# State of Florida

# Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook

**for State Grants under Title IX, Part C, Section 9302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Public Law 107-110)**

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**REVISED: March 26, 2003**
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**U. S. Department of Education**
**Office of Elementary and Secondary Education**
**Washington, D.C. 20202**

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# PART I: Summary of Required Elements for State Accountability Systems

## Instructions

The following chart is an overview of States' implementation of the critical elements required for approval of their State accountability systems. States must provide detailed implementation information for each of these elements in Part II of this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

For each of the elements listed in the following chart, States should indicate the current implementation status in their State using the following legend:

**F:** State has a final policy, approved by all the required entities in the State (e.g., State Board of Education, State Legislature), for implementing this element in its accountability system.

**P:** State has a proposed policy for implementing this element in its accountability system, but must still receive approval by required entities in the State (e.g., State Board of Education, State Legislature).

**W:** State is still working on formulating a policy to implement this element in its accountability system.

**Summary of Implementation Status for Required Elements of State Accountability Systems**

| Status | | State Accountability System Element |
|---|---|---|
| **Principle 1: All Schools** | | |
| F | 1.1 | Accountability system includes *all schools and districts in the state*. |
| F | 1.2 | Accountability system holds *all schools to the same criteria*. |
| F | 1.3 | Accountability system incorporates the *academic achievement standards*. |
| F | 1.4 | Accountability system provides *information in a timely manner*. |
| F | 1.5 | Accountability system includes *report cards*. |
| F | 1.6 | Accountability system includes *rewards and sanctions*. |
| **Principle 2: All Students** | | |
| F | 2.1 | The accountability system includes *all students* |
| F | 2.2 | The accountability system has a consistent definition of *full academic year*. |
| F | 2.3 | The accountability system properly includes *mobile students*. |
| **Principle 3: Method of AYP Determinations** | | |
| F | 3.1 | Accountability system expects *all student subgroups, public schools, and LEAs to reach proficiency by 2013-14*. |
| F | 3.2 | Accountability system has a method for determining whether *student subgroups, public schools, and LEAs made adequate yearly progress.* |
| F | 3.2a | Accountability system establishes a *starting point*. |
| F | 3.2b | Accountability system establishes *statewide annual measurable objectives*. |
| F | 3.2c | Accountability system establishes *intermediate goals*. |
| **Principle 4: Annual Decisions** | | |
| F | 4.1 | The accountability system *determines annually the progress* of schools and districts. |

**STATUS Legend:**
**F** – Final state policy
**P** – Proposed policy, awaiting State approval
**W** – Working to formulate policy

**Principle 5: Subgroup Accountability**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F | 5.1 | The accountability system *includes all the required student subgroups*. |
| F | 5.2 | The accountability system holds *schools and LEAs accountable for the progress of student subgroups*. |
| F | 5.3 | The accountability system includes *students with disabilities*. |
| F | 5.4 | The accountability system includes *limited English proficient students*. |
| F | 5.5 | The State has determined the minimum number of students sufficient to yield statistically reliable information for each purpose for which disaggregated data are used. |
| F | 5.6 | The State has strategies to protect the privacy of individual students in reporting achievement results and in determining whether schools and LEAs are making adequate yearly progress on the basis of disaggregated subgroups. |

**Principle 6: Based on Academic Assessments**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F | 6.1 | Accountability system is based *primarily on academic assessments*. |

**Principle 7: Additional Indicators**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F | 7.1 | Accountability system includes *graduation rate for high school*s. |
| F | 7.2 | Accountability system includes an *additional academic indicator for elementary and middle school*s. |
| F | 7.3 | Additional indicators are valid and reliable. |

**Principle 8: Separate Decisions for Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F | 8.1 | Accountability system holds students, schools and districts separately accountable for *reading/language arts* and *mathematics*. |

**Principle 9: System Validity and Reliability**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F | 9.1 | Accountability system produces *reliable decisions*. |
| F | 9.2 | Accountability system produces *valid decisions*. |
| F | 9.3 | State has a plan for addressing *changes in assessment and student population*. |

**Principle 10: Participation Rate**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F | 10.1 | Accountability system has a means for calculating the *rate of participation* in the statewide assessment. |
| F | 10.2 | Accountability system has a means for *applying the 95% assessment criteria to student subgroups and small schools.* |

**STATUS Legend:**

F – Final policy
P – Proposed Policy, awaiting State approval
W– Working to formulate policy

# PART II: State Response and Activities for Meeting State Accountability System Requirements

## Instructions

In Part II of this Workbook, States are to provide detailed information for each of the critical elements required for State accountability systems. States should answer the questions asked about each of the critical elements in the State's accountability system. States that do not have final approval for any of these elements or that have not finalized a decision on these elements by January 31, 2003, should, when completing this section of the Workbook, indicate the status of each element that is not yet official State policy and provide the anticipated date by which the proposed policy will become effective. In each of these cases, States must include a timeline of steps to complete to ensure that such elements are in place by May 1, 2003, and implemented during the 2002-2003 school year. By no later than May 1, 2003, States must submit to the Department final information for all sections of the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

## PRINCIPLE 1. A single statewide Accountability System applied to all public schools and LEAs.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 How does the State Accountability System include every public school and LEA in the State? | Every public school and LEA is required to make adequate yearly progress and is included in the State Accountability System.<br><br>State has a definition of "public school" and "LEA" for AYP accountability purposes.<br>• The State Accountability System produces AYP decisions for all public schools, including public schools with variant grade configurations (e.g., K-12), public schools that serve special populations (e.g., alternative public schools, juvenile institutions, state public schools for the blind) and public charter schools. It also holds accountable public schools with no grades assessed (e.g., K-2). | A public school or LEA is not required to make adequate yearly progress and is not included in the State Accountability System.<br><br>State policy systematically excludes certain public schools and/or LEAs. |

| STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
| --- |
| The State of Florida is submitting a comprehensive and unified plan for accountability that includes all required aspects of NCLB and that relies on and compliments current state assessment and accountability provisions initiated by Governor Jeb Bush and the Florida Legislature. All public schools in the state will be included in the NCLB accountability program. Florida statutes do not differentiate between public schools for purposes of accountability.<br><br>Florida will adopt a single statewide accountability system for all public schools that includes multiple measures. These are: adequate yearly progress as defined by federal law, school grades as defined by state law, individual student progress towards annual learning targets to reach proficiency, and a return on investment measure that links dollars spent to student achievement. All schools will be rated on each of these measures. Schools meeting all standards will be designated as highly effective and efficient.<br><br>Each of these elements informs parents, educators, and the community about different facets of a school's performance. No one element, on its own, can provide a complete picture. If all four elements measured the same performance indicators in the same way, there would be no need for these unique elements. Florida's accountability system has been carefully constructed to ensure that we consider all aspects of a school's performance and therefore, there may be situations in which a school performs poorly in one or more of the elements but demonstrates higher performance in the others. We are designing a comprehensive public information campaign to ensure that all constituents, including parents, understand the four elements of Florida's accountability system and what the data derived from each element represent.<br><br>Some schools do not contain grade levels presently assessed by the existing statewide assessment program, such as a K-2 school. In these cases, the school will be assigned the AYP classification of the school to which it sends students.<br><br>Of Florida's 3,309 schools, 210 or 6.3% have less than 30 students. Schools with highly mobile populations such as juvenile justice facilities, teen parent programs, and hospital/homebound programs will not receive an AYP status designation. Students' performance and participation rates will be rolled up to the district and/or state level. This accounts for approximately 98 of the 210 schools with a population of less than 30 students. The remaining 112 schools including all elementary, middle, high schools, charter schools, exceptional student education, and vocational schools will receive an AYP designation so long as their student |

population is larger than 10. While there are a few "schools" with student populations of less than 10 in the testing age range, these consist primarily of special situations in which one or more students have unique placements based on individual circumstances, e.g., an adult education center or a county jail. Again, these students' performance and participation rates will roll up to the district and/or state levels. The SEA will also begin monitoring more closely the existence of separate schools with exceptionally small numbers of students to ensure that it is necessary for such small schools to exist as separate entities.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Sections 1000.03 and 1000.04, F.S. for definitions of public education, public schools, and governance thereof.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.2 How are all public schools and LEAs held to the same criteria when making an AYP determination? | All public schools and LEAs are systematically judged on the basis of the same criteria when making an AYP determination.<br><br>If applicable, the AYP definition is integrated into the State Accountability System. | Some public schools and LEAs are systematically judged on the basis of alternate criteria when making an AYP determination. |
| **STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS** | | |
| All public schools will be judged according to the requirements of NCLB when making AYP decisions, subject to limitations of cell size discussed elsewhere. The AYP decisions will be made on the basis of "status comparisons" required in law.<br><br>Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendices A and E attached hereto. | | |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.3 Does the State have, at a minimum, a definition of *basic*, *proficient* and *advanced* student achievement levels in reading/language arts and mathematics? | State has defined three levels of student achievement: *basic*, *proficient* and *advanced*.[1]<br><br>Student achievement levels of *proficient* and *advanced* determine how well students are mastering the materials in the State's academic content standards; and the *basic* level of achievement provides complete information about the progress of lower-achieving students toward mastering the *proficient* and *advanced* levels. | Standards do not meet the legislated requirements. |

[1] System of State achievement standards will be reviewed by the Standards and Assessments Peer Review. The Accountability Peer Review will determine that achievement levels are used in determining AYP.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) uses five Achievement Levels, numbered 1-5 with 1 the lowest level and 5 the highest level. For purposes of NCLB implementation, Level 1 is "Below Basic," Level 2 is "Basic," Levels 3 and 4 are "Proficient," and Level 5 is "Advanced." FCAT results will continue to be reported with the original numbering system, but all NCLB reports will include references to the titles required in federal legislation.

## Specification of *NCLB* Achievement Standards

| FCAT Achievement Levels | No Child Left Behind Achievement Standards |
|---|---|
| 5 | Advanced |
| 3-4 | Proficient |
| 2 | Basic |
| 1 | Below Basic |

Definitions of FCAT Achievement Levels are as follows:

- Level 5: Performance at this level indicates that the student has success with the most challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A Level 5 student answers most of the test questions correctly, including the most challenging questions.
- Level 4: Performance at this level indicates that the student has success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A Level 4 student answers most of the questions correctly but may have only some success with questions that reflect the most challenging content.
- Level 3: Performance at this level indicates that the student has partial success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards but performance is inconsistent. A Level 3 student answers many of the questions correctly but is generally less successful with questions that are most challenging.
- Level 2: Performance at this level indicates that the student has limited success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.
- Level 1: Performance at this level indicates that the student has little success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.4 How does the State provide accountability and adequate yearly progress decisions and information in a timely manner | State provides decisions about adequate yearly progress in time for LEAs to implement the required provisions before the beginning of the next academic year.<br><br>State allows enough time to notify parents about public school choice or supplemental educational service options, time for parents to make an informed decision, and time to implement public school choice and supplemental educational services. | Timeline does not provide sufficient time for LEAs to fulfill their responsibilities before the beginning of the next academic year. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The FCAT is administered in late February and early March with test results available to schools prior to the end of the school term in May. The data are released in waves with the first release describing district and state summary data and the second wave providing student-by-student test results. To expedite the release of student level data, the Department's test support contractor provides the means whereby districts can access their data electronically from a secure server prior to shipment of the printed reports. State summary data are available in early May and can be used to determine if the state objective targets have been met.

As soon as the final data files have been produced in early May, work can begin on assembling the information with which to determine school and district AYP. The reports will be available in time for parents to make informed "school choice" decisions prior to the beginning of the following school year in August.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix B attached hereto. Also, see Section 1008.22, F.S.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.5 Does the State Accountability System produce an annual State Report Card? | The State Report Card includes all the required data elements [see Appendix A for the list of required data elements].<br><br>The State Report Card is available to the public at the beginning of the academic year.<br><br>The State Report Card is accessible in languages of major populations in the State, to the extent possible.<br><br>Assessment results and other academic indicators (including graduation rates) are reported by student subgroups | The State Report Card does not include all the required data elements.<br><br>The State Report Card is not available to the public. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

For many years, Florida has released school, district, and state level student assessment results. Each district is required to prepare an annual report that must include information about student achievement and other relevant information. State, district and school reports provide data similar to those required by NCLB. Additional required elements will be included to become fully compliant. The Department is committed to the release of a State Report Card that meets the requirements of NCLB. The data elements found in Appendix A of this document will be included, and the report will be available by the beginning of the school academic year.

The state reports will be available through the Department's Internet web site. As Spanish is the second most used language in Florida, the State Report Card also will be available in this language.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See chart in Appendix A attached here to. Also, see Section 1008.385, F.S. and the following web site: http://info.doe.state.fl.us/fsir/.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.6 How does the State Accountability System include rewards and sanctions for public schools and LEAs?[2] | State uses one or more types of rewards and sanctions, where the criteria are:<br>• Set by the State;<br>• Based on adequate yearly progress decisions; and,<br>• Applied uniformly across public schools and LEAs. | State does not implement rewards or sanctions for public schools and LEAs based on adequate yearly progress. |

[2] The state must provide rewards and sanctions for all public schools and LEAs for making adequate yearly progress, except that the State is not required to hold schools and LEAs not receiving Title I funds to the requirements of section 1116 of NCLB [§200.12(b)(40)].

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Florida law provides for various rewards and sanctions, depending on performance results. Section 1002.31, F.S., mandates a "school choice" program for each district. Section 1002.38, F.S., provides "opportunity scholarships" for students attending a school rated "failing" for two years in any four-year period. Parents may choose to enroll these children in other public or private schools. Section 1008.32, F.S., gives the State Board of Education the authority to monitor educational quality and take firm steps to intervene in any school district, if needed. See also Rule 6A-1.09981, FAC, for a description of actions that can be taken for schools that do not perform well within the A+ Plan.

The School Recognition Program recognizes the high quality of many of Florida's public schools. As authorized, the program provides greater autonomy and financial awards to schools that demonstrate sustained or significantly improved student performance. Schools that receive an "A" or schools that improve at least one performance grade category are eligible for school recognition.

The 2002 Legislature appropriated funds for the District Lottery and School Recognition Program in Item 4 of the General Appropriations Act. Of the $306,925,000 appropriated for this purpose, $122,770,000 or 40% can be used to fund financial awards for the Florida School Recognition Program. Each eligible school receives $100 per student.

Florida will implement the requirements found in Sections 200.32 – 200.34 of the NCLB rules mandating school classifications of "school improvement, corrective action, and restructuring." Title I schools not meeting AYP will be subject to interventions and sanctions defined by federal law. These will not be applied to schools or districts not receiving Title I funds; however, schools not meeting standards for individual student progress toward proficiency and schools falling below the return on investment standard shall be designated as in need of assistance in these areas.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See the following web site address: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/bosi/home0006.htm>. Also, see Sections 1002.31, 1002.38, 1008.32, 1008.345 and 1008.36, F.S; and Rule 6A-1.09981, FAC, available at < http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-11.htm - 6A-1.09981>.

## PRINCIPLE 2. All students are included in the State Accountability System.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 How does the State Accountability System include all students in the State? | All students in the State are included in the State Accountability System.<br><br>The definitions of "public school" and "LEA" account for all students enrolled in the public school district, regardless of program or type of public school. | Public school students exist in the State for whom the State Accountability System makes no provision. |

| STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
| --- |
| All students are included in the NCLB accountability system. The vast majority of students take the FCAT in grades 3-10. LEP students who have been enrolled in an approved English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for 12 months or less for whom it is determined on an individual basis that the FCAT is not an appropriate measure of academic proficiency are assessed using other measures of academic performance. The Department has implemented a system of locally-developed alternate assessments for those students with disabilities for whom the Sunshine State Standards and participation in the FCAT are not appropriate. Districts report the results of these assessments to the state in terms of students who are at different levels of proficiency. This allows the state to aggregate information about how many students are "Proficient or Above" in terms of the assessments they took.<br><br>Florida statute requires that school districts operate educational programs for students in juvenile justice centers and programs. Each such program has a unique school number and will be treated as a school. All students shall be assessed and included in the state accountability system.<br><br>All students who are "mobile," meaning they attend more than one school during the year, shall be included in the statewide assessment system and included within the district and/or state AYP calculation.<br><br>Of Florida's 3,309 schools, 210 or 6.3% have less than 30 students. Schools with highly mobile populations such as juvenile justice facilities, teen parent programs, and hospital/homebound programs will not receive an AYP status designation. Students' performance and participation rates will be rolled up to the district and/or state level. This accounts for approximately 98 of the 210 schools with a population of less than 30 students. The remaining 112 schools including all elementary, middle, high schools, charter schools, exceptional student education, and vocational schools will receive an AYP designation so long as their student population is larger than 10. While there are a few "schools" with student populations of less than 10 in the testing age range, these consist primarily of special situations in which one or more students have unique placements based on individual circumstances, e.g., an adult education center or a county jail. Again, these students' performance and participation rates will roll up to the district and/or state levels. The SEA will also begin monitoring more closely the existence of separate schools with exceptionally small numbers of students to ensure that it is necessary for such small schools to exist as separate entities.<br><br>Links to Supporting Evidence: See the following web address for information about alternate assessments: < http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/pub-home.htm>. |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 2.2 How does the State define "full academic year" for identifying students in AYP decisions? | The State has a definition of "full academic year" for determining which students are to be included in decisions about AYP.<br><br>The definition of full academic year is consistent and applied statewide. | LEAs have varying definitions of "full academic year."<br><br>The State's definition excludes students who must transfer from one district to another as they advance to the next grade.<br><br>The definition of full academic year is not applied consistently. |
| **STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS** | | |
| For the purposes of calculating school accountability under NCLB, students who are enrolled and in attendance by the fall term as documented in Survey 2 conducted the second week of October and Survey 3 conducted the second week of February will be included in the analyses.<br><br>Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix E attached hereto. | | |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 2.3 How does the State Accountability System determine which students have attended the same public school and/or LEA for a full academic year? | State holds public schools accountable for students who were enrolled at the same public school for a full academic year.<br><br>State holds LEAs accountable for students who transfer during the full academic year from one public school within the district to another public school within the district. | State definition requires students to attend the same public school for more than a full academic year to be included in public school accountability.<br><br>State definition requires students to attend school in the same district for more than a full academic year to be included in district accountability.<br><br>State holds public schools accountable for students who have not attended the same public school for a full academic year. |

| STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
| --- |
| For many years, Florida has had a student identification system that assigns a unique number to each student upon initial enrollment. Because the number follows the student throughout his/her academic career, an opportunity is available to analyze achievement data in terms of community demographic variables, school characteristics, staff characteristics, and the enacted curriculum.<br><br>An individual student often enrolls in one school and then transfers to another school during the school year. These students' data will be used for district AYP but will not be assigned to a given school for school-level AYP unless the student transferred after the March testing window has concluded.<br><br>Students enrolled in the district during that period, but not at the same school, will be assessed and included in the district calculation of AYP. Students enrolled in the state during that period, but not in the same district will be assessed and included in the state calculation of AYP.<br><br>Links to Supporting Evidence: See Section 1008.386, F.S., for information about the student identification numbering system. |

