Assessment and Accountability
BRIEFING BOOK

FCAT | School Accountability | Teacher Certification Tests

2007

Florida Department of Education · Accountability, Research, and Measurement

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Jeanine Blomberg
Commissioner of Education

Just Read, Florida!

April 10, 2007

Dear Senators and Representatives:

Please find the *Assessment and Accountability Briefing Book*, published by the Florida Department of Education, enclosed. This resource provides a comprehensive overview of Florida's K-12 and postsecondary assessment programs and will serve as a useful tool as you make accountability decisions.

The FCAT has been part of the landscape of education reform in Florida for several years. It plays a key role in the ongoing effort to raise standards. However, it is important to remember that the FCAT is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. The result is an improved education for Florida's children and increased accountability for its schools.

Florida's teacher certification examinations also play a key role in education reform by ensuring that our teachers are highly qualified. Improving teacher quality is integral to improving Florida's educational health.

The Department of Education staff and I are prepared to assist you with your needs. We look forward to working with you to ensure that Florida's students receive a first rate education. If you have questions about the information contained in the *Briefing Book*, please contact Dr. Cornelia Orr, Administrator, Office of Assessment and School Performance, at (850) 245-0513, or Suncom 205-0513.

Sincerely,

Jeanine Blomberg

Jeanine Blomberg
Commissioner

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are extended to the following people for their contributions to the development of the *Assessment and Accountability Briefing Book*. This document was a collaborative effort. The individuals listed below worked together to share their expertise and insights about Florida's assessment and school performance program by compiling, preparing, reviewing, and editing this document. We are grateful for the contributions of everyone involved in making the *Assessment and Accountability Briefing Book* possible.

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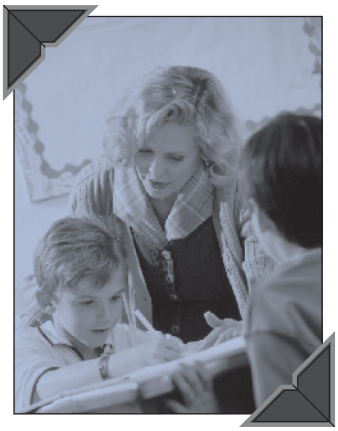


Introduction & Chronologies

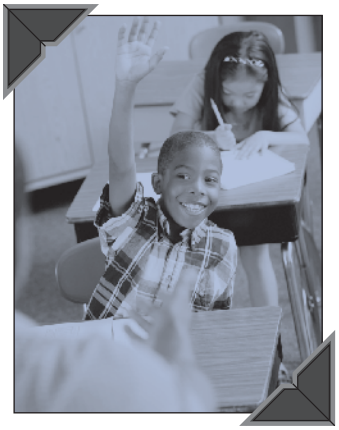
I – Introduction and Chronologies

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this *Assessment and Accountability Briefing Book* is to provide readers with a guide for understanding Florida's educational assessment and accountability programs. This publication is intended to serve as a resource for detailed information about the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT), the School Grading system, and the Certification Examinations for Florida Educators, as well as to give an overview of how the different areas of student and educator assessments and school accountability results are integrally related. Florida's educational assessments provide citizens standard measures to use in determining student progress, evaluating schools, and ensuring that appropriately qualified educators are teaching in and leading our schools.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS – A CHRONOLOGY

Florida's focus on educational accountability began well before 1998 and the first administration of the FCAT. Key events of the state's focus on improving student achievement are described in the following chronology and in Appendix E. This summary briefly outlines the origin of the student assessment and school accountability systems, including the origin of the Sunshine State Standards and the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of the FCAT.



1991 The 1991 School Improvement and Accountability legislation, commonly referred to as *Blueprint 2000*, established the Florida Commission of Education Reform and Accountability and called for sweeping changes in schools. The intent of the legislation was to ensure higher levels of achievement for all students and more accountability for schools. The legislation also committed the state to rewarding higher performing schools and providing assistance to unsuccessful schools. School boards were required to identify and report on the status of schools not making adequate progress. At the end of the 1990-91 school year, school boards reported 72 schools in 65 districts were not making adequate progress.

1992 In October, the High School Competency Test (HSCT) administration for students was changed from Grade 10 to Grade 11. Students could continue to retake the HSCT through a thirteenth year as high school students or as adults, as long as they were continuously enrolled.

