

2005 FCAT

Grades 3 and 12

Reading and Mathematics

May 11, 2005





JEB BUSH
GOVERNOR

STATE OF FLORIDA

Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2005

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GOVERNOR BUSH AND COMMISSIONER WINN ANNOUNCE FCAT RESULTS FOR 3RD AND 12TH GRADE

~ More 3rd graders reading at or above grade level than ever before ~

CHARLOTTE HARBOR—Governor Jeb Bush today announced Florida students continue to achieve at high levels with more third graders than ever before reading at grade level. The results show more than two-thirds of all Florida third grade students are reading at or above grade level—the largest number in the state's history. The Governor was joined by Education Commissioner John Winn to release the results of the third and twelfth grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) at Peace River Elementary School. Students at Peace River Elementary were forced to attend a neighboring elementary school, in afternoon sessions, from 12:30 until 6:10 p.m. after their school was destroyed by Hurricane Charley. Despite adverse conditions, third grade scores at Peace River went from 56 percent of students reading at or above grade level in 2004 to 80 percent in 2005, an increase of 24 percent.

“Our students, teachers and parents achieved tremendous results in the face of adversity. Today's results show the state is moving in the right direction with more third grade students reading at or above grade level,” said Governor Bush. “I’m extremely proud of our progress so far. These scores are more than just numbers or a trend line on a chart. Each year when scores improve it means more students are learning.”

“I could not be more proud of the achievements of our students, teachers and parents,” Peace River Principal Lynne Kratochvil said. “This was a team effort building the literacy skills necessary for the students to achieve this success.”

Ending social promotion three years ago has had a positive impact on student achievement. In 2005, sixty-two percent of retained third graders scored at Level 2 or above, up from 59 percent in 2004. Overall, the percentage of third graders reading at or above grade level rose to 67 percent this year, up from 66 percent last year and 57 percent when third graders began taking the FCAT in 2001. Meanwhile, the percentage of third graders scoring below basic (Level 1) in reading dropped to 20 percent from 22 percent in 2004 and 29 percent in 2001.

(more)

FCAT RESULTS – Page Two

“Teachers in Florida have been working extremely hard to prepare students to succeed in the classroom and life,” Lt. Governor Toni Jennings said. “These results show children are making gains in reading and math and more are advancing to the next stage of their education.”

Other FCAT results include:

- Florida students continue to close the achievement gap. African American third grade reading scores have increased from 36 percent reading at or above grade level in 2001 to 52 percent in 2005. Hispanic students made similar increases with 46 percent reading at or above grade level in 2001 to 61 percent in 2005.
- Florida students made similar improvements in mathematics with 68 percent of third graders calculating math at or above grade level, compared to 52 percent in 2001.
- In 2002, nine percent of the graduating class did not pass the 8th grade level high school competency test (HSCT) whereas only 7 percent of this year’s seniors will not graduate solely because they have not yet met the 10th FCAT graduation requirement. This has improved from 10 percent in 2004.

“In Florida, students are responding positively to the challenge set before them through high standards and accountability,” Commissioner Winn said. “We want to ensure that when a student leaves the classroom at the end of the year, he or she has achieved the necessary skills to succeed in school and in life.”

The FCAT is not the sole determiner of a child’s promotion to fourth grade. Parents of third graders in need of additional remediation may learn more at www.justreadflorida.com. High school seniors and their parents who want to learn more about their options should visit <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/12-grade/twelhome.htm>.

The options available to third graders who were not successful on the FCAT include:

- **Summer Reading Camps**—These reading camps will consist of six to eight weeks of intensive targeted-specific remedial reading instruction. The camp will include 5 _ hours of instructional time per day for four days a week.
- **Reading Mentors**—These mentors will work in coordination with the summer reading camps to give participating students another opportunity to improve their reading ability.
- **Families Building Better Readers Workshops**—These workshops are designed to educate parents on simple ways to help improve their child's literacy. The sessions will also highlight strategies and methods to help their children through the remedial process.

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FCAT RESULTS – Page Three

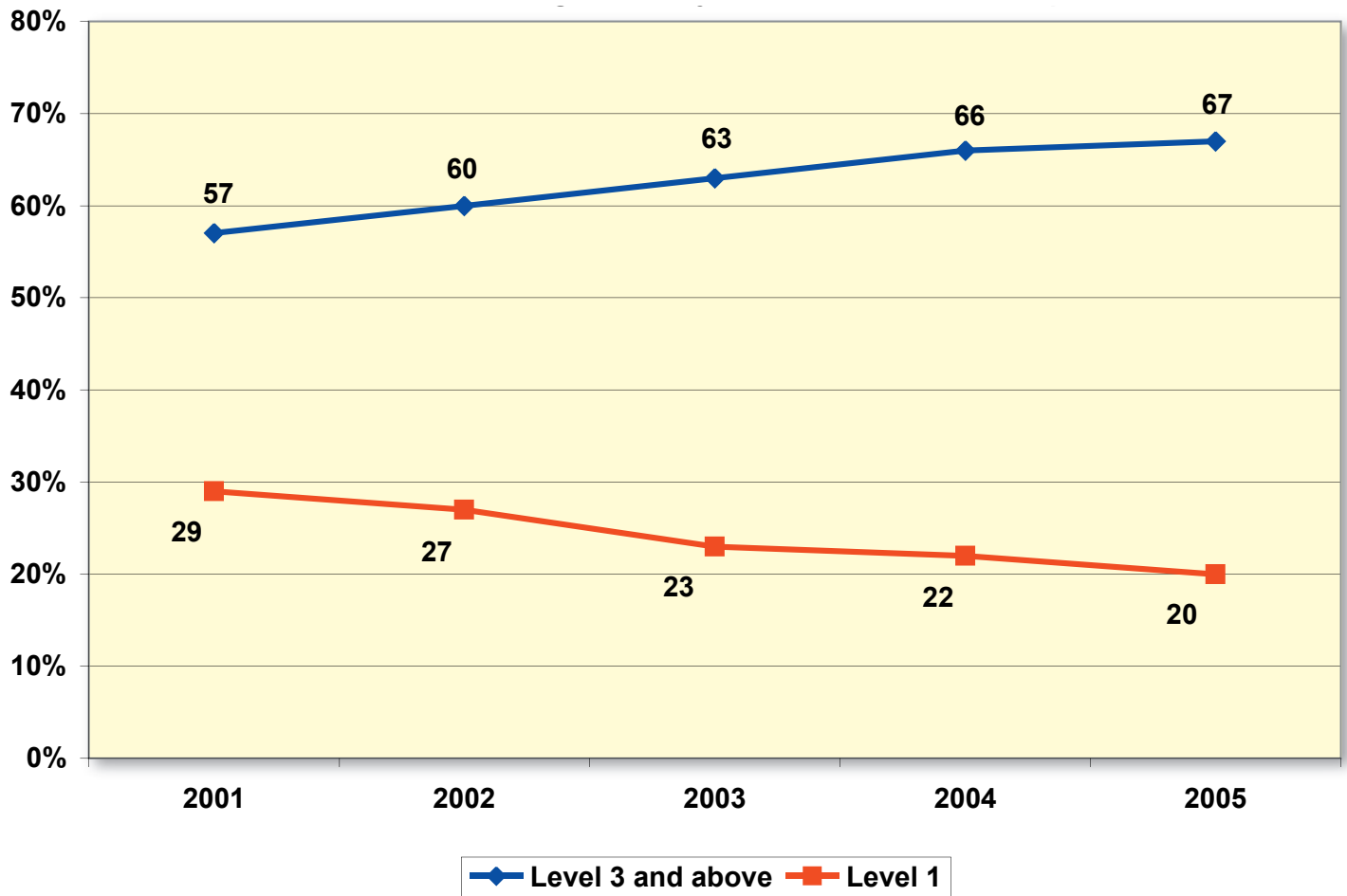
For those twelfth graders who did not meet the FCAT graduation requirements, there are numerous options (detailed in the attached *Stay in the Loop* flyer), including the following opportunities:

- **FCAT Remediation**— Schools offer many opportunities for students to participate in intensive remediation programs to assist them in earning passing scores on the FCAT, including before and after school programs, summer school, tutoring, intensive reading or mathematics classes, and computer assisted instruction. Many students take advantage of this remediation and retake the FCAT in June.
- **Common Placement Test (CPT)-Eligible Certificate of Completion**—Students who meet all requirements for a standard high school diploma except earning passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT are eligible to receive the Common Placement Test (CPT)-Eligible Certificate of Completion. Students who receive this may enroll directly into Florida community colleges. These students will be allowed to take the CPT and be admitted to remedial or college credit courses based on their CPT scores. These students may also enroll directly into postsecondary career and technical education programs offered at school district technical centers and at community colleges.
- **GED Preparation**— Students who did not earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT may choose to participate in an adult education program and prepare to take the GED tests. Students who pass the GED tests will earn the State of Florida high school diploma.
- **GED Exit Option**— Students who did not earn passing scores on the FCAT are eligible to participate in the high school GED Exit Option. These students will continue taking courses that meet high school graduation requirements, prepare for the GED, and if they pass the GED tests, graduate with a State of Florida high school diploma.
- **Technical/Vocational Training**—Students will also be counseled about high demand occupational training programs in which they can enroll while pursuing their high school diploma.
- **Community College Acceptance**—Once students earn their GED, CPT eligible Certificate of Completion or high school diploma, they are eligible to enroll at a Florida public community college.

Full FCAT results are not yet available. For preliminary third and twelfth grade results, please visit <http://fcat.fldoe.org>.