**PRINCIPLE 3. State definition of AYP is based on expectations for growth in student achievement that is continuous and substantial, such that all students are proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than 2013-2014.**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 How does the State's definition of adequate yearly progress require all students to be proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics by the 2013-2014 academic year? | The State has a timeline for ensuring that all students will meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement in reading/language arts[3] and mathematics, not later than 2013-2014. | State definition does not require all students to achieve proficiency by 2013-2014.<br><br>State extends the timeline past the 2013-2014 academic year. |

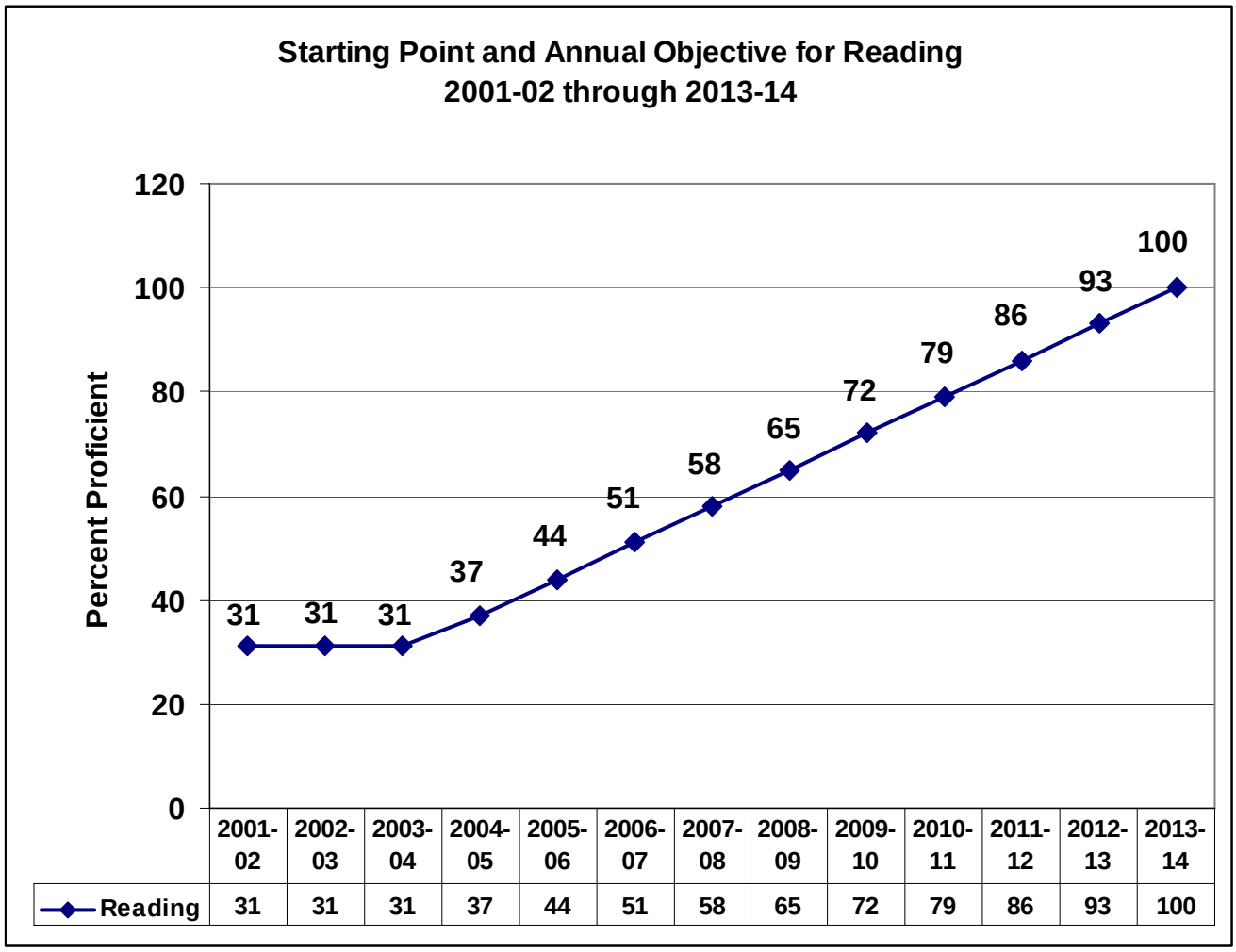
**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Department has prepared a schedule for improvements in academic achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics that begins with the "starting point" and concludes with 100% of the students being "Proficient or Above" at the end of the 2013-14 academic year. See also the response to question 3.2a.

The graphs and source data on the following pages illustrate the starting points and annual objectives.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendices C and D attached hereto.

[3] If the state has separate assessments to cover its language arts standards (e.g., reading and writing), the State must create a method to include scores from all the relevant assessments.


Starting Point and Annual Objective for Reading
2001-02 through 2013-14
Percent Proficient
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
31
31
31
37
44
51
58
65
72
79
86
93
100
2001-02
2002-03
2003-04
2004-05
2005-06
2006-07
2007-08
2008-09
2009-10
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Reading
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72
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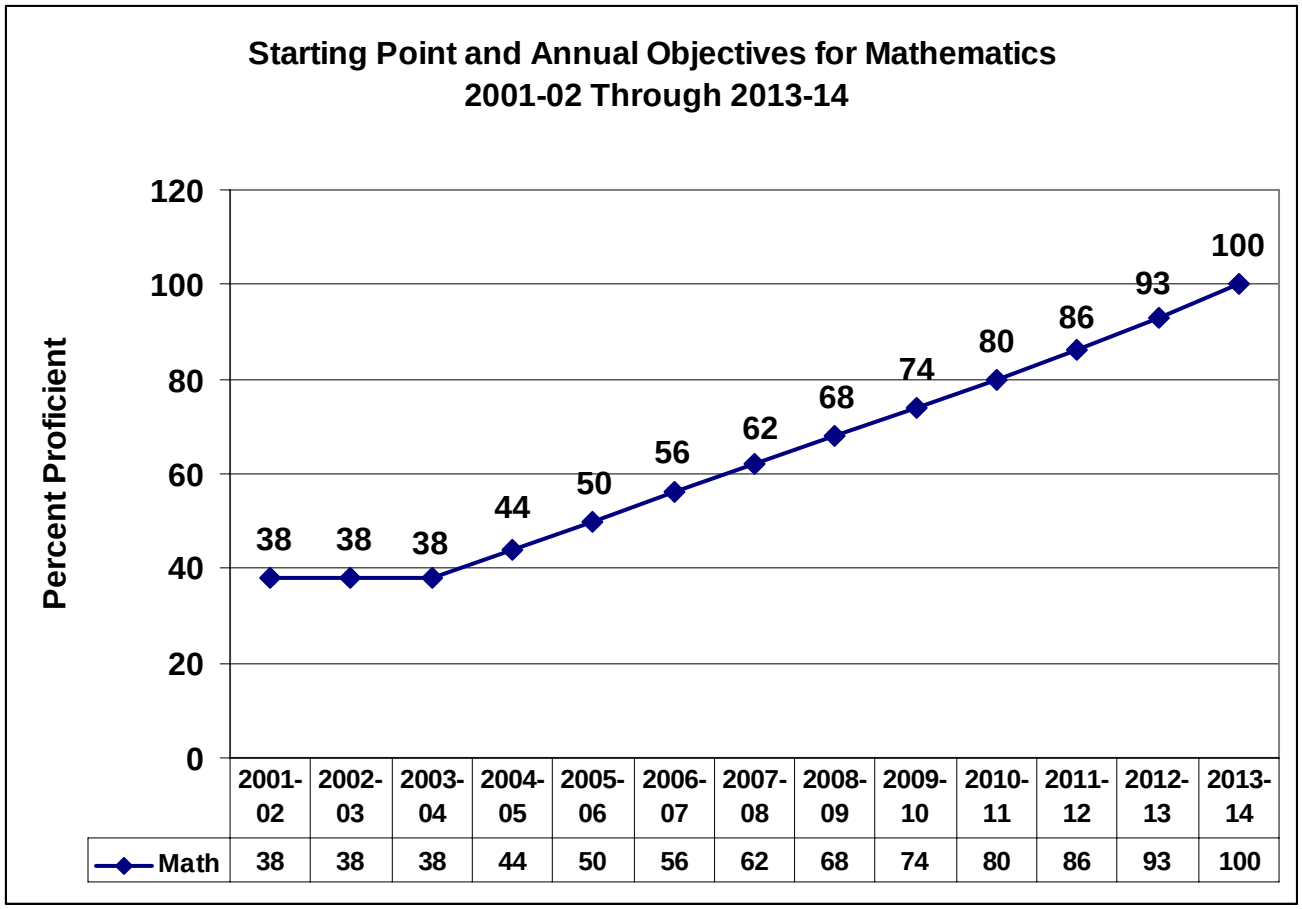
100


Starting Point and Annual Objectives for Mathematics
2001-02 Through 2013-14
Percent Proficient
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
38
38
38
44
50
56
62
68
74
80
86
93
100
2001-02
2002-03
2003-04
2004-05
2005-06
2006-07
2007-08
2008-09
2009-10
2010-11
2011-12
2012-13
2013-14
Math
38
38
38
44
50
56
62
68
74
80
86
93
100

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.2 How does the State Accountability System determine whether each student subgroup, public school and LEA makes AYP? | For a public school and LEA to make adequate yearly progress, each student subgroup must meet or exceed the State annual measurable objectives, each student subgroup must have at least a 95% participation rate in the statewide assessments, and the school must meet the State's requirement for other academic indicators.<br><br>However, if in any particular year the student subgroup does not meet those annual measurable objectives, the public school or LEA may be considered to have made AYP, if the percentage of students in that group who did not meet or exceed the proficient level of academic achievement on the State assessments for that year decreased by 10% of that percentage from the preceding public school year; that group made progress on one or more of the State's academic indicators; and that group had at least 95% participation rate on the statewide assessment. | State uses different method for calculating how public schools and LEAs make AYP. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The state plan includes the criteria that are part of the NCLB authorization. A school will meet AYP if all of its subgroups meet the state targets in reading and mathematics and attain at least 95% participation in the assessment (FCAT and alternate assessments) and if the school shows an increase in the other indicator(s) of at least 1%. If one or more subgroups do not meet the state measurable objectives in reading or mathematics, the "safe harbor" criteria will be applied. This requires that the school demonstrate that, for each of the subgroups that did not meet the state objectives, the percent of "non proficient" students decreased by 10%. In addition, the subgroup(s) must have made progress of at least one percent increase on the state's "other indicators" and each subgroup must have attained at least 95% participation in the assessment. The participation rate will be calculated by dividing the number of students actually taking the FCAT or alternate assessment by the number of students in membership at the time of the assessment.

For example, if School A did not meet the state objectives in reading and if, for example, the percentage of its Hispanic minority students not reaching proficiency decreased from 50% to 45% and if the Hispanic subgroup made improvement of at least 1% in the "other" indicator, it would be classified as meeting AYP. Note: the school would be expected to decrease the percentage of the Hispanic subgroup not reaching proficiency by 5% (10% of the base of 50%), which results in 45% of the students not reaching proficiency (55% reaching proficiency).

However, the Florida unified approach includes an additional criterion for a school to meet AYP. Under the terms of the Florida A+ Plan for Education, each school is given a grade ranging from "A" to "F." No school rated within this system as either "D" or "F" will be determined to be meeting AYP. This feature enhances the accountability of the overall program since the Florida A+ Plan includes a measurement of academic growth for students in the lowest 25%. Even the most capable school must show growth of its lowest achieving students within the A+ system. See Appendix F.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendices E and F attached hereto.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.2a What is the State's starting point for calculating Adequate Yearly Progress? | Using data from the 2001-2002 school year, the State established separate starting points in reading/language arts and mathematics for measuring the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the State's proficient level of academic achievement.<br><br>Each starting point is based, at a minimum, on the higher of the following percentages of students at the proficient level: (1) the percentage in the State of proficient students in the lowest-achieving student subgroup; or, (2) the percentage of proficient students in a public school at the 20th percentile of the State's total enrollment among all schools ranked by the percentage of students at the proficient level.<br><br>A State may use these procedures to establish separate starting points by grade span; however, the starting point must be the same for all like schools (e.g., one same starting point for all elementary schools, one same starting point for all middle schools…). | The State Accountability System uses a different method for calculating the starting point (or baseline data). |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Department analyzed the FCAT results from the academic year 2001-02 according to the requirements of NCLB.
Section 1111(b)(2)(E) provides that the starting point shall be, at a minimum, based on the higher of the percentage of students at the proficient level who are in –

"(i) the State's lowest achieving group of students described in subparagraph (C)(v)(II); or

(ii) the school at the 20$^{th}$ percentile in the State, based on enrollment, among all schools ranked by the percentage of students at the proficient level."

Florida's data were analyzed both ways, separately by grade level and subject area (reading and mathematics). The FCAT nationally-normed test (the SAT-9) was not used in this analysis since it is not part of the State's school accountability program. Instead, only the portion of FCAT that is constructed around the Sunshine State Standards was used. (This is commonly identified as the FCAT-SSS.)

The following table presents the results of the analysis method specified in (ii) for reading and mathematics. The percent of students scoring Level 3 and above was calculated for each school, and the schools were ranked. Counting upward from the lowest scoring school, a school containing the 20%-tile of student enrollment was located. This analysis depends on counting the student population within each school without regard to how many grade levels are present in each school. Thus, the population being counted is not the population of students in the tested grade level who earned ratings of "Proficient or Above" but is, instead, the total enrollment of the school itself.

**Identification of Starting Points Based on Achievement and School Enrollment**

| Reading | Mathematics |
|---|---|
| 30.68% | 37.54% |

NCLB specifies that the starting points will be the HIGHER of the results of the two analyses. Since these starting points are higher than those derived from the first analysis, the starting points will be 31% for reading and 38% for mathematics.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix C attached hereto.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.2b What are the State's annual measurable objectives for determining adequate yearly progress? | State has annual measurable objectives that are consistent with a state's intermediate goals and that identify for each year a minimum percentage of students who must meet or exceed the proficient level of academic achievement on the State's academic assessments.<br><br>The State's annual measurable objectives ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement within the timeline.<br><br>The State's annual measurable objectives are the same throughout the State for each public school, each LEA, and each subgroup of students. | The State Accountability System uses another method for calculating annual measurable objectives.<br><br>The State Accountability System does not include annual measurable objectives. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The State's annual objectives for improvement in reading and mathematics are shown in Appendix D. Florida has developed and is implementing a science assessment but the performance standards have not yet been established. Science has not yet been included in the analysis of measurable objectives.

In the event that the Florida Board of Education chooses to adopt higher expectations for the FCAT at one or more grade levels, this schedule may be changed.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix D attached hereto.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.2c What are the State's intermediate goals for determining adequate yearly progress? | State has established intermediate goals that increase in equal increments over the period covered by the State timeline.<br>• The first incremental increase takes effect not later than the 2004-2005 academic year.<br>• Each following incremental increase occurs within three years. | The State uses another method for calculating intermediate goals.<br>The State does not include intermediate goals in its definition of adequate yearly progress. |
| **STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS** | | |
| The state plan provides intermediate goals as shown in Critical Element 3.1. These have been designed to permit increases every three years using 2001-02 as the base year. This system provides annual increases leading to the final expectation of 100% proficiency.<br>Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix D attached hereto. | | |

**PRINCIPLE 4. State makes annual decisions about the achievement of all public schools and LEAs.**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 How does the State Accountability System make an annual determination of whether each public school and LEA in the State made AYP? | AYP decisions for each public school and LEA are made annually.[4] | AYP decisions for public schools and LEAs are not made annually. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

AYP decisions for each public school and school district will be made annually using the system described in Appendix E and the schedule shown in the response to Critical Element 3.2c.

Data will be collected from the FCAT and the alternate assessment systems, combined, and disaggregated. State level, district, and school data will be available. For each school and each school district, the results will be compiled and analyzed in accordance with the AYP plan.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix E attached hereto.

[4] Decisions may be based upon several years of data and data may be averaged across grades within a public school [§1111(b)(2)(J)].

**PRINCIPLE 5. All public schools and LEAs are held accountable for the achievement of individual subgroups.**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 How does the definition of adequate yearly progress include all the required student subgroups? | Identifies subgroups for defining adequate yearly progress: economically disadvantaged, major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.<br><br>Provides definition and data source of subgroups for adequate yearly progress. | State does not disaggregate data by each required student subgroup. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The two-dimensional matrices provided below illustrate how the definition of adequate yearly progress includes all of the required student subgroups.

## Elementary and Middle Schools

| | Reading | Reading Participation Rate | Math | Math Participation Rate | Other (Writing)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All students | | | | | |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| White | | | | | |
| Black | | | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | | |
| Am. Indian | | | | | |
| SWD | | | | | |
| LEP | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

*** In accordance with Section 200.19 of the final regulations, the "Other Academic Indicators" will be disaggregated by subgroup for reporting purposes but will not be used for determining AYP.**

## Senior High Schools

| | Reading | Reading Partici-pation Rate | Math | Math Partici-pation Rate | Other (Gradu-ation Rate)* | Other (Writing)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All students | | | | | | |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | | | | | | |
| White | | | | | | |
| Black | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | | | |
| Am. Indian | | | | | | |
| SWD | | | | | | |
| LEP | | | | | | |

* In accordance with Section 200.19 of the final regulations, the "Other Academic Indicators" will be disaggregated by subgroup for reporting purposes but will not be used for determining AYP.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix E attached hereto.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 5.2 How are public schools and LEAs held accountable for the progress of student subgroups in the determination of adequate yearly progress? | Public schools and LEAs are held accountable for student subgroup achievement: economically disadvantaged, major ethnic and racial groups, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students. | State does not include student subgroups in its State Accountability System. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Department's system for determining AYP requires that progress be made within the specified subgroups for AYP to be achieved at the school and district level. These include:

1. All students
2. Economically disadvantaged students
3. Students with disabilities (SWD)
4. Limited English proficient students (LEP)
5. White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian students (separately)

Data for the above subgroups will be reported contingent upon group size limitations discussed in Critical Element 5.5.