The Grade 10 Assessment Test (GTAT) was first administered in 1992. It was a customized, norm-referenced, multiple-choice test in reading comprehension and mathematics given in Grade 10.

The Florida Writing Assessment Program (FWAP) was administered for the first time to Grade 4 students in 1992. Students wrote an essay in response to a designated writing prompt. Students were assigned one of two types of prompts: narrative or expository. In 1993, the program was expanded to include Grade 8 students, and Grade 10 was added in 1994.

As part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Trial State Assessments (TSAs), a sample of Florida's Grade 4 and 8 students were assessed in mathematics and a sample of Florida's Grade 4 students were assessed in reading.

1994 Florida participated in the NAEP Grade 4 reading assessment. The Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 introduced design changes that expanded the data that NAEP gathered to include mathematics and reading assessments of students in Grades 4, 8, and 12. However, due to budget issues, only Grade 4 reading was funded.

1995 The Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability recommended procedures for assessing student learning in Florida that would raise expectations for students and help them compete for jobs in the global marketplace. The State Board of Education adopted the recommendations, called the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Design (FCAD), in June 1995.

Also in 1995, the State Board of Education established student achievement criteria and identified critically low schools based on these criteria. The criteria included norm-referenced test (NRT) scores at Grades 4 and 8, writing scores at Grades 4, 8, and 10, and HSCT scores at Grade 11. Schools were identified as being critically low when average scores in all three subject areas were below the minimum criteria for two consecutive years. In November, there were 158 critically low performing schools (7 percent of the total number of schools reported). Identifying these schools resulted in a commitment to improving student achievement for all schools and all students.

1996 The Sunshine State Standards, Florida's curriculum framework, were adopted by the State Board of Education for seven subject areas. New legislation (s. 229.565, F.S.) recognized the Performance Standards as the academic standards for Florida students and authorized the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT). The Grade 10 Assessment Test (GTAT) was discontinued.

In the second year of the accountability program, 71 critically low schools were identified as not meeting the student achievement criteria. The *1995-1996 Performance Status of Schools Report* provided results for all schools on these criteria.

NAEP was administered in Florida at Grades 4 and 8 in mathematics and at Grade 8 in science. NAEP began offering accommodations on a trial basis for Students With Disabilities (SWD) and English language-learners (ELLs). The goal was to make Florida NAEP a more inclusive assessment.

1997 Schools not meeting the accountability criteria were identified and reported for the third year. The number of critically low schools decreased to 30, indicating the positive impact school accountability was having on student achievement. The Florida Legislature created, but was unable to fund, a statewide program to recognize schools with exemplary or improved performance.

Revisions to s. 229.57, F.S., required criterion referenced statewide assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics for students in elementary, middle, and high school. Grade levels were not specified. The new assessments were required to include performance tasks. In February, FCAT Reading and Mathematics was field tested in Grades 4, 5, 8, and 10. Each test included items in multiple formats: multiple-choice, gridded response, and open-ended items (also called performance tasks).

The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) adopted a schedule for the national and state NAEP tests through the year 2010. Every other year, state NAEP exams were scheduled in Florida for Grades 4 and 8, alternating between reading/writing and mathematics/science (beginning with reading/writing in 1998).

The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997 (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. 1401, required the inclusion of ESE students in regular assessment programs. Florida took steps to include as many students as possible by providing a variety of accommodations, including specially formatted tests in large print and Braille. Rule 6A1-0943, FAC, was amended by the State Board of Education to codify these procedures.

1998 The FCAT was administered for the first time in January to students in Grade 4 (Reading), Grade 5 (Mathematics), and Grades 8 and 10 (Reading and Mathematics). Tests at these grade levels established baseline data and included performance tasks. Achievement levels 1 through 5 were set for FCAT scores. Although the FCAT results were not used for accountability purposes in 1998, school results were reported. FCAT scores from this administration could be used to exempt students from the HSCT required for graduation. Students who scored at or higher than 327 on FCAT Reading and 315 on FCAT Mathematics could take advantage of this exemption.

Based on the accountability criteria, only four schools were identified as not making adequate progress in 1998, compared to 158 three years earlier. The Florida School Recognition program was funded for the first time at $5.4 million, and 140 schools received recognition and monetary rewards.

