

Testing, Proficiency, and College-Entrance Efforts

TerraNova Examinations

Nevada students in grades four, eight, and ten are assessed in reading, language, mathematics, and science using the TerraNova (CCTB/McGraw-Hill), a norm-referenced examination.¹ See Notes section for discussion of the exam. The scores show:

- ❖ At the fourth-grade level, Nevada students performed at the national 50th percentile in reading, scored above the national average in language and math, and scored below the average in science.
- ❖ At the eighth-grade level, Nevada students performed above the national 50th percentile in reading, language, and math; but scored below the national average in science.
- ❖ At the tenth-grade level, Nevada students performed above the national average in all four areas.

TerraNova National Percentile Ranks for Nevada Students Grades 4, 8, and 10: Fall 2000

Grade	Reading	Language	Math	Science
Grade 4	50	57	57	47
Grade 8	51	52	52	48
Grade 10	56	57	60	58

Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2000.

High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE)

Clark School District had the largest percentage (7.3) of high school students who were denied diplomas for failing the HSPE, followed by Churchill and Washoe counties (4.8 and 4.0 percents, respectively). The remaining school districts had 3

percent or less of their students fail the HSPE. Due to great class size variation among school districts comparisons are not necessarily reliable. See Notes section for discussion of HSPE.

College-Entrance Examinations

- ❖ The average verbal and math scores for the class of 2001 on the SAT were 509 and 515, respectively. The corresponding national average scores were 506 and 514.²
- ❖ The percentage of Nevada students taking the ACT and SAT college-entrance exams decreased over the 1999-2000 to 2000-2001 school years. For the 2000-2001 school year 39.0 percent of seniors took the ACT, down from 40.2 percent in 1999-2000. Similarly, 33.0 percent of seniors took the SAT in the 2000-2001 school year, down from 34.0 percent in the 1999-2000 school year.
- ❖ The class of 2001 earned a composite score of 21.3 on the ACT, which is slightly above the national average composite score of 21.0.³ The highest possible score is 36.

Nevada High School Performance on ACT and SAT*: 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001

ACT & SAT Performance	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Percent of seniors taking ACT*	43.7	40.2	39.0
ACT composite average	21.5	21.5	21.3
Percent of seniors taking SAT*	34.0	34.0	33.0
SAT verbal average	512	510	509
SAT math average	517	517	515

*ACT and SAT are college-entrance examinations. Includes the juniors who took the tests in the previous year.

Source: Nevada Department of Education, 1998-2001.

Testing, Proficiency, and College-Entrance Efforts Continued

Millennium Scholarships

In 1999, NRS 396.911 created the Millennium Scholarship trust fund, which was initiated by Governor Guinn and approved by Nevada's legislators. The trust fund is administered by the state treasurer. It is derived from the state's share of the settlement from tobacco companies over health-care costs related to smoking. The University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) Board of Regents adopted policy guidelines for the administration of the scholarship.

Nevada's high school students are eligible for the Millennium Scholarship if they meet the following conditions:⁴

- ❖ Graduation with a diploma from a public or private high school in Nevada after May 1, 2001;
- ❖ Completion of high school with at least a 3.0 grade-point average, on a 4.0 grading scale, using all high school credit-granting courses;
- ❖ Passing all areas of the Nevada HSPE;
- ❖ State of Nevada resident for at least two years of high school.

Each eligible student receives an award packet for identification as a potential Millennium Scholarship recipient.⁵ To receive the benefits, students must enroll in a public institution of higher learning in Nevada. However, receiving a Millennium Scholarship does not guarantee admission to the institutions, nor does it guarantee admission to all programs at the universities or community colleges.⁶

Two lifetime limitations on the Millennium Scholarship exist: (1) the maximum lifetime total award is \$10,000 (2) support is available only during the eight years following high school graduation.⁷

Number of Eligible Students for the Millennium Scholarship by County: Fall 2001

<i>School District</i>	<i>Eligible Students</i>
Carson City	265
Churchill	169
Clark	4,764
Douglas	193
Elko	266
Esmeralda*	NA
Eureka	14
Humboldt	72
Lander	37
Lincoln	51
Lyon	174
Mineral	13
Nye	123
Pershing	38
Storey	18
Washoe	1,583
White Pine	72
TOTAL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS	7,852
TOTAL NUMBER WHO USED SCHOLARSHIP	4,552

Note: NA = Not Applicable.

*Esmeralda County students attend neighboring Nye County high schools. The actual number of Esmeralda County students eligible for the Millennium Scholarship is not available.

Source: Office of the State Treasurer, Millennium Scholarship, 2001.