

# NEWS

Connecticut Department of Education

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## **2005 Connecticut Academic Performance Test Results**

Statewide results for the spring 2005 administration of the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) show several trends since the beginning of the test's second generation in 2001. Given in Grade 10, CAPT assesses student performance in Mathematics, Science, Reading Across the Disciplines and Writing Across the Disciplines. Trends show the following:

- The participation rate for Grade 10 students increased from 2001 to 2005 by nearly nine percentage points and remained fairly constant in 2004 and 2005 at nearly 95 percent.
- The percentage of Grade 10 students meeting goal and proficiency levels generally increased in each of the four content areas despite a large increase in the percentage of test-takers. Currently, about half of the state's Grade 10 students meet the state goal standard and about 80 percent meet the proficiency standard.
- The percentage of Grade 10 students meeting the state goal on all four tests steadily increased, while the percentage of students meeting the state goal on no test steadily decreased from 2001 to 2005.
- Since 2001, the percentage of students from lower-achieving subgroups (such as racial and ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged students) meeting

- the proficiency standard has been increasing at a faster rate than that of their higher-performing counterparts. This has narrowed the achievement gaps.
- From 2001 to 2005, the proportion of Grade 10 students from the Connecticut Technical High Schools meeting the proficiency standard for each of the four content areas has increased by more than 20 percentage points, and in 2005 is nearly at the state average for each content area.

“I want to applaud the success of the tenth grade students who took the CAPT last spring, and particularly those in our state technical high schools. I also want to thank the teachers and administrators who have been expecting more, and getting more, from their students,” said Commissioner of Education Betty J. Sternberg. “Student participation in and performance on the CAPT continue to grow and improve. But we all still need to work harder to ensure that all students perform at the highest possible levels.”

### **Statewide CAPT Results for Mathematics, Science, Reading and Writing, 2001 to 2005**

Table 1 below summarizes the participation rates and percentages of students statewide meeting the state goal and proficiency levels on the CAPT by content area, along with the change in percentages from 2001 to 2005. Overall, nearly 95 percent of Grade 10 students in Connecticut schools took the CAPT in 2005. Another one percent of the state’s students took the Skills Checklist, a test specifically designed for the most significantly cognitively impaired students.

Participation rates have increased by about 8.5 percentage points across the four content areas from 2001 to 2005. The proportion of Connecticut students participating in the CAPT in 2005 was similar to 2004.

(Table 1 appears on Page 3.)

**Table 1: CAPT Participation and Performance for All Grade 10 Students from 2001 through 2005**

CAPT Content	Year	Participation Rate	Percent At/Above Goal	Percent At/Above Proficient
Mathematics	2001	85.9	44.6	77.0
	2002	87.4	44.0	77.7
	2003	89.8	45.1	74.3
	2004	94.6	46.1	76.5
	2005	93.9	47.8	75.7
	Change	+8.0	+3.2	-1.3
Science	2001	86.0	43.4	81.5
	2002	89.2	43.2	80.8
	2003	90.8	43.2	80.7
	2004	94.8	47.4	81.7
	2005	94.0	47.3	82.7
	Change	+8.0	+3.9	+1.2
Reading Across the Disciplines	2001	86.2	42.2	77.8
	2002	88.5	44.8	78.9
	2003	89.9	47.0	77.9
	2004	94.4	48.0	79.1
	2005	94.4	48.9	79.4
	Change	+8.6	+6.7	+1.6
Writing Across the Disciplines	2001	84.1	48.7	81.8
	2002	86.7	51.0	79.8
	2003	88.8	52.8	81.0
	2004	93.6	53.7	84.5
	2005	93.5	55.2	82.6
	Change	+9.4	+6.5	+0.8

Table 1 illustrates that despite increased participation over the last five years, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of Grade 10 students meeting the state goal for each of the four content areas and an increase in each area, except mathematics, at the proficiency level. Changes in statewide results between 2004 and 2005 were positive. At the goal level there were modest gains in mathematics, reading and writing and a slight decrease in science. At the proficiency level, small increases in science and reading, and modest decreases in mathematics and writing occurred.

Table 2 compares the percentages of Grade 10 students who took the CAPT and met the state goal on all four tests to those who did not meet goal on any of the tests. Steadily increasing percentages of tenth graders met the goal on all four tests, while steadily decreasing percentages did not meet the goal on any test between 2001 and 2005.

(Table 2 appears on Page 4.)