NAEP first offered accommodations to Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English-language learners (ELLs). Florida NAEP results were reported in two ways: accommodations not permitted and accommodations permitted.

1999 The Florida Legislature revised several of the statutory requirements for the state assessment program and enacted bold new accountability legislation known as the A+ Plan for Education (CS/HB 751). This legislation increased standards and accountability for students, schools, and educators. The concept of annual learning gains was added to the accountability system with the addition of tests at grades 3 through 10. The revisions also included the addition of a science assessment for students in Grades 5, 8, and 10; a norm-referenced test at grades 3 through 10; the use of the FCAT for graduation; and the development of a system for calculating the academic growth of each student over a year's time.

Consistent with the new legislation, the State Board of Education identified five school performance levels as letter grades, and the 1999 FCAT results were used to assign school grades. In the first year that school performance grades were issued, 78 schools were designated as "F" schools. Students in two schools that were designated critically low performing in 1998 and received "F" performance grades in 1999 were eligible for and some received opportunity scholarships. Approximately $30 million was disbursed to 319 schools for meeting the school recognition criteria.

Section 229.567, F.S., entitled School Readiness Uniform Screening was established. The Department of Education was required to adopt a school readiness uniform screening that addressed the goals specified in the statute. School districts were required to administer the kindergarten uniform screening to each kindergarten student upon entry into kindergarten and an approved screening to students entering the public school system for the first time in first grade.

Long-term trend NAEP administered to 9-, 13-, and 17-year old students in Florida.

2000 New FCAT Reading and Mathematics tests were field tested for Grades 3, 6, 7, and 9 and for Grade 4 Mathematics and Grade 5 Reading. This was the first time all students in grades 3 through 10 were assessed. Florida did not participate in state NAEP because of the expansion of the FCAT.

The Florida Writing Assessment Program (FWAP) became FCAT Writing.

The first FCAT Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) for reading and mathematics was administered in grades 3 though 10. The FCAT NRT provides information to

help ensure that Florida students are keeping pace with their peers nationally. Because the FCAT NRT is designed for this purpose, it is not necessarily aligned with the Sunshine State Standards.

The FCAT results for Grades 4, 5, 8, and 10 were again used for assigning school grades. All 78 "F" schools from the previous year improved their rating to a grade of "D" or higher. Four schools were issued "F" performance grades for the first time in 2000. In the third year of school recognition awards, 1,015 schools received financial incentives for earning an "A" or improving at least one letter grade.

2001

In the third year of issuing school grades, the number of "A" and "B" schools increased from 21 percent in 1999 to 41 percent in 2001. In the same time period, "D" and "F" schools decreased from 28 percent to 12 percent. There were no "repeat" or new "F" schools in 2001. In addition, 842 schools received school recognition awards for "A" grades or for improving by at least one letter grade.

In August, the State Board of Education established the FCAT passing scores that students had to earn as one of their requirements for receiving a standard high school diploma. In December, achievement level standards for reading and mathematics were also established by the State Board of Education. Five levels of achievement were identified for FCAT scores in Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 to complement the achievement levels established in 1998 for Grades 4, 5, 8, and 10.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was passed requiring states/districts who receive Title 1 funding to participate in biennial State NAEP in reading and mathematics at Grades 4 and 8, beginning with the 2002-03 academic year. NAEP science and writing were to be administered alternately every four years. NCLB also requires annual assessment in reading and mathematics for grades 3 through 8 beginning in the 2005-06 school year, with the addition of science assessments in grade spans 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12 in 2007-08. Section 1008.00(2), F.S., was passed as a reference to include NAEP in the sate assessment program. The legislation requires all selected schools to participate in the NAEP assessments.

2002

During the 2002 special legislative session, s. 1008.25(5)(b), F.S., was amended to require the retention of Grade 3 students who failed to achieve a score above Achievement Level 1 on FCAT Reading.

For the first time, it was possible to report annual growth scores for FCAT Reading and Mathematics using a developmental (growth or learning gains) scale. The FCAT developmental score scale was used to report scores representing achievement across grades 3 though 10, with scores ranging from approximately 0 to 3000. The developmental scale score (DSS) and change in this score provided parents and educators with a measure of student learning gains over a year's time.

