



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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NEARLY 90 PERCENT OF MINNESOTA 9TH -GRADERS PASS GRADUATION WRITING TEST

Roseville – The Minnesota Department of Education today announced that nearly 90 percent of Minnesota 9th-graders passed the Writing Graduation-Required Assessments for Diploma (GRAD).

“We are pleased that Minnesota students have performed so well on the Writing GRAD,” Education Commissioner Alice Seagren said. “We hope this assessment provides educators with a starting point for improving every student’s writing skills.”

The Writing GRAD assessment is designed to measure whether or not a student has attained basic writing skills before graduation. Those skills include the ability to formulate and communicate a written message in English to an adult reader. Taking into account several factors, including composition, style, sentence formation, grammar, and mechanics and spelling, the assessments are graded as passing or not passing.

The Writing GRAD assessment consists of a student responding in written form to a prompt. The prompt on this year’s assessment was: *Think of a time you did something to help someone else. Explain why you chose to help and how the experience made you feel. Include details so that your reader will understand your actions and feelings.*

This is the second year that Minnesota 9th-graders took the Writing GRAD assessment, which replaced the writing Basic Skills Test (BST) beginning in 2007. The Writing GRAD uses the same administration and scoring procedures as the BST did during its tenure.

Students who do not pass the Writing GRAD assessment will have opportunities to retest during statewide testing windows. Please contact Christine Dufour at 651-582-8720 or visit www.education.state.mn.us for school and district level results.

(more)

2007 and 2008 GRAD Writing Results

<i>Student Group</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Amer. Indian</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>African-American</i>	<i>Free/Reduced Lunch</i>	<i>Special Ed.</i>	<i>Limited English Proficient</i>
2008	89.5	94	79	81	74	69	77	60	56
2007	90.8	95	81	84	77	70	80	63	57

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