EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PSAT/NMSQT 2000–01

Program Description

The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is the multiple choice national examination, which is administered during the month of October of each year by the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB). This examination serves as a qualifying examination for a number of scholarship programs, and as a practice for the Scholastic Assessment Test I (SAT I) college entrance examination. The PSAT/NMSQT also allows the participants entry into the College Search Service. The College Search Service is a direct selection and recruitment service for colleges who have targeted parameters, such as geographic location, area of interest, ethnic identification, and/or score range. This test was administered on 30 HISD campuses.

The PSAT/NMSQT consists of verbal, mathematics, and writing items measuring the abilities which are important skills needed for academic success in college. The verbal section of the PSAT/NMSQT includes three types of questions: sentence completion, analogy, and critical reading. The mathematics questions are presented using three formats: multiple choice, quantitative comparison, and student-produced response. The mathematics questions are designed for students who have had one year of high school algebra and geometry. The writing skills section is designed to measure the ability to express ideas effectively in standard written English, recognize faults in usage and sentence structure, and use language with sensitivity meaning.

This report provides information on participation in and performance on the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT by HISD students, both districtwide and by school. Specific questions addressed in this report were:

1. What was the level of participation by HISD students in the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT?
2. What were the mean scores of HISD students on the verbal, mathematics, and writing subtests of the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT?
3. How many HISD students qualified as National Merit finalists?
4. How has performance on the PSAT/NMSQT progressed from 1992–93 to 2000–01?
5. How did individual schools score on the Texas Scholars PSAT/NMSQT participation compared to the preview points in 1999–2000?

Findings

Districtwide

- A total of 6,630 college bound HISD students participated in the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT testing program. This represents an increase of 10.8% over the previous year.
- The overall mean scores for 2000–01 were 44.1 in verbal, 45.7 in mathematics, and 46.0 in writing.
- The overall mean score for the verbal section has remained steady at approximately 44.4, after increasing in 1994–95. Mathematics mean scores have also remained steady at approximately 45.5 since 1994–95.
- As of 1992–93, males have averaged higher scores (39.0–47.1) than females (38.2–46.0) on the verbal section. In the mathematics section, males have also consistently scored higher (46.3–48.6) than females (42.4–44.9).
- When examining ethnicity for all test takers, mathematics scores improved from 1999–2000 to

2000–01 for Asians and Hispanics. The verbal scores showed improvement for Whites.

Juniors

- The level of participation for HISD juniors increased from 37% in 1999–2000 to 43% in 2000–01.
- The overall participation for juniors was highest for H.P. Carter (>100%), DeBakey (98.8%), and HSPVA (81.4%).
- HISD's juniors achieved scores averaging 44.3 on the verbal section, 46.0 on the mathematics section, and 46.3 on the writing section of the PSAT/NMSQT.
- The mean verbal score ranged from 56.9 to 30.0, mathematics from 58.5 to 31.6, and writing from 57.9 to 35.4.
- When looking at ethnicity among juniors, the mean scores show an overall decline, especially in the verbal and mathematics sections.
- Four high schools, Bellaire, Debakey, HSPVA, and Lamar, had a mean score above 50 on all three sections. The mathematics and writing mean score for Washington was above 50; and their verbal mean score was 49.5.

Sophomores

- Participation for HISD sophomores increased from 20% to 23%.
- Middle College had the highest participation rate with 72.3%.
- The following scores were identified with sophomores: mathematics, 46.2; verbal, 44.6; and writing, 46.1.

National Merit Finalists

- The schools with the most National Merit Finalists were Bellaire (47), Lamar (11), DeBakey (5) and HSPVA (4).
- The overall number of National Merit Finalists decreased from 73 to 70. The number of students receiving a National Achievement Scholarship and a National Hispanic Recognition increased to 12 and 42, respectively.

Texas Scholars Accountability System

- Austin, Lee, Milby, and Sharpstown improved their participation in PSAT points. Lee received a 4.0 compared to a 1.0 from the preview points in 1999–2000.