The use of the DSS growth score was included as part of the A+ Plan school performance grading system for the first time in 2002. Using this new system, a record 1,311 schools earned school recognition awards for earning an "A" or improving a letter grade. However, 64 schools received "F" grades.

FCAT Science was field tested in Grades 5, 8, and 10 in a representative sample of Florida schools in April 2002.

In a legal challenge to the law that protected the security of the state mandated assessments, a Pinellas County student who failed the FCAT and his

family sued to see the scored booklets. Leon County Circuit Court ruled in favor of granting access to the tests; however, the District Court of Appeals overturned the lower court decision.

State and National NAEP were administered in Florida in Grades 4 and 8 in reading and writing. This NAEP administration was the first time Florida school personnel were not required to administer the assessment. Beginning with the 2002 administration, contractors were hired to administer the assessment.

2003

The sixth administration of the FCAT tests of the Sunshine State Standards in Reading and Mathematics for Grade 10 students occurred in 2003. The graduating class of 2003 (Grade 9 students in 1999-2000) were required to attain passing scores on FCAT as one of the requirements for high school graduation. During the 2003 legislative session, s. 1008.22(9), F.S., permitted some senior high school students to graduate with a regular diploma by substituting designated SAT or ACT scores for the required FCAT scores.

The first operational assessment and reporting of students scores for FCAT Science, administered in Grades 5, 8, and 10, took place in May 2003.

The Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act (HB 1739) was passed (see s. 1003.43(11), F.S.). This provision gives a student's individual educational plan (IEP) team the authority to waive passage of the FCAT as a requirement for graduation with a standard diploma in the traditional 24 minimum-credit graduation program during the student's senior year if the IEP team determines that the FCAT cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration allowable accommodations.

State and National NAEP were given in Florida in Grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics. Florida was the only state to have a significant increase in Grade 4 reading between 2002 and 2003.

2004

Rule 6A-1.094222, FAC, entitled "Standards for Mid-Year Promotion of Retained Third Graders" and effective for the 2004-05 school year, was passed. A Grade 3 student retained because the student did not pass the Reading portion of the Grade 3 FCAT is eligible for mid-year promotion during the first semester of the following academic year if the student demonstrates mastery of the Grade 3 Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks of Language Arts and beginning mastery of the Benchmarks for Grade 4 (mastery should be consistent with the month of promotion to Grade 4). A student may complete a portfolio that demonstrates mastery of the appropriate Benchmarks, or a student may demonstrate proficiency by performing at an acceptable level on a locally selected standardized assessment.

Florida Virtual School (FLVS), originally funded as a grant-based pilot project in 1997, was included in the statewide assessment program and school grading system.

Rule 6A-1.09981(8)(a), FAC, raised writing proficiency to 3.5 up from 3.0 on a 0 to 6 scale for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years and to a 4.0 for 2006-07 and beyond (in 2006, Rule 6A-1.09981(8)(a) was amended to keep the proficiency level at 3.5, rather than raise it to a 4.0 in the 2006-07 school year). Sub-paragraph (8)(c) requires inclusion of FCAT Science for determining school grades for the 2006-07 school year. This legislation requires completion of science standard setting during 2005-06. Like FCAT Reading and Mathematics, FCAT Science is reported by Achievement Levels ranging from 1 to 5, with an Achievement Level of 3 indicating grade-level proficiency.

The Middle Grades Reform Act (s. 1003.415, F.S.) requires a personalized middle school success plan for each student scoring below Level 3 on FCAT Reading on the most recent administration of the FCAT in Grades 6, 7, or 8, starting with the 2004-05 school year, and rigorous reading instruction for students in Grades 6, 7, or 8 scoring below Level 3 on the most recent administration of the FCAT, starting with the 2005-06 school year.

Long-term trend NAEP administered to 9-, 13-, and 17-year old students in Florida.

2005

In response to the FCAT Science Advisory committee, Science Performance Review committee, the Florida Association of Science Supervisors, and the Florida Association of Science Teachers, FCAT Science was moved from Grade 10 to Grade 11 to allow an additional year for students to receive high school-level science instruction.

FCAT Writing was supplemented with multiple-choice items as a field test to create a more comprehensive assessment of writing and allow a fair measure of writing performance for the purpose of meeting the graduation requirement as mandated by s. 1008.22(3)(c)5, F.S.