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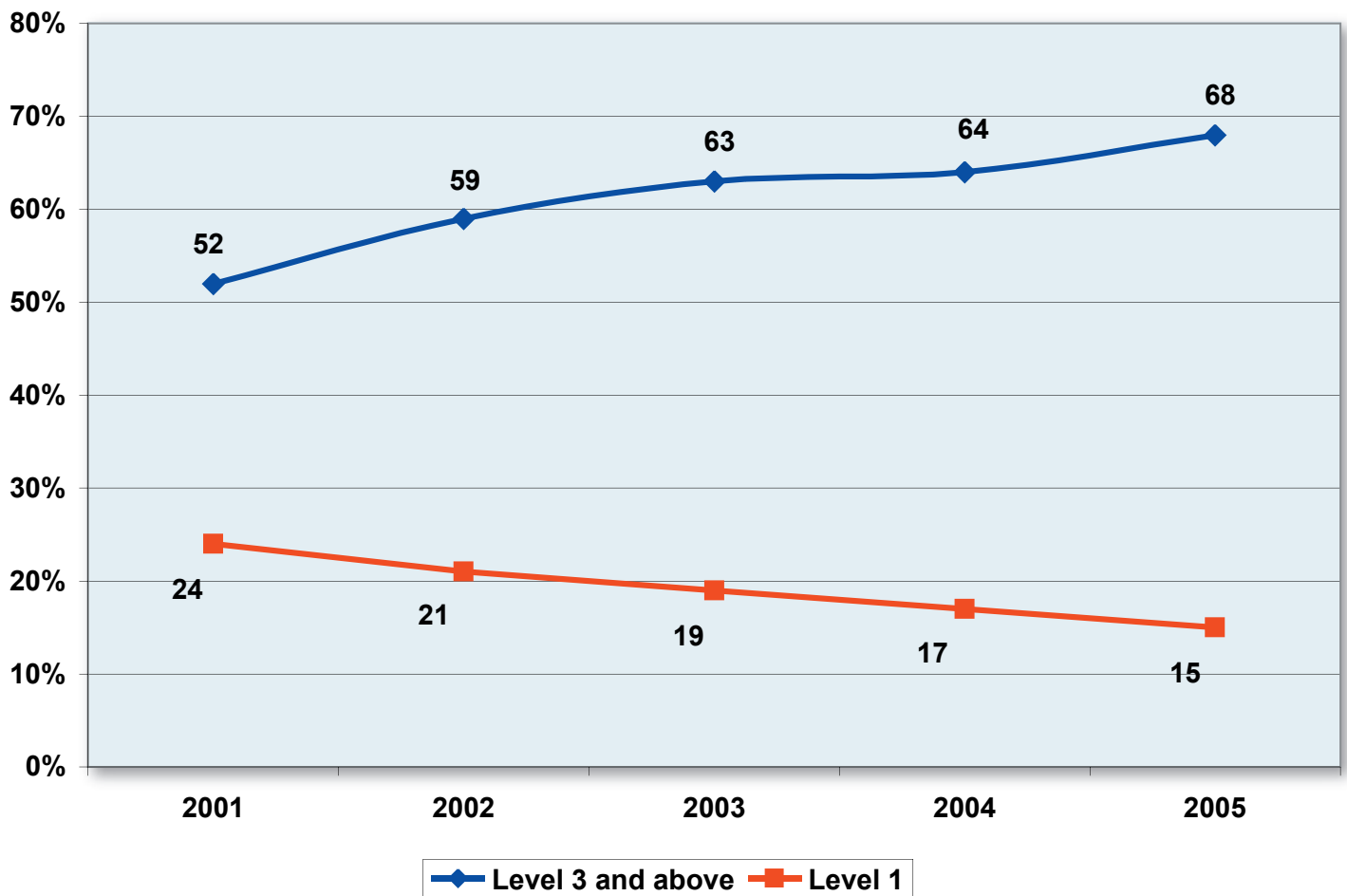
FCAT Reading by Achievement Level Grade 3



In 2005, 67 percent of Florida's third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Reading. This represents an increase from 57 percent in 2001, 60 percent in 2002, 63 percent in 2003, and 66 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 10 percentage points since 2001. In 2005, 20 percent of Florida's third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Reading. This represents an improvement from 29 percent in 2001, 27 percent in 2002, 23 percent in 2003, and 22 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 9 percentage points since 2001.

Source: Florida Department of Education

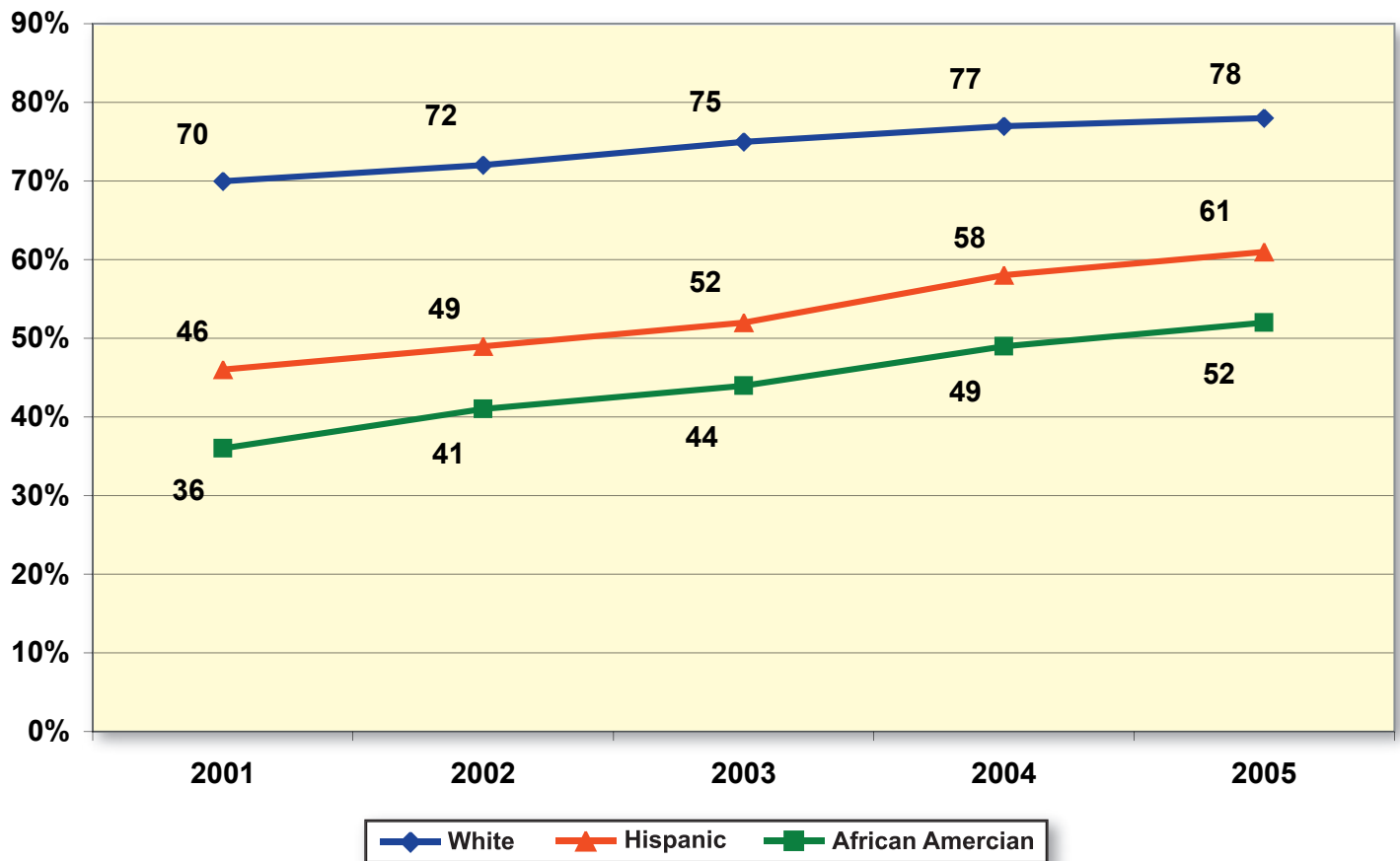
FCAT Mathematics by Achievement Level Grade 3



In 2005, 68 percent of Florida's third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Mathematics. This represents an increase from 52 percent in 2001, 59 percent in 2002, 63 percent in 2003, and 64 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 16 percentage points since 2001. In 2005, 15 percent of Florida's third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Mathematics. This represents an improvement from 24 percent in 2001, 21 percent in 2002, 19 percent in 2003, and 17 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 9 percentage points since 2001.

Source: Florida Department of Education

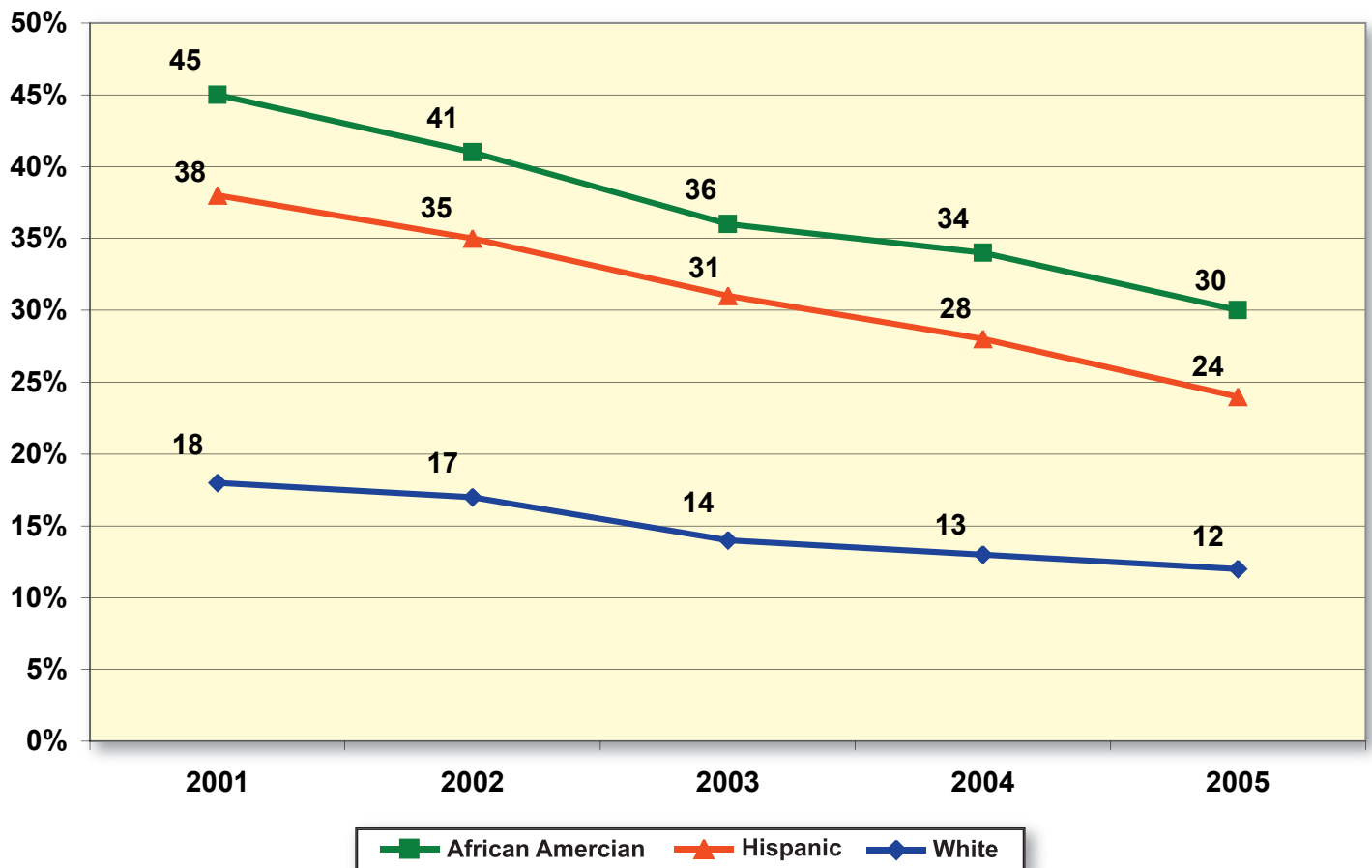
FCAT Reading Students at Achievement Level 3 and Above Grade 3



In 2005, 78 percent of Florida's white third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Reading. This represents an increase from 70 percent in 2001, 72 percent in 2002, 75 percent in 2003, and 77 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 8 percentage points since 2001 for white third graders. In 2005, 61 percent of Florida's Hispanic third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Reading. This represents an increase from 46 percent in 2001, 49 percent in 2002, 52 percent in 2003, and 58 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 15 percentage points since 2001 for Hispanic third graders. In 2005, 52 percent of Florida's African American third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Reading. This represents an increase from 36 percent in 2001, 41 percent in 2002, 44 percent in 2003, and 49 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 16 percentage points since 2001 for African American third graders.