Recommendations

Districtwide

- Continue to identify successful efforts to promote participation and performance among students, especially minorities. Share these approaches with other high schools.
- Emphasize the Texas Scholars Accountability System and its connection to the PSAT. This will help increase the participation rate of the PSAT as well as improve Texas Scholar ranking.

Principals

- Incorporate into school planning a systematic effort to increase participation and performance of students taking the PSAT.
- Leverage adoption of new diploma seal requirements and programs, such as Texas Scholars, to provide students with preparation to help them improve performance on the PSAT.
- Utilize existing district funds and resources from the CEEB to provide students with computers and software.

School Staff

- Promote awareness and encourage participation in the PSAT. Provide information to students and their parents about the benefits of the PSAT, including eligibility for scholarships and placement for college.
- Incorporate college preparation materials and activities in the high school curriculum to help students prepare for the PSAT and other college qualifying examinations. Include materials created by the College Board. Many can be found at: www.collegeboard.org.
- Schedule time for students to take practice versions of the PSAT during school hours.

PSAT/NMSQT
2000–01

Purpose: *To present the results of the October 2000 administration of the PSAT/NMSQT for HISD students.*

Design: *Descriptive*

Population*: 6,630 students in HISD who took the PSAT/NMSQT during the October 2000 administration.*

Methods: *Descriptive analyses*

Findings: *Overall participation increased 10.8% compared to 1999–2000. The percentage of juniors and sophomores participating in the PSAT/NMSQT increased to 43% and 23%, respectively. Juniors averaged a score of 44.3 on the verbal section, 46.0 on the mathematics section, and 46.3 on the writing section. Junior participation rates for individual schools ranged from 7.6% to >100.0%.*

Conclusions: *HISD has greatly improved the participation rate on the PSAT. Aggressive efforts on the districtwide level to identify successful efforts that promote participation and performance will inform other high schools of strategies to take. Principals need to incorporate systematic efforts into school planning, leverage the importance of the Texas Scholars Accountability System, and provide students with computers and PSAT software in order to increase participation and performance within their high school. Promotion of the benefits of the PSAT, incorporation of college preparation materials into high school curriculum, and scheduled practice test time will promote awareness and encourage participation in the PSAT.*

Introduction

Program Description

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is a national examination administered in the fall of each year by the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB). One function of the PSAT/NMSQT is to serve as preparation for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), a college admissions examination generally taken later in the junior year or early in the senior year of high school. The PSAT is typically taken in a student's junior year, although some first take the exam in their sophomore year.

The PSAT/NMSQT is also a qualifying examination for many of the scholarship programs sponsored by corporations, colleges, universities, and other organizations, including National Merit scholarships. The top 15,000 scorers nationwide are identified as semifinalists for the National Merit Scholarship. To qualify as a finalist for the award, a student must be endorsed and recommended by the school principal, must confirm the NMSQT performance on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) during the junior year in high school, and must submit an application that gives detailed information about their accomplishments, personal interests, and educational goals.

In addition to the National Merit Scholarship winners, other specific recognition is given to high-scoring Hispanic students through the National Hispanic Scholar Program, and to high scoring African-American students through the National Achievement Program for Outstanding Negro Students. All of the achievement scholarship winners are considered to have the greatest potential for future academic success.

Another important benefit for students of the PSAT/NMSQT is the College Search Service, which is operated by the Educational Testing Service. Approxi-

mately, 90% of the students taking the PSAT/NMSQT register to participate in this search service. Colleges and universities obtain the names and addresses of the tested students who meet specific parameters set by the colleges, such as geographic location, areas of major interest, and test score range. The colleges then directly contact the students with recruitment information and materials. As a result, the test has come to serve as a selection process for obtaining and bringing the prospective students to the attention of colleges and universities.

