ATTACHMENT A

2009-10 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
PSAT AND PLAN STUDENT TESTING PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

The Florida Legislature has appropriated funds to support the administration of the PSAT or PLAN pre-college entrance examination to Grade 10 students in Fall 2009. The purpose of this Technical Assistance Paper is to provide additional information based on questions received from districts.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Do all students have to take the PSAT or PLAN?**
   No. It is not mandatory for students to take the PSAT or PLAN, but schools should encourage all students to participate.

2. **What about students with disabilities?**
   Students with disabilities may not be denied access to the PSAT or PLAN. Testing accommodations included on an individual educational plan or plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act must be implemented if they are allowable under the publisher's guidelines.

3. **Do home education students qualify to participate in the PSAT or PLAN program?**
   No. The law states that, "each public high school…shall provide for the administration of the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), or Preliminary ACT (PLAN) to all enrolled 10th grade students." Since home education students are not enrolled in the public school system, they are not eligible to participate.

4. **Do Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities have to participate in the PSAT or PLAN program?**
   Yes. The law is specific and states, "each public high school, including, but not limited to, schools and alternative sites and centers of the DJJ, shall provide for the administration of the PSAT or PLAN to all enrolled 10th grade students."

5. **Do schools have to notify parents of the opportunity to exempt their child from PSAT or PLAN testing?**
   Yes. The law is specific on this point and states, "…a written notice shall be provided to each parent that shall include the opportunity to exempt his or her child from taking the PSAT/NMSQT or PLAN."

6. **Will the Department provide a standard "written notice" for all schools to use?**
   No. Based on individual district circumstances and preferences, it will be the responsibility of each district to determine the method by which it will inform parents of this opportunity. The written notice should include the purpose and benefits of the PSAT/PLAN program, such as:
   - Grade 10 pre-college testing provides a basis to increase college participation, as it is an indicator for performance on the SAT or ACT.
   - PSAT includes verbal, mathematics, and writing components; it is used as a diagnostic tool to measure strengths and weaknesses for both students and curriculum.
   - PLAN includes four curriculum-based achievement tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning, along with other components that provide a way to link academic performance to educational and career planning.
   - The program is instrumental in identifying each student's untapped potential.
   - Test results will provide high school guidance counselors with information to help identify students who are ready or need additional work in order to enroll and be successful in Advanced Placement and other college preparatory courses.
   - Test results can open up discussion about future education plans that may not have been considered otherwise.

7. **How will districts inform the Department of their test selection and projected total enrollment of Grade 10 students to be tested?**
   The Florida Pre-College Entrance Examination Program Selection Form (Attachment B) requires each district to identify its test selection and the projected Fall 2009 enrollment of Grade 10 students in its district.

   In addition, we request that you complete and submit this form containing the following seven data elements in the specified columns:

   1. Florida District Name (Column A)
   2. Florida District Number (Column B)
   3. Florida School Name (Column C)
   4. Florida School Number (Column D)
   5. College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) code (Column E)
   6. Fall 2009 Grade 10 projected enrollment (Column F)
   7. Estimated Grade 10 students to participate in PSAT or PLAN (Column G)

   Districts should submit their selection form and Excel spreadsheet (Attachment B) no later than Friday, July 17, 2009, via email to Kira.Sullivan@fldoe.org, or fax to (850) 245-0781.

8. **Does filling out Attachment B mean that I have ordered my materials?**
   No. Attachment B is a form that provides an estimate to be used by the Department for procurement purposes. Schools will order through the appropriate website based on the test selected by the district.

9. **How do schools register with ACT or the College Board?**
   Schools will register by submitting an order to the testing organization selected by their district to receive test materials. If there are any questions about registration details, please contact the appropriate person below:

   PLAN – Ginger Green, ACT (850) 878-2729

   PSAT – Jesus Jara, the College Board (850) 521-4909

10. **Will the state pay for the administration of the PSAT or PLAN for students enrolled in grade levels other than Grade 10?**
    No. Schools will be responsible for fees associated with the administration of PSAT or PLAN for students in grades other than Grade 10, and also for those Grade 10 students who grid their grade level improperly. The testing organizations will track the number of students who are actually tested and will invoice the Department of Education accordingly. **Please be aware that schools are responsible for the cost of testing students who are not in Grade 10. Districts are responsible for cooperating with the testing organizations to arrange for test registration and administration.**

11. **Is there a "percent tested" requirement for Grade 10 students?**
    No. However, the intent of the law is to ensure that as many students as possible are given access to the PSAT/PLAN program and the services that result. The Department of Education will publish participation rates by school and district.

12. **How does this program affect individual students who take the PSAT or PLAN on their own?**
    Students can take the PSAT or PLAN as part of this program or register to take the other exam at their own cost. Testing multiple times permits students to become familiar with college placement testing.

13. **If a student takes the PSAT in 10th grade, may he/she participate in the National Merit Scholarship program?**
    Yes. However, in order to enter the National Merit Scholarship Corporation competition, the student must take the PSAT again in Grade 11.