Source: Florida Department of Education

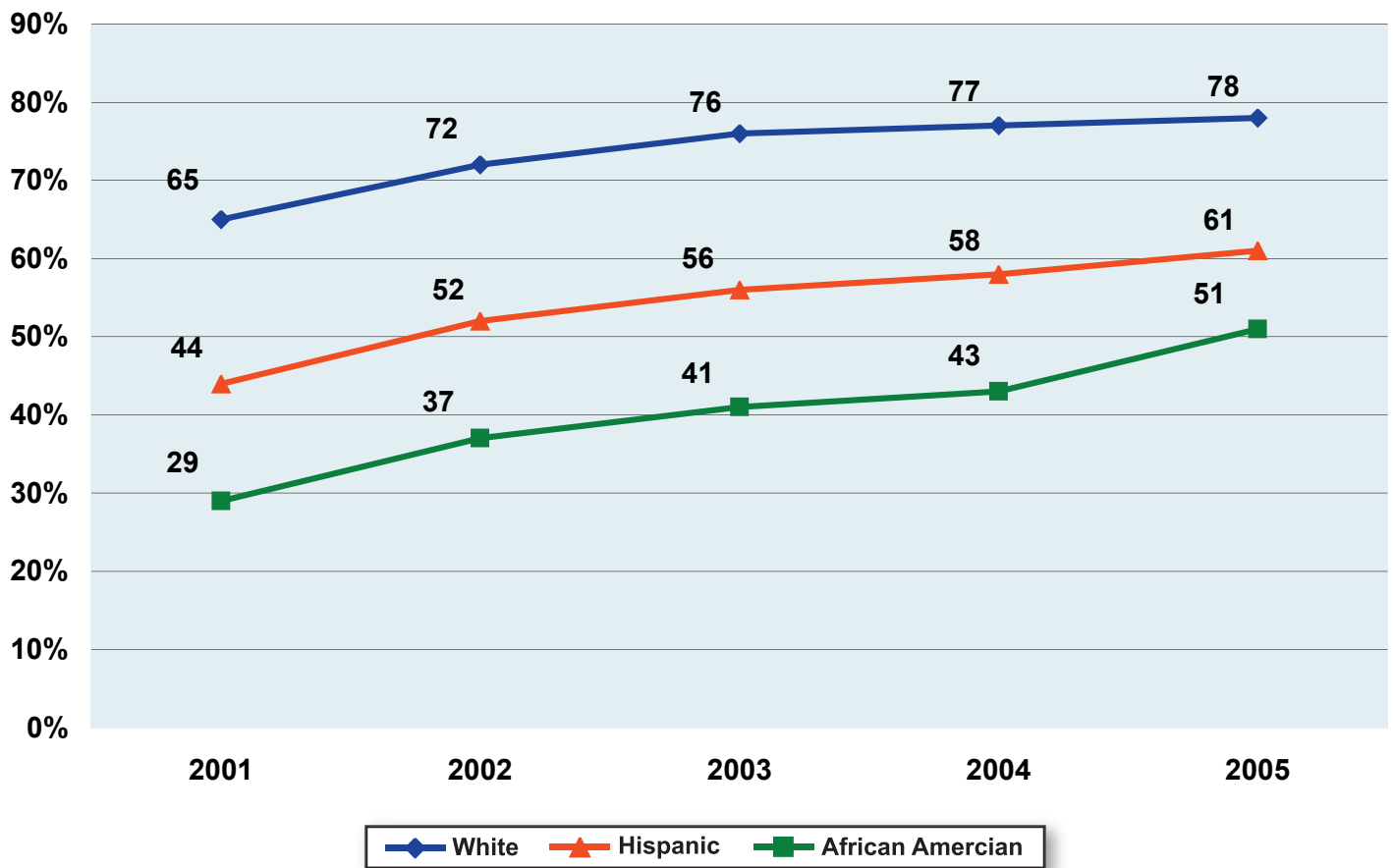
FCAT Reading Students at Achievement Level 1 Grade 3



In 2005, 12 percent of Florida's white third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Reading. This represents a decrease from 18 percent in 2001 for white third graders. In 2005, 24 percent of Florida's Hispanic third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Reading. This represents a decrease from 38 percent in 2001, 35 percent in 2002, 31 percent in 2003, and 28 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 14 percentage points since 2001 for Hispanic third graders. In 2005, 30 percent of Florida's African American third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Reading. This represents a decrease from 45 percent in 2001, 41 percent in 2002, 36 percent in 2003, and 34 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 15 percentage points since 2001 for African American third graders.

Source: Florida Department of Education

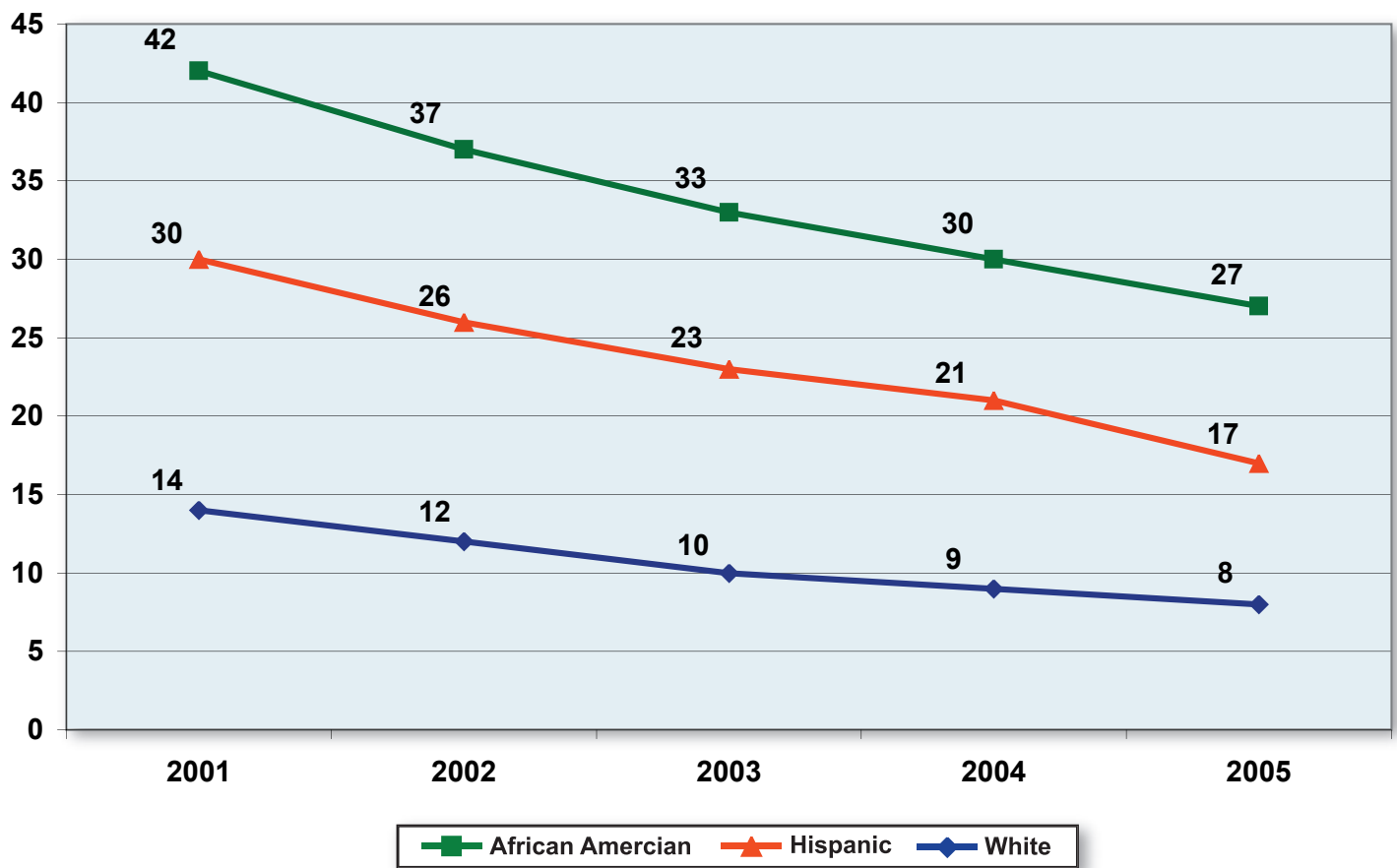
FCAT Mathematics Students at Achievement Level 3 and Above Grade 3



In 2005, 78 percent of Florida's white third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Mathematics. This represents an increase from 65 percent in 2001, 72 percent in 2002, 76 percent in 2003, and 77 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 13 percentage points since 2001 for white third graders. In 2005, 61 percent of Florida's Hispanic third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Mathematics. This represents an increase from 44 percent in 2001, 52 percent in 2002, 56 percent in 2003, and 58 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 17 percentage points since 2001 for Hispanic third graders. In 2005, 51 percent of Florida's African American third graders scored in achievement level 3 and above on FCAT Mathematics. This represents an increase from 29 percent in 2001, 37 percent in 2002, 41 percent in 2003, and 43 percent in 2004 for a total increase of 22 percentage points since 2001 for African American third graders.