The PSAT/NMSQT consists of 52 verbal, 40 mathematics and 39 writing items. The verbal sections of the PSAT/NMSQT include three types of questions: sentence completion, analogy, and critical reading. The sentence completion questions measure the ability to recognize logical relationships between a pair of words and to recognize logical relationships between parts of a sentence. The analogy questions test the ability of a student to see the relationship between a pair of words and to recognize the similar or parallel relationship in another pair of words. The critical reading questions include reading selections from social sciences, natural sciences, and the humanities. The mathematics questions are presented in three formats: multiple choice, quantitative comparison, and student-produced response. The questions are designed for students who have had one year of high school algebra and geometry. The writing section questions are designed to measure the ability to express ideas effectively in standard written English, to recognize faults in usage and structure, and to use language with sensitivity meaning.

Administration

The PSAT/NMSQT is a 2-1/2 hour test. The verbal questions are presented in two 30 minute sections. The mathematics questions are also presented in two 30 minute sections for a total of two hours. Then, the students are allowed 30 minutes for the completion of the writing section. The students are permitted to bring and use calculators. The high schools administer the PSAT/NMSQT on their individual campuses. Each school selects one of two alternative test dates, such as a weekday or a Saturday, on which to test their students. A student who is unable to be tested on the day his or her school selects may be tested on the alternative date at another test site. Although the two testing dates use different versions of the examination, the tests have been equated by the CEEB so that the two versions of the test are equivalent.

Scoring

Three scaled scores are computed for each student: a verbal score, a mathematics score, and a writing score. Each score ranges from 20 to 80; these numbers are analogous to the scaled scores of 200 to 800 generated by the SAT–1. Nationally, the average verbal, mathematics, and writing scores are nearing the midpoint (50) of the 20 to 80 scale. Beginning with the 1994–95 administration, the verbal and mathematics scales were recentered to make the two scores comparable.

An additional score is calculated for determining eligibility for National Merit recognition: the Selection Index (SI), computed by adding the verbal, the mathematics, and the writing scores. The selection index scores are not represented in this report.

Texas Scholars Program

During the 2000–01 school year, HISD implemented the Texas Scholars Program. The Scholars Accountability System gives secondary schools a rating based on two components:

1. the percent of graduates receiving either a Recommended High School Program diploma or a Distinguished High School Program diploma and;

2. the percent of juniors taking the PSAT.

The ratings a school can achieve from highest to lowest are platinum, gold, silver, and bronze. HISD utilized 1999–2000 data in order to provide schools with a preview rating for planning purposes for the future implementation of this accountability system for the 2000–01 school year.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to describe the performance and participation of HISD students on the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT compared to previous years. The following research question were answered:

1. What was the level of participation by HISD students in the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT?

2. What were the mean scores of HISD students on the verbal, mathematics, and writing subtests of the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT?

3. How many HISD students qualified as National Merit Scholarship finalists?

4. How has performance in the PSAT/NMSQT progressed from 1992–93 to 2000–01?

5. How did individual schools score on the Texas Scholars PSAT/NMSQT participation compared to the preview points in 1999–2000?

Methods

Participants

A record 6,630 college bound students participated in the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT testing program (27 seniors, 3,945 juniors, 2,387 sophomores, and 271 freshmen). Thirty schools again participated in the PSAT/NMSQT compared to last year. This number includes the two new high schools: Chavez and Westside.

Data Analysis

Test performance, along with demographic information supplied by the students, was reported to HISD electronically by the CEEB via diskettes. These data, together with enrollment data from the Schools Administrative Student Information (SASI) System, were compiled for analysis. Participation rates were calculated by dividing the number of students tested by the PEIMS snapshot of fall enrollment for the same group. Participation rates for sophomores and juniors were calculated across the district and by school. The gender and ethnic composition of the junior class 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT participation group were calculated and compared with the composition of the 1999–2000 HISD junior class as a whole.

Current mean verbal, mathematics, and writing scores for juniors were calculated by school, as well as by gender and ethnicity district wide. Longitudinal analysis of mean scores were performed on previously reported PSAT/NMSQT data from 1992–93 to 2000–01.