Section 1002.69 (1), F.S., entitled Statewide Kindergarten Screening; Kindergarten Readiness Rates, directed the Department of Education to establish a Kindergarten readiness screening that assesses the readiness of each student for kindergarten based upon the performance standards of Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards. Each school district was required to administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each kindergarten student in the school district within the first 30 school days of each school year.

State and National NAEP were administered in Florida in Grades 4 and 8 in reading, mathematics, and science. Florida NAEP results for reading and mathematics were published in October 2005, and the results for science were released in April 2006.

2006

In February 2006, FCAT Writing became FCAT Writing+ due to the added multiple-choice component that is now operational for Grades 4, 8, and 10. For FCAT Writing+, students receive a whole-test score between 100 and 500 as well as a subscore on a rubric of 0 to 6 for the essay. Students' scores on FCAT Writing+ were reported for the first time in May 2006.

Effective for the 2006-07 school year and beyond, science will be added to the school grading calculation. Science will be the seventh component for calculating school grades. The component will measure the percent of students meeting high standards in science for Grades 5, 8, and 11. Science will not be used to assess annual learning gains. Learning gains of the Lowest 25 percent of students in mathematics will be added to the school grading calculation as the eighth component. The addition of two components to the school grade calculation will lead to an adjustment in the grading scale. Two hundred total points will be added to the scale, an increase of 600 to 800 points possible. The new scale will require an additional 115 points above the current ranges to earn an A - F. High Schools will be eligible for ten bonus points added to their total school grade points accumulated through the eight components if at least half of the Grade 11 and 12 students in the school retaking the Grade 10 FCAT meet the graduation requirement. At least 50 percent of students retaking the Grade 10 FCAT Reading assessment and 50 percent of the students retaking the Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics assessment must meet the graduation requirement for a school to receive the ten bonus points.

Section 1003.4156, F.S., entitled General Requirements for Middle Grades Pro-

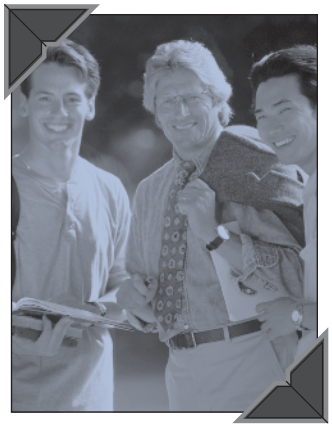
motion amended s. 1003.415, F.S, entitled Middle Grades Reform Act. In addition to the rigorous reading instruction requirements of the Middle Grades Reform Act, mathematics remediation was required for students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 who scored below a Level 3 on FCAT Mathematics the previous school year, beginning in the 2006-07 school year.

Section 1003.428(2)(b)2c and d, F.S., require remediation in the subjects of reading and mathematics for high school students in grades 9 through 12 who score below a Level 3 on FCAT Reading or Mathematics the previous school year, effective in the 2006-07 school year and beyond.

Section 1008.25(4) requires each student who scores below Level 3 on FCAT Reading or Mathematics to have a progress monitoring plan that assists the student or the school in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency, effective in the 2006-07 school year and beyond.

Within 30 school days of the start of the school year, the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) was administered for the first time to all kindergarten students and to all students who participated in the VPK Education Program the previous year, regardless of public or non-public school attendance in kindergarten. FLKRS replaces the SRUSS.

National NAEP was administered in U.S. History, civics, and economics (Grade 12 only). Florida participated in the assessment.



2007 State and National NAEP were administered in Florida in Grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics, and Grade 8 students were assessed in writing. Florida's Grade 12 students participated in reading and writing national assessments.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS – A CHRONOLOGY

Florida has a long history of ensuring that high-quality teachers and administrators are in every classroom across the state because teachers are the key to providing a high-quality education for Florida's students. The state has implemented measures of teacher quality that ensure teacher competency in the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics, professional pedagogy, and subject-matter expertise. In addition, assessments for undergraduate students have been implemented to confirm the basic skills acquisition of all Florida students seeking professional credentialing. Assessments in all of these areas have been modified over time to correlate increased expectations for professionals with increased expectations for public school students.