Source: Florida Department of Education

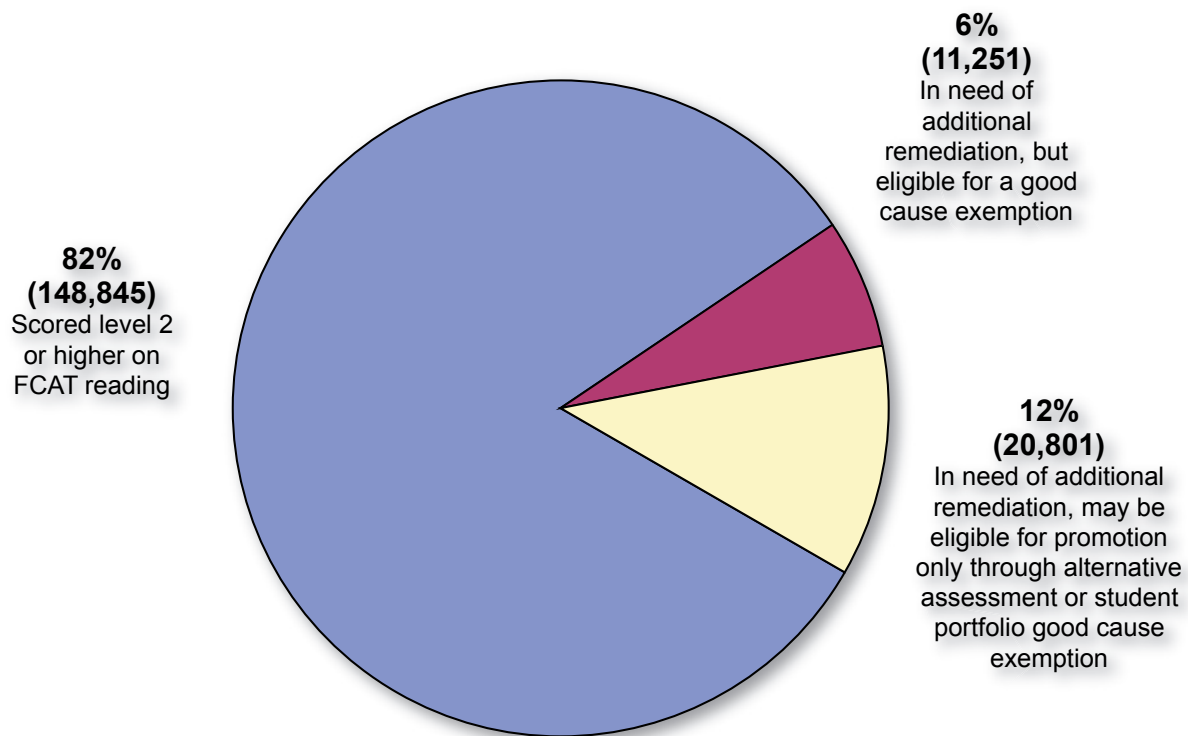
FCAT Mathematics Students at Achievement Level 1 Grade 3



In 2005, 8 percent of Florida's white third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Mathematics. This represents a decrease from 14 percent in 2001, 12 percent in 2002, 10 percent in 2003, and 9 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 6 percentage points since 2001 for white third graders. In 2005, 17 percent of Florida's Hispanic third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Mathematics. This represents a decrease from 30 percent in 2001, 26 percent in 2002, 23 percent in 2003, and 21 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 13 percentage points since 2001 for Hispanic third graders. In 2005, 27 percent of Florida's African American third graders scored in achievement level 1 on FCAT Mathematics. This represents a decrease from 42 percent in 2001, 37 percent in 2002, 33 percent in 2003, and 30 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of 15 percentage points since 2001 for African American third graders.

Source: Florida Department of Education

FCAT Reading First Time Test Takers Grade 3

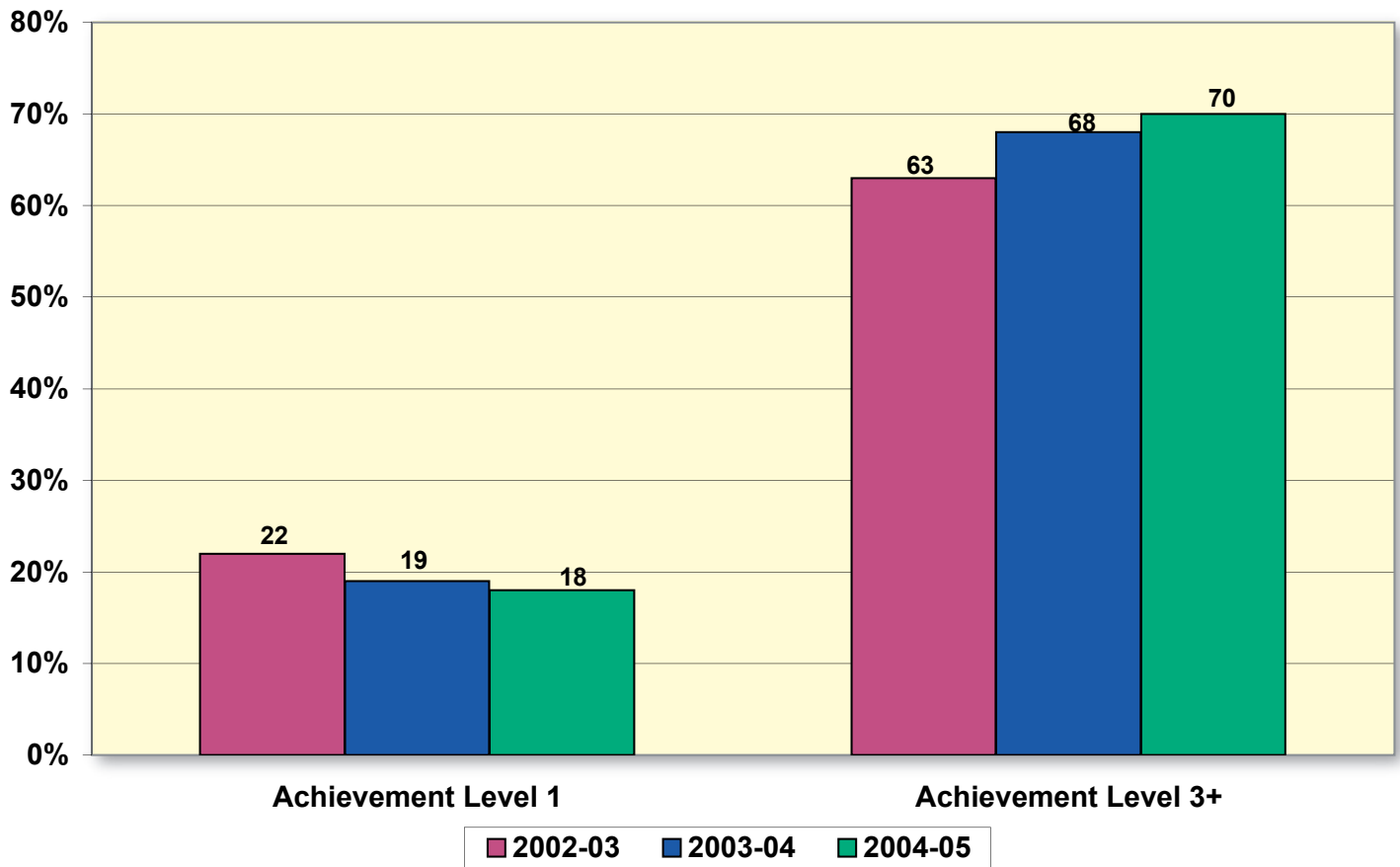


In 2005, 82 percent (148,845) of Florida's third grade students taking FCAT reading for the first time scored at achievement level 2 or higher. Twelve percent, 20,801 students, are in need of additional remediation and may be eligible for promotion only through alternative assessment or student portfolio good cause exemption. Six percent, 11,251 students, are in need of additional remediation but are eligible for good cause exemption promotions. The actual number of retained students may be fewer since some students move out of Florida or enroll in a non-public school the following year.

Source: Florida Department of Education

FCAT Reading First Time Test Takers Grade 3

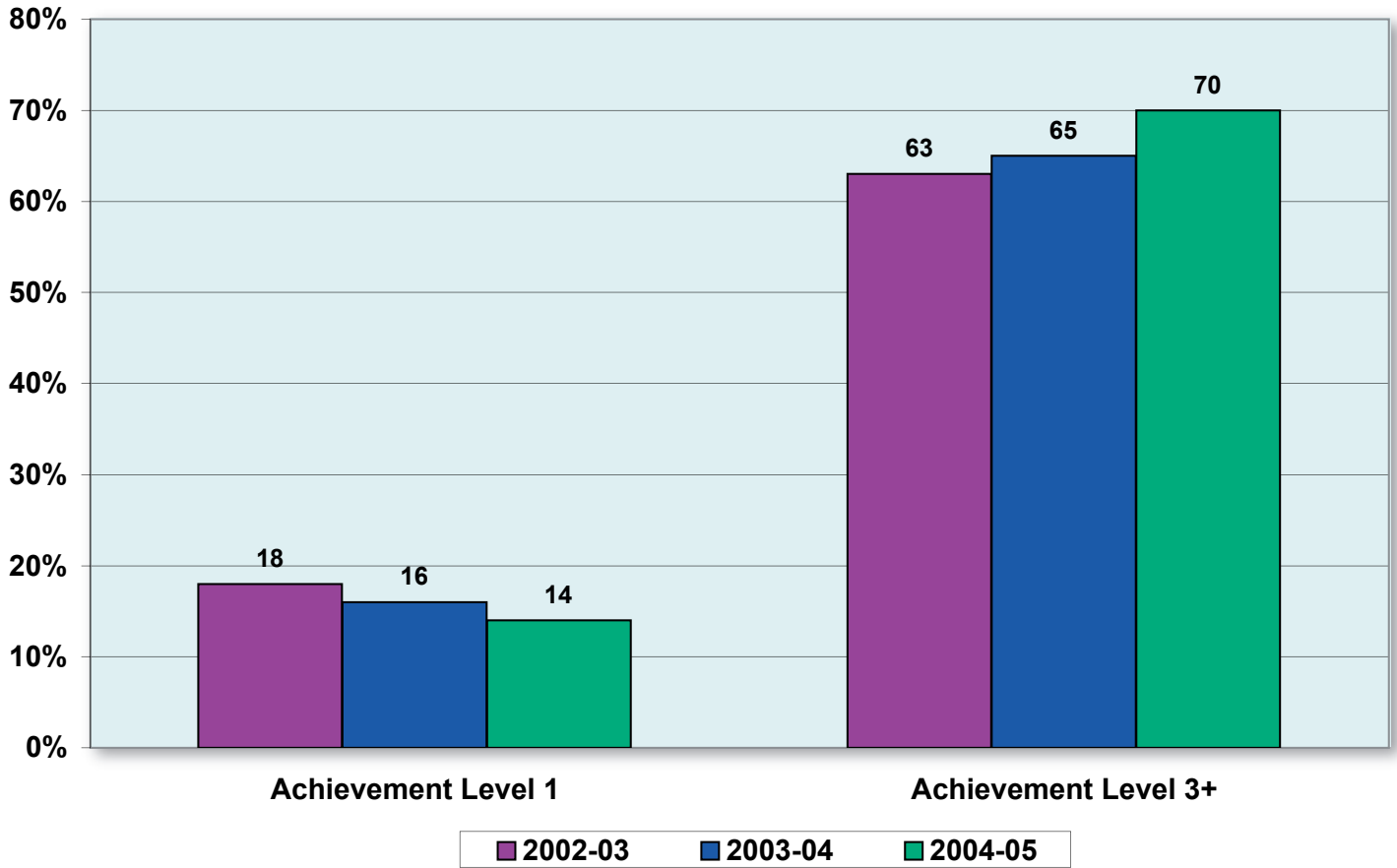
2005 FCAT Reading Grade 3 - First Test Takers



In 2005, 18 percent of Florida's third grade students taking FCAT Reading for the first time scored in achievement level 1. This represents a decrease from 22 percent in 2003 and 19 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of four percent since 2003. In 2005, 70 percent of Florida's third grade students taking FCAT Reading for the first time scored in achievement level 3 and above. This represents an increase from 63 percent in 2003 and 68 percent in 2004 for a total increase of seven percent since 2003.

