



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**LITTLE ROCK:** Results from the state's 2010 End-of-Course exams show gains over last year in algebra I and geometry achievement levels for public school students, but they reveal a decline in biology scores. All scores for this and previous years are included in the attached charts.

The algebra I scores take on added significance this year as the 2009-2010 winter and spring administrations of the exams for ninth-graders and younger are the first to fall under the state's "high stakes" testing for graduation requirements.

Of the 353 seventh-, eighth- and ninth-grader who took the exam in January, 91.5 percent passed, while 93 percent of the 33,093 students in those grades taking the April administration of the exam passed. Those who failed their first try will have two opportunities to undergo remediation and then retake the exam. If they still fail after three attempts, an alternative form of remediation will be made available to them and then they will take an alternative, computer-based exam.

The algebra I and geometry End-of-Course exams are used in the calculations to identify schools in need of improvement under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind). A score of "proficient" – which is higher than a score of "pass" -- must be attained under the federal requirements.

- On the algebra I End-of-Course Exam, 73 percent scored proficient or higher in January and 76 percent did so in April
- On geometry, 76 percent scored proficient or higher in January and 69 percent did in April
- On biology, 40 percent scored proficient or higher in January and 36 percent did in April.

"The good news is more than nine out of ten students passed this test the first time around," said Tom W. Kimbrell, Arkansas commissioner of education, "but the great news is that three out of four are mastering algebra at a proficient level."

*The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.*