



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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NEWS RELEASE

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Fact Sheet: 2004 State Assessments

The State Assessments were administered in the spring of 2004 to Rhode Island's public-school students in the elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

The New Standards Reference Examinations in English language arts and mathematics were given to all students in grades 4, 8, and 11. (In previous years, high-school students were tested in grade 10.) Each New Standards test consists of several subtests (Mathematics Skills, Concepts, Problem Solving; Reading for Basic Understanding, Reading for Analysis and Interpretation, Writing Effectiveness, Writing Conventions).

These tests require that students write a complete answer and explain their work. They also include a small number of multiple-choice questions.

The tests were graded by teams of specially trained educators. They were not graded on a scale, such as 1 to 100. Rather, for every subject and every grade level, there are "standards" that have been approved by the R.I. Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. These standards describe the quality of work expected at each grade level.

The score for each test represents the percentage of students in that grade level that met or exceeded the state standard.

The tests were designed and graded by Harcourt, Inc., of San Antonio, Texas.

Most of the New Standards tests have been administered every year since 1998. For the past three years, these test scores have been the basis for determining school classifications. The classifications, which may lead to sanctions under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, use three years of test data, and they use the scores for the schools (and districts) as a whole and for various groups of students within the school (or district). The R.I. Department of Elementary Education (RIDE) plans to release the 2004 school classifications on November 22nd.

(RIDE also administers the Rhode Island Writing Assessment in grades 3 and 7 and the 2004 Rhode Island Health Education Assessment, in grade 5. These tests are not used to determine school classifications.)

The 2004 assessment results are posted on the RIDE Web site, www.ridoe.net

