

July 29, 2004

ISAT RESULTS RELEASED

BOISE - The State Board of Education released 2004 spring Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) results showing strong proficiency results overall for elementary grades in reading, math, and language usage, while more moderate scores for middle and high school students. Fewer Idaho students were proficient or advanced in math across every grade than in reading and language usage.

Tenth grade results revealed that 79 percent of all 10th graders, whose ISAT scores also count as a graduation requirement, scored proficient or advanced on all three exams using the phased-in graduation score. Results also illustrated a wide gap between limited English proficient (LEP) students and English proficient students.

"The number one goal of our ISAT program is to improve student achievement," said State Board of Education President Rod Lewis. "The data the ISAT provides is invaluable because it presents an individualized picture of student achievement as well as a picture of school, district and statewide achievement. The good news today is that more Idaho students are proficient in language usage, reading and math than they were a year ago."

Approximately 173,000 Idaho students took ISAT tests in spring 2004. This is only the second time grades 2-10 have taken the spring ISAT. The State Board translates each student's scores into four categories: below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. A below basic categorization means the student has critical deficiencies in terms of the subject tested. An advanced score would mean the student has a comprehensive understanding above the grade level. The goal is to have students proficient or advanced. The scores are calculated based on every student who obtained a valid test score. These scores are not Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), determinations as guided by "No Child Left Behind."

2004 Statewide Results:

In the reading ISAT, the overall percentage of proficient or advanced students for the state was 87.1 percent for third grade, 82.4 percent for fourth grade, 73.9 percent for seventh grade, 81.9 percent for eighth grade, and 77.7 percent for 10th grade.

For the math ISAT, the overall percentage of proficient or advanced students for the state was 86.2 percent for third grade, 83.7 percent for fourth grade, 69.2 percent for seventh grade, 66.1 percent for eighth grade, and 70.6 percent for 10th grade.

In the language usage ISAT, the overall percentage of proficient or advanced students for the state was 88.4 percent for third grade, 88.9 percent for fourth grade, 71.7 percent for seventh grade, 72.9 percent for eighth grade, and 80.9 percent for 10th grade.

According to State Board of Education rule, 10th graders must score at least "proficient" on the ISAT as one of their graduation requirements. Students can take the test up to nine times and the scores students must receive for the requirements are phased in over three years. Using the lower graduation requirement scores, 90.1 percent of 10th graders were proficient or advanced in reading, 85.5 percent in math, and 93.1 percent in language usage. Overall, 79 percent of all 10th graders passed all three tests on the first attempt.

Limited English proficient (LEP) students continue to struggle compared to non-LEP students. For instance, in the tenth grade, only 33 percent of limited English students were proficient in reading, 36.7 percent in math, and 43 percent in language usage.

2003 Comparisons

Compared to 2003 ISAT spring statewide test results, students in 2004 increased their overall

proficiency results, with the exception of 10th grade math scores that decreased slightly. Again, proficiency gains were greater in elementary grades and narrowed in middle and high school. The following is a comparison of grades four, eight, and 10 from 2003 to 2004. There are no other direct comparisons for 2003 ISAT, because grades four, eight and 10 were the only grades given on-grade level tests in spring 2003.

		2003 % Proficient + Advanced	2004 % Proficient + Advanced
Grade 4	Reading	75.6 %	82.4 %
	Language Usage	79.8 %	88.9 %
	Math	77.5 %	83.7 %
Grade 8	Reading	74.0 %	81.9 %
	Language Usage	71.3 %	72.9 %
	Math	53.0 %	66.1 %
Grade 10	Reading	75.1 %	77.7 %
	Language Usage	74.6 %	80.9 %
	Math	71.7 %	70.6 %

What's Next?

The State Board of Education recently announced a two-year, \$5.03 million agreement with PLATO Learning to provide students in all districts with individualized computer software for ISAT remediation and advancements. This powerful technology-based program will allow each district in the state to import scores from the ISAT and then identify a personalized learning path for that student. Beginning in spring 2005, the ISAT series will grow to include a science assessment in grades five, seven, and 10. Ultimately, the Board plans to add science assessments for all grades two through 10 for both the fall and spring testing periods.