Students who initially are classified as SWD or LEP and who subsequently leave that official classification will no longer be considered as SWD or LEP for accountability purposes and will be considered in the total group as well as in their race/ethnic or economically disadvantaged group, if applicable.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 5.3 How are students with disabilities included in the State's definition of adequate yearly progress? | All students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments: general assessments with or without accommodations or an alternate assessment based on grade level standards for the grade in which students are enrolled.<br><br>State demonstrates that students with disabilities are fully included in the State Accountability System. | The State Accountability System or State policy excludes students with disabilities from participating in the statewide assessments.<br><br>State cannot demonstrate that alternate assessments measure grade-level standards for the grade in which students are enrolled. |
| **STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS** | | |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|

The Florida assessment program, FCAT, emphasizes the participation of ALL students. Students with disabilities are provided a wide variety of accommodations. Students with disabilities who do not participate in FCAT are assessed with an alternate assessment process, the results of which are merged with the FCAT proficiency ratings.

Florida's program expects schools to provide the opportunity to learn for students with disabilities and for LEP students with the intent of preparing them for graduation with a regular diploma.
For the 2006-06 school year, Florida will be utilizing the shorh term flexibility afforded by the United States Department of Education regarding the students with disabilities subgroup. Florida will apply the Mathematical Adjustment Students with Disabilities subgroup. We understand that this option is short term and applies only to schools/districts that did not make AYP based solely on the SWD subgroup. This option allows us to make a mathematical adjustment to the SWD proficiency rate in order to provide additional credit to schools/districts that missed AYP solely based on the achievement of SWD subgroup; in Florida this would be 11% based on model calculation in USDE document.

Sample Calculation:
244,142 students with disabilities assessed in Florida divided by 1,343,903 students assessed Florida = 18.16%. The 18.16 is divided into 2.0 (2.0 is prescribed by USDE) = 11%, which is the mathematical adjustment.

For this year only, this proxy will then be added to the percent of students with disabilities who are proficient. This adjusted percent proficient is what a State may use to reexamine if the school made AYP for the 2004-05 school year.

| Example Schools 2005 | Actual SWD Proficient Reading | FL Mathematical Adjustment | Adjusted Proficiency Actual + 11% | Adjusted AYP Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Roosevelt | **13%** | **11%** | **24%** | **No** |
| Washington | **25%** | **11%** | **36%** | **No** |
| Lincoln | **15%** | **11%** | **26%** | **No** |
| Adams | **30%** | **11%** | **41%** | **Yes** |
| Coolidge | **4%** | **11%** | **15%** | **No** |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 5.4 How are students with limited English proficiency included in the State's definition of adequate yearly progress? | All LEP students participate in statewide assessments: general assessments with or without accommodations or a native language version of the general assessment based on grade level standards.<br><br>State demonstrates that LEP students are fully included in the State Accountability System. | LEP students are not fully included in the State Accountability System. |

| STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
| --- |
| See also the response to Critical Element 5.3.<br><br>The academic achievement of all students classified as limited English proficient will be measured and reported. LEP students are required to participate in the FCAT assessment program. The scores of LEP students participating in the FCAT are included in the accountability system and affect the calculation of AYP.<br><br>On an individual basis, it may be determined that the FCAT is not an appropriate measure of academic performance for LEP students who have been enrolled in an approved English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for 12 months or less. However, the academic achievement of these students is measured and reported using locally-determined alternate assessments. This represents a very small percentage of LEP students. The scores of the students taking alternate assessments are cross-walked to the established proficiency designations and included in the calculation of AYP. The Department is currently working with representatives of school districts to ensure that the alternate assessments being used are valid and reliable and that the cross-walk to proficiency designations is consistent with Florida's Sunshine State Standards and the developmental scale discussed previously See Appendix B for complete description of Florida's process and for a discussion of how LEP students are accommodated, including language assistance, when taking the FCAT.<br><br>Links to Supporting Evidence: See the following web sites for further information about assessing LEP students: < http://www.firn.edu/doe/omsle/dps97054.htm> and <http://www.firn.edu/doe/omsle/omspubpg.htm>. |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 5.5 What is the State's definition of the minimum number of students in a subgroup required for reporting purposes? For accountability purposes? | State defines the number of students required in a subgroup for reporting and accountability purposes, and applies this definition consistently across the State.[5]<br><br>Definition of subgroup will result in data that are statistically reliable. | State does not define the required number of students in a subgroup for reporting and accountability purposes.<br><br>Definition is not applied consistently across the State.<br><br>Definition does not result in data that are statistically reliable. |

[5] The minimum number is not required to be the same for reporting and accountability.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Department will utilize the following minimum group sizes.

1 For public reporting purposes, there shall be no fewer than 10 students in a cell.

2 For accountability purposes, the minimum group size shall be at least 30 students and more than 15 percent of the total school population or 100 students for the subgroups for performance criteria (not participation).

These values have been in use for many years in reporting statistical data collected by the Department. The value of 30 for group reporting has been incorporated in State Board of Education Rule. See Rule 6A-1.09981, FAC.

Analysis of data indicate that Florida has the largest schools in the nation:

| | Primary | Middle | High |
|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Average | 446 | 595 | 752 |
| Florida | 694 | 1,030 | 4,460 |

*NCES Statisical Report, September 2001

Florida's student population is very diverse. Of the 2,535,155 students in the prekindergarten through 12th grade membership (Survey 2 Data (October 7-11, 2002), 50.64% were White, 24.16% were Black, 20.95% were Hispanic, 1.98% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.99% were Multiracial, and .28% were American Indian/Alaskan Native. Students with disabilities represented 15% of the population while limited English proficient students represented 11% of the population.

These data support the use of a minimum group size of at least 30 students and more than 15 percent of the total school population or 100 students. When one considers the general size of the schools and of the subgroups it would appear that Florida is better positioned than most states to have subgroups of sufficient size to fairly judge performance consistent with the requirements of No Child Left Behind.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Rule 6A-1.09981, FAC, available at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-11.htm - 6A-1.09981>.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 5.6 How does the State Accountability System protect the privacy of students when reporting results and when determining AYP? | Definition does not reveal personally identifiable information.[6] | Definition reveals personally identifiable information. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Florida educational data system protects the identity of all student information. See Rule 6A-1.0014, FAC, language below:

> Each school district and the Department shall develop and implement an automated information system component which shall be part of, and compatible with, the statewide comprehensive management information system. Each information system component shall contain automated student, staff and finance information systems and shall include procedures for the security, privacy and retention of automated records. The procedures for the security, privacy and retention of automated student records shall be in accordance with the requirements of 20 U.S.C. 1232g(b)(3), 34 CFR Part 99 and Section 228.093, Florida Statutes.

FCAT test results likewise are protected from disclosure to unauthorized persons. Any individual wishing to use Florida student data for research or contract purposes must adhere to the provisions of Florida's statutes and rules related to disclosure of sensitive information.

In addition, performance levels within a reporting cell will be reported only if the performance is greater than 5% and less than 95%. By not specifically reporting very small or very large percentages, student identity is further protected.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Rule 6A-1.0014, FAC, available at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-1.htm#6A-1.0014>.

[6] The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits an LEA that receives Federal funds from releasing, without the prior written consent of a student's parents, any personally identifiable information contained in a student's education record.

**PRINCIPLE 6. State definition of AYP is based primarily on the State's academic assessments.**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 6.1 How is the State's definition of adequate yearly progress based primarily on academic assessments? | Formula for AYP shows that decisions are based primarily on assessments.[7]<br><br>Plan clearly identifies which assessments are included in accountability. | Formula for AYP shows that decisions are based primarily on non-academic indicators or indicators other than the State assessments. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Florida accountability program for NCLB will be based primarily on the results of student academic assessments. Other indicators will be used in accordance with the requirements of NCLB.

See also Appendix E for a discussion of the "other indicators." For elementary and middle schools, the results of the statewide writing assessment will be used. For high schools, the grade 10 writing assessment and the high school graduation rate will be used.

[7] State Assessment System will be reviewed by the Standards and Assessments Peer Review Team.

**PRINCIPLE 7. State definition of AYP includes graduation rates for public High schools and an additional indicator selected by the State for public Middle and public Elementary schools (such as attendance rates).**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 7.1 What is the State definition for the public high school graduation rate? | State definition of graduation rate:<br>• Calculates the percentage of students, measured from the beginning of the school year, who graduate from public high school with a regular diploma (not including a GED or any other diploma not fully aligned with the state's academic standards) in the standard number of years; or,<br>• Uses another more accurate definition that has been approved by the Secretary; and<br>• Must avoid counting a dropout as a transfer.<br>Graduation rate is included (in the aggregate) for AYP, and disaggregated (as necessary) for use when applying the exception clause[8] to make AYP. | State definition of public high school graduation rate does not meet these criteria. |

[8] See USC 6311(b)(2)(I)(i), and 34 C.F.R. 200.20(b)

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

In Florida, the number of graduates from a four-year adjusted cohort is divided by the total number of students in the adjusted cohort. The adjusted cohort (denominator) is determined through a multi-step process in which we subtract from the 9th grade cohort the students who transfer out of the school or are deceased and add the students transferring into the school who, at the time of their enrollment, are on the same schedule to graduate as students from the first group. This definition is more accurate than the definition created by the National Center for Education Statistics.

For NCLB, we propose to use the prior year graduation rate for the calculation of AYP and the state report card. This is necessary because many districts graduate students during summer school, and the deadline for AYP calculations and public reporting can occur prior to summer school conclusion for some districts.

The NCLB graduation rate will vary slightly from the graduation rate that Florida publishes annually because NCLB excludes GED recipients. At this time, all Florida high school students receiving a GED from the Florida Department of Education are included in our published graduation rate.

For the purposes of calculating the graduation rate, the classification of students in grade 9 will follow them throughout their high school career. For example, if a student is classified as SWD in grade 9 but then by grade 11 is no longer considered to be SWD, he/she will still be counted as if the classification had not changed. This classification methodology will apply only for the purposes of calculating the graduation rate as stated above, and will not be used for any other NCLB purpose.

Florida has five high school graduation options:

- Standard Diploma
- Certificate of Completion
- State of Florida/High School Equivalency Diploma
- Special Diploma
- Special Certificate of Completion.

Only those students receiving a standard diploma or a State of Florida/High School Equivalency Diploma will be counted in the NCLB graduation rate. The State of Florida/High School Equivalency Diploma differs significantly from the typical GED program. This exit option is based on an agreement with the

American Council on Education and s. 1003.435(4), Florida Statutes. The participants in this program must meet performance standards established by rules of the State Board and pass the GED instead of the FCAT. All State of Florida diplomas issued under this option have equal status with other high school diplomas for all state purposes including admission to any state university or community college. The performance standards are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and students achieving this diploma are considered to be as proficient as any student receiving a standard diploma.

A complete description of Florida's high school graduation options is included as Appendix I.

Links to Supporting Evidence: Section 1003.435(2), (4), and (6).

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 7.2 What is the State's additional academic indicator for public elementary schools for the definition of AYP? For public middle schools for the definition of AYP? | State defines the additional academic indicators, e.g., additional State or locally administered assessments not included in the State assessment system, grade-to-grade retention rates or attendance rates.[9]<br><br>An additional academic indicator is included (in the aggregate) for AYP, and disaggregated (as necessary) for use when applying the exception clause to make AYP. | State has not defined an additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Florida plan will utilize the results of the FCAT writing assessment in grades 4, 8, and 10 as "other indicator." In addition, for grade 10, the high school graduation rate will be an "other indicator."

The FCAT writing assessment is described in Appendix B.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendix B attached hereto.

[9] NCLB only lists these indicators as examples.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 7.3 Are the State's academic indicators valid and reliable? | State has defined academic indicators that are valid and reliable.<br><br>State has defined academic indicators that are consistent with nationally recognized standards, if any. | State has an academic indicator that is not valid and reliable.<br><br>State has an academic indicator that is not consistent with nationally recognized standards.<br><br>State has an academic indicator that is not consistent within grade levels. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The statewide assessment tests (FCAT) in reading, writing, and mathematics are reliable and valid instruments. See the web site address shown below for the FCAT Technical Report for reading, writing, and mathematics.

Links to Supporting Evidence: The FCAT Technical Report is available at: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/fcatpub2.htm>.

**PRINCIPLE 8. AYP is based on reading/language arts and mathematics achievement objectives.**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 8.1 Does the state measure achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics separately for determining AYP? | State AYP determination for student subgroups, public schools and LEAs separately measures reading/language arts and mathematics. [10]<br><br>AYP is a separate calculation for reading/language arts and mathematics for each group, public school, and LEA. | State AYP determination for student subgroups, public schools and LEAs averages or combines achievement across reading/language arts and mathematics. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Reading, writing, and mathematics are separately measured and reported as part of the FCAT system. The data from each of these is used in the AYP calculations. See Appendix E.

Florida also is using its A+ Plan for Education "school grades" as an additional criterion for the "safe harbor." See Critical Element 3.2. The A+ school grading system is described in Appendix F. In the calculation of school grades, a school earns points according to the degree to which students are Proficient or Above in reading, writing, and mathematics in a compensatory fashion. That is, the points are merged and a school can be relatively high or low across the various measures. The results of the A+ Plan are used only as described in Critical Element 3.2.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Appendices E and F.

[10] If the state has more than one assessment to cover its language arts standards, the State must create a method for including scores from all the relevant assessments.

## PRINCIPLE 9. State Accountability System is statistically valid and reliable.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 9.1 How do AYP determinations meet the State's standard for acceptable reliability? | State has defined a method for determining an acceptable level of reliability (decision consistency) for AYP decisions.<br><br>State provides evidence that decision consistency is (1) within the range deemed acceptable to the State, and (2) meets professional standards and practice.<br><br>State publicly reports the estimate of decision consistency, and incorporates it appropriately into accountability decisions.<br><br>State updates analysis and reporting of decision consistency at appropriate intervals. | State does not have an acceptable method for determining reliability (decision consistency) of accountability decisions, e.g., it reports only reliability coefficients for its assessments.<br><br>State has parameters for acceptable reliability; however, the actual reliability (decision consistency) falls outside those parameters.<br><br>State's evidence regarding accountability reliability (decision consistency) is not updated. |

| STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
| --- |
| The Florida assessment and accountability programs take great pains to provide reliable results. The FCAT student tests are annually evaluated for reliability using several different methods. The Department triangulates data quality control so that no data are released unless three independent parties agree on the accuracy of the processing, analysis, and reporting. The A+ school grading system includes various quality control steps as well as a formal appeal process available to each school.<br><br>Data are not reported for low n-count data cells, and the individual student results are maintained in a secure manner, not subject to inappropriate release. Each student's test score is reported using confidence intervals based on the standard error of measurement. Test answer sheets for grade 12 students who are just a few points from earning passing scores are routinely hand scored in addition to being computer scored. If there are any questions about missing or inaccurate data, the agency immediately investigates the situation and takes corrective action as may be appropriate.<br><br>Use of the "safe harbor" further provides a safeguard for schools and districts that are making good progress with their students. |

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 9.2 What is the State's process for making valid AYP determinations? | State has established a process for public schools and LEAs to appeal an accountability decision. | State does not have a system for handling appeals of accountability decisions. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Schools and districts will be evaluated separately for reading and mathematics performance. A school or district could fail to meet its AYP requirements in reading one year, improve in reading the second year, and become deficient in mathematics the second year. If this occurs, the school or district will not be subjected to the requirements of Sections 200.32-200.34 of the NCLB rules because it has not had two consecutive years of poor performance in the same content area. If a school or district fails to meet its AYP requirements in the same content area (e.g., reading) for two consecutive years, it will be subjected to the requirements of Sections 200.3-200.34.

According to the requirements of NCLB, before a school can be identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, the school district must provide the school with the opportunity to review the data on which such a decision will be made. Under the law, this responsibility is assigned to districts, not the state agency. The state agency will provide leadership and technical assistance to districts in the creation of appropriate processes whereby schools can appeal decisions about their AYP status.

With regard to its A+ school grading system, the state agency has a process whereby schools and districts can appeal their accountability results. The appeals process is initiated immediately upon receipt of the accountability findings, and the school or district must submit its counter evidence within thirty days. The agency reviews the data, clarifies anything that is not clear, and issues a final finding. Previous experience has shown that appeals are often based on (1) incorrect student identification, (2) inaccurate student classifications, and (3) missing student answer documents.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Rule 6A-1.09981, FAC, located at: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-11.htm - 6A-1.09981> for information about the A+ school grading system.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 9.3 **How** has the State planned for incorporating into its definition of AYP anticipated changes in assessments? | State has a plan to maintain continuity in AYP decisions necessary for validity through planned assessment changes, and other changes necessary to comply fully with NCLB.[11]<br><br>State has a plan for including new public schools in the State Accountability System.<br><br>State has a plan for periodically reviewing its State Accountability System, so that unforeseen changes can be quickly addressed. | State's transition plan interrupts annual determination of AYP.<br><br>State does not have a plan for handling changes: e.g., to its assessment system, or the addition of new public schools. |

| STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|
| Changes in the FCAT program already are underway in that the new science assessment will be in operation in the spring of 2003. Student performance on the science test will be incorporated into the NCLB system in accordance with law and will require definition of cut-scores, calculation of a starting point, and determination of annual improvement objectives. Because the FCAT score scale has been stabilized and vertically equated (reading and mathematics) and because new items are constantly added to the item pool, the system can be sustained indefinitely. A revision of the Sunshine State Standards is expected to be completed over the next two years, but slight changes in the content standards should not lead to significant changes in the statistical system underlying the FCAT.<br><br>New public schools are opened annually, and their inclusion will present no difficulties for the overall system. Each school district will be responsible for the performance of students in any new schools, and each individual school will be included in the AYP system as soon as its student assessment data are available. Status information will be available as a result of the first administration of FCAT, and gain information will be available after the second administration. |

[11] Several events may occur which necessitate such a plan. For example, (1) the State may need to include additional assessments in grades 3-8 by 2005-2006; (2) the State may revise content and/or academic achievement standards; (3) the State may need to recalculate the starting point with the addition of new assessments; or (4) the State may need to incorporate the graduation rate or other indicators into its State Accountability System. These events may require new calculations of validity and reliability.