**Table 2: Percentage of Grade 10 Students Meeting State Goal from ‘No Tests’ to All Four Tests on the CAPT from 2001 through 2005**

Number of Tests (Number Tested)	2001 (34,914)	2002 (37,096)	2003 (38,602)	2004 (40,514)	2005 (42,426)
All Four Tests	22.6	23.7	26.6	27.7	29.2
Three Tests	12.9	12.7	12.3	13.5	13.2
Two Tests	13.4	13.7	12.6	13.1	12.6
One Test	13.7	13.7	12.8	13.3	12.8
No Tests	37.4	36.1	35.7	32.4	32.3

### Comparison by Education Reference Groups (ERGs)

Table 3 compares the percentages of students meeting the proficiency level on CAPT, the NCLB performance standard, for each of the ERGs from 2001 to 2005. Table 4 follows, comparing the percentages of students meeting the higher state standard, goal. The scores of students with disabilities and English language learners have been removed so that similar populations of students are compared across the years.

Table 3 shows positive trends in the percentage of students meeting the proficiency standard for all of the ERGs in nearly all content areas, particularly in ERG G. The trends for ERG I show improvement in Science, Reading and Writing, with a slight decline in Mathematics, and indicate there is still much work to be done. (See definition of Education Reference Groups on Page 8.)

**Table 3: Percentage of Grade 10 Students Meeting State Proficiency on CAPT by ERG, 2001-05**

ERG	Content Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Change 2001-05
A	Math	96.1	97.3	97.5	98.2	98.4	+2.3
	Science	97.9	98.7	98.9	99.3	99.4	+1.5
	Reading	98.3	98.2	98.6	99.0	99.1	+0.7
	Writing	98.4	97.6	98.4	99.6	99.3	+0.9
B	Math	94.1	94.6	93.8	95.1	95.2	+1.1
	Science	96.0	96.3	96.4	96.8	97.7	+1.7
	Reading	94.2	95.8	95.1	96.6	96.7	+2.5
	Writing	94.9	95.2	95.9	97.4	97.3	+2.4
C	Math	93.2	93.9	92.7	94.5	94.5	+1.3
	Science	95.9	96.6	95.6	97.5	97.6	+1.7
	Reading	93.8	94.2	92.8	94.6	95.4	+1.6
	Writing	93.4	92.9	92.9	96.1	95.2	+1.8
D	Math	88.8	90.5	88.1	89.2	89.0	+0.2
	Science	92.6	92.6	93.1	92.5	93.3	+0.7
	Reading	90.0	91.1	92.0	91.3	91.2	+1.2

	Writing	92.8	91.6	93.3	94.2	93.3	+0.5
E	Math	86.4	88.9	87.3	91.1	86.6	+0.2
	Science	92.9	93.3	93.7	95.6	94.8	+1.9
	Reading	87.4	88.7	90.8	90.3	91.2	+3.8
	Writing	88.3	90.9	91.5	95.8	91.9	+3.9
F	Math	82.3	84.0	80.5	85.3	81.7	-0.6
	Science	85.7	86.8	87.8	90.4	89.8	+3.0
	Reading	83.4	84.7	84.6	86.1	85.0	+1.6
	Writing	86.6	87.0	87.3	91.6	89.2	+2.6
G	Math	82.6	84.3	81.2	87.5	83.5	+0.9
	Science	86.1	83.9	87.9	91.6	90.4	+4.3
	Reading	80.1	81.5	82.3	85.2	84.6	+4.5
	Writing	83.4	82.0	84.5	91.9	89.8	+6.4
H	Math	75.6	76.3	72.5	75.3	74.0	-1.6
	Science	80.6	80.4	80.3	81.9	83.3	+2.7
	Reading	77.5	79.8	77.8	79.8	80.1	+2.6
	Writing	83.3	79.8	82.6	86.8	84.5	+1.2
I	Math	49.9	50.7	45.0	51.0	49.4	-0.5
	Science	58.4	58.5	57.0	59.5	60.6	+2.2
	Reading	58.2	61.6	57.2	60.7	59.7	+1.5
	Writing	66.0	63.3	64.7	71.9	66.9	+0.9

Table 4 illustrates positive trends in the percentage of students meeting the state’s goal standard for all of the ERGs for each content area with, on average, the greatest gains made in the areas of reading and writing across the ERGs. “The trend data provide solid evidence that districts across the state have set high standards for teaching and learning, with the expectation that all students must perform not merely at the proficiency level, but must strive to meet the state’s challenging goal standard,” added Commissioner Sternberg.