The National Merit Scholarship list by school was provided by the administrative guidance counselor for the PSAT/NMSQT. Texas Scholar preview points were extracted from "Preview of 1999–2000 Status on HISD Scholars Accountability System" and compared to PSAT/NMSQT data for 2000–01.

Results

What was the level of participation by HISD students in the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT?

Table 1: PSAT Participation by Juniors and Sophomores

		00–01	99–00	98–99	97–98
Juniors	n	3,945	3,492	3,534	3,327
	%	43	37	37	35
Sophomores	n	2,387	2,051	2,147	2,179
	%	23	20	16	16

Districtwide Participation

The junior year is the year when participation qualifies a student for the National Merit Scholarship and for other recognition. Many students take the exam in their sophomore or even freshman year to prepare for the junior year testing. A total of 6,630 HISD students participated in the 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT. These students included 27 seniors, 3,945 juniors, 2,387 sophomores, and 271 freshmen. This represents an overall increase of 712 students from the 2000–01 school year.

Table 1 shows the numbers and rates of participation for HISD juniors and sophomores in 1997–98 through 2000–01. The level of participation for juniors increased to 43% compared to 37% in 1999–2000. HISD sophomores improved in their participation by 3%.

Participation and Gender/Ethnicity

Table 2 presents the gender and ethnic composition of the HISD 1999–2000 and 2000–01 junior class PSAT/NMSQT participation group. The number of juniors taking the test rose substantially from 3,492 to 3,945. This represents a 13.0% increase from last school year. Females continued to participate in a greater capacity than males (59.3% and 40.7%, respectively). The percentage of test-takers who were Hispanic continued to increase with 37.9% participat-

Table 2: Gender and Ethnic Composition of HISD Juniors PSAT/NMSQT

Junior Class	Total	Female	Male	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	White
2000	3,945							
Percent of Test-Takers	—	59.3	40.7	30.0	7.4	37.9	<1.0	21.7
Percent of Eligibles	43.2	48.7	37.0	39.1	71.1	35.1	50.0	59.6
1999	3,492							
Percent of Test-Takers	—	58.5	41.5	31.6	7.8	36.5	<1.0	22.5

ing in 2000–01. However, African Americans, Asians, and Whites all decreased compared to the 1999–2000 school year.

For the 2000–01 administration, the females who took the PSAT/NMSQT represented 48.7% of the females eligible to take the test in the junior class. Likewise, the males represented 37.0% of those junior males eligible to test. Participation among the ethnic groups ranged from 71.1% for Asian students to 35.1% for Hispanic students. The increase overall is evident with all eligibles in every category of gender and ethnicity, except Native American.

Participation by Schools

A total of 30 HISD high schools had students taking the 2000–01 PSAT. **Table 3** presents the percentages of the junior and sophomore classes from each participating HISD high school who took part in the PSAT/NMSQT.

There was considerable variation among HISD schools in the percentage of college-bound juniors who took the PSAT. The percentage was highest for H.P. Carter (>100.0%), DeBakey High School (98.8%) and HSPVA (81.4%). The percentage over 100% for H.P.Carter can be explained with the change in enrollment from the PEIMS snapshot to the administering of the PSAT/NMSQT. In regards to sophomores, Bellaire (55.3%) and Middle College (72.3%) had the highest participation.

What were the mean scores of HISD students on the verbal, mathematics, and writing subjects of the PSAT?

PSAT Scores by School

Every HISD high school participating in the SAT program also entered students in the PSAT/NMSQT testing program. **Table 4** presents the junior 2000–01 PSAT/NMSQT mean verbal, mathematics, and writing scores by school.