**PRINCIPLE 10. In order for a public school or LEA to make AYP, the State ensures that it assessed at least 95% of the students enrolled in each subgroup.**

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 10.1 What is the State's method for calculating participation rates in the State assessments for use in AYP determinations? | State has a procedure to determine the number of absent or untested students (by subgroup and aggregate).<br><br>State has a procedure to determine the denominator (total enrollment) for the 95% calculation (by subgroup and aggregate).<br><br>Public schools and LEAs are held accountable for reaching the 95% assessed goal. | The state does not have a procedure for determining the rate of students participating in statewide assessments.<br><br>Public schools and LEAs are not held accountable for testing at least 95% of their students. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

In the school year 2001-02, Florida implemented a new procedure whereby each student is accounted for at the time the FCAT was administered. With the student identification number and the other information about the subgroup to which an individual student belongs, it will not be difficult to determine the participation rates for each school and district. The State is committed to the goal of assessing all eligible students.

The participation rate will be calculated by dividing the number of students actually taking the FCAT or alternate assessment by the number of students in membership at the time of the assessment.

| CRITICAL ELEMENT | EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS | EXAMPLES OF *NOT* MEETING REQUIREMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 10.2 What is the State's policy for determining when the 95% assessed requirement should be applied? | State has a policy that implements the regulation regarding the use of 95% allowance when the group is statistically significant according to State rules. | State does not have a procedure for making this determination. |

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Department's policy is that 95% participation is required and reported as long as the group size is 30 or more eligible students. For 30 students, 95% is 29, so only one student could miss the assessment activity. For small schools with stable populations of less than 30 but more than 10, the 95% participation rate will be applied to the total school population and any subgroups with more than 10 members.

The participation rate will be calculated by dividing the number of students actually taking the FCAT or alternate assessment by the number of students in membership at the time of the assessment.

The n = 30 policy is in current State Board of Education policy in Rule 6A-1.09881, FAC.

Links to Supporting Evidence: See Rule 6A-1.09981, FAC, at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-11.htm - 6A-1.09981>.

# Appendix A

## Required Data Elements for State Report Card

Section 1111(h)(1)(C) of No Child Left Behind requires the following information in the State Report Card.

1. Information, in the aggregate, on student achievement at each proficiency level on the State academic assessments (disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged) except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

2. Information that provides a comparison between the actual achievement levels of each student subgroup and the State's annual measurable objectives for each such group of students on each of the academic assessments.

3. The percentage of students not tested (disaggregated by the student subgroups), except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

4. The most recent 2-year trend in student achievement in each subject area, and for each grade level, for the required assessments.

5. Aggregate information on any other indicators used by the State to determine the adequate yearly progress of students in achieving State academic achievement standards disaggregated by student subgroups.

6. Graduation rates for secondary school students disaggregated by student subgroups.

7. Information on the performance of local educational agencies in the State regarding making adequate yearly progress, including the number and name of each school identified for school improvement under section 1116.

8. The professional qualifications of teachers in the State, the percentage of such teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and the percentage of classes in the State not taught by highly qualified teachers, in the aggregate and disaggregated by high-poverty compared to low-poverty schools

which (for this purpose) means schools in the top quartile of poverty and the bottom quartile of poverty in the State.

# Proposed No Child Left Behind Report Card with Additional State Indicators

| Indicator | NCLB Required | Current Report Card | Changes to State Report Card |
|---|---|---|---|
| Assessment Results by proficiency level (disaggregated). | √ | | Disaggregated information is not currently reported, but is available. |
| Assessment results compared to Florida's annual objectives by (disaggregated). | √ | | Currently, we do not have annual objectives by subject or by student subgroup. Objectives will need to be determined. |
| Percentage of students not tested (disaggregated). | √ | | Not currently reported, but available. |
| Assessment results compared to the most recent 2-year trend in each subject, for each grade. | √ | | Prior year comparison currently reported, 2-year trend data is available. |
| Results of Florida Writes (disaggregated). | √ | | Disaggregated information is not currently reported, but is available. |
| Graduation rates (disaggregated). | √ | √ | Disaggregated information is not currently reported, but is available. Report will include PY Grad Rate. |
| AYP, including schools designated for improvement. | √ | | AYP calculation will need to be determined, collected, and reported. |
| The professional qualifications of teachers disaggregated by high poverty vs. low poverty. | √ | √ | Disaggregated information is not currently reported. Determination of high poverty vs. low poverty needs to be made. |
| The percentage of teachers in the state teaching out of field disaggregated by high and low poverty. | √ | √ | Currently aggregated data is added to the state report card at the district. Data to be collected and reported. |
| The percentage of classes in the state not taught by highly qualified teachers disaggregated by high and low poverty. | √ | | Data to be collected and reported. |
| Dropout Rate | | √ | PY Dropout Rate to be Reported. |
| Number of teachers and staff new to the school | | √ | |
| Results of Kindergarten Readiness | | √ | |
| October Membership | | √ | |
| Teachers, administrators, and staff who receive satisfactory annual evaluations | | √ | Add to LEA Report Card |
| School advisory council membership composition. | | √ | Add to LEA Report Card |
| School Lottery $ Budget | | √ | Add to LEA Report Card |

# Current State Report Card Indicators – Recommended for Deletion

| Indicator on State Report Card | Recommendation |
|---|---|
| Average number of days of students absent | Keep on the Indicators Report |
| Average number of days of teacher and administrator absences | Keep on the Indicators Report |
| Graduates found by FETPIP | Keep in Reports produced by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program |
| Graduates found by FETPIP in the Military, in post-secondary schools, and/or employed | Keep in Reports produced by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program |
| Occupational Completion Point Graduates found by FETPIP compared to all OCP graduates follow-up by FETPIP | Keep in Reports produced by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program |
| Occupational Completion Point Graduates found by FETPIP in the Military, in post-secondary schools, and/or employed. | Keep in Reports produced by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program |
| Number of diplomas awarded to Adults | Keep in Reports produced by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program |
| Students enrolled any time during the 180 day year | Keep on the Indicators Report |

## ***Current State Report Card***

The School Advisory Council Report is produced in accordance with State Rule 6A-1.09982. Each district school board is responsible for developing and implementing procedures for schools to use when issuing annual school reports. Each school must distribute a school public accountability report to all parents, guardians, and adult students and make it available to the general community upon request. Reports are due on November 15 of each year.

## ***NCLB Report Card***

Not later than the beginning of the 2002-03 school year, school districts must disseminate the NCLB Report Card to all schools in the school district and parents in the reported school. To the extent practicable, the information should be made widely available through public means such as the Internet and reported in a language that the parents can understand.

# Appendix B

## Description of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

Section 1111 of H.R.-1 (NCLB), outlines the Congressional requirements for academic standards, assessments, and accountability system. These requirements will not be repeated herein but will be identified by Section numbers throughout the description of Florida's programs for the reader's cross-reference.

Challenging Academic Standards (s. 1111(b)(1))

Section 1008.22(3)(a), F.S. (available at www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm) requires the Commissioner of Education to bring to the State Board of Education sets of skills and competencies that will guide instruction in all of the public schools. The specific requirement is stated as follows:

> Submit to the State Board of Education a list that specifies student skills and competencies to which the goals for education specified in the state plan apply, including, but not limited to, reading, writing, science, and mathematics. The skills and competencies must include problem-solving and higher-order skills as appropriate and shall be known as the Sunshine State Standards as defined in Section 1000.21, F.S. The commissioner shall select such skills and competencies after receiving recommendations from educators, citizens, and members of the business community. The commissioner shall submit to the State Board of Education revisions to the list of student skills and competencies in order to maintain continuous progress toward improvements in student proficiency.

The development of Florida's content standards began with creation of curriculum frameworks as a resource and a guide for school districts. The frameworks included the Sunshine State Standards (Standards) that specify the challenging content expected of Florida students.

The development of Florida's Sunshine State Standards was discussed in the Title I Plan for 2001-02 and will not be repeated herein. Specific information about the manner in which each set of standards was created is available at the following Department of Education web site: http://www.firn.edu/doe/curric/prek12/frame2.htm. In summary, the Standards were developed with the involvement of practicing educators from across Florida, reviewed by various interested parties, including the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL), reviewed by all school districts, and adopted by the State Board of Education in 1996.

Grade Level Expectations

The original design of the Standards did not include grade-by-grade expectations for all grade levels. As decisions were made to expand the statewide assessment program to include all grades 3-10 (see following discussion), it became necessary to create "grade level expectations." These are described at length on the Department's web site at www.firn.edu/doe/menu/sss.htm and will not be repeated here.

Evaluation and Review of the Sunshine State Standards

In addition to the review of the emerging standards by McREL as previously described, the Sunshine State Standards have been reviewed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Their commentary can be found at http://www.aft.org/edissues/standards99/states/Florida.htm. AFT concludes that Florida's Standards are "clear, specific, and grounded in content." Here are selected statements descriptive of the mathematics, language arts, and science Standards:

*Language Arts*

> "The **English** standards are clear across all three levels, and the content at the elementary and middle levels is strengthened by the addition of the new *Expectations.* … In addition, the *Florida Writes!* assessment booklets clarify the writing forms at all three levels and include examples of student work that illustrate the quality and complexity of writing expected of students at each of the levels.

*Mathematics*

> "With the addition of the new *Grade Level Expectations,* the elementary and middle level **mathematics** standards are quite clear and specific. … At the high school level the standards are generally clear and specific, but at times, they are broad."

*Science*

> "The **science** standards are also clear, specific, and grounded in content. … The *Expectations* help clarify the standards for grades K-8 and illustrate how the standards might look in a classroom."

Education Week also conducted a review of the standards and accountability programs across the 50 states. Florida's program was rated "A" in the special publication *Quality Counts* that can be seen on the web at http://www.edweek.org/sreports/qc03/rc/rcard_frameset.htm.

The Department of Education commissioned a special mid-term review of the Sunshine State Standards to be conducted by the Suncoast Area Center for

Educational Enhancement at the University of South Florida. The results of this activity will be used for a more comprehensive review of the Standards over the next three years.

The Standards represent what all students should know and be able to do as designated by the State Board of Education. The adoption of the Standards sets policy direction for instruction in Florida's schools. However, the Standards do not limit schools or school districts in what should be taught. Local units are completely free to supplement the instructional program with content and objectives not included in the Standards.

Academic Assessments (Section 1111(b)(3))

Florida has had an organized statewide assessment program for more than 30 years. (A chronology of the statewide assessment programs can be found at http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/hsaphome.htm.) As understanding of the value of data has increased and as testing and computer systems have developed, especially in the last 20 years, the Florida statewide assessment program, management information system program, and school/district accountability program have grown and become more sophisticated. The activities during the school year 2002-03 continue this steady evolution and improvement process.

As early as 1973, Florida showed an understanding of the importance of measuring student achievement, measuring other educational indicators, and reporting to the public. In 1971, Governor Reubin Askew appointed a Citizens' Committee on Education to study education and recommend ways to improve our schools. The report of this committee, *Improving Education in Florida*, included such concepts as citizen participation in the educational process, public reporting of information, state- and district-level assessment programs, and participation in the fledgling National Assessment of Educational Progress (The Governor's Citizens' Committee on Education, Tallahassee, FL, March 15, 1973).

In 1976, the Florida Legislature enacted an Educational Accountability Act that expanded the statewide assessment program to grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 and introduced the nation's first requirement that students pass a high school competency test to qualify for a regular diploma. The State developed and implemented these tests and subsequently faced two legal challenges. The high school competency test was challenged in *Debra P. v. Turlington* (474 F. Supp. 244 , MD Fla. 1979), and the basic skills tests were challenged in *Love v. Turlington* (1980). The State position prevailed in both situations with the courts ruling that competency tests can be required although the State must assure that the students are afforded due process. These landmark rulings established the precedent for court rulings in other states, including, most recently, a challenge to the TAAS system in Texas (*GI Forum et al v. TEA et al,* 2000).

The Legislature continued to modify and improve the statewide assessment requirements during the 1980s and even extended the concepts to the postsecondary level with creation of certain statewide testing requirements for community college and university students. However, it became apparent that the emphasis on minimum competencies for all students had its limitations. Average and above average students were not being challenged, and the general focus on "minimums" was not producing graduates who could perform in today's employment marketplace.

In the early 1990's, the Legislature revised the structure of the state assessment program and created the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability. Their work contributed to discussions about the importance of challenging educational standards and the need to move away from minimum competency tests and the traditional reliance on multiple-choice test questions. Coming from the work of the Commission and the Department, an overall assessment plan was adopted for 1996-97 and revised for 1997-98.

In the mid-1990s, the State moved rapidly toward creation and adoption of the Sunshine State Standards, as previously described. The Standards and the associated curriculum frameworks defined challenging content in seven subject areas. In 1995, a request for proposals was issued for a new, expanded statewide assessment program. Contracts for development of the new assessment were issued in mid-1996, and the State began the creation of tests that would look much different than the older minimum competency tests.

By 1992, the statewide assessment program developed and implemented a writing assessment program in grades 4, 8, and 10. In 1999, under Governor Jeb Bush, the program was expanded to all grades 3 – 10. The new assessment program would contain both criterion-referenced tests measuring state content and nationally norm-referenced tests. Performance items were to be included to the extent that was practical. Student, school, district, and statewide results would be reported and used as the basis for a school accountability program. See s. 1008.22, F.S., available at http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm.

Under the terms of the new statute, the existing High School Competency Test (HSCT), a minimum competency test required for graduation, would be phased out and students graduating in 2003 would have to earn a passing score on the new grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) to graduate. Students who were enrolled in 9th grade in the Fall of 1999 thus were given advance notification of their graduation requirement vis-à-vis the state test.

The new testing structure is shown in Figure 1 below. Reading and mathematics are tested with both criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests at eight grade levels, while writing and science are measured at three grade levels each. This combination permits the achievement of students to be measured against two different dimensions – the State's own challenging content as well as

national norms. Although Figure 1 does not show it, Florida also participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) at both the national and state levels. (Due to a scheduling conflict, Florida did not participate in the 2000 state-NAEP but did participate in the Spring 2002 testing and will continue to participate in the future as required by *No Child Left Behind* (*NCLB*).

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test exceeds the minimum requirements of NCLB that only requires student assessment in reading and mathematics once in grades 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12. Because the FCAT measures student achievement in reading and mathematics in all grades 3-10 and uses a coordinated vertical score scale, Florida is able to track student achievement over time from one grade level to another. This generates powerful information with which to monitor progress as is required by NCLB.

The writing assessment component and the High School Competency Test component have been in existence for many years. Each of these tests was developed through the efforts of commercial contractors and school district curriculum content committees to both develop and validate items. For additional information, the reader may refer to the Department of Education's web site at www.firn.edu/doe/sas/sasshome.htm, which contains a description of these programs as well as a chronology of the development of the state assessment program from 1976 to the present.

Through the 1995 competitive bid previously mentioned, the Department contracted with CTB/McGraw-Hill (CTB) for the development and implementation of the FCAT tests in grades 4 (reading), 5 (mathematics), 8 (reading and mathematics), and 10 (reading and mathematics). Initial development took place from May 1996 through the census field test in March 1997. The first full-scale census assessment occurred in February 1998 followed by the second administration in February 1999.

The test development process began with selection of those portions of the Standards that would be measured. Since the Standards themselves are very broad goals and were not specific enough to define the assessment system, benchmarks within the Standards were selected for this purpose. The test blueprint was created to show how many items would be needed for the test and how they would be distributed. In general, about 20% of the items would be either short- or extended-response items. In mathematics, gridded response items also were to be used.

Item specifications were drafted by writers from CTB, reviewed by Department staff, and validated by committees of practicing Florida classroom teachers and curriculum supervisors. The specifications can be seen at the Department's web site at http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/fcatis01.htm . Items and performance exercises were drafted by CTB writers, reviewed by Department staff, and, again, validated by committees of Florida educators. Pilot tests of the items and

exercises were conducted with small groups of students, not to gather statistical information, but, instead, to see whether students understood the directions and the item content. Pilot test participants were interviewed to gather feedback information. A community sensitivity review committee and an item bias review committee also reviewed all of the items prior to their use.

CTB psychometricians worked cooperatively with Department assessment staff to select the measurement model that would be used. In this case, since the performance items were being merged with the multiple-choice items, it was decided to use both 2- and 3-parameter item response theory techniques to analyze the data, create the score scale, and equate the tests from year to year and horizontally across operational forms.

The field test of the test items and performance exercises was conducted in 1997 with students in all schools across Florida participating. An item sampling methodology was used, so not all students took all items although all students at the assessed grade levels were tested. Exceptional education students (those with disabilities and those who are gifted) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) students were included in the field test. The test items were calibrated, and items were selected for the 1998 operational tests.

In 1998, the tests were administered and the results were reported. Since achievement levels (i.e., performance standards) had not yet been adopted, student performance was reported in terms of scale scores and content subscores. In addition, student performance was displayed in terms of whether the score was within the lower, middle, or upper third of Florida examinees.

## Figure 1

## Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Design

| | Sunshine State Standards Assessment Component | | | Norm-Referenced Testing Component |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | FCAT with Performance Tasks | FCAT without Performance Tasks | FCAT Writing Test | |
| 3 | | Reading<br>Mathematics | | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 4 | Reading | Mathematics | Writing | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 5 | Mathematics,<br>Science | Reading | | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 6 | | Reading<br>Mathematics | | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 7 | | Reading<br>Mathematics | | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 8 | Reading,<br>Mathematics,<br>Science | | Writing | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 9 | | Reading<br>Mathematics | | Reading,<br>Mathematics |
| 10 | Reading,<br>Mathematics,<br>Science | | Writing | Reading,<br>Mathematics |

NOTE: The statutory language authorizing the science assessment specified grades 4, 8, and 10. A decision was made to move to grade 5 to avoid over-testing 4th graders.

A new Request for Proposals issued in 1999 resulted in the selection of Harcourt Educational Measurement (HEM) to continue expansion of the available item pool in reading and mathematics. A separate Request for Proposals in 2000 led to a contract with NCS Pearson (subcontracting with Riverside Publishing Company) for creation of the new science test.

FCAT Design

The statewide assessment test, now known as the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test or FCAT, is geared to the Sunshine State Standards and directly measures specific benchmarks that are part of the Standards. Local school districts, of course, may have instructional objectives that supplement or go beyond the Sunshine State Standards, but the FCAT is not intended to measure such content.

The FCAT does not measure everything that is found in the Sunshine State Standards and was not designed to do so. Consider, for example, that students

are expected to be able to write a research paper, conduct a scientific experiment, or perform certain physical activities. Measuring such content in a standardized assessment program would be impractical and, therefore, must be omitted. Local schools and districts must determine the extent to which local assessments or classroom evaluation activities will be used to measure these areas.

The FCAT program design identifies those benchmarks that are candidates for inclusion on the test, but because of the practical limits of time, it is not possible to include all content on any given test form. From year to year, adjustments are made in the content to cycle through the benchmarks while maintaining a core of content needed for stability and equating purposes.

