nj.us/education

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