Table 3: Participation of Junior and Sophomores in the PSAT: 2000–01

School	% of Juniors	% of Sophomores
Austin	49.1	16.7
Bellaire	65.0	55.3
H.P. Carter	>100.0	2.9
CLC	7.6	4.8
Chavez	29.8	7.3
Davis	14.4	4.0
DeBakey	98.8	50.3
Furr	25.9	3.8
Sam Houston	46.5	23.9
HSPVA	81.4	48.3
Jones	59.8	9.4
Jordan	46.0	13.7
Kashmere	39.9	24.7
Lamar	69.7	34.6
HSLECJ	50.6	35.8
Lee	77.0	5.2
Madison	36.0	14.7
Middle College	58.8	72.3
Milby	27.3	19.7
Reagan	22.5	9.4
Scarborough	21.7	20.2
Sharpstown	40.3	14.2
Sterling	42.9	14.6
Waltrip	26.0	26.2
Washington	41.1	41.7
Westbury	27.5	17.6
Westside	39.9	34.2
Wheatley	15.3	23.3
Worthing	34.3	8.2
Yates	49.4	43.2

For the 2000–01 test administration, the mean verbal score ranged from 56.9 for Bellaire High School to 30.0 for Carter Career Center. Mathematics scores

Table 4: PSAT Mean Verbal, Math, and Writing Scores by School for HISD Juniors

	2000–01 Scores				1999–2000 Scores				Difference			
School	n	Verbal	Math	Writing	n	Verbal	Math	Writing	n	Verbal	Math	Writing
Austin	209	36.0	38.7	39.3	108	36.1	40.3	38.8	101	-0.1	-1.6	0.5
Bellaire	476	56.9	58.5	57.9	431	55.5	57.3	58.6	45	1.4	1.2	-0.7
H.P. Carter	21	30.0	31.6	35.4	20	33.0	34.1	37.2	1	-3.0	-2.5	-1.8
CLC	11	34.0	36.4	40.4	9	34.1	31.1	37.2	2	-0.1	5.3	3.2
Chavez	59	37.9	40.6	41.3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Davis	44	40.0	43.3	41.7	123	36.9	42.9	40.6	-79	3.1	0.4	1.1
DeBakey	159	55.1	58.0	55.7	207	54.5	56.0	56.4	-48	0.6	2.0	-0.7
Furr	65	36.3	37.7	40.5	81	37.7	38.0	42.1	-16	-1.4	-0.3	-1.6
Sam Houston	220	35.9	39.0	39.1	237	37.1	38.6	40.5	-17	-1.2	0.4	-1.4
HSPVA	140	56.5	54.8	57.6	152	54.7	52.5	57.3	-12	1.8	2.3	0.3
Jones	134	42.6	43.7	43.1	158	44.5	44.2	45.5	-24	-1.9	-0.5	-2.4
Jordan	121	38.6	41.2	41.3	73	38.3	41.2	41.2	48	0.3	0.0	0.1
Kashmere	63	37.9	39.6	40.6	75	41.6	43.4	43.7	-12	-3.7	-3.8	-3.1
Lamar	499	51.3	50.9	51.0	386	52.4	51.3	54.4	113	-1.1	-0.4	-3.4
HSLECJ	87	44.0	45.0	47.1	125	45.1	43.1	47.3	-38	-1.1	1.9	-0.2
Lee	302	34.2	36.8	39.6	141	45.6	44.9	48.3	161	-10.7	-8.1	-8.7
Madison	109	39.7	39.5	40.9	82	40.0	42.5	41.3	27	-0.3	-3.0	-0.4
Milby	162	40.6	45.5	43.3	140	40.6	43.3	44.1	22	0.0	2.2	-0.8
Middle College	20	42.4	41.9	43.1	14	36.6	37.5	38.3	6	5.8	4.4	4.8
Reagan	89	39.9	41.1	42.5	79	38.7	39.7	42.9	10	1.2	1.4	-0.4
Scarborough	43	45.8	45.0	46.6	77	44.6	45.1	45.8	-34	1.2	-0.1	0.8
Sharpstown	102	41.6	43.7	44.8	88	42.1	43.2	45.1	14	-0.5	0.5	-0.3
Sterling	111	39.3	39.9	40.8	102	39.3	41.4	41.0	9	0	-1.5	-0.2
Waltrip	94	45.9	44.7	47.6	92	44.4	43.3	48.2	2	1.5	1.4	-0.6
Washington	113	49.5	53.4	50.1	113	48.9	53.7	49.5	0	0.6	-0.3	0.6
Westbury	103	41.5	42.2	43.8	144	41.7	41.8	44.3	-41	-0.2	0.4	-0.5
Westside	114	46.4	47.8	46.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wheatley	20	34.0	38.1	36.7	34	33.8	40.4	37.5	-14	0.2	-2.3	-0.8
Worthing	128	38.3	42.8	43.1	111	39.7	42.6	42.6	17	-1.4	0.2	0.5
Yates	127	36.1	38.8	38.5	89	38.9	40.8	40.3	38	-2.8	-1.5	-1.8