**Table 4: Percentage of Grade 10 Students Meeting State Goal on CAPT by ERG, 2001-05**

ERG	Content Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Change 2001-05
A	Math	77.9	79.5	84.6	84.5	86.4	+8.5
	Science	77.0	75.0	81.0	83.5	82.8	+5.8
	Reading	79.1	79.1	84.2	86.9	88.7	+9.6
	Writing	82.7	80.3	87.9	88.9	90.6	+7.9
B	Math	67.0	69.8	71.8	73.0	75.3	+8.3
	Science	65.1	64.8	68.6	71.5	74.8	+9.7
	Reading	66.2	69.2	73.8	75.8	77.3	+11.1
	Writing	68.8	72.9	76.7	78.0	81.5	+12.7
C	Math	63.2	64.6	66.6	68.2	71.1	+7.9
	Science	64.6	66.2	64.8	69.8	73.5	+8.9
	Reading	65.4	64.4	64.9	69.2	72.3	+6.9
	Writing	65.9	67.9	68.8	72.0	76.0	+10.1
D	Math	56.9	55.8	58.3	60.0	61.1	+4.2
	Science	54.1	55.7	55.9	60.4	59.4	+5.3
	Reading	51.6	56.0	60.8	59.6	60.1	+8.5
	Writing	62.1	65.8	68.7	67.4	68.8	+6.7
E	Math	48.9	48.7	53.8	57.9	53.8	+4.9
	Science	51.0	51.6	52.3	60.7	57.9	+6.9
	Reading	49.4	49.8	56.8	57.1	60.5	+11.1
	Writing	54.7	60.3	62.9	68.5	67.6	+12.9

F	Math	45.6	44.5	45.6	49.1	47.9	+2.3
	Science	43.9	45.1	45.6	51.1	49.1	+5.2
	Reading	40.4	46.2	49.1	50.1	48.5	+8.1
	Writing	49.8	56.5	56.2	57.7	60.1	+10.3
G	Math	40.0	40.5	45.2	45.0	46.2	+6.2
	Science	39.3	38.5	40.4	49.3	47.3	+8.0
	Reading	34.9	39.8	42.6	47.3	46.2	+11.3
	Writing	43.9	48.3	49.6	57.3	57.5	+13.6
H	Math	39.6	36.9	37.8	38.8	40.9	+1.3
	Science	37.3	36.7	35.6	39.9	39.1	+1.8
	Reading	36.3	40.0	41.6	42.0	44.4	+8.1
	Writing	46.6	46.8	50.0	50.5	52.2	+5.6
I	Math	15.6	14.8	14.6	15.4	17.9	+2.3
	Science	15.2	16.7	14.7	18.6	16.5	+1.3
	Reading	18.1	22.3	21.7	22.3	22.2	+4.1
	Writing	24.3	27.4	28.0	30.1	28.7	+4.4

### Results from the Technical High Schools Show Impressive Gains

Table 5 shows results for Grade 10 students in the Connecticut Technical High Schools (CTHS) from 2001 to 2005. Again, the scores of students with disabilities and English language learners have been removed to ensure the comparability of populations across the years. The percentages of students meeting the proficiency standard have increased substantially across all four content areas over the five-year period. These changes in CAPT performance are among the largest in the state, with CTHS Grade 10 students now performing at nearly the state average. In 2005, 99 percent of students in the technical high schools took the CAPT, compared with 92 percent in 2001. “I am especially delighted by the performance of students enrolled in our state technical high schools,” Commissioner Sternberg said. “This sustained improvement reflects the staff’s high expectations for participation and performance, the students’ expectations for themselves, their joint hard work to increase achievement, and ongoing improvements in curriculum and instruction.”

**Table 5: Percentages of Grade Ten Technical High School Students Meeting State Proficiency on the CAPT from 2001 through 2005**

Content Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Change 2001-05
Math	51.8	57.2	56.5	63.0	72.4	+20.6
Science	58.6	64.1	65.8	73.8	79.9	+21.3
Reading	46.7	56.6	59.9	69.2	76.2	+29.5
Writing	58.4	59.0	66.9	80.8	80.0	+21.6

## **Achievement Gaps Among Subgroups**

The 2005 CAPT results show improvements in the participation of black, Hispanic and white Grade 10 students across the four content areas over the second generation of the CAPT. From 2001 to 2005, the participation rate for black students increased 15 percentage points to 89 percent; for Hispanic students, 17 percentage points to 85 percent; and for white students, 6 percentage points to 97 percent. The goal continues to be to reach participation rates of at least 95 percent for black and Hispanic students.