Sample items can be found on the Internet at the following location: http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/fcatsmpl.htm. These documents include a count of the benchmarks that exist in the Sunshine State Standards and how they are measured with the FCAT. Writing is a special situation since the assessment consists of a single holistically scored writing prompt. When students take this test, they are required to perform many of the benchmarks in Language Arts, but the written product is not scored analytically to differentiate among the separate writing skills.

FCAT Reading assesses content from two areas of the Reading and Language Arts Standards: (a) Constructs Meaning from Information Text and (b) Constructs Meaning from Literature.

FCAT Mathematics assesses content from five areas: (a) Number Sense, Concepts and Operations, (b) Measurement, (c) Geometry and Spatial Sense, (d) Algebraic Thinking, and (e) Data Analysis and Probability.

FCAT Science assesses content from eight content strands: (a) Nature of Matter, (b) Energy, (c) Force and Motion, (d) Processes that Shape the Earth, (e) Earth and Space, (f) Processes of Life, (g) How Living Things Interact with Their Environment, and (h) Nature of Science.

Scoring and Scaling

The FCAT assessment instruments include both multiple-choice items and performance items. The performance items are of three types: (1) extended response; (2) short response; and (3) gridded response items used only in mathematics. The tests are scored and scaled using 2- and 3-parameter IRT analyses. For more complete detail, refer to the *2000 FCAT Technical Report* included as an Attachment. (The reports for 2001 and 2002 have not yet been published.)

The student scores for the reading and mathematics tests are reported on a score scale from 100 to 500 with additional information that indicates his/her achievement level. The FCAT norm-referenced component, the Stanford Achievement Test Version 9 (SAT-9), generates a national percentile rank based on multiple-choice questions in reading comprehension and mathematics problem-solving.

When the FCAT was administered in March 2001, items were imbedded across grade levels to provide the basis for calculation of a developmental score scale linking all eight grade level tests together. During June-August 2001, Harcourt Educational Measurement, with its subcontractor HumRRO, performed the analysis needed for the developmental scale. The developmental scale ranges from 0 to 3000 across grades 3 through 10.

The analysis was successful, and the developmental scale was used in the process of creating the FCAT achievement levels for the "new" grade levels that had been added to the FCAT system. The State Board of Education subsequently adopted an administrative rule incorporating the performance standards that defined the FCAT Achievement Levels in reading and mathematics, coordinated across the existing grade levels and the newly added grade levels. The Achievement Levels for the FCAT in grades 3-10 are discussed below.

Beginning with the test results from the March 2002 assessment, it is possible to measure a student's growth (gain) across years. Students received an Individual Student Report in May 2002 that revealed whether they gained, stayed the same, or declined in their academic proficiency in terms of the Achievement Levels. For example, if a student was in Level 3 in 4$^{th}$ grade in 2001 and is in Level 4 in 5$^{th}$ grade in 2002, he would receive a computer printed message stating that he had improved from one year to the next. Florida's A+ school grading system, described elsewhere, uses growth information as one factor in calculating a school's grade.

The Department prepared an Internet web site that permits parents and teachers to key enter a student's scores and generate a graph showing how the student progressed compared to the other students in the state. This analysis is done on the basis of the actual developmental scale score rather than on changes in the Achievement Level. The initiation of gain scores will provide the educational system with a new and powerful tool to understand student progress. Later in this Plan, it will be seen how Florida proposes to use information from the gain scores to evaluate progress under NCLB.

Multiple Measures

The FCAT system is a multi-dimensional program. It utilizes machine-scorable items as well as performance items. The grade ten test is used as a high school

graduation requirement. The FCAT system also incorporates a national norm-referenced test in reading comprehension and mathematics problem-solving.

Higher-Order Thinking Skills

To understand how the new FCAT measures higher order thinking skills and understanding, reviewers should inspect the Sunshine State Standards, the benchmarks being measured, the item specifications, and the sample exercises. One will immediately see that students are not being asked simple, one-step, minimal skills items. They must think, analyze, and explain, answering questions that require original thought and multiple steps, cast in a framework that crosses all subject areas. In other words, the stimulus material in the mathematics test or the reading test can come from any appropriate material from any content area (e.g., science). Reading skills and mathematics skills are thereby applied in other content domains.

Comprehensive Writing Assessment

The Department has initiated steps to revise the current writing assessment so it will be more comprehensive. In addition to the existing single essay prompt, the revised test would include machine scoreable items measuring editing, language mechanics, and other writing skills. By including new content and additional items, the content will be broadened, and it will be possible to more closely equate each year's test form to that of the preceding year. Current plans call for the new writing test to be implemented in the spring of 2005.

Alignment of Assessment and Standards

The FCAT is not an off-the-shelf test product; it has been built to Florida's content standards and expectations from the first day.

In all cases, the FCAT items and performance exercises are written to match the Department's approved item specifications, which match the designated benchmarks. This linkage has been built into the system and is verified at every stage of the test development process. Both the specifications validation committee and the item validation committees reviewed the given materials in terms of the degree of match to the benchmarks.

The FCAT is developed with the assistance of subject area committees of Florida educators who teach or supervise mathematics, reading, writing, and science. These practicing classroom teachers and curriculum supervisors assist in approving the overall test design, the benchmarks to be assessed, the test specifications, and the test items themselves. Their work guarantees that the tests are aligned with the Standards. It also guarantees that consideration is given to the measurement of content areas not currently included in the test so that changes can be made in future editions of the tests.

The task of alignment is built into the test development system rather than determined by some outside source. In effect, since the initial materials are developed by the test contractor, the Florida-based committees are the outside reviewers and validators.

The FCAT is not a basic skills test, and the items include a range of difficulty. The test measures more complex skills and requires the students to think, solve, and explain.

Information about the Sunshine State Standards, the test specifications, sample items, and the FCAT are available on the Internet and through various printed publications. (See the assessment program's web site at www.firn.edu/doe/sas/sasshome.htm.) The FCAT item specifications are public documents and are disseminated to all school districts for their use.

*No Child Left Behind* requires that the statewide assessment program:

- Specify what children are expected to know and be able to do;
- Contain coherent and rigorous content; and
- Encourage the teaching of advanced skills.

The Florida system meets each of these three criteria.

Individual Student Assessment Reports

The FCAT program is a census-based assessment, although sampling procedures are used for some statistical analyses and for field-testing new items. This design provides complete data reports for each student, school, and district.

A publication titled Understanding FCAT Reports, 2002 includes a description of various report forms. The FCAT Individual Student Report provides the usual identification information about the student and then describes the student's performance. The data show the student's total score for each subject area, compare the student against the established performance criteria, compare the student against statewide averages, show how the student performed in each subcontent area, and provide a measure of growth over a two-year period. Beginning with the 2000 assessment, a separate report included how well the student performed on the national norm-referenced component (the SAT-9). The reverse side of the individual reports includes descriptive information for the parent written in English and Spanish. This document is available upon request.

Disaggregated Reports

Florida's student assessment program has a long history of providing disaggregated reports of student data. The current FCAT provides a variety of reports of data for subpopulations.

*NCLB* requires that assessment results be provided by school district, school, racial and ethnic group, English proficiency status, migrant status, gender, students with disabilities compared to non-disabled students, and economically disadvantaged compared to those not economically disadvantaged. Florida is committed to reporting these categories of data. However, it is not possible to produce them in the initial reports of FCAT data because several data files must be merged to generate some of the reports (e.g., economically disadvantaged). It, therefore, may be necessary to create the reports after the initial releases of data.

All required reporting subgroups and reporting specifications will be provided. Disaggregated reports are generated for ALL schools, not just Title I schools.

Disaggregated data reports from the FCAT are provided directly to each school district as well as administrators within the Department of Education. Each school district provides further dissemination to school administrators, teachers and parents as appropriate. State and district school improvement personnel regularly utilize disaggregated data for planning and achievement monitoring purposes. To promote the appropriate use of disaggregated data for monitoring progress and to aid strategic planning for school improvement, regional workshops were held to train district testing, evaluation, and school improvement staff how to read, interpret, and use the data reports.

Technical Quality of the FCAT

The FCAT is designed to be reliable, valid, and free from bias. Considerable effort was devoted to and is being devoted to the technical quality of the assessment program.

Validity has many dimensions, but in its most fundamental sense, a test is not said to be valid but, instead, one speaks about whether an interpretation of an examinee's score is valid. This is, perhaps, a subtle distinction and not one that the average consumer clearly understands. This is why many people ask, "Is this test valid?"

Validity is not a single judgment but is a conclusion reached by looking at different pieces of evidence. At the same time, the developing agency, in this case the Florida Department of Education, bears a responsibility for stating the intent of the test and how the scores are to be used. The FCAT was designed to be used to measure whether or not students have demonstrated skills proficiency to meet the State's academic standards. This does not preclude use of FCAT

scores in some other ways such as to predict a future performance, but any such uses would have to be individually validated, as they were not part of the original test design.

With the above principle in mind, the development of FCAT is founded on content validity as indicated by the match between the test and the benchmarks the items purport to measure. In other words, the question is, "Do the items match the content that the State desires to measure?"

The content validity of FCAT was built into the developmental process from the very first steps. The item specifications were created by the test development contractor and reviewed, revised, and validated by committees of Florida classroom teachers and curriculum specialists. The overall test blueprint was likewise reviewed, revised, and validated by subject area content committees in Florida. During these reviews, the materials provided by the contractors were and are heavily edited; items are rejected or modified to make certain they meet the test item specifications. Reviewers use worksheets that track their acceptance or rejection of each item.

All items are pilot-tested on small groups of students and the students are interviewed after each sitting. This permits the test administrator to learn first-hand what difficulties the examinee has with the instructions, the items, or the materials. All test items are field-tested with large random samples of Florida students, accomplished by administering statewide field tests or by imbedding items within operational forms. All items in such field tests are subjected to statistical item analyses and further review by staff of the Department and the contractor. Such analyses routinely include 2- and 3-parameter IRT approaches, calculation of classic psychometric indices, dimensionality studies, and DIF analyses. Content validity thus is established by a thorough and professional quality control process.

As the FCAT was initially developed in grades 4, 5, 8, and 10, data were gathered to compare student performance on the test with their performance on district norm-referenced tests and grades earned in courses. The data collected in 1998 from a sample of districts revealed a reasonably strong correlation between the Stanford 8 and FCAT scores. In 2000, the FCAT included use of the Stanford 9 (SAT-9) and, thus, the comparisons could be done by the Department as soon as the results were available. These studies generally show that the FCAT-SSS and the FCAT-NRT are correlated at about the 0.83 – 0.85 level.

Comparing grades earned in courses is more problematic since teachers are known to assign grades for reasons other than academic proficiency. Furthermore, students have many different course selection possibilities and a simple correlation between FCAT and grade point average is often indistinct. The Department conducted a few studies of the relationship between grades and FCAT scores. Generally, the results show that low scores on the FCAT are associated with poor performance in courses and vice versa.

For grade 10 students in Florida, there is an additional source of interesting data. These students have the option of taking the entering freshman college placement test. The State offers this test to high school students with the intent of inspiring all students to aim toward postsecondary education and to select courses that will prepare them for college work. Scores of over 10,000 high school students who took this test have been collected, and correlation and predictive studies of the data have been conducted.

Florida also is creating a "value-added" accountability system that will track students over time as they move through the educational system.

Another important dimension of interest is that of "instructional validity," the degree to which the content measured by the test is being taught. The State is obligated to consider instructional validity as one important dimension of the provision of due process to students. (See the findings of the *Debra P. v. Turlington* case.)

Florida districts and schools have been on notice for many years about the development and, later, the adoption of the Sunshine State Standards. The Standards were adopted by the State Board of Education after public hearings and much discussion and review. Various memoranda were sent to district superintendents and other educators about the importance of teaching the content defined by the Standards. Publications and other informational and educational tools have been developed to assist districts in adopting the Standards.

The State conducted an instructional validity study in the 2000-01 school year to guarantee that all students are having the opportunity to learn the desired content. This is particularly important because the 10$^{th}$ grade students of 2000-01 will be the first class to be required to pass the FCAT for graduation. The results showed that Florida school districts have implemented the Sunshine State Standards into the instructional program.

The consequential aspects of validity require long-term review and consideration. Certain impressions are available at this time. First, the test results are improving over time. This may be interpreted as schools spending more time emphasizing the benchmarks being measured by FCAT. Since the test is secure and is not released and since the tested content is broad, rather than narrow as in older minimum competency days, it may be reasonably concluded that students are making good progress toward the challenging standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Second, comments from instructional leaders and supervisors across the state articulate their beliefs that the FCAT, with its reach into higher content and its use of performance items, is moving the instructional program in the directions they desire. Third, there are always those who complain that the state assessment tests are unnecessary and are an undesirable intrusion into the daily classroom life. Teachers object that they

have to "cease their normal activities and teach FCAT." The response to this is that "FCAT-prep" activities are not needed and are not desirable since the Sunshine State Standards are to be woven into the curriculum and instructional program in a seamless manner.

In summary, based on immediate information, the program appears to be working as designed and results are being obtained. Longer-term information will be needed for clarification of other dimensions of impact.

Reliability of the FCAT is also a matter of psychometric concern and interest. The technical data describing the FCAT are shown in the *2000 FCAT Technical Report*. This includes a description of the standard errors of measurement and the rater consistency for the performance items. In regard to the latter, while the performance scoring is being conducted, the Department receives daily statistical reports showing rater consistency for each performance item. Other data show the consistency of each individual rater. If a rater is not performing up to the established standards, the individual is retrained or discharged.

Florida places great emphasis on good test administration procedures, test security, and ethical behavior of students and test administrators. Readers should pay particular attention to the FCAT Test Administrator's Manual, provided as an Attachment, which includes copies of test security statutes and administrative rules. It is expected and demanded that Department staff, contractor staff, advisory committees, content committees, and district educators follow instructions relative to maintenance of test security. Procedures are in place to investigate any allegation of a breach in test security. This includes criminal prosecution and referrals to the Professional Practices Commission for action against the professional license. In addition, a paper on ethical behavior in the administration of assessment tests has been prepared and given wide circulation. See the Department's web site at http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/pdf/ethics.pdf.

The Department's Office of Assessment and School Accountability convenes a committee of district test administrators each year to debrief following each annual assessment cycle. The Section Administrator personally tours the State after the spring assessment administration and makes from eight to ten presentations about the score reports. At the same time, feedback is gathered from workshop participants concerning the program and problems occurring during test administration. Each test administrator with every school completes a feedback form to describe any difficulties with test administration and suggestions for improvement. This feedback is analyzed by the test support contractor and given to the Department.

In addition, the Office of Assessment and School Accountability statistical analysis staff provides intense quality control over the processing of test answer sheets by the test support contractor. There is an independent audit of each step

of the contractor's work and approximately 40 separate computer programs are run against the various computer files provided by the contractor to identify errors of various types. Equating and calibration analyses are separately run by two and sometimes three groups to triangulate results and confirm accuracy. No test results can be processed by the contractor until the quality control staff agrees that there are absolutely no errors present. This process requires about ten calendar days to complete. In addition, staff members are present at each site where performance items are being scored. They monitor activities, provide guidance, participate in training, and solve problems as they occur. This requires that each person be on-site from four to six weeks in out-of-state locations.

The State has a formal and regular operation to maintain a high quality assessment program through analyses and input from various external sources. There are technical advisory committees, curriculum content committees, and external *ad hoc* committees of advisors. These groups either are convened to review and update the assessment instruments or they are convened to solve a particular problem or critique some aspect of the assessment. The test support and development contracts include thousands of dollars in resource money to provide travel and consultant fees where needed. Research projects are routinely commissioned with state universities to explore issues related to scaling, dimensionality, IRT questions, plans for vertical scaling, etc. The program and its tests are reviewed and evaluated every year and are in a constant process of improvement.

We believe that Florida's extensive quality control process excels among the various state assessment programs.

Additional explanatory information about the FCAT program including a chronology of development, sample items, test specifications, and other documents can be found on the web at the following address: http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat.htm.

National Assessment of Educational Progress

Florida has participated in the state-level administrations of the NAEP tests, with one exception when the first version of FCAT was being implemented. The state will participate in the state-level NAEP in the future, as required by *NCLB*.

Challenging Student Academic Achievement Standards

*No Child Left Behind* requires all states to adopt challenging academic achievement standards for the tests in mathematics, reading/language arts, and science. This has been accomplished in Florida for the mathematics and reading/language arts assessments, although, in Florida, such standards are referred to as FCAT Achievement Levels. Their development and current status is described in the section below.

The Department of Education created definitions for five Achievement Levels that would be the basis for describing student performance on the FCAT. The definitions are shown below in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

**Definitions of the FCAT Achievement Levels**

Level 5: Performance at this level indicates that the student has success with the most challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A Level 5 student answers most of the test questions correctly, including the most challenging questions.

Level 4: Performance at this level indicates that the student has success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A Level 4 student answers most of the questions correctly but may have only some success with questions that reflect the most challenging content.

Level 3: Performance at this level indicates that the student has partial success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards but performance is inconsistent. A Level 3 student answers many of the questions correctly but is generally less successful with questions that are most challenging.

Level 2: Performance at this level indicates that the student has limited success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.

Level 1: Performance at this level indicates that the student has little success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.

To operationalize the five definitions, it was necessary to select performance standards or “cut-scores” for each level and have them adopted by the State Board of Education as administrative rule. The Department has, at this time, engaged in two separate standard-setting operations.

The first standard setting exercise was implemented for the initial tests in reading (grades 4, 8, and 10) and mathematics (grades 5, 8, and 11). In the fall of 1998, a statewide committee of practicing teachers and curriculum leaders was designated for the purpose of advising the State on the selection of achievement levels (i.e., performance standards). This committee of about 80 people was divided into elementary, middle, and senior high working groups. They were convened at a location near Tampa, Florida, for a four-day working session.

The participants engaged in a five-step process built around the "bookmark" standard-setting procedure suggested by CTB/McGraw-Hill, the first FCAT development contractor. Participants were given workbooks containing over 100 items that represented the range of difficulty of FCAT items. At the earliest stage, each person reviewed the items and selected the location where a "bookmark" or standard was to be defined. At each subsequent stage, the participant was provided more information and opportunity for discussion. Five votes were taken before the conclusion of the meeting.

Department staff then took the proposals for achievement levels to other groups for review. Three committees were convened – one of business leaders, one of citizens, and one of educators other than classroom teachers and curriculum specialists. Further reviews were conducted within the agency, and in December 1998, the State Board of Education adopted cut-scores for an initial stage followed by a higher, second stage.