ranged from 58.5 for Bellaire High School to 31.6 for Carter Career Center. Writing scores ranged from 57.9 for Bellaire High School to 35.4 for Carter Career Center.

Each subtest has a midpoint score of 50.0. Four high schools, Bellaire, DeBakey, HSPVA, and Lamar, had mean scores above 50 on all three subtests. Additionally, Washington High School had a mean mathematics score of 53.4 and a mean writing score of 50.1.

When compared to the previous school year, 11 schools witnessed a growth in their mean verbal scores, 14 schools increased their mean mathematics scores, and 9 schools increased their mean writing scores. Davis, HSPVA, and Middle College experienced an improvement in all three sections. Most notably, Middle College had a large increase in verbal, mathematics and writing with 5.8, 4.4, and 4.8, respectively. Finally, 16 schools improved their number of students who participated on the PSAT.

Performance and Gender/Ethnicity

PSAT scores by gender and for each ethnic group

Table 5: 1999–2000 and 2000–01 PSAT Verbal, Mathematics, and Writing Scores by Ethnicity and Gender of HISD Juniors.

	2000–2001				1999–2000			
Ethnicity	**n**	**Verbal**	**Math**	**Writing**	**n**	**Verbal**	**Math**	**Writing**
African-American	1,182	41.1	42.2	43.3	1,089	42.5	43.3	44.9
Asian	291	50.7	57.5	52.7	269	51.9	56.5	54.1
Hispanic	1,495	39.2	41.4	42.1	1,258	40.7	42.5	44.0
Native American	3	43.7	44.7	47.7	10	48.8	46.8	46.1
White	858	55.1	55.2	55.4	774	54.3	53.9	56.3
Other	60	48.7	48.8	50.2	47	48.1	47.8	48.7
No Response	56	42.3	42.3	44.2	45	48.3	48.5	48.7
Gender								
Female	2,339	44.0	44.9	46.7	2,039	44.5	45.1	48.1
Male	1,606	44.6	47.5	45.7	1,448	46.6	48.5	47.8
No Response	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	32.8	38.8	37.6

comprising the HISD junior student population are shown in **Table 5**.

The scores for females and males on the PSAT showed a decrease in all subjects. The disparity of scores between males and females in the mathematics and reading section diminished slightly. However, the difference in the writing section increased. Both genders also improved in participation.

When looking at ethnicity, Asians, Native Americans, White, and "Other" showed growth in at least one section. However, African Americans, Hispanics and the "No Response" category declined in every section for 2000–01 compared to 1999–2000. Finally, the overall participation in the PSAT shows an increase for all categories, except Native American.

How many HISD students qualified as National Merit finalists?

Table 6 presents the number of HISD seniors for the past two years who were National Merit Scholarship finalists based on the PSAT results from their junior

Table 6: National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test Finalists for HISD Seniors by Graduating Class

	National Merit Finalist		National Achievement		National Hispanic Recognition	
School	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**	**2001**	**2000**
Austin	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bellaire	47	40	3	1	10	4
Davis	0	0	0	0	0	2
DeBakey	5	3	5	3	8	11
HSPVA	5	4	1	0	5	2
Jones	0	2	2	0	1	1
Lamar	11	19	0	2	11	13
Law Enforcement	0	1	0	0	2	0
Lee	0	0	0	1	0	0
Milby	0	0	0	0	1	3
Waltrip	1	0	0	0	0	0
Washington	1	2	1	2	3	0
Westbury	0	2	0	0	0	0
Total	70	73	12	9	42	37

year. The number of National Merit Finalists declined compared to 1999–2000. However, the number of National Achievement and National Hispanic Recognition Finalists increased.