Source: Florida Department of Education

FCAT Mathematics First Time Test Takers Grade 3



In 2005, 14 percent of Florida's third grade students taking FCAT Mathematics for the first time scored in achievement level 1. This represents a decrease from 18 percent in 2003 and 16 percent in 2004 for a total decrease of four percent since 2003. In 2005, 70 percent of Florida's third grade students taking FCAT Mathematics for the first time scored in achievement level 3 and above. This represents an increase from 63 percent in 2003 and 65 percent in 2004 for a total increase of seven percent since 2003.

Source: Florida Department of Education



Reading and Mathematics Scores – GRADE 3 Statewide Comparison for 2001 to 2005

FCAT Reading – Sunshine State Standards Test¹										
Grade	Year	Number of Students	Average Developmental Scale Score	Average Mean Scale Score	Percent of Students by Achievement Level ²					Achievement Level Three & Above
					1	2	3	4	5	
3	2001	186,139	1233	289	29	14	32	21	4	57
	2002	188,387	1257	293	27	14	32	23	5	60
	2003	188,107	1290	298	23	15	33	25	5	63
	2004	206,435	1315	303	22	13	33	26	6	66
	2005	202,975	1333	305	20	13	33	28	6	67

FCAT Mathematics – Sunshine State Standards Test¹										
Grade	Year	Number of Students	Average Developmental Scale Score	Average Mean Scale Score	Percent of Students by Achievement Level					Achievement Level Three & Above
					1	2	3	4	5	
3	2001	186,336	1258	291	24	24	33	16	3	52
	2002	188,606	1309	302	21	20	34	20	5	59
	2003	188,487	1335	308	19	19	34	22	7	63
	2004	206,534	1346	310	17	19	34	23	7	64
	2005	203,037	1380	317	15	17	34	25	9	68

FCAT Norm-Referenced Test³							
	Year	Reading			Mathematics		
		Number Tested	Scale Score	Median ⁴ NPR ⁵	Number Tested	Scale Score	Median NPR
SAT 9	2000	183,050	616	49	182,188	612	56
	2001	185,991	622	56	186,080	615	59
	2002	187,965	624	57	188,192	618	62
	2003	187,526	629	61	187,665	623	66
	2004	205,797	629	62	205,804	625	68
SAT 10	2005	201,925	620	50	201,794	624	62

¹ Data are for all students tested in all curriculum groups.

² Achievement Level information was not reported in May 2001 for grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9. The data shown here reflect the retroactive application of the Achievement Level criteria.

³ The 2005 FCAT Norm-Referenced Test is a custom form of the Stanford 10[®]. Prior to that, the Stanford 9[®] was used.

⁴ Median is the score that identifies the middle point.

⁵ NPR is the National Percentile Rank and indicates the percent of students who earned the same score or lower. Students who score at the national average earn an NPR of 50.



INTRODUCTION

This booklet is for parents of Florida's third-grade students. It is designed to help you understand what Florida law says about reading requirements for third-grade students and promotion to fourth grade. It also describes what the school will do to help if your child is reading below grade level.

BACKGROUND

Reading is the core of the school day for young students. Walk into a kindergarten, first-, second-, or third-grade classroom, and you will find children learning to read. They may be talking about the sounds letters make, listening to the teacher read a story, reading aloud together, working on a computer reading program, or talking and writing about what they have read. This is because reading and comprehension are the foundations for all academic learning. Students need strong reading skills in order to learn in all other school subjects, such as science, history, writing, and even math.

Schools regularly assess (measure) the reading ability of all students in kindergarten through grade three. This allows them to identify students who are struggling with reading. If your child is reading below grade level, the school will let you know exactly what type of reading difficulty your child is having. The school will then develop a plan to provide special instruction in reading, such as individual help from teachers, aides, volunteer tutors, and parents.

THE PLAN

The law requires schools to develop an **academic improvement plan (AIP)** for each struggling reader. Parents will be invited to participate in developing this plan. The AIP describes the child's specific reading difficulties. It also describes the intensive teaching practices that will be used to help the child catch up in reading. This special instruction will be provided during regular school hours, in addition to the regular reading instruction. Each student's progress will be monitored frequently. This intensive help will be provided until the reading deficiency is corrected.

If the child has a disability, the child's **individual educational plan (IEP)** may serve as the AIP. Parents are always invited to be a part of the IEP team.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIRD GRADERS

The specific skills that students need in reading are described in the Sunshine State Standards. Designed by teachers, the Standards tell what Florida students should know and be able to do at each grade level. They are in line with national education standards.

By the end of third grade, students are expected to be able to read independently. This means that they can read and understand words, sentences, and paragraphs without help.

FCAT

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) measures students' progress on the Sunshine State Standards. Students in grades 3–10 take the FCAT each spring. Third graders are tested in reading and mathematics. Their scores fall into one of five levels: Level 5 is the highest; Level 1 is the lowest.

The third-grade FCAT requires students to read stories that are about 350 words long and answer questions about what they have read. The test also requires them to use charts, graphs, maps, and other materials to gather information to answer questions.





What does scoring Level 1 on the FCAT mean?

When a third grader scores in the lowest level on the FCAT, it warns us that the child is reading at a much lower level than is expected of third graders. Students who score Level 1 may not be able to recognize or sound-out new words or know their meaning. They may have trouble answering questions that identify a story's main idea, main characters, and order of events. They may not be able to use information from charts, graphs, or maps to answer specific questions.

THE LAW

Florida law says that third graders who score at Level 1 in reading on the FCAT must be retained (not promoted to fourth grade). However, children who demonstrate the required reading level through the approved alternate test (the Stanford Achievement Test [SAT]) or through a student portfolio can be granted a "good cause exemption" and be promoted to fourth grade.

If your child scores at Level 1, you will be notified by the school that your child will not be promoted to fourth grade until he or she achieves the required reading level.

Students who are retained must be given intensive instruction in reading to help them catch up. You will be given information about the intensive instruction that will be provided to help your child make progress in reading.

Note: Some students with disabilities, some students with limited English proficiency, and some students who have already been retained twice can receive a "good cause exemption" and be promoted, although they are not reading at the required level. If your child is not eligible for a good cause exemption, you will be notified as to why your child is not eligible. See the back page for more information.

What does the law mean?

This law means, "We are not going to give up on struggling students; we are going to invest in them." This will have a positive effect on our whole state. It will reduce the need for remedial education in middle and high school and may lower dropout rates and juvenile delinquency. It will also help Florida develop the highly skilled workforce needed in a strong economy.



RETENTION

What does retention mean?

Retention does not mean that the child has failed. It does not mean that teachers or parents are not working hard enough. It does mean that the child needs more time and help to catch up in reading.

Purpose of Retention

The purpose of retention is to give children who have substantial reading deficiencies more time and the intensive instruction they need to catch up in reading.



Why third grade?

A substantial reading deficiency must be addressed before students can move on to the more difficult schoolwork of fourth grade and beyond. In fourth grade, the focus shifts from learning to read to reading to learn. Textbooks become more complex; reading passages are longer. Students use encyclopedias, websites, and other written materials to do research for history reports, science projects, and other schoolwork. Those who have trouble understanding what they read find it very difficult to keep up. Many students become frustrated when they try to tackle this schoolwork without independent reading skills. For some students, this leads to years of difficulty in school and limited opportunities in adult life.

How will we help students who have been retained?

Schools must provide reading enhancement and acceleration strategies to students who are retained, including the following:

- proven effective teaching strategies and methods
- a high-performing teacher
- participation in summer reading camp
- at least 90 minutes of reading instruction each day, which often involves
 - ✓ one-on-one or small group instruction
 - ✓ special books, computer software, and other instructional materials
 - ✓ more frequent progress monitoring
 - ✓ tutoring or mentoring
 - ✓ transition classes that include third- and fourth-grade students
 - ✓ after-school instruction
 - ✓ summer reading camps.

Parents must also be offered at least one of the following options:

- tutoring using proven strategies
- parent workshops and a parent-guided home reading program
- a mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.

Once the intensive instruction has begun, the child's progress will be checked frequently and the teaching strategies adjusted as needed.

MAKING PROGRESS

Mid-Year Promotion

If the child can demonstrate the required reading level before the start of the next school year, he or she may be promoted to fourth grade. If the child achieves the required reading level during the next school year, the child may be promoted to fourth grade at that time: mid-year. To be promoted to fourth grade mid-year, the child must demonstrate mastery of the third grade reading skills and beginning fourth grade reading skills. This is because the student must have made enough progress to be successful in fourth grade. The child may be given a standardized test or the teacher may put together a portfolio of the child's work.

Intensive Acceleration Class

If the student has already been retained once in third grade and then scores at Level 1 again, the school must provide an intensive acceleration class that focuses on increasing the child's reading level at least two grade levels in one school year. The intensive acceleration class must

- have a lower teacher-student ratio than other third-grade classes
- have a high-performing teacher
- provide reading instruction for most of the school day
- give students the opportunity to master the fourth grade Sunshine State Standards in other subjects, such as math and science
- use research-based reading, language, and vocabulary instructional programs
- monitor student progress weekly
- maintain a portfolio for each student.

The district must also offer these students the option of being served in a transitional instructional setting designed to help them meet the fourth grade Sunshine State Standards, while continuing to remediate the reading deficiency.