1980 In response to a 1978 competency study for the purpose of developing a comprehensive written and performance-based teacher certification examination, all teacher candidates seeking certification in the state of Florida were required to take the Professional Education Examination and the original Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE-O), with subtests in Reading, Writing (essay), and Mathematics. The competencies assessed by the FTCE-O and the Professional Education Examination were identified through a study conducted by the Council on Teacher Education, which noted twenty-three Essential Generic Competencies upon which to base both examinations. These same competencies were implemented as part of the curricular requirements at Florida colleges and universities with approved teacher education programs.

State legislation, Section 231.087, F.S., established the Florida Council on Educational Management (FCEM). The duties of the FCEM included identifying relevant management competencies of school managers, developing standards

and procedures for evaluating manager performance, and specifying procedures for school manager certification, which became the basis for creating the Florida Educational Leadership Examination (FELE).

1983 In the spring, the Florida Department of Education reexamined the passing scores for both of the teacher examinations and recommended slightly more difficult passing scores for the FTCE-O Reading and Mathematics subtests and the Professional Education Examination. The State Board of Education endorsed this recommendation and adopted the necessary amendments to existing administrative rules.

1984 Changes set forth in Rule 6A-10.0316, FAC, established minimum competencies that were expected of college students in public institutions in Florida. Colleges and universities were required to give a test of basic college-level skills, the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST), to all students prior to the award of an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree and for admission to upper-division status in a state university in Florida.

1985 During 1985, an extensive review of the College-Level Academic Skills Project (CLASP) skills resulted in the addition, deletion, and/or modification of some of the original skills. As a result of the 1985 review, revised skills were adopted by the State Board of Education and were measured by the CLAST beginning with the fall 1987 administration.

1986 In accordance with Rule 6A-4.00821, FAC, the Florida Educational Leadership Examination (FELE) was developed and implemented for the certification of educational administrators. The FELE was first administered at the University of West Florida as a pilot test and normed in 1987.

The 1986 Florida Legislature modified the testing program by requiring teacher candidates to pass a subject area test effective in 1988.

State legislation (s. 1012.56, F.S.), changed the FTCE basic skills certification requirement for teachers to the Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT).

1988 Beginning July 1, 1988, the CLAST replaced the CPT as the instrument for testing the basic Reading, Writing, and Mathematics competencies for teacher certification described in Rule 6A-4.0021(2)(d), FAC, and added a test of English Language Skills to teacher certification requirements.

The first FELE administration for which examinees were given passing scores was given in November. Until 1994, the FELE was administered two times a year. Thereafter, it was offered four times a year.

The Florida Legislature expanded the FTCE to include tests of subject matter knowledge in the certification areas, and teacher candidates applying for initial certification were required to pass a Professional Education Examination, as well as a Subject Area Examination (SAE). Eighteen SAEs, which are listed in the table FTCE Subject Area Examinations by First Administration Date below, were first administered in October 1988.

1989 During 1989, an extensive review of the CLASP skills resulted in the addition, deletion, and/or modification of some of the original skills. The revised skills resulting from the 1989 review have been incorporated into the CLAST since the fall 1992 administration.

1989-1990 The State Board of Education amended Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC, to include revised competencies and skills for the professional education part of the

FTCE; additional SAEs were first administered in 1989 and 1990, as outlined in the table below:

FTCE Subject Area Examinations by First Administration Date

October 1988	April 1989	October 1989
Biology 6-12	Art K-12	Chemistry 6-12
Computer Science K-12	Elementary Education 1-6	Drama 6-12
Earth-Space Science 6-12	English 6-12	Economics 6-12
Emotionally Handicapped K-12	Hearing Impaired K-12	Educational Media Specialist PK-12
Geography 6-12	Mathematics 6-12	French K-12
Guidance & Counseling PK-12	Music K-12	German K-12
History 6-12	Primary Education K-3	Health K-12
Journalism 6-12	Social Science 6-12	Latin K-12
Mentally Handicapped K-12		Middle Grades English 5-9
Physical Education K-8		Middle Grades General Science 5-9
Physical Education 6-12		Middle Grades Mathematics 5-9
Physically Impaired K-12		Middle Grades Social Science 5-9
Political Science 6-12		Physics 6-12
Reading K-12		Spanish K-12
School Psychologist PK-12		Speech 6-12
Specific Learning Disabilities K-12		
Speech-Language Impaired K-12		
Varying Exceptionalities K-12		

April 1990	October 1990
Humanities K-12	Business Education 6-12
Preschool Education N-PK*	Home Economics 6-12
Psychology 6-12	Occupational Specialist
Sociology 6-12	
Visually Impaired K-12	

*Last tested 8/93. Replaced with Preschool Education B-4 (first tested 10/93).