For the National Merit Scholarship, Bellaire, DeBakey, HSPVA , and Waltrip showed improvement in the number of finalists compared to 1999–2000. Bellaire had the largest increase in National Merit finalists (from 40 to 47). Bellaire, DeBakey, HSPVA, and Jones showed a rise in the number of National Achievement Scholarships. Finally, for the National Hispanic Recognition Scholarship, Bellaire, HSPVA, HSLECJ, and Washington improved in the number of students awarded this honor. Most notably, Bellaire went from four recipients in 1999–2000 to 10 recipients in 2000–01.

How has performance in the PSAT/NMSQT progressed from 1992–93 to 2000–01?

Since 1992–93, the mean scores overall have also risen steadily. **Table 7** exhibits that after the test was recentered in 1994–95, verbal scores took a large jump from 38.5 to 46.4. From that time on, the verbal mean scores declined slightly but have remained steady since 1996–97. This table also shows that the mathematics mean scores have remained steady since 1994–95, with an average score of 45.0.

When examining gender in Table 7, the disparity between male and female mathematics mean scores has declined since last year; however, males continue to score higher. In addition, the difference in genders when comparing verbal mean scores has decreased from last year. Writing scores were not examined since this section was not implemented until 1997–98.

The comparison of ethnicity shows that differences between scores are not consistent. Table 7 also presents that there is a great disparity in mean mathematics scores between the higher scoring Asians and Whites and the lower scoring African Americans and Hispanics. However, between African Americans and Hispanics, mean scores tend to crisscross with very close scores. Asians continue to perform higher than every other ethnicity in mathematics. The difference between the two groups is at an all time high in mathematics mean scores. In addition, Whites also continue to score higher on the verbal section than Asians.

How did individual schools score on the Texas Scholars PSAT/NMSQT participation compared to the preview points in 1999–2000?

Table 8 compares the points received for the Texas Scholars Accountability System for participating in the PSAT during the 1999–2000 and 2000–01 administrations. Austin, Lee, Milby, and Sharpstown increased their levels of junior participation and therefore their points. Most notably, Lee improved their point

Table 7: 1992-1993 to 1999-2000 PSAT Mathematics and Verbal Mean Scores

Mathematics Mean Scores: 1992–1993 to 2000–01

Year	Overall	Female	Male	Asian	Hispanic	African American	White
92–93	44.3	42.4	46.7	51.9	40.1	39.0	48.8
93–94	44.0	42.3	46.6	52.5	39.9	38.7	49.7
94–95	46.1	44.4	48.6	54.3	41.8	41.1	52.1
95–96	45.8	44.0	48.4	54.4	41.3	41.3	52.3
96–97	45.3	44.1	46.9	53.7	41.1	41.7	52.1
97–98	44.8	43.7	46.3	53.4	41.2	40.6	52.5
98–99	44.9	43.6	46.8	52.4	41.5	41.1	52.0
99–00	45.8	44.5	47.7	55.1	41.2	42.0	53.0
00–01	45.7	44.6	47.4	56.4	41.6	41.5	53.6

Verbal Mean Scores: 1992–1993 to 2000–01

Year	Overall	Female	Male	Asian	Hispanic	African American	White
92–93	38.5	38.2	39.0	40.4	33.9	34.8	44.0
93–94	38.5	38.3	39.0	41.7	34.4	34.5	44.7
94–95	46.4	46.0	47.1	49.6	42.0	42.4	53.1
95–96	45.3	44.6	46.3	49.3	40.8	42.0	52.1
96–97	44.4	44.2	44.8	48.5	39.8	41.4	52.6
97–98	44.8	44.5	45.2	48.7	41.4	41.2	53.1
98–99	43.9	43.5	44.5	46.9	40.2	41.4	51.5
99–00	44.6	44.0	45.6	50.4	40.2	41.1	53.5
00–01	44.1	43.7	44.6	49.5	39.5	40.4	53.6

rating from 1.0 to 4.0. Davis, Eastwood, Middle College, Scarborough, and Wheatley all decreased in points awarded by one.