FIVE COMPONENTS OF READING

Teachers in the early grades work on improving students' skills in these five components of reading:

1. **Phonemic awareness** is the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. This includes noticing rhyme and recognizing the separate, small sounds in words (phonemes).
2. **Phonics** is the understanding of the relationships between the written letters of the alphabet and the sounds of spoken language. This knowledge allows a reader to “decode” words by translating the letters into speech sounds.
3. **Fluency** is the ability to read quickly, accurately, and with proper expression. Fluent readers can concentrate on understanding what they read because they don't have to focus on decoding.
4. **Vocabulary** includes all the words the reader can understand and use. The more words a child knows, the better he or she will understand what is read. Knowing how words relate to each other is a building block that leads to comprehension.
5. **Comprehension** is the ability to understand what one has read. This includes understanding the plot of a story or the information in an article. It also includes things like recognizing the main idea of an article or being able to compare and contrast different characters in a story.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THIRD-GRADE RETENTION

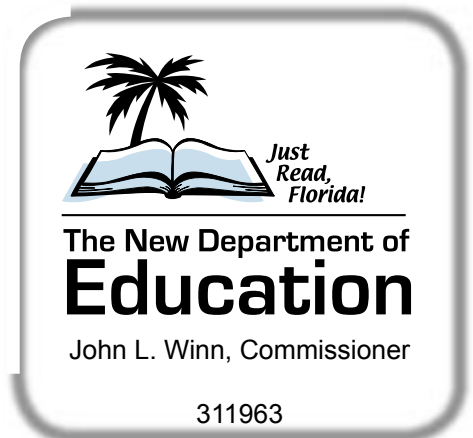
Some third-graders who score Level 1 on the FCAT in reading can be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted to fourth grade. This is called a “good cause exemption.” Good cause exemptions are given to only the following students:

- students who show an acceptable level of performance on the alternate reading test (the SAT)
- students who show through a teacher-developed portfolio that they can read on grade level*
- Limited English proficient students who have had less than two years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program
- students with disabilities whose individual educational plan (IEP) shows that it is not appropriate for them to take the FCAT
- students with disabilities who take the FCAT and whose IEP or 504 Plan says that they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but who still show a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten through grade 3
- students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but who still have a deficiency in reading and who have already been retained in kindergarten through grade 3 for a total of two years.

If you believe your child may be eligible for a good cause exemption, talk to your child's teacher. For a good cause exemption to be approved, the following steps must take place:

1. The student's teacher must submit documentation to the principal.
2. The principal must review the documentation and decide whether or not the student should be promoted. If the principal determines that the student should be promoted, the principal must make the recommendation to the school district superintendent.
3. The school district superintendent must accept or reject the principal's recommendation that the student be promoted.

*The teacher selects the contents of the portfolio. The documents in the portfolio must show that the student has mastered the Sunshine State Standards benchmarks that are assessed by the grade 3 reading FCAT. Talk to your child's teacher to find out more about portfolios.



For more information go to www.justreadflorida.com

2005 SUMMER READING CAMPS

District	Contact	Email Address	Phone #	Start	End
Alachua	Dr. Sandi Anusavice	anusavsh@sbac.edu	352.955.7586	6-Jun	30-Jun
Baker	Robin Mobley	rmobley@baker.k12.fl.us	904.259.0427	31-May	1-Jul
Bay	Lendy Willis	williir@bay.k12.fl.us	850.872.4356	31-May	30-Jun
Bradford	Carol Clyatt	clyatt_c@firn.edu	904.966.6816	6-Jun	30-Jun
Brevard	Lynn Spadaccini	spadaccinil@brevard.k12.fl.us	321.633.1000 ext.330	2-Jun	29-Jun
Broward	Frank Vodolo	fvodolo@browardschools.com	754.321.2130	8-Jun	28-Jun
Calhoun	Wynette Peacock	peacock_w@firn.edu	850.674.8734	1-Jun	13-Jul
Charlotte	Doug Whittaker	doug_whittaker@ccps.k12.fl.us	941.255.0808 ext.3080	27-Jun	22-Jul
Citrus	Dr. Mark Brunner	brunnerm@citrus.k12.fl.us	352.726.1931	14-Jun	7-Jul
Clay	Mary Bethea	mbethea@mail.clay.k12.fl.us	904.284.6577	6-Jun	30-Jun
Collier	Jack Staples	StapleJa@collier.k12.fl.us	239.377.1060	20-Jun	20-Jul
Columbia	Barbara H. Thomas	thomas_b4@firn.edu	386.755.8048	6-Jun	14-Jul
Dade	Jodi Bolla	jbolla@dadeschools.net	395.995.3122	22-Jun	22-Jul
DeSoto	Tammy O'Donnell	tammy.odonnell@desoto.k12.fl.us	863.494.4222 ext. 112	31-May	1-Jul
Dixie	Frances Bray	francesbray@dixie.k12.fl.us	352.498.1338	6-Jun	30-Jun
Duval	Dr. Deirdra McDowell Sutton	suttond@educationcentral.org	904.390.2877	20-Jun	15-Jul
Escambia	Dr. Deborah Malishan	dmalishan@escambia.k12.fl.us	850.469.5494	6-Jun	8-Jul
FAMU Lab	Dr. Rose Campbell	Rose.Campbell@famu.edu	850.599.3325	6-Jun	18-Jul
FAU Lab	Mary Linville	linville@fau.edu	561.297.3970	13-Jun	8-Jul
Flagler	Kathy Baldwin	baldwink@flaglerschools.com	386.437.7526	13-Jun	21-Jul
Franklin	Brenda Wilson	Wilson_b4@firn.edu	850.653.8831 ext. 105	13-Jun	21-Jul
FSDB	Margaret McClure	VanOmerM@fsdb.k12.fl.us	904.827.2503	6-Jun	1-Jul
FSU Lab	Marlene West	mawest@mail.fsu.edu	850.245.3807	13-Jun	22-Jul
Gadsden	Millie E. Anderson	anderson_m@firn.edu	850.627.9651	9-Jun	15-Jul
Gilchrist	Janet Langford	langfordj@gilchrist.k12.fl.us	352.463.3265	6-Jun	14-Jul
Glades	Mazie Ford	Ford_M3@firn.edu	863.946.2083	13-Jun	21-Jul
Gulf	Sara Joe Wooten	swooten@gulf.k12.fl.us	859.229.6940	31-May	30-Jun
Hamilton	Vivian Scott	Scott_v1@firn.edu	386.792.6524	31-May	30-Jun
Hardee	Greg Dick	gdick@hardee.k12.fl.us	863.773.9058	6-Jun	30-Jun
Hendry	Jodi Bell	bellj@hendry.k12.fl.us	863.612.0750	31-May	30-Jun
Hernando	Debbie Pfenning	pfenning_d@hcsb.k12.fl.us	352.797.7070 ext. 448	6-Jun	1-Jul
Highlands	Joyce McClelland	mcclelj@highlands.k12.fl.us	863.471.5569	1-Jun	30-Jun
Hillsborough	Marilyn Blackmer	_marilyn.blackmer@sdhc.k12.fl.us	813.272.4481	6-Jun	30-Jun
Holmes	Peggy Alderman	alderman_p@firn.edu	850.547.6674	6-Jun	14-Jul
Indian River	Terri D'Albora	terri.dalbora@indian-river.k12.fl.us	777.564.3108	13-Jun	14-Jul
Jackson	Lillie Speights	lillie.speights@jcsb.org	850.482.1200 ext. 222	30-May	30-Jun
Jefferson	Cynthia Shrestha	shrestha_c@firn.edu	850.342.0100	6-Jun	19-Jul
Lafayette	Marion McCray	mmccray@lafayette.k12.fl.us	386.294.2882	31-May	7-Jul
Lake	Doreathe Cole	ColeD@lake.k12.fl.us	352.253.6546	20-Jun	21-Jul
Lee	Lynn Pottorf	LynnP@lee.k12.fl.us	239.337.8141	6-Jun	24-Jun
Leon	Iris Wilson	wilsoni@mail.leon.k12.fl.us	850.487.7219	6-Jun	14-Jul
Levy	Linda Durrance	durranel@levy.k12.fl.us	356.486.5231	6-Jun	13-Jul
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Madison	Julia Waldrep	waldrej@madison.k12.fl.us	850.973.5022	6-Jun	14-Jul
Manatee	Linda Guilfoyle	guilfoyl@fc.manatee.k12.fl.us	941.708.8770 ext.2252	1-Jun	13-Jul
Marion	Nancy Leonard	leonardn@marion.k12.fl.us	352.671.7724	6-Jun	15-Jul
Martin	Delores Oliver Calloway	callowd@martin.k12.fl.us	772.219.1200 ext. 30420	2-Jun	29-Jun
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Pinellas	Maria Lindquist	Maria_Lindquist@places.pcsb.org	727.588.6088	24-May	30-Jun
Polk	Diana Myrick	diana.myrick@polk-fl.net	863.534.0643	1-Jun	30-Jun
Putnam	Michael Pegg	mpegg@putnamschools.org	386.329.0633	6-Jun	30-Jun
Santa Rosa	Kenny McCay	mccayk@mail.santarosa.k12.fl.us	850.983.5045	6-Jun	1-Jul
Sarasota	Lori White	lori_white@sarasota.k12.fl.us	941.927.9000	6-Jun	14-Jul
Seminole	Rita Ramsey	rita_ramsey@scps.k12.fl.us	407.320.0032	7-Jun	1-Jul
St. Johns	Diane Solms	solmsd@stjohns.k12.fl.us	904.819.7532	6-Jun	30-Jun
St. Lucie	Mary Krause	krausem@stlucie.k12.fl.us	772.429.5530	13-Jun	21-Jul
Sumter	Debbie Moffitt	moffitd@sumter.k12.fl.us	352.793.2315	2-Jun	13-Jul
Suwannee	Nancy Roberts	nroberts@suwannee.k12.fl.us	386.364.2622	31-May	14-Jul
Taylor	Wanda Kemp	wanda.kemp@taylor.k12.fl.us	850.838.2541	1-Jun	12-Jul
UF Lab	Amy Hollinger	amyh@pky.ufl.edu	352.392.1554	20-Jun	15-Jul
Union	Bobbie Morgan	morganb@union.k12.fl.us	386.496.2045	1-Jun	28-Jun
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Walton	Kay Dailey	daileyk@walton.k12.fl.us	850.892.1100	6-Jun	19-Jul
Washington	Mike Welch	welch_m@firn.edu	850.638.6222	6-Jun	14-Jul

FACT SHEET

for Families Building Better
Readers Parent Workshop

Introduction

Families Building Better Readers (FBBR) is a workshop for parents of children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

This two hour training is the product of a collaborative effort between the Florida Department of Education's Just Read, Florida! initiative, Bureau of Family and Community Outreach, and the College of Professional Studies at University of West Florida.

