

NJ's Alternate High School Assessment (formerly the SRA, Special Review Assessment)

NJTESOL/NJBE Legislative Conference

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NJ HS Graduation Requirements

To receive a NJ HS diploma, a student must...

- Earn a minimum of 110 course credits
- Meet all local graduation requirements
- Pass the NJ High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) OR the Alternate High School Assessment (formerly the SRA)

What is the AHSA/SRA?

- A test of math, reading & writing skills
- A 'second-chance' test for students who don't pass all or part the HSPA
- Same content & level of difficulty as HSPA
- Different format and testing conditions (eg. language, time accommodations)
- Performance Assessment Tasks (PATs) instead of multiple choice questions

SRA Data

- About 12% of NJ graduates use SRA
- SRA is statewide Issue (60% non-Abbott)
- 1 of 3 urban graduates use SRA
- Majority of ELLs use SRA
- 105 Schools Have Over 10% SRA Grads
- About 12,000 students statewide

Who Graduates through SRA?

Statewide Totals for Students Graduating Through SRA

	Year	General Ed	ELL/LEP	Sp Ed	Total
	1999	6559	1219	147	7925
HSPT	2000	6818	1364	226	8408
	2001	7572	1460	194	9226
	2002	7613	1675	260	9548
HSPA	2003	12566	1617	463	14646
	2004	13397	1353	581	15331
	2005	13826	1208	627	15661
	2006	11581	1128	579	13288
	2007	10015	1109	623	11747
	2008	9752	1150	611	11513
	2009	10,199	1120	650	11653

Criticisms of SRA

- A 'backdoor' diploma
- Local scoring wasn't reliable
- Overuse beyond original intentions
- Students had three chances to pass HSPA
- SRA diplomas were 'worthless'

Arguments in Support of SRA

- Students need multiple ways to graduate
- Content of SRA = HSPA
- Rutgers Newark study found 40% of SRA grads continued their education
- HS grads live longer, healthier lives, earn more, better parents, go to prison less.
- Single test should not determine graduation
- Close achievement & opportunity gaps—don't raise dropout rates

Recent SRA Background

March 2008 State Bd. votes to retain & revise SRA
SRA Advisory Group Recommendations (1/09)

- Audit system rejected
- Measurement, Inc. hired

NJDOE Rolls Out New AHSA Process (Fall, 09)

SRA Timeline 2009-2010 (Draft as of 5/20/09)

- September 2009: SRA Instructional Program
- October 6-8, 2009: HSPA retest administration
- December 18, 2009: Districts receive online rosters of October 2009 HSPA results;
- December 18-January 4, 2009: Districts receive SRA answer documents and pre-ID labels from state vendor;
- January 4-5, 2010: Districts download SRA PATs;
- January 6-28, 2010: First Administration Window
- January 29-February 3, 2010: Vendor receives SRA student responses from districts;
- February 15-March 31, 2010: Vendor scores student responses and reports results to districts via online rosters;
- March 29-April 1, 2010: Districts access SRA PATs for second administration window;
- April 12-30, 2009: Second Administration Window;
- May 1-3: Vendor receives student responses from districts;
- May 10-June 2, 2010: Vendor scores student responses and reports results online.

AHSA Issues

- Fewer opportunities to take AHSA
- Less time & flexibility to complete PATs
- Fewer translations/test accommodations
- Delayed feedback for students/teachers
- No pilot testing done (unlike HSPA, other tests)
- January results sent to schools by March 30

January AHSA Results

- 9500 Math: 34% passed (3240)
- 4500 LAL: 10% passed (430)
- 120 districts no one passed LAL
- 40 districts no one passed Math
- DOE says results were 'a great surprise.. mistake was that we didn't field test the scoring.'
- Thousands at risk of not graduating

January AHSA LAL Results

District Factor Group	Students Tested	Passed	% Passed
A	1959	117	6%
B	550	65	12%
CD	346	53	15%
DE	345	49	14%
FG	251	46	18%
GH	261	35	13%
I	60	10	17%
J	9	4	44%

January AHSA Math Results

District Factor Group	Students Tested	Passed	% Passed
A	3342	718	21%
B	1217	503	41%
CD	914	371	41%
DE	1084	475	44%
FG	818	343	42%
GH	790	379	48%
I	247	119	48%
J	29	14	48%

AHSA Scoring Issues

- Test content unchanged
- Scoring/procedures changed
- MI Scoring: 30% NJ teachers 70% MI staff
- Scoring standards applied differently
- Reports of scoring/training irregularities
- 'Due notice' & 'fairness' issues
- Impact on ELLs & urban districts

NJDOE Response

- NJDOE 'rescored' several thousands Jan. math and reading PATs (not writing)
- Scoring process for April AHSA 'reviewed'
- Commissioner asks districts to let students participate in grad ceremony w/o diploma
- Adding summer AHSA administration
- NJDOE will provide online program
- NJDOE developing 'appeals process'

ELC Response

- ELC asked Commissioner to treat this year's AHSA scores as a pilot
- Return graduation decisions to districts/schools (including 'appeals')
- Release all HS assessment data by June 2
- Reconvene SRA Advisory Council to review and improve AHSA for 2010-11

Graduation Options for Students

- Rescoring of January tests may change some results
- March HSPA results returned last week
- April AHSA results by June 2
- Summer AHSA test & programs
- District decision re participation graduation ceremony
- Prepare & submit appeals

Other Steps Pending

- Assembly Education Committee Hearing & Response
- State Board of Education Hearing Wed. 5/19
- Possible ELC legal action
- Contact:
 - Commissioner Bret Schundler
 - Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer
 - Director of Assessment Tim Peters
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Follow up

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