In the fall of 2001, it was necessary for the Department to initiate development of recommendations for Achievement Levels for the new grades in 3-10 that had been added to the assessment program. With the assistance of the new test development contractor, Harcourt Educational Measurement, the Department again implemented a process involving committees of teachers, curriculum leaders, business leaders, parents, and citizens. The "book mark procedure" was used as in 1998; however, it was possible to add a new dimension to the standard-setting procedure since the Department had successfully completed a vertical scaling analysis for the assessment tests. Since the 100-500 FCAT scale could be converted to a continuous developmental scale spanning grades 3-10, it was possible for corrections to be made in the specification of the cut-scores to smooth out the Achievement Levels and make them more consistent across the grades.

In December 2001, the State Board of Education considered the issue of passing standards for the new grade levels. The Board adopted the recommended cut-scores and, in addition, decided to extend to 2004 the date at which Stage Two would become effective. Tables 1-2 display the FCAT Achievement Levels adopted by the Board.

# Table 1

## FCAT READING, GRADES 3-10

### *Stage 1 for tests administered in 1999-2003*

| Grade | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | 100-258 | 259-283 | 284-331 | 332-393 | 394-500 |
| **4** | 100-274 | 275-298 | 299-338 | 339-385 | 386-500 |
| **5** | 100-255 | 256-285 | 286-330 | 331-383 | 384-500 |
| **6** | 100-264 | 265-295 | 296-338 | 339-386 | 387-500 |
| **7** | 100-266 | 267-299 | 300-343 | 344-388 | 389-500 |
| **8** | 100-270 | 271-309 | 310-349 | 350-393 | 394-500 |
| **9** | 100-284 | 285-321 | 322-353 | 354-381 | 382-500 |
| **10** | 100-286 | 287-326 | 327-354 | 355-371 | 372-500 |

### *Stage 2 for tests administered in 2004 and beyond*

| Grade | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | 100-271 | 272-296 | 297-344 | 345-406 | 407-500 |
| **4** | 100-287 | 288-311 | 312-351 | 352-398 | 399-500 |
| **5** | 100-268 | 269-298 | 299-343 | 344-396 | 397-500 |
| **6** | 100-277 | 278-308 | 309-351 | 352-399 | 400-500 |
| **7** | 100-279 | 280-312 | 313-356 | 357-401 | 402-500 |
| **8** | 100-283 | 284-322 | 323-362 | 363-406 | 407-500 |
| **9** | 100-297 | 298-334 | 335-366 | 367-394 | 395-500 |
| **10** | 100-299 | 300-339 | 340-367 | 368-384 | 385-500 |

# Table 2

## FCAT Mathematics, Grades 3-10

***Stage 1 for tests administered in 1999-2003***

| Grade | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | 100-252 | 253-293 | 294-345 | 346-397 | 398-500 |
| **4** | 100-259 | 260-297 | 298-346 | 347-393 | 394-500 |
| **5** | 100-287 | 288-325 | 326-354 | 355-394 | 395-500 |
| **6** | 100-282 | 283-314 | 315-353 | 354-390 | 391-500 |
| **7** | 100-274 | 275-305 | 306-343 | 344-378 | 379-500 |
| **8** | 100-279 | 280-309 | 310-346 | 347-370 | 371-500 |
| **9** | 100-260 | 261-295 | 296-331 | 332-366 | 367-500 |
| **10** | 100-286 | 287-314 | 315-339 | 340-374 | 375-500 |

***Stage 2 for tests administered in 2004 and beyond***

| Grade | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | 100-265 | 266-306 | 307-358 | 359-410 | 411-500 |
| **4** | 100-272 | 273-310 | 311-359 | 360-406 | 407-500 |
| **5** | 100-300 | 301-338 | 339-367 | 368-407 | 408-500 |
| **6** | 100-295 | 296-327 | 328-366 | 367-403 | 404-500 |
| **7** | 100-287 | 288-318 | 319-356 | 357-391 | 392-500 |
| **8** | 100-292 | 293-322 | 323-359 | 360-383 | 384-500 |
| **9** | 100-273 | 274-308 | 309-344 | 345-379 | 380-500 |
| **10** | 100-299 | 300-327 | 328-352 | 353-387 | 388-500 |

For the writing assessment, the State Board of Education has not officially adopted a “cut-score” since there is no high-stakes decision required of this test. However, the Department considers a student score of “3” on the scale of 1-6 as being the lowest acceptable score. This is driven by the definition of the scoring rubric itself as can be seen at the Department’s web site: http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fw/fwaprubr.htm.

The State Board of Education has not yet considered the issue of performance standards for the science assessment since the test was not administered on a statewide basis until 2002. The Department expects to undertake standard-setting operations in August 2003.

The grade 10 FCAT passing scores adopted by the State Board of Education in December 2001 specified two levels. For students tested in March and October

2001, the passing scores would be 287 in reading and 295 in mathematics. Beginning in March 2002, all 10th graders who are initially taking the FCAT for graduation will be required to earn scores of 300 in reading and mathematics. The Commissioner of Education is required to review the passing score levels in mid-2002 and determine whether to make further adjustments in the passing scores. This step is necessary because the objective of the overall accountability program is to keep moving the educational system forward. Making regular adjustments in the required passing scores (or definitions of the FCAT Achievement Levels) is viewed as essential.

*No Child left Behind* Academic Standards

As stated in Section 1111(b)(1)(D) of *NCLB*, each state Title I program is required to include challenging academic standards with at least three levels of proficiency –Advanced, Proficient, and Basic. States may have more than three levels, but must define the levels and explain their relationship to the levels required for Title I purposes.

Florida deliberately did not use value-laden words to describe its achievement levels because of the lessons learned in the *Debra P. v. Turlington* case. The original high school competency test was called a "functional literacy test," and so it was easy for someone to mistakenly assume that a failing score labeled a student as being "functionally illiterate." It has, therefore, been decided to use only numbers to identify the five different levels describing performance on FCAT.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) utilizes the labels of "Advanced," "Proficient," and "Basic." There has been considerable discussion about these labels and whether another category of "Below Basic" should be added. Table 3 below shows the percentage of students attaining various achievement levels for grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics (*NAEP 1998 Reading State Report for Florida*, 1999; *NAEP 1996 Mathematics, Cross-State Data Compendium for the Grade 4 and Grade 8 Assessment, 1998*). This is followed by Table 4 that shows the percentage of students in each of the five achievement levels of FCAT from the 2002 administration.

## Table 3

## Percentage of Students in Florida Attaining NAEP Achievement Levels

| | Below Basic | At or Above Basic | At or Above Proficient | Advanced |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4th Reading (1992) | 47 | 53 | 21 | 3 |
| 4th Reading (1994) | 50 | 50 | 23 | 5 |
| 4th Reading (1998) | 46 | 54 | 23 | 5 |
| 8th Reading (1998) | 35 | 65 | 23 | 1 |
| 4th Mathematics (1996) | 45 | 55 | 15 | 1 |
| 8th Mathematics (1996) | 46 | 54 | 17 | 2 |

## Table 4

## Percentage of All Students in Florida Within Each 2002 FCAT Achievement Level

| | | Levels | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grade** | **Number of Students** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | | | |
| 3 | 188,387 | 27 | 14 | 32 | 23 | 5 |
| 4 | 191,866 | 30 | 15 | 28 | 21 | 6 |
| 5 | 192,604 | 28 | 18 | 30 | 19 | 4 |
| 6 | 194,125 | 30 | 18 | 28 | 18 | 5 |
| 7 | 191,991 | 29 | 21 | 29 | 16 | 5 |
| 8 | 184,483 | 29 | 26 | 28 | 14 | 3 |
| 9 | 204,728 | 44 | 27 | 17 | 8 | 4 |
| 10 | 150,135 | 32 | 33 | 21 | 8 | 7 |

| | | Levels | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grade** | **Number of Students** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| | | | | | | |
| Mathematics | | | | | | |
| 3 | 188,606 | 21 | 20 | 34 | 20 | 5 |
| 4 | 192,366 | 26 | 24 | 32 | 15 | 4 |
| 5 | 192,472 | 25 | 27 | 23 | 19 | 6 |
| 6 | 193,948 | 35 | 22 | 25 | 13 | 5 |
| 7 | 191,786 | 33 | 21 | 26 | 14 | 7 |
| 8 | 184,379 | 25 | 22 | 31 | 14 | 8 |
| 9 | 203,911 | 28 | 24 | 26 | 15 | 6 |
| 10 | 149,784 | 19 | 21 | 25 | 27 | 8 |

According to Florida statutes, the Commissioner of Education must designate an FCAT achievement level that represents inadequate performance. This has been done, and Level 1 was so designated. For purposes implementing *No Child Left Behind*, we designate the following relationships shown in Table 5 between Florida's Achievement levels and the labels specified by *NCLB*:

## Table 5

## Specification of *NCLB* Achievement Standards

| FCAT Achievement Levels | No Child Left Behind Achievement Standards |
|---|---|
| 5 | Advanced |
| 3-4 | Proficient |
| 2 | Basic |
| 1 | Below Basic |

Level 1 will be considered to be "Below Basic." FCAT Level 2 will be considered "Basic," and Levels 3 and 4 will be "Proficient." FCAT Level 5 will be "Advanced." However, the labels used in *No Child Left Behind* **will not be used** in Florida's FCAT reports and publications in order to avoid inadvertent misinterpretations of the labels.

## FCAT Inclusion Policies and Procedures

Federal requirements in NCLB clearly expect states to develop ways to include all students in the academic assessment program. Florida accepts this philosophic orientation and has taken steps to foster such inclusion. Indeed, this orientation can be seen in several Department publications. Our emphasis is one of inclusion both in the instructional programs and the student assessment programs.

The FCAT Test Administrator's Manual reinforces this theme on page four by stating, "In general, all students enrolled in the grade levels being tested should participate in the FCAT administration. Students must be administered the test for the grade level in which they are enrolled." The Manual (page 4) also says that LEP students are expected to be tested, as are students with disabilities.

The following information describes Florida's policies with regard to the testing of students with disabilities and limited English proficient students.

### Students with Disabilities

Some students need accommodations to enable them to adequately access the assessment tests. The FCAT Test Administrator's Manual contains specific instructions on determining the allowable accommodations for ESE students. Each such decision must be made on an individual basis. The student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is the beginning point for such decisions, although occasionally the Department of Education assists school officials in making these decisions. The Department's current policy would not allow an accommodation that threatened the security of the test (e.g., student taking the test at home without supervision) or changed the construct being measured (e.g., reading the reading test).

In certain circumstances, a student may be excluded from taking the FCAT. If a student is excluded, the IEP must document why the assessment is not appropriate and what alternative assessment procedure will be used.

The State Board of Education recently amended an existing administrative rule that specifies policies and procedures with regard to waivers from the required high school graduation test. This rule describes the conditions under which a student can be given a waiver from the test as the vehicle for demonstration of proficiency in reading and mathematics required for award of a diploma. The rule may be seen at http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-8.htm#6A-1.09431.

To make certain the Department's policies and procedures relative to accommodations for test administration are current and appropriate, Governor Jeb Bush issued Executive Order #02-108 on April 3, 2002, to convene a special committee to study the matter and make recommendations for changes and

improvements. The committee's recommendations were available in the fall of 2002 and are being reviewed and addressed by the Department.

Table 6 shows the 2002 participation rates for students with disabilities.

## Table 6

## Participation of Students with Disabilities by Grade FCAT and Alternate Assessment, 2002

Reading

| Grade | # Enrolled | # Participated FCAT | # Participated Alternate Assessment* | % Participated |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 31,217 | 27,242 | 2,240 | 94.4% |
| 4 | 33,498 | 29,393 | 2,488 | 95.2% |
| 5 | 34,391 | 30,393 | 2,475 | 95.6% |
| 6 | 32,698 | 27,719 | 2,961 | 93.8% |
| 7 | 31,839 | 26,055 | 3,241 | 92.0% |
| 8 | 29,651 | 23,754 | 3,226 | 91.0% |
| 9 | 37,100 | 23,749 | 5,999 | 80.2% |
| 10 | 22,369 | 13,950 | 4,357 | 81.8% |

Mathematics

| Grade | # Enrolled | # Participated FCAT | # Participated Alternate Assessment* | % Participated |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 31,217 | 27,107 | 2,209 | 93.9% |
| 4 | 33,498 | 29,571 | 2,420 | 95.5% |
| 5 | 34,391 | 30,407 | 2,444 | 95.5% |
| 6 | 32,698 | 27,631 | 2,957 | 93.5% |
| 7 | 31,839 | 25,966 | 3,228 | 91.7% |
| 8 | 29,651 | 23,671 | 3,208 | 90.7% |
| 9 | 37,100 | 23,469 | 5,980 | 79.4% |
| 10 | 22,369 | 13,832 | 4,343 | 81.3% |

* 2001-02 was the first year of state level data collection for alternate asessment.

Limited English Proficient Students

In Florida, there are 215,777 students classified as limited English proficient and being served. These students speak 207 different languages and come from 257 different countries. The four largest language groups are Spanish, Haitian-Creole, French and Portuguese. See 2000-2001 ESOL Annual Report, State Synopsis for a listing of all native languages represented in Florida's K-12 educational system in 2000-01, available via the Internet at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/bin00011/0001esol/files/0001ESOLState.pdf>.

As described in Principle 5.4, all LEP students are to be assessed. An LEP student may be exempted only when he/she has been receiving services in a program operated in accordance with an approved district LEP plan one year or less and a majority decision is made by an LEP committee, on an individual student basis, to exempt him/her.

In this context, the term "LEP committee" is defined in Rule 6A-6.0902, F.A.C., as meaning:

> "...LEP Committee means a group composed of ESOL teachers and home language teachers, and an administrator or designee plus guidance counselors, social workers, school psychologists or other educators as appropriate for the situation. The parent(s) would also be invited to attend any committee meetings."

The LEP committee, in making its decision, shall consider the following factors: (1) level of mastery of basic competencies and skills in English and home language according to appropriate local, state and national criterion-referenced standards; (2) grades from the current or previous years; or (3) other test results. (See Rule 6A-1.09432, FAC, available via the Internet at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-1-8.htm#6A-1.09432.>)

Rule 6A-6.09091, F.A.C., Accommodations of the Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and Procedures for Limited English Proficient Students, ensures accommodations in the administration of the FCAT to LEP students. (See Rule 6A-6.09091, FAC, available via the Internet at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/rules/6a-69.htm#6A-6.0901>.) The FCAT Administration Manual contains the complete description of the accommodations for LEP students. Following are selected pages from the 2003 FCAT Administration Manual.

For school year 2002-2003, assessment results for all LEP students will be collected, analyzed and reported. The scores of LEP students participating in FCAT and those assessed by other methods shall be used in the calculation of AYP. The scores for LEP students who did not participate in the FCAT will be

collected and reported by the number scoring proficient and those not scoring proficient.

A comprehensive plan has been developed for both assessment of academic progress and English language proficiency. The June 2002 FDOE submission of the NCLB Consolidated Application describes in detail the process and reporting of results for English language proficiency and for academic achievement of all LEP students.

# READING, MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

## MARCH 2003

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
www.myfloridaeducation.com

## TEST ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS

Districts are required to offer accommodations to LEP students who are currently receiving services in a program operated in accordance with an approved District LEP Plan. Permissible modifications for these LEP students are listed below. The test may be administered with any one of these modifications or a combination of accommodations that are determined to be appropriate for the particular needs of the LEP student. However, all testing, with or without accommodations, must be completed during the prescribed testing dates shown on the inside front cover of this manual.

Flexible Setting. LEP students may be offered the opportunity to be tested in a separate room with the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or heritage language teacher acting as test administrator. Parents must be informed of this option for students not of legal age and shall be given the opportunity to select the preferred method of test administration.

Flexible Scheduling. LEP students may take a part or session of the test during several brief periods within one school day; however, a session of the test must be completed within one school day.

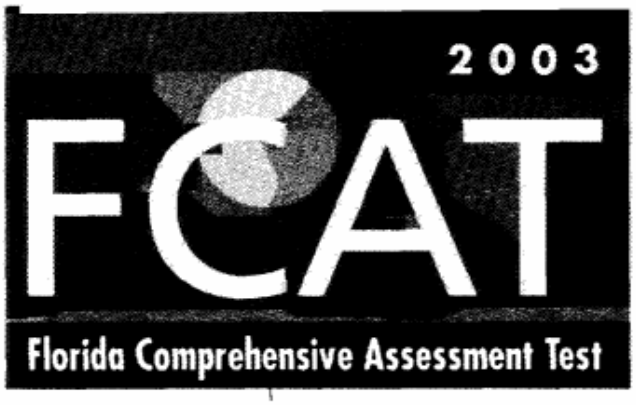
Flexible Timing. LEP students may be provided additional time; however, a session must be completed within one school day.

Assistance in the Heritage Language. For the mathematics and science tests, LEP students may be provided limited assistance by an ESOL or heritage language teacher using the student's heritage language. The teacher may answer specific questions about a word or phrase that is confusing the student because of limited English proficiency, but is prohibited from giving assistance that will help the student solve mathematics and science test questions. A student's questions must not be answered in a way that would lead the student to unmistakably infer the correct answer to a question. If the FCAT is administered to a group of students, the teacher may answer questions about directions for the benefit of the group; questions of clarification from individual students must be answered on an individual basis without disturbing other students taking the test.

For the reading test, the ESOL or heritage language teacher may answer student questions about the general test directions in a way that the student would not be unmistakably led to infer the correct answer to any of the questions. The teacher is prohibited from reading words to the student from the passages, test items, and performance tasks, and from answering student questions about the passages, test items, and performance tasks.

For the writing test, the ESOL or heritage language teacher may answer student questions about the general test directions in their heritage language. The teacher may answer specific inquiries concerning a word or phrase in a writing assessment prompt that is confusing the student because of limited English proficiency. In no case shall assistance be given to the student in responding to the writing assessment prompt. The teacher is prohibited from reading the prompt to the student. All student responses **must be written in English.** Responses written in languages other than English will not be scored.

**Dictionary.** LEP students may have access to an English-to-heritage language translation dictionary and/or heritage language-to-English translation dictionary, such as those made available to LEP students in an instructional setting. However, a dictionary providing definitions written exclusively in the heritage language or in English may not be provided.





