

## **Florida Statewide Participation in 10<sup>th</sup> Grade PSAT and PLAN Testing** **1999 - 2007**

Since 1999 the State of Florida has provided funds for 10<sup>th</sup> graders in all public schools to take either the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying TEST (PSAT) or the Preliminary ACT (PLAN). Tenth grade testing is promoted as a counseling and diagnostic tool, and a way to get students thinking about advanced coursework and college/career planning. Additionally, research has shown that students who take the PSAT tend to do better on the SAT than students who do not take the PSAT. Access to PSAT/PLAN testing fits into the larger context of providing more academic rigor for all students.

The following summarizes statewide PSAT and PLAN 10<sup>th</sup> grade testing participation trends for 1999 through 2007.

- Tenth grade enrollment in Florida public schools increased by 18% between 1999 and 2007. By contrast, during that period the number of PSAT test takers increased by 282% and the number of PLAN test takers by 316%.
- The PSAT increases were greatest among African Americans and Hispanics. The number of African-American PSAT test takers increased by 408% while the number of Hispanic test takers increased by 676%.
- The number of PLAN test takers among African Americans increased by 190%, the number among Hispanic increased by 119%, and the number of Asians by 632%
- The differences in the sizes of the PSAT and PLAN increases among racial-ethnic minorities may be due to the demographics in the districts that adopted PSAT as their 10<sup>th</sup> grade test and those that adopted PLAN. In 2007, 38 school districts were predominately PSAT districts and 35 were PLAN districts. Many of the PLAN districts are located in rural areas with fewer Hispanics. Enrollments in the PSAT districts accounted for 83% of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollments statewide, while PLAN districts accounted for 17%.<sup>1</sup>
- Overall, PSAT test takers as a percentage of statewide 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollments increased from 21% in 1999 to 67% in 2007. PLAN test takers increased from 4% of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment in 1999 to 13% in 2007.
- The percentages taking PSAT or PLAN are somewhat higher when considering PSAT and PLAN districts separately. In 2007, 78% of the 10<sup>th</sup> graders in PSAT districts took the PSAT, while 75% of the 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the PLAN districts took PLAN.
- PSAT and PLAN participation trends by school district and school may be found at <http://www.fldoe.org/evaluation/act-sat-ap.asp>.

---

<sup>1</sup> These numbers are based on the 67 county school districts plus the university-based lab schools, the School for the Deaf and the Blind, and Washington-Dozier.