Purpose

This workshop will:

- Provide parents with simple instructional activities that they can do with their children to improve reading performance. Content activities are supported by sound reading research.
- Provide parents with resources that will help improve their children's literacy throughout life.

Workshop Theme

The workshop theme is "Families Building Better Readers." Every parent will receive a "tool kit" filled with reading activities to do with their children at home. Parents are trained during breakout sessions on how to fully utilize these educational activities to benefit their children.

Workshop Sites

Families Building Better Readers parent workshops will be conducted all year long in communities around the state.

Statewide train-the-trainer workshops will also be provided at statewide meetings and conferences.

For workshop times and locations, please visit the Bureau of Family and Community Outreach website at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/family/>.



If you have any questions about Families Building Better Readers Parent Workshop or for information on family and community involvement, please contact:

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Family and Community Outreach**
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 544
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
Phone: (850) 245-0847 or Suncom 205-0847, Fax: (850) 245-0849
<http://www.firn.edu/doe/family/>
www.fldoe.org

About the Trainer



FBBR training is provided by Dr. Angela Martin from the University of West Florida (UWF). Dr. Martin works as an educational consultant, creating educational materials and conducting dynamic workshops across the Southeast. She is an experienced elementary school teacher and earned her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction and her masters in Elementary and Early Childhood Education with an emphasis in reading. As a trainer, Martin is well known and liked by parents and mentors whose positive roles she values as a mother of four and mentor herself.

Dr. Angela Martin
U.W.F. Building 85
11000 University Parkway
Pensacola, FL 32514
amartin@uwf.edu



STAY IN THE LOOP!

If you're a high school senior and you haven't passed the FCAT yet, you may feel discouraged. But now's the time for you to take your future into your own hands and do what it takes to succeed. Think about the possibilities. Talk to your family, teachers, and guidance counselor. And most of all, stay in school and stay in the Learning Loop!

TAKE THE FCAT AGAIN.

Your school has the know-how to teach the skills you need for the FCAT. Take advantage of it! Sign on for the extra instruction you will be offered; do your best, and take the FCAT again in June. You could also sign up for summer school or come back to school for part of next year in order to brush up on your skills so you'll be ready for the FCAT.

TAKE THE GED EXIT OPTION.

Stay in school and take a GED pre-test. Then, if you pass the GED tests before the end of the school year, you can graduate with a state of Florida diploma and participate in graduation activities.

TAKE A CPT-ELIGIBLE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION. THEN CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION.

If you earn all your required course credits and have at least a 2.0 GPA, you can receive a CPT-eligible certificate of completion. That will let you enroll in community college or postsecondary career and technical education programs. Take the CPT (Common Placement Test); if you make a high enough score, you can take college credit courses. Even if you don't make the cut-off score, you can start with remedial courses at the community college—later, you may be able to move on to college credit courses.

TAKE A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION. THEN CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION.

If you earn all your required course credits but don't have a GPA of 2.0 or higher, you can receive a certificate of completion. The certificate of completion does not carry any of the privileges of a standard high school diploma, so you should still sign up for summer school, return to school next year, or enroll in a GED preparation program.

TAKE COURSES THROUGH ADULT HIGH SCHOOL.

Once you are out of school, you can sign up for adult high school credit courses. You'll still need to pass the courses and pass the FCAT to get a diploma from your school district, but you can continue your education.

TAKE THE GED AS AN ADULT.

Once you are out of school, you can sign up for an adult education GED preparation program. This program is offered at technical centers, adult and community education centers, and community colleges. If you pass the GED tests, you will receive a state of Florida diploma.

THESE OPTIONS ARE ONLY FOR STUDENTS WITH AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLAN (IEP)

- Some students with disabilities are eligible for an FCAT waiver.
- Students with disabilities who have not yet earned a standard diploma may stay in school until their 22nd birthday.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



JOHN L. WINN
Commissioner of Education



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K12: 2005-51

MEMORANDUM

To: District School Superintendents

From: Jim Warford

Date: April 21, 2005

Subject: **ASSISTANCE TO 11TH AND 12TH GRADE STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT EARNED PASSING SCORES ON GRADE 10 FCAT FOR 2004-2005**

Florida continues to focus resources to support student preparation to successfully advance to the next grade level and graduate with a standard high school diploma. It is important to increase the proficiency level of all students by supporting rigorous and relevant curriculum in the classroom, appropriate remediation for students at risk of academic failure, and academic advisement that will enable high school students to earn credits and passing scores on the Grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in order to graduate with a standard diploma.

JIM WARFORD
K-12 Chancellor

District School Superintendents
April 21, 2005
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The results of the March 2005 administration of the Grade 10 FCAT will be mailed to your districts during the next several weeks. Florida law requires districts to provide appropriate remediation activities for students who did not earn passing scores. Additionally, students who have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the grade 10 FCAT or an alternative assessment by the end of twelfth grade must be provided the following learning opportunities:

- Participation in an accelerated high school equivalency diploma preparation program during the summer;
- Upon receipt of a certificate of completion, be allowed to take the Common Placement Test (CPT) and be admitted to remedial or credit courses at a state community college, as appropriate;
- Participation in an adult general education program.

It is essential that you continue to prioritize resources and efforts to prepare these students for success on the June test administration and provide information regarding continuing education opportunities in your district, such as summer school, tutoring, FCAT Explorer, GED Exit Option, and adult education. It is important for there to be face-to-face interaction with these students to provide support and information about opportunities for success. We strongly recommend that your school counselors schedule a time to meet with each student who took the FCAT in March to review his or her graduation plan and recent scores.

The Department will mail printed copies of *Best Practices for Using FCAT Explorer with 11th and 12th Grade Students* and *Stay in the Loop* to the district Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum and Instruction in sufficient quantities for distribution to high school teachers and students respectively. To provide you and your staff with assistance, please find attached the following materials:

- Examples of remediation activities reported by school districts for 11th and 12th grade students who have not earned passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT for the 2004-2005 school year. We encourage you to continue implementing and enhancing remedial activities for these students to ensure their success on the June administration of the FCAT. Additional information regarding the CPT-Eligible Certificate of Completion can be found in a Technical Assistance Paper at <http://info.fldoe.org/dscqi/ds.py/Get/File-1861/TAP.pdf>.
- *Best Practices Guidelines for Using FCAT Explorer with 11th and 12th Grade Students*. This document is designed for teachers and is intended to target issues unique to using the FCAT Explorer program as part of the instructional plan for

District School Superintendents
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helping high school students prepare to re-take and pass the FCAT. The guidelines provide helpful information for maximizing the FCAT Explorer to support classroom instruction, using the reports to monitor students' progress, and outlining the unique features of the practice programs in reading and mathematics. You may access these guidelines online at www.fcatexplorer.com. From the FCAT Explorer home page, click Educator Resources, then click the link for *Best Practices Guidelines for Using FCAT Explorer with 11th and 12th Grade Students* under the School Resources/General Resources column. You will also find a link for a more comprehensive set of *Best Practices Guidelines* for all students at this site.

- *Stay in the Loop* student information flier

Thank you for your continued commitment to Florida's education goal of highest student achievement. Working together, we can increase learning and completion at all levels.

JW:mjbo

Attachments

cc: Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum and Instruction
Directors of Secondary Education
High School Principals
Guidance Supervisors
Student Services Directors
High School Guidance Counselors

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Examples of Remediation Activities Reported by School Districts for 11th and 12th Grade Students Who Have Not Earned Passing Scores on the Grade 10 FCAT for the 2004-2005 School Year

Activities provided during the school day:

Remedial Classes

- Students who have not passed the FCAT are required to take an intensive reading or mathematics course in addition to their regularly scheduled English or mathematics course. Courses include intensive remediation and students earn elective credit toward high school graduation.
- FCAT Review Class is provided to all students who have not passed the FCAT. Students earn elective credit.
- A sequence of courses in reading that loop for all level 1 and 2 students has been designed. Students are required to participate in intensive remediation courses and parents are sent a certified letter regarding the essential need for their child to pass the FCAT and earn a high school diploma.
- Students' schedules are restructured to provide intensive reading and/or mathematics remediation during the school day.

Use of Technology

- Students are provided with laptop computers to ensure they can access remediation, including FCAT preparation materials and FCAT Explorer. Teachers schedule time during the day for students to use computers to access the remediation.
- Technology system has been purchased or developed that provides information for teachers to manage and mine data from multiple sources and assessments to be used to develop students' AIPs.

Performance Mentoring

- District developed benchmark assessment test, which has been shown to have high predictability for performance on FCAT, given in November. Data used to develop AIPs to provide interventions such as after school program, Saturday programs, and specific remediation classes during the school day.
- Focus lessons and mini-assessments have been developed to teach reading across all curriculum areas, including social studies, science, physical education, and art. Reading coaches assist content area teachers with strategies for teaching reading in their areas.
- Data have been disaggregated to identify students' deficiencies and schools developed reading strategies to be used by content area teachers.

Guidance

- School counselors meet individually with students to provide student success skills and support additional remediation efforts.
- Case management model is utilized in which the principal assigns juniors and seniors who have not passed the FCAT to school staff, including student services personnel and career specialist. School staff meets with each student and his or her parents to design remediation program that may include Saturday tutorials, after school program, FCAT Explorer, intensive remediation classes.

Other Classes

- Reading coaches work with subject area teachers to incorporate reading strategies in other content areas and facilitate mentoring for level 1 students.
- School day extended one hour for all students in low performing schools beginning January 2005. During this time, level 1 and 2 students receive intensive remediation and level 3+ students will participate in enrichment activities. The school year has also been extended ten days. Principals meet with students on a regular basis.

Activities provided during extended school day or on Saturdays:

- Credit retrieval program has been developed for students who are credit-deficient and who have not passed the FCAT. Program is provided after school and includes remediation for FCAT.
- Nine-one-one program designed to provide Saturday school. High quality teachers provide intensive remediation for students based on individual diagnosis of deficiencies. District provided letters to students' employers to provide excuse from work to attend Saturday school.
- After school program provides intensive remediation, transportation, and food for students. The transportation and food have increased the number of eligible students who participate in this opportunity.
- Many districts have implemented after school programs and are working to increase the number of eligible students who actually participate (several districts provide transportation, which has increased participation).
- All students who participate in extracurricular activities are required to participate in after school study hall in which low-performing students are provided intensive remediation and on-grade-level students participate in preparation activities for SAT and ACT. Since all students are required to participate, there is no stigma for level 1 and 2 students.
- Students who have not earned passing scores on the grade 10 FCAT are required to participate in after school programs in order to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.