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

www.myfloridaeducation.com

# WRITING
# TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

# FEBRUARY 2003

## TEST ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS

Districts are required to offer accommodations to LEP students who are currently receiving services in a program operated in accordance with an approved District LEP Plan. Permissible modifications for these LEP students are listed below. The test may be administered with any one of these modifications or a combination of accommodations that are determined to be appropriate for the particular needs of the LEP student. However, all testing, with or without accommodations, must be completed during the prescribed testing dates shown on the inside front cover of this manual.

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# Appendix C

## Discussion of NCLB "Starting Point"

Section 1111(b)(2)(B) of NCLB requires each state to create an accountability program to ensure that all schools are making adequate yearly progress (AYP). Each state has the flexibility to define how it will approach this task and hold schools responsible for the progress of the students.

The law sets forth various requirements that will not be quoted herein. Instead, the discussion that follows will provide Florida's solutions and will include a discussion of all relevant points.

Florida's student assessment tests measure the same high standards for all students, are valid and reliable instruments, seek continuous improvement of students' educational attainments, measure all schools against the established standards, and report disaggregated test results for all groups required by NCLB. The discussion that follows will address (1) the starting point for measuring progress, (2) the timelines for improvement, (3) other indicators that will be used, (4) annual measurable objectives, and intermediate goals for improvement.

Since the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test has been in place for several years, the Department of Education has complete information on the current status of student achievement in reading and mathematics in grades 3-10 and writing achievement in grades 4, 8, and 10. Information on student achievement in science will not be available until after the spring 2003 assessment has been conducted.

Because Florida has not established different levels of performance for the writing assessment as is required by NCLB, this test will not be used to meet the requirements of Section 1111(b)(3)(C)(v)(I) or (II). The writing assessment results will be used as an additional indicator as required by Section 1111(b)(2)(C)(vii). See the discussion in the following pages about "other indicators."

The Department analyzed the results of the FCAT administered in the spring 2002 and the results are presented in the following discussion. In considering what should be the starting point for AYP, the FCAT data could be presented in several ways: (1) as mean scale scores on the FCAT 100-500 scale, (2) as mean scale scores on the FCAT 0-3000 vertical scale, or (3) as percents of students in the "Proficient and Above" category. Since the latter is considered to be the easiest to understand and is consistent with the overall objective of getting students to be Proficient or better, the "starting point" data were analyzed and are presented as percentages. This does not preclude the Department from using

the student performance in terms of the vertical scale for the purpose of tracking progress over time.

Section 1111(b)(2)(E) provides that the starting point shall be, at a minimum, based on the higher of the percentage of students at the proficient level who are in –

"(i) the State's lowest achieving group of students described in subparagraph (C)(v)(II); or

(ii) the school at the 20th percentile in the State, based on enrollment, among all schools ranked by the percentage of students at the proficient level."

Florida's data were analyzed both ways, separately by grade level and subject area (reading and mathematics). The FCAT nationally-normed test (the SAT-9) was not used in this analysis since it is not part of the State's school accountability program. Instead, only the portion of FCAT that is constructed around the Sunshine State Standards was used. (This is commonly identified as the FCAT-SSS.)

Table 7 presents the results of the analysis method specified in (ii) for reading and mathematics. The percent of students scoring Level 3 and above was calculated for each school, and the schools were ranked. Counting upward from the lowest scoring school, a school containing the 20%-tile of student enrollment was located. This analysis depends on counting the student population within each school without regard to how many grade levels are present in each school. Thus, the population being counted is not the population of students in the tested grade level who earned ratings of "Proficient or Above" but is, instead, the total enrollment of the school itself.

## Table 7

## Identification of Starting Points Based on Achievement and School Enrollment

| Reading | Mathematics |
|---|---|
| | |
| 30.68% | 37.54% |

NCLB specifies that the starting points will be the HIGHER of the results of the two analyses. Since these starting points are higher than those derived from the first analysis, the starting points will be those shown in Table 7: 31% for reading and 38% for mathematics.

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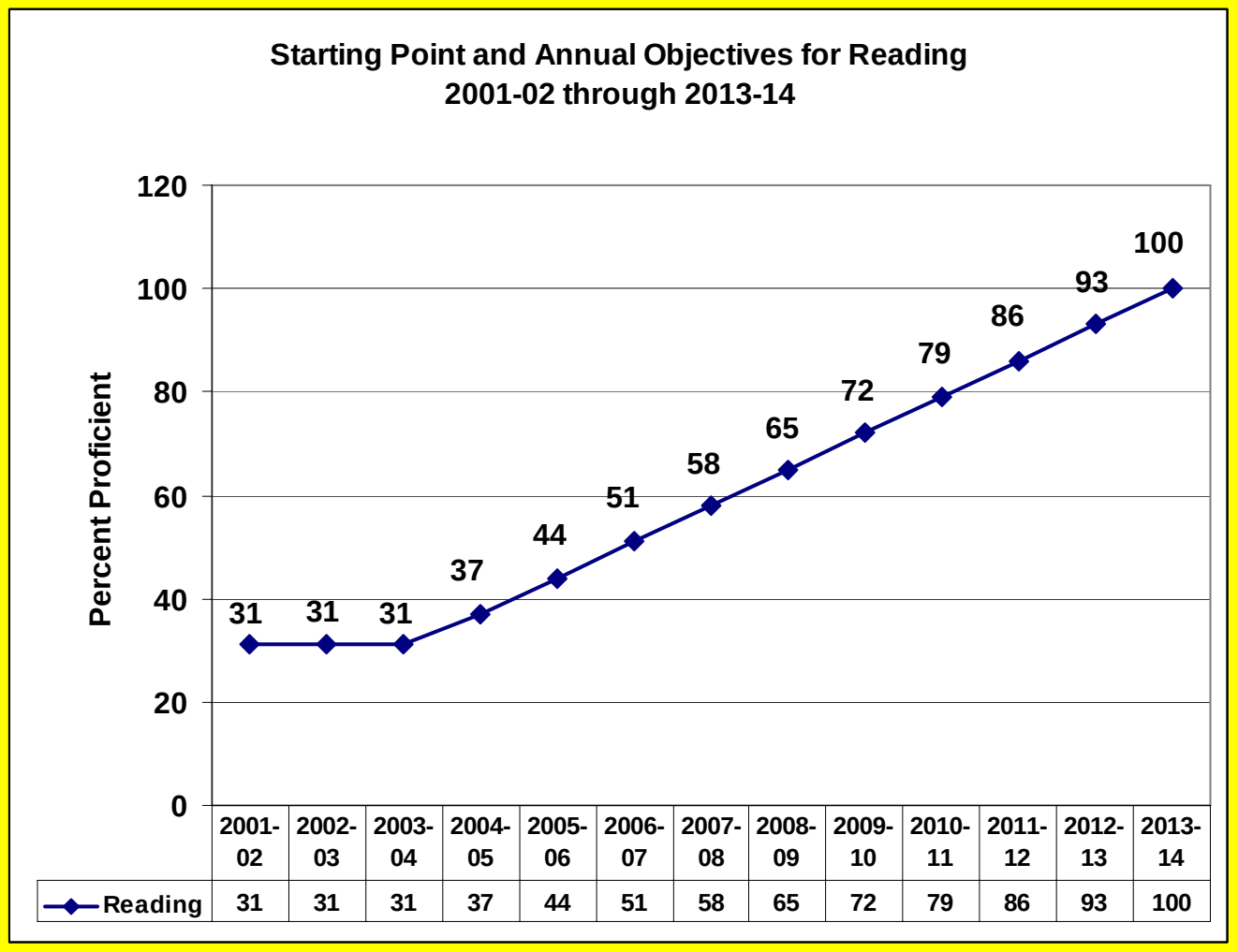
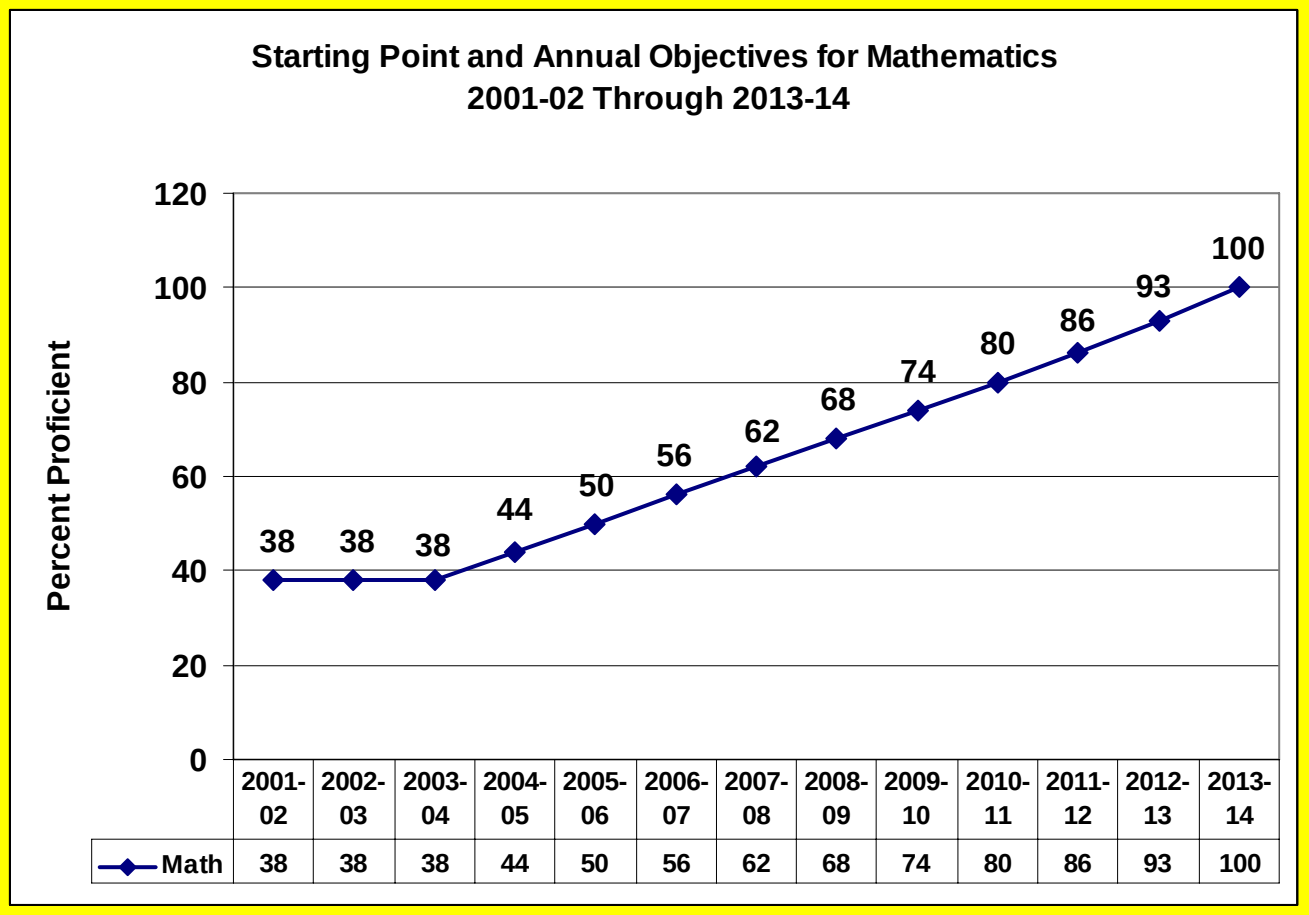
## Appendix D

## Annual Progress Objectives




NOTE: Year 1 = 2001-02 base year.




NOTE: Year 1 = 2001-02 base year.

# Appendix E

## Florida's AYP Plan

As an introduction to Florida's AYP proposal, first consider how the NCLB requirements for accountability are structured. As Congress and the President planned for NCLB, they faced a dilemma in that the 50 states and territories have different academic standards and student assessment programs which are not equivalent, interchangeable, measure the same content, administered at the same grade levels, given to students at the same time of year, generate the same kind of information, or have the same impact. Indeed, some states prefer not to emphasize centralized testing programs and assign that responsibility to each district. This is a direct result of the provisions in the Constitution that give states the responsibility of implementing a public education system.

Congress sought an effective way to measure the success of the Title I provisions in NCLB given the realities of such a diverse national system. A good evaluation system would try to accumulate information across all of the states, districts, and schools to provide the means of making sensible comparisons among the various delivery agents. For years, however, Congress has had little success in gathering such common information.

To illustrate the approaches used by Congress in its attempts to gather meaningful common data, consider the "anchor test study" and the "NCE" units approach. In the former, an attempt was made to link together several different commercially available norm-referenced tests in reading. The attempt proved to be extremely difficult and was abandoned by the mid-1970's. The latter approach tried to create a type of single scale that could be used in place of a single test administered in all schools. The Normal Curve Equivalent scores were useful but did not solve the problems associated with different instructional programs, different curriculum expectations, and differences in content being assessed.

As Congress created the language for NCLB, it was faced with the task of requiring improvement in student achievement while not imposing a national testing program or a national student identification number to track progress over time. The model that evolved, therefore, is basically the same approach as has been used in the past—a "status" model rather than a "growth" model. Student achievement within a school, district, or state is to be measured during the current academic year and the results compared to the achievement in the following year. In other words, fifth grade students in 2002-03 will be compared to fifth grade students in 2003-04 even though the students are not the same! The assumption is that one year's group of students is not significantly different than the next year's group of students, an idea that is extremely tenuous in these days of high family mobility. It is further exacerbated in a state like Florida where

there is tremendous in-migration of students every year, making each year's class different in many ways than the one last year.

Now consider what NCLB requires each state to do in measuring AYP. The following five concepts summarize the important steps.

1. Starting points are determined based on 2001-02 reading/language arts and mathematics achievement data. With the goal of 100% "Proficient or Above" in 12 years, each state stipulates annual measurable objectives (growth targets). One or more "other indicators" are selected for measurement.

2. Each state gathers assessment information (including other indicators) and reports the % "Proficient and Above" for: all students, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, and five categories of race/ethnicity (white, African-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan). This is a status measurement at a point in time in which current performance is compared to the growth targets.

3. Each school's performance is compared to the state measurable objectives. Each subgroup in #2 above must meet or exceed the objectives. However, if one or more subgroups do not meet the objectives, the school will meet AYP if the percentage of students in those subgroups not reaching proficiency decreases by 10% compared to the previous year and if those subgroups made progress on one or more of the other indicators and if not less than 95% of each subgroup of students participated in the assessment. While the first comparison is one of status, the second could be either a status measurement comparison or a growth comparison for a cohort of students because the law does not prescribe which it will be.

4. Each district's performance is compared to the state measurable objectives. Each subgroup in #2 above must meet or exceed the objectives.

   However, if one or more subgroups does not meet the objectives, the district will meet AYP if the percentage of students in those subgroups not reaching proficiency decreases by 10% compared to the previous year and if those subgroups made progress on one or more of the other indicators and if not less than 95% of each subgroup of students participated in the assessment. While the first comparison is one of status, the second can be either a status measurement comparison or a growth comparison for a cohort of students.

5. Compare the state's performance to the measurable objectives. Each subgroup in #2 above must meet or exceed the objectives.

   In addition, the state must meet its objectives relating to the development and attainment of English proficiency for LEP students.

Assuming that these steps have been completed, the results of the assessments will be displayed for the public and the educational community. The conditions for meeting AYP under NCLB are challenging in that the school and district must meet the state targets in each of several separate comparisons. This can be illustrated by the following table.

The data display would appear as shown below for elementary, middle, and senior high schools.

## Elementary and Middle Schools

| | Reading | Reading Participation Rate | Math | Math Participation Rate | Other (Writing)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All students | | | | | |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | | | | | |
| White | | | | | |
| Black | | | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | | |
| Am. Indian | | | | | |
| SWD | | | | | |
| LEP | | | | | |

* In accordance with Section 200.19 of the final regulations, the "Other Academic Indicators" will be disaggregated by subgroup for reporting purposes but will not be used for determining AYP.

## Senior High Schools

| | Reading | Reading Partici-pation Rate | Math | Math Partici-pation Rate | Other (Gradu-ation Rate)* | Other (Writing) * |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All students | | | | | | |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | | | | | | |
| White | | | | | | |
| Black | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | | | |
| Am. Indian | | | | | | |
| SWD | | | | | | |
| LEP | | | | | | |

* In accordance with Section 200.19 of the final regulations, the "Other Academic Indicators" will be disaggregated by subgroup for reporting purposes but will not be used for determining AYP.

For a senior high school to meet all of its targets requires a number of separate Yes/No conjunctive decisions. Scoring relatively higher in reading will not compensate for low scores in mathematics as would happen in a compensatory model.

The reporting of assessment information in the previous tables is subject to the following conditions:

1. The cells in the above table will be reported subject to the limitations on cell sizes previously described.

2. The school's values in each cell of the above table will be the the current year's performance.

3. Students who take an alternate assessment will have their results reported in categorical classifications that include the designation of "Proficient," thereby making it possible for their performance to be counted with those of other students.

4. Any school that is in its first year of operation will be included in the system but with only one year of data to report. Schools that include K-2 and do not take the statewide assessment (FCAT) will be assigned the proficiency ratings earned by the school their students attend in grade 3.

5. In the event that a school district selects additional indicators with which to determine a school's AYP, as is authorized in Section 1116 of HR-1 (NCLB authorization), the district shall provide these data to the Department of Education for use with the State Report Cards required by law.

6. The required NCLB data analyses and reports will be prepared for each school regardless of the grade level configurations. That is, a K-5 school will generate data displayed as shown on the previous page as well as a grades 9-12 high school or a K-12 school. Each can be reported in terms of the percent of students who are "Proficient or Above" in reading and in mathematics. At the district level, the data will be reported for all students in the district who are "Proficient or Above" in reading and mathematics without regard for school-by-school distinctions.

NCLB includes several important concepts such as the following.

(1) All students must be held to the same, challenging standards;
(2) All students are to be assessed;
(3) The progress of students is to be consistent and forward-looking with the goal of moving all students to at least the Proficient level within 12 years;
(4) Assessment results are to be aggregated and reported to parents annually;
(5) Assessment and accountability results are to be disaggregated by seven major subgroups and
(6) Student progress is monitored annually and improvement is noted when performance improves with a specific grade level(s) over time. This is a "status system" on a very large scale.

While these principles are admirable, the NCLB model can be improved in those states that have launched an effort to implement "value-added achievement monitoring" in which the progress of individual students is monitored across time. If Johnny's reading achievement is measured in fourth grade and he is measured again in fifth grade with a test that has been vertically linked across the grade levels, his absolute growth, or lack thereof, can be measured and reported. The keys to such a system are: (1) a student testing program in all grade levels, (2) test content keyed to an established set of curriculum expectations, (3) a vertical measurement scale that allows student scores to be reported from the least grade to the highest, and (4) a student identification system that assigns a unique number to a student through his/her lifetime within the public school system. All of these elements are found in the existing Florida public school assessment and accountability system.