Discussion

Overall participation in the PSAT has improved at every grade level. This increase can be explained by the implementation of the Texas Scholars Accountability System. The influx in participation, however, did not notably change the percentages for the genders and ethnicity. When looking at the individual school level, the levels of participation showed slight increases and decreases with the exception of Lee and Lamar, whose participation levels increased by over a hundred students. These results indicated an overall change in participation but no noticeable change among gender and ethnicity.

Mean scores for the district went slightly down which was expected with such an increase in participation. As participation increases, less academically strong students are more likely to participate in the testing, which results in slightly lower scores. As the increase in participation becomes steady, students should become more acclimated to the PSAT and scores should improve.

The mean scores of males and females both decreased slightly, which was indicative of the overall mean scores. The results, however, were mixed when examining ethnicity. The disparity between Asians and Whites compared to African Americans and Hispanics continues to exist. Schools should continue to promote the PSAT to all students, with emphasis on African Americans and Hispanics. Continued participation and familiarity in the PSAT for all groups will improve scores and students' chances to be accepted in colleges and receive scholarships.

Table 8: PSAT Points Awarded for Texas Scholars Accountability System by School

School	1999–2000*	2000–01	Difference
Austin	1.0	2.0	1.0
Bellaire	3.0	3.0	0.0
Chavez	-	2.0	N/A
Davis	2.0	1.0	-1.0
DeBakey	4.0	4.0	0.0
Eastwood	1.0	0.0	-1.0
Furr	2.0	2.0	0.0
HSPVA	4.0	4.0	0.0
Houston	2.0	2.0	0.0
Jones	3.0	3.0	0.0
Jordan	2.0	2.0	0.0
Kashmere	2.0	2.0	0.0
Lamar	3.0	3.0	0.0
Law Enforcement	3.0	3.0	0.0
Lee	1.0	4.0	3.0
Madison	2.0	2.0	0.0
Middle College	4.0	3.0	-1.0
Milby	1.0	2.0	1.0
Reagan	1.0	1.0	0.0
Scarborough	2.0	1.0	-1.0
Sharpstown	1.0	2.0	1.0
Sterling	2.0	2.0	0.0
Waltrip	2.0	2.0	0.0
Washington	2.0	2.0	0.0
Westbury	2.0	2.0	0.0
Westside	-	2.0	N/A
Wheatley	2.0	1.0	-1.0
Worthing	2.0	2.0	0.0

* Preview Points

Recommendations

Districtwide

- Continue to identify successful efforts to promote participation and performance among students, especially minorities. Share these approaches with other high schools.

- Emphasize the Texas Scholars Accountability System and its connection to the PSAT. This will help increase the participation of the PSAT as well as improve Texas Scholar ranking.

Principals

- Incorporate into school planning a systematic effort to increase participation and performance of students taking the PSAT.

- Leverage adoption of new diploma seal requirements and programs, such as Texas Scholars, to provide students with preparation to help them improve performance on the PSAT.

- Utilize existing district funds and resources from the CEEB to provide students with computers and software.

School Staff

- Promote awareness and encourage participation in the PSAT. Provide information to students and their parents about the benefits of the PSAT, including eligibility for scholarships and placement for college.

- Incorporate college preparation materials and activities in the high school curriculum to help students prepare for the PSAT and other college qualifying examinations. Include materials created by the College Board. They can be found at: www.collegeboard.org.
- Schedule time for students to take practice versions of the PSAT during school hours.