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Commissioner of Education



MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents

FROM: John L. Winn

DATE: October 6, 2006

SUBJECT: PSAT/PLAN

Florida continues to make progress on its primary mission of ensuring that all students are exposed to high quality educational opportunities and increased academic rigor in the classroom and curriculum. For example, in 2006 Florida had greater than average increases for Black and Hispanic students taking the SAT, and these students outperformed their counterparts nationwide. Additional opportunities provided for students to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses in 2005 to 2006 have resulted in the greatest increases in the number of AP exam-takers compared to other states. Also, Black and Hispanic AP exam-takers have increased by over 230% from 1999 to 2006.

The state-funded free 10th grade testing program is a critical part of Florida's plan for expanding educational opportunities to all students. To demonstrate this commitment, Section 1007.35, F.S., directs all districts to provide administration of the PSAT or PLAN to all 10th graders. As shown below, many school districts, in recognition of the value of 10th grade testing towards student achievement and postsecondary aspirations have ensured their students' participation, resulting in a tremendous increase in the numbers of students taking the PSAT and PLAN from 1999 to 2005.

Percentage of 10th Grade Test-Takers			
		1999	2005
PSAT	All	21%	67%
	Blacks	13%	56%
	Hispanics	16%	73%
PLAN	All	4%	11%
	Blacks	3%	6%
	Hispanics	4%	4%

I encourage you to be actively involved in ensuring that all 10th graders take the PSAT or PLAN test this year. Thank you for your continued commitment to students and I greatly appreciate your attention to this important initiative.

JLW/mh