The existing Florida school accountability program produces school grades based on student performance in reading, writing, and mathematics. Special attention is paid to students who are in the lowest 25% of students in FCAT

Levels 1, 2, and 3 in each school. Further, the program features the measurement of academic growth of individual students through the FCAT vertical score scale in reading and mathematics.

Florida proposes to fully implement NCLB in all schools and deliver analyses and results exactly as the law specifies. However, in order to link the NCLB status system to Florida's existing status and gain system, it is proposed that no school will be allowed to be designated as meeting AYP if it has been graded "D" or "F" under the A+ school grading system.

Under the terms of the system Florida is proposing, all of these objectives will be met with a system that is more challenging than the NCLB requirements. Congress enacted a law that meets the constraints posed by the vast majority of states who do not have the student assessment and accountability traditions found in Florida. If Florida changes its A+ system to serve as the NCLB accountability system, it actually will cause our system to regress, not move forward with its measurement of individual student learning gains.

Florida already has a tremendous investment in its A+ Plan for Education, and educators and citizens are familiar with it. To make changes would require amendments to existing statutes, administrative rules, computer programs, administrative infrastructure, and information dissemination to all public schools.

The Florida school grading system is illustrated in Appendix F of this Plan. Close inspection demonstrates how the program holds schools accountable for scoring high on the FCAT, specifically, having increasing numbers of students earning FCAT Achievement Level scores previously identified as being the equivalent of "Proficient or Above" as required by NCLB.

The program requires students to make learning gains in reading and mathematics if they presently are earning less than "Proficient." If they already are achieving at the "Proficient or Above" levels, the school earns points to the degree that the students do not regress.

Specific attention is paid to the achievement of those students who are demonstrating the least achievement, below "Proficient." Schools earn points for all students in the lowest 25%-tile who make "adequate progress," defined as gaining in achievement as much as the norm group for the State.

The existing system already incorporates the results of the writing assessment that we have proposed be the "other indicator" for grades 4, 8, and 10.

If a school does not meet its annual growth targets, it can meet AYP under the "safe harbor" provisions of NCLB for improving the performance of students in various subgroups:

1. The percentage of students in that group below the State's proficiency achievement level "decreased by [at least] 10 percent of that percentage from the preceding school year"; and
2. That group made progress on the other indicator of writing or, for high schools, writing and the graduation rate; and
3. Not less than 95% of the students enrolled in each group takes the statewide assessment. The participation rate will be calculated by dividing the number of students actually taking the FCAT or alternate assessment by the number of students in membership at the time of the assessment.

However, if a school does not meet the State's annual objective growth target for two years in a row or if the school otherwise earns a grade of "D" or "F," it will be designated a school in need of targeted assistance and additional services or sanctions will be identified.

Schools and districts will be evaluated separately for reading and mathematics performance. A school or district could fail to meet its AYP requirements in reading one year, improve in reading the second year, and become deficient in mathematics the second year. If this occurs, the school or district will not be subjected to the requirements of Sections 200.32-200.34 of the NCLB rules because it has not had two consecutive years of poor performance in the same content area. If a school or district fails to meet its AYP requirements in the same content area (e.g., reading) for two consecutive years, it will be subjected to the requirements of Sections 200.3-200.34.

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# Appendix F

## A+ School Grading System

The following charts explain how school grades are calculated for the A+ school grading system.

# GRADING FLORIDA PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2001-2002

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CHARLIE CRIST, COMMISSIONER, www.firn.edu/doe

**School grades for 2001-02 utilize a point system. Schools are awarded one point for each percent of students who score *high on the FCAT and/or make annual learning gains.***

## Scoring High on the FCAT

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is the primary measure of students' achievement of the Sunshine State Standards. Student scores are classified into five achievement levels, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

⇒ Schools earn one point for each percent of students who score in achievement levels 3, 4, or 5 in **reading** and one point for each percent of students who score 3, 4, or 5 in **math**.

⇒ The **writing** exam is scored by at least two readers on a scale of 1 to 6. The percent of students scoring "3" and above is averaged with the percent scoring "3.5" and above to yield the percent meeting minimum and higher standards. Schools earn one point for each percent of students on the combined measure.

## Making Annual Learning Gains

Since FCAT **reading and math** exams are given in grades 3 – 10, it is now possible to monitor how much students learn from one year to the next.

⇒ Schools earn one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in reading and one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in math. Students can demonstrate learning gains in any one of three ways:

(1) Improve achievement levels from 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, or 4-5; **or**
(2) Maintain within the relatively high levels of 3, 4, or 5; **or**
(3) Demonstrate more than one year's growth within achievement levels 1 or 2.

⇒ Special attention is given to the reading gains of students in the lowest 25% in levels 1, 2, or 3 in each school. Schools earn one point for each percent of the lowest performing readers who make learning gains from the previous year. It takes at least *50%* to make "adequate progress" for this group.

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADING SCALE

**A**
- *410* points* or more
- Meet adequate progress of lowest 25% in reading
- Gains for lowest 25% are within 10 points of gains for all students
- Test at least 95% of eligible students

**B**
- *380* points* or more
- Meet adequate progress of lowest 25% in reading within two years
- Test at least 90% of eligible students

**C**
- *320* points* or more
- Meet adequate progress of lowest 25% in reading within two years
- Test at least 90% of eligible students

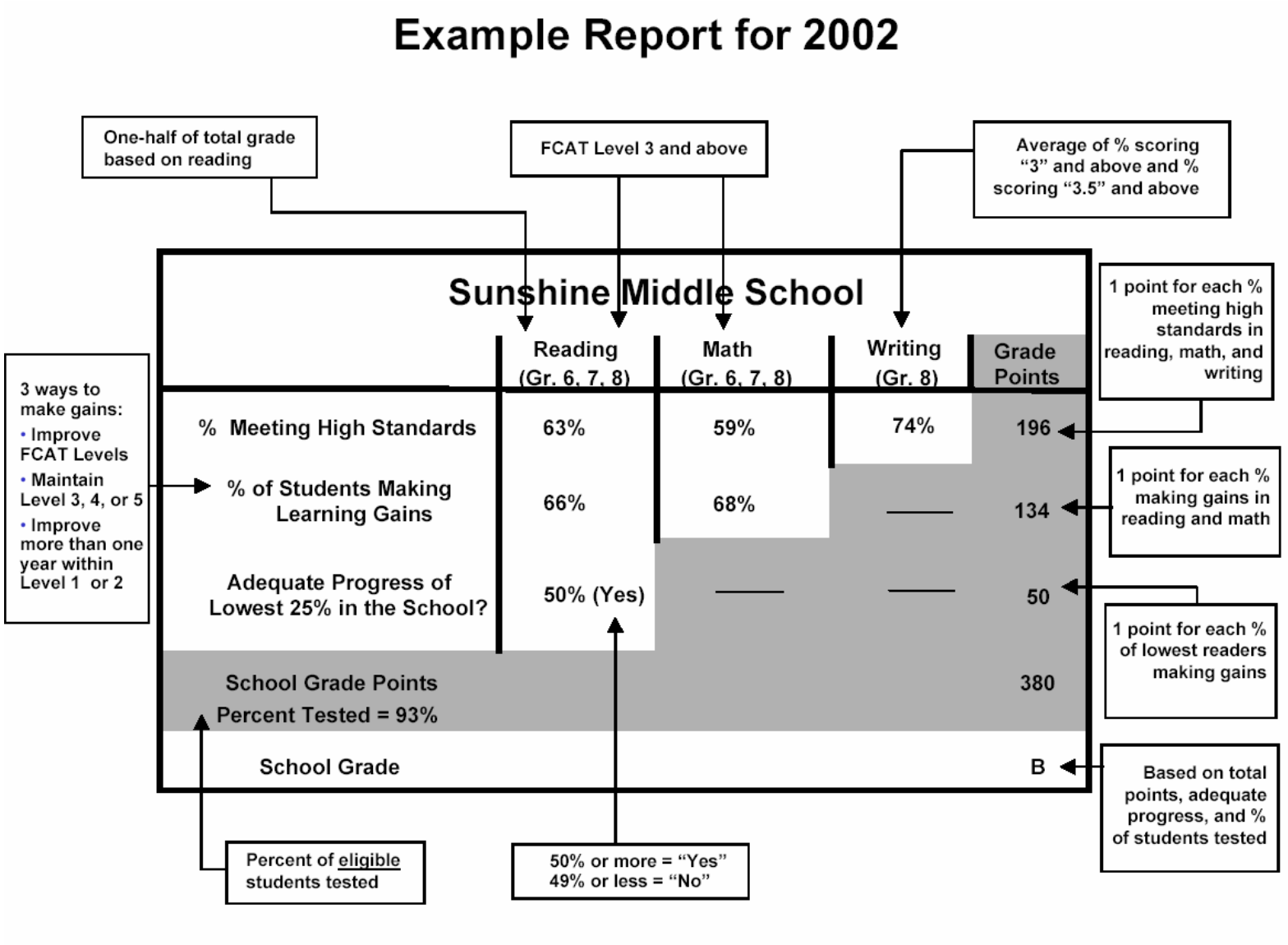
**D**
- *280* points* or more
- Test at least 90% of eligible students

**F**
- Fewer than *280* points*
  **or**
- Less than 90% of eligible students tested

**Which students are included in school grade calculations?** As in previous years, only standard curriculum students who were enrolled in the same school in both October and February are included. Speech impaired, gifted, hospital/homebound, and Limited English Proficient students with more than two years in an ESOL program are also included.

**What happens if the lowest 25% of students in the school do not make "adequate progress" in reading?** Schools that aspire to be graded "C" or above, but do not make adequate progress with their lowest 25% in reading, must develop a School Improvement Plan component that addresses this need. If a school, otherwise graded "C" or "B", does not demonstrate adequate progress for two years in a row, the final grade will be reduced by one letter grade.

***The 2002 grading scale above may vary by as much as 5% in order to make a smooth transition from 2001.**


Example Report for 2002
One-half of total grade based on reading
FCAT Level 3 and above
Average of % scoring "3" and above and % scoring "3.5" and above
Sunshine Middle School
Reading (Gr. 6, 7, 8)
Math (Gr. 6, 7, 8)
Writing (Gr. 8)
Grade Points
1 point for each % meeting high standards in reading, math, and writing
3 ways to make gains:
• Improve FCAT Levels
• Maintain Level 3, 4, or 5
• Improve more than one year within Level 1 or 2
% Meeting High Standards
63%
59%
74%
196
% of Students Making Learning Gains
66%
68%
134
1 point for each % making gains in reading and math
Adequate Progress of Lowest 25% in the School?
50% (Yes)
50
1 point for each % of lowest readers making gains
School Grade Points
380
Percent Tested = 93%
School Grade
B
Based on total points, adequate progress, and % of students tested
Percent of eligible students tested
50% or more = "Yes"
49% or less = "No"

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# Appendix G

## Annual Learning Gain Targets to Proficiency

The FCAT was originally developed to test reading in grades 4, 8, and 10, and mathematics in grades 5, 8, and 10. The test results were reported in terms of a succession of annual "status reports" that revealed the performance of Florida students who were in different cohorts. The data were reported for each subject using a score scale that ranged from 100-500, and each scale was separately computed for each grade level. Progress over time was reported as changes in the performance of each grade level group – i.e., this year's fourth grade students were compared to last year's fourth graders to see if the average score changed or, for example, if more students were earning "Level 3" scores.

In 2001, the FCAT program was expanded so that the tests now are being administered in all grades 3-10. This offers the opportunity to make use of a new score scale that links adjacent grades together and permits progress to be tracked over time, based on what is commonly called a "developmental scale." The effect of this improvement is that student performance across the grades can be tracked across this scale. As a student moves from grade to grade, his/her performance can be monitored and compared to the performance of other students in Florida. Most importantly, the yearly progress of each student can be reported by the change in the developmental scale scores.

Florida will use this new developmental scale to develop a plan with annual learning gain targets for all students below proficiency.

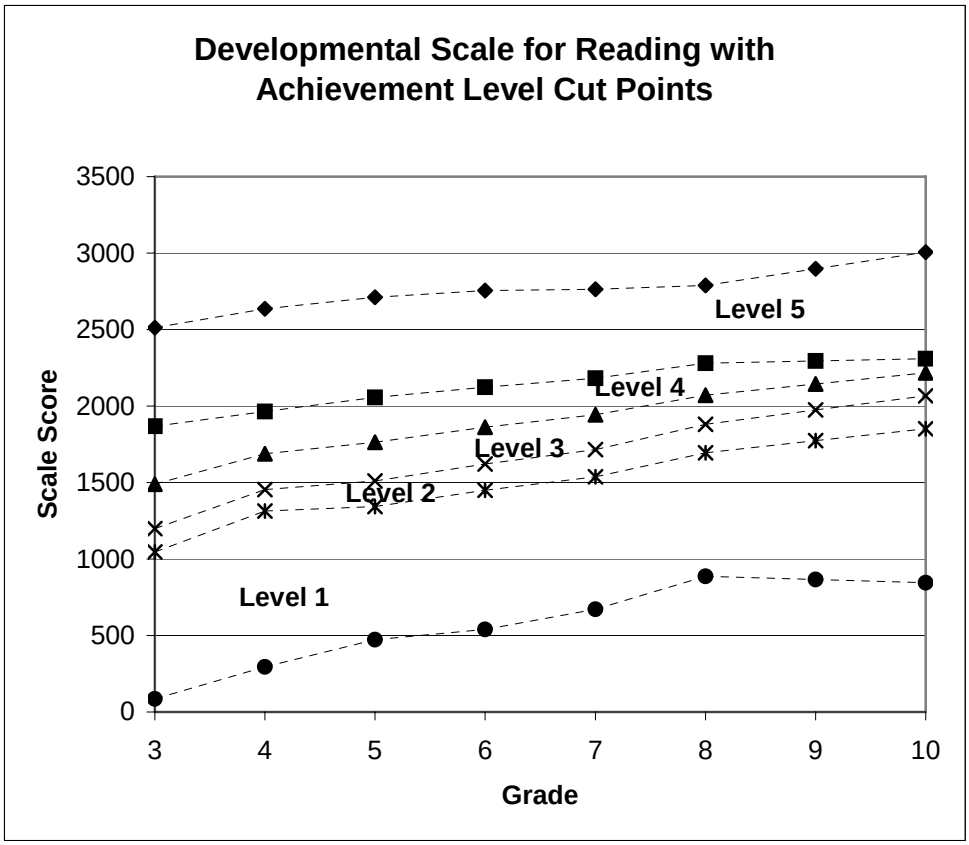
### Four-Year Plans

By using the developmental scale, districts and schools can chart their students' growth as they move across the grade levels. Such charts, or data plots, make it possible to answer the question, "Is this student making adequate progress for each year in school?" and, "If this student keeps making the same amount of progress, is he/she going to be ready for the grade ten graduation testing requirement?" For those students achieving below proficiency, we are able to set annual targets for growth that will set the student on a trajectory to proficiency.

For example, a third-grade student with a FCAT Reading score of 150 would be designated as scoring in Level 1, clearly below proficiency. The Developmental Scale Score (DSS) for this student would be 389 in the conversion to the vertical scale. To bring this student to a level of proficiency by the end of 7$^{th}$ grade, the student would need to have a DSS score of at least 1719 and his/her plan would map out the growth needed each year to reach the goal of proficiency, with identified annual benchmarks. Instructional plans would tie to the content scores on the FCAT Reading test, so that specific strategies link to content areas needing attention.

**Example Developmental Scale for Reading**

The following chart illustrates the relationship between the developmental scores and the FCAT achievement levels.



## Appendix H

## The Florida Department of Education
## Return on Investment (ROI)

Currently the Department of Education has available a multitude of reports which provide information using student, staff and finance data. For the purpose of assessing the quality and efficiency of the various education delivery systems, the Department is in the process of using the available information to develop a comprehensive set of measures for the purpose of comparisons and trend analysis of schools, districts, and postsecondary institutions. By integrating the goals of highest student achievement and quality and efficient services, this effort will establish an accountability system for the use of public education resources for all delivery systems.

A comprehensive system for calculating “return on investment” based on indicators of institutional efficiency and effectiveness is under development. The system will have many benefits, including:

- The use of data to influence decision-making – Good decisions are based on inquiry and analysis. Information technologies are available to make this possible for school-based administrators, as well as external users of education information such as legislators and researchers.

- The use of data to target specific areas for improvement – Timely and accurate data can assist decision makers at all levels in focusing on improvement strategies.

- The use of disaggregated data to examine wide-ranging goals – Disaggregating data for analysis allows for identification of programmatic and/or fiscal inequities and assists in the establishment of baselines for improvement.

- The use of data in rapid program evaluation – In order to have an impact, program evaluation must be timely as well as complete. By compiling and linking program and other data in an accurate and well-designed retrieval system, program evaluation can be effectively and efficiently accomplished.

- The use of data to examine the relationship between cost and program effectiveness.

# Appendix I

## The Florida Department of Education
## High School Graduation Options

### Standard Diploma

Students who have 2.0 GPA, pass FCAT, earn the required 24 credits and meet any other local graduation requirements receive a standard diploma (s. 1003.43(9) and 1008.22(3)(c)5, F.S.).

### Certificate of Completion

Students who have a 2.0 GPA, earn the required credits but do not pass the FCAT receive a "certificate of completion" (s. 1003.43(9), F.S.)

### State of Florida/High School Equivalency Diploma

Students who are at-risk for not graduating, participate in a General Education Development (GED) Exit program and pass the GED receive a State of Florida diploma (DOE agreement with the American Council on Education and s. 1003.435(4), F.S.).

Candidates, who are at least 18 years of age, unless extraordinary circumstances exist, and who meet performance standards established by rules of the State Board (including passing the GED) receive a high school equivalency diploma 1003.435(2)&(4), F.S.).

All high school equivalency diplomas issued under this law have equal status with other high school diplomas for all state purposes, including admission to any state university or community college (s. 1003.435(6)(a), F.S.).

The State Board is to adopt rules for the award of a standard high school diploma to holders of high school equivalency diplomas who are assessed as meeting designated criteria (s. 1003.435(6)(b), F.S.).

### Special Diploma

Certain students with disabilities are eligible to receive a special diploma upon completion of specified standards, which include the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma (see Section 1003.438, Florida Statutes).

### Special Certificate of Completion

Certain student with disabilities who do not complete the requirements for a special diploma may be awarded a special certificate of completion (see Section 1003.438, Florida Statutes).