Table 6 identifies the percentage of students by race/ethnicity and eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch scoring at or above the proficient level from 2001 through 2005, and the change over the five-year period. These subgroups of students are distributed among all of the state's ERGs, but are mostly concentrated in ERGs H and I. In mathematics, science, reading and writing, the percentage of black students meeting the state's proficiency standards increased by an average of 4 percentage points across the four content areas, compared with about 2.4 percentage points for Hispanic students and about 1.8 percentage points for white students. From 2004 to 2005 the percentage of black and Hispanic students meeting the proficiency level increased in mathematics, science and reading at higher rates than those of their white counterparts, while all three groups declined in writing. "While there is still much work to be done so that all Connecticut students meet the proficiency level, the trend is promising," Dr. Sternberg said.

Table 6 also shows that the achievement of poor students increased at rates faster than those of students who are not poor. (Poverty status is identified by eligibility for free or reduced-priced lunch.) From 2001 to 2005, the percentage of Connecticut students eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch scoring at the proficient level on each of the four CAPT content area tests increased by an average of 3.8 percentage points, compared with an increase of 2.1 percentage points for non-eligible students. Participation by members of this subgroup increased dramatically during this time, with the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch taking the CAPT increasing from about 67 to 87 percent and remaining fairly stable for the last two test administrations. The percentage of non-eligible students participating increased from about 89 to 96 percent.

(Table 6 appears on Page 8.)

**Table 6: Percentage of Grade 10 Subgroups Meeting State Proficiency  
On the CAPT from 2001 through 2005**

Subgroup	Content Area	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Change 2001-05
Black	Math	40.6	42.2	39.3	42.0	44.5	+3.9
	Science	50.6	50.6	51.6	52.3	56.0	+5.4
	Reading	51.2	54.2	53.1	54.4	55.6	+4.4
	Writing	61.6	56.4	61.8	65.1	64.0	+2.4
Hispanic	Math	47.1	45.8	42.1	46.1	46.8	-0.3
	Science	54.1	50.4	51.9	53.8	57.3	+3.2
	Reading	51.3	54.0	50.9	54.6	56.3	+5.0
	Writing	59.5	55.3	57.5	64.3	61.2	+1.7
White	Math	85.7	86.6	84.1	86.3	85.9	+0.2
	Science	89.2	89.3	89.5	90.6	91.6	+2.4
	Reading	84.8	85.7	85.6	86.7	87.5	+2.7
	Writing	87.2	86.2	87.2	90.5	89.2	+2.0
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch	Math	45.3	46.8	42.4	48.3	47.7	+2.4
	Science	52.6	51.5	52.0	56.7	57.9	+5.3
	Reading	49.9	52.8	50.5	55.5	55.0	+5.1
	Writing	59.3	55.0	57.9	65.1	61.8	+2.5
Non-eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch	Math	82.0	82.4	80.9	82.3	82.5	+0.5
	Science	86.2	85.2	86.9	87.0	88.7	+2.5
	Reading	82.3	83.1	83.6	83.9	85.4	+3.1
	Writing	85.3	83.7	85.8	88.4	87.6	+2.3

For more comprehensive information on statewide, ERG, district and subgroup results on the 2005 CAPT, go to [www.captreports.com](http://www.captreports.com).

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***Editor's Note:***

**Definition of ERGs**

To assist in reporting and analyzing school district data, the State Department of Education developed Education Reference Groups (ERGs), which are designed to compare groups of districts that have similar characteristics. ERGs are used in Department reports to place district resources and district-level student achievement into perspective. ERGs were first developed using 1980 Census data and were updated in 1996 when 1990 Census data were available and analyzed. The state's 166 school districts and three academies have been divided into nine groups, based on socioeconomic status, indicators of need and enrollment. Because both the socioeconomic status and needs of people in neighborhoods or schools within a district may vary significantly, ERGs are used only to compare data which are aggregated to the district level.

In addition to the data elements from the 1990 Census, the State Department of Education used characteristics of children attending public schools and their families in assigning towns to ERGs. Three of the data elements used (median family income, percentage of children with at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or higher, and percentage of children's parents holding jobs in executive, managerial or professional occupations) are measures of socioeconomic status. Three others (percentage of children living in families with a single parent or in nonfamily households, school-age children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children in 1994 as a percentage of children enrolled public schools, and percentage of children whose families speak a language other than English at home) are indicators of need. Enrollment in the district in 1994 was divided into 10 groups (deciles) and given half weight in the analysis. Revised ERGs based on the 2000 Census should be available by fall 2005.