FCAT EXPLORER

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH 11TH & 12TH GRADE STUDENTS

Make Full Use of the FCAT Explorer

The *FCAT Explorer Best Practice Guidelines for Working with 11th & 12th Grade Students* is specifically intended to support your remediation efforts with 11th and 12th grade students who have not yet passed the 10th grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). These guidelines target issues unique to using the FCAT Explorer practice programs as part of your instructional plan for helping high school students prepare to re-take — and pass — the FCAT.

For a full set of general tips for using the FCAT Explorer effectively with all of your students, refer to the comprehensive *FCAT Explorer Best Practice Guidelines*.

To access the comprehensive *FCAT Explorer Best Practice Guidelines*, visit www.fcatexplorer.com and click Educator Resources on the home page, or sign in to your Teacher's Desk and click Resource Center.

Use FCAT Explorer to Support Your Classroom Instruction

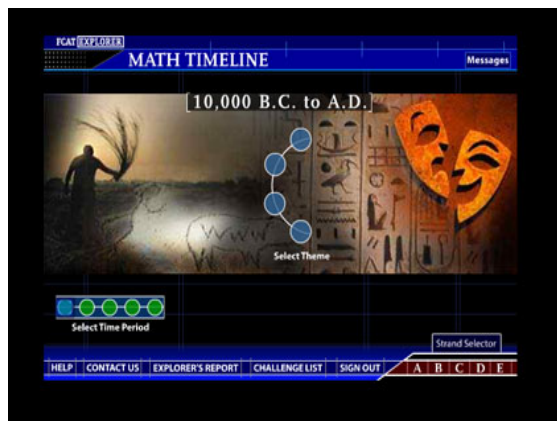
The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) designs all FCAT Explorer practice programs to support — but not *replace* — your classroom instruction.

The design of *Math Timeline: 10th Grade Benchmarks* and *Reading Timeline: 10th Grade Benchmarks* is specifically intended to help students practice for the 10th grade FCAT. Both of these programs reinforce your classroom instruction on FCAT-tested skills by following every answer choice with in-depth Learning Guidance in the form of hints, instructional feedback, and correct answer explanations.

In addition to practice with Learning Guidance, *Reading Timeline* also offers a Skill Seminar with self-instructional lessons. The lessons allow students to independently review the eight critical reading comprehension skills that reviewers have identified as most challenging to high school students based on FCAT scores and teacher input.

However, although every FCAT Explorer practice program offers strong instructional support, none of the programs are intended to replace your introduction of the skills through direct, classroom instruction.

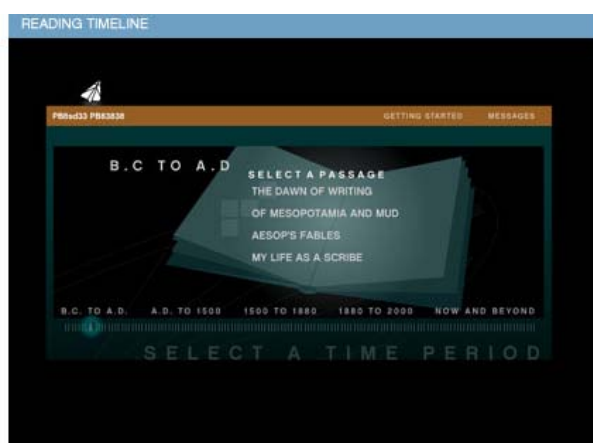
Make Use of *Math Timeline's* Unique Features



The 10th grade mathematics practice program offers some useful and interesting features to enrich practice and hold students' attention, including the ability to focus on specific Strands. With over 140 FCAT-like practice items, *Math Timeline* provides comprehensive

practice with all of the mathematics benchmarks tested on the 10th grade FCAT.

Make Use of *Reading Timeline's* Unique Features



The 10th grade reading practice program also offers useful and interesting features. Perhaps most noteworthy is the Skill Seminar, in which students receive remedial instruction on eight foundational reading comprehension

skills. *Reading Timeline* delivers comprehensive practice on all of the reading benchmarks tested on the 10th grade FCAT through 23 passages and over 200 FCAT-like practice items.

Placement pre-test. When students enter *Reading Timeline*, they complete a pre-test. The pre-test consists of 40 items that cover each of the nine benchmarks tested on the 10th grade FCAT. Based on pre-test performance, students are seamlessly moved to either the core *Reading Timeline* practice program or the Skill Seminar.

The placement decision is based on a composite pre-test score. You may view your students' individual pre-test scores from the Run Reports function on your Teacher's Desk. However, because the pre-test contains limited items per skill, the pre-test is not an appropriate instrument for making diagnostic decisions on a single skill. Therefore, student performance is only provided as a composite score.

Core practice program. Students with pre-test results above the cut score are routed to the core *Reading Timeline* practice materials. Core practice materials span the full range of difficulty levels that a student may encounter the official FCAT, with the exception that passages are loosely sequenced from easiest to most challenging. Students receive answer-specific Learning Guidance for every answer choice. While working in the core practice program, a student may elect to enter the Skill Seminar at any time.

Skill Seminar. The Skill Seminar provides self-instructional lessons on the eight critical reading comprehension skills that are most challenging to high school students. These lessons were selected based on official FCAT results and the recommendations of classroom teachers and reading experts. The eight Skill Seminar lessons are:

1. Making Predictions
2. Finding Meaning in Context Clues
3. Using Word Parts to Find Meaning
4. Finding the Main Idea
5. Recognizing Methods of Organizing Text
6. Understanding the Author's Purpose
7. Identifying Valid, Reliable Information
8. Synthesizing Information from Multiple Sources

Each Skill Seminar lesson gives students clear, step-by-step instruction, practice, and Learning Guidance on an explicit, research-based strategy for applying the skill covered in the lesson:

- Each lesson begins by gaining the student's attention and establishing the relevance and benefits of becoming proficient with this skill.
- The lesson then provides a skill definition accompanied by examples and demonstrates how the skill is applied in a real-life context. These demonstrations begin with very simple content and build toward content that represents the level of complexity students will encounter on the official FCAT.
- Next, the lesson provides an explicit, research-based strategy for applying the skill.
- Instruction on applying the strategy is followed by practice opportunities ranging from simple to complex. Each answer choice is accompanied by answer-specific Learning Guidance.
- Each lesson culminates with a progress report.

Skill Seminar Post-Test. Students who entered the Skill Seminar as the result of a deficient pre-test score receive a Skill Seminar post-test. Skill Seminar post-test results are used to determine whether a student is ready to move into the core *Reading Timeline* practice program, or whether the student should be encouraged to practice in an FCAT Explorer practice program at a lower readability level.

Reading Timeline Post-Test. When students finish all of the *Reading Timeline* practice items in the core practice program, they complete a comprehensive post-test. The *Reading Timeline* post-test is parallel to the pre-test and consists of 40 items that cover each of the nine benchmarks tested on the 10th grade FCAT.

Progress Reports. From your Teacher's Desk, you may customize detailed reports on individual students or groups of students. For the core *Reading Timeline* practice program, you may review student progress on strands, benchmarks, skills, or content. In addition, you may view student scores on the placement pre-test and on each of the post-tests, as well as their performance on each lesson in the Skill Seminar. You may also view a report of the items remaining on a student's Challenge List.

**Make Use of
4th Grade Reading
Skill Mini Lessons**

The very first FCAT Explorer program, *Space and Safari Reader: 4th Grade Benchmarks*, provided instructional feedback for first incorrect answer choices by means of skill-specific mini lessons. Called “Tips” in that program, these animated, interactive mini lessons provided instruction and practice on 29 discrete reading comprehension skills.

In 2004 new technology allowed implementation of an innovative “highlighted text review” feedback strategy, which then replaced the Tips. In this teacher requested, research-based strategy, when a student selects an incorrect answer to a text-based question, the program requires the student to return to the passage and review text highlights before getting a second chance to select the correct answer.

Although teachers received the new “highlighted text review” feedback strategy with unanimous enthusiasm, many teachers at multiple grade levels expressed dismay that the Tips were no longer accessible. These teachers had come to rely on the Tips as an effective tool for defining and clarifying Skills; they reported using them during small-group instruction at all grade levels, in mentoring activities with beginning teachers, and during consultations with parents. Consequently, teachers once again have access to the Tips.

You can access the Tips, now called Mini Lessons, from your Teacher’s Desk by clicking Resource Center. The Mini Lessons are presented on that page under the General Resources heading. You will also find them under the program-specific resources for *Reading Odyssey – 4th Grade Benchmarks*.

**Make Use of
5th Grade Math
Instructional Games**

Many middle school and high school students enjoy — and benefit from — the instructional games in *Math Station: 5th Grade Benchmark*. These games are *instructional* games that reinforce skills required for success on the FCAT. In addition, you can motivate students by awarding bonus game tokens, or decrease a struggling student’s token accrual rate to provide a more reasonable challenge (see *Games* on your Teacher’s Desk). On the other hand, if students appear to be spending too much time in the game arcade, you can increase their challenge by increasing their token accrual rate.

**Make Use Of
Open Response
Materials**

The FCAT Explorer provides “Open Response” materials for those grade levels that must write responses to performance tasks on the FCAT. You can print these materials from the Resource Center on your Teacher’s Desk and use them for homework assignments, or for small group or whole class activities.



About the FCAT

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

In the mid-1990's, a group of Florida teachers came together and created a set of academic standards for Florida's public schools. They asked themselves, "What do we think students need to learn in school, before they move on? What do we want them to know about math? About science? What kind of reading and writing skills should they have?" In answering these questions, the group of teachers created a list of basic skills that Florida's students need to know, which became known as the Sunshine State Standards (SSS).

The **Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)** is a test to determine whether students are learning the Sunshine State Standards. The questions on the test are written for each grade level to determine whether students mastered the Sunshine State Standards in reading, math, writing, and science. The purpose of the FCAT is to make sure that the students are learning the basic skills they need to be successful in life.

Students in grades 3-10 take the FCAT each spring. The third-graders are tested in reading and mathematics. Their scores fall into one of five levels: Level 5 is the highest; Level 1 is the lowest. Students who receive a Level 1 on the third grade reading portion of the FCAT must improve their reading skills before they can move on to fourth grade. Students in grades 4, 8, and 10 take the FCAT Writing Test. The FCAT Science Test is given to students in grades 5, 8, and 11.

Third graders who score Level 1 in reading on the FCAT must repeat the third grade unless there is other evidence that proves these students can read on grade level. Students who are retained must be given intensive instruction in reading to help them catch up.

What does Level 1 mean?

A score of Level 1 on the FCAT means that the student has shown little success in meeting the basic skills they are supposed to know at their grade level. That means that third graders who score Level 1 may not be able to recognize or sound-out new words or know the meaning if them. They would also have trouble answering questions that identify a story's main idea, main characters, and the correct order of story events. Chances are that these students can't correctly use information from charts, graphs, or maps to answer specific questions.



Florida Department of Education