1991 For the first time in Florida, computer-adaptive testing was available to teacher candidates needing to demonstrate the basic skill competencies assessed by the CLAST. Any student or teacher candidate needing to retake subtests in English Language Skills, Reading, and/or Mathematics could take advantage of this method. The Essay portion of the CLAST was not available via computer.

1992-1995 Additional SAEs were first administered in 1992, 1993, and 1995, as shown in the following table:

FTCE Subject Area Examinations by First Administration Date

October 1992	October 1993	April 1995
English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) K-12	Prekindergarten/Primary PK-3	Agriculture 6-12
	Preschool Education B-4	Industrial Arts-Technology Education 6-12
		Marketing 6-12

1996 Effective in January, s. 240.107(9)(c), F.S., provided students an exemption for all or parts of the CLAST if they earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale in college courses identified by the Postsecondary Planning Commission and achieved a passing score on the CPT. The CLAST, however, continued to be required for all teacher certification candidates.

1997 Section 240.107(9)(c), F.S., was revised to eliminate the CPT as a requirement for exempting the CLAST. Additional mechanisms were instituted for demonstrating mastery of college-level academic skills: minimum scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT I) or the American College Test (Enhanced ACT), in lieu of CLAST scores.

2000 In July, s. 1012.56, F.S. (formerly s. 231.17, F.S.), was revised to replace the CLAST with the General Knowledge Test to meet basic skills requirements for teacher certification, effective July 1, 2002.

2001 The Occupational Specialist subtest area examination was no longer administered after July 28, 2001.

2002 State Board of Education rule and s. 1012.56, F.S., were implemented, requiring teachers to earn passing scores on the new GKE in order to obtain their Professional Certificate.

A candidate who passed the CLAST before July 1, 2002, can present the scores to the Bureau of Educator Certification to meet requirements for demonstration of mastery of basic skills for certification purposes. For subtests of the CLAST not taken and passed before July 1, 2002, the corresponding subtests of the General Knowledge Test are required. Also, effective July 1, 2002, s. 1012.56, F.S., requires that examinations used for demonstration of mastery of general knowledge, professional education competence, and subject area knowledge shall be aligned with student standards approved by the State Board of Education. Further, the examination of competency for demonstration of subject area knowledge shall be sufficiently comprehensive to assess subject matter expertise for individuals who have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and acquired subject knowledge either through college credit or by other means. Some certification areas, such as the Florida Educational Leadership Examination (FELE), require a master's degree or higher and have specific course work or degree requirements in addition to the subject area examination. For more information about qualifying for an educator's certificate in Florida, visit the Bureau of Educator Certifications' website www.fldoe.org/edcert.

Additional FTCE tests that were first administered in July 2002 are as follows:

- General Knowledge Test (basic skills test)
- Exceptional Student Education K-12 (subtest area examination)
- Kindergarten – Grade 6 (subtest area examination)

After January 29, 2002, SAEs in Exceptional Student Education K-12, General Knowledge, and Kindergarten – Grade 6 were administered.

2003 The Professional Education Test was revised and updated. The revised Professional Education Test was given in July. The Home Economics 6-12 test was renamed Family and Consumer Science 6-12; the competencies and skills remained the same.

Additional subject area tests that were first administered in July 2003 are as follows:

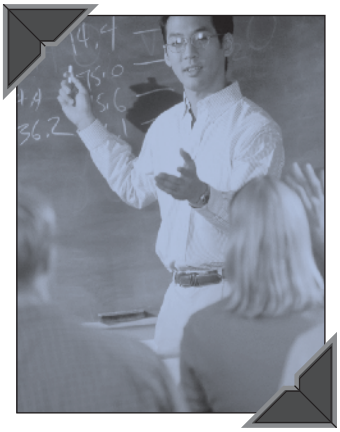
- Middle Grades Integrated Curriculum 5-9
- Physical Education K-12

2004 The following subject area examinations were no longer administered after June 30, 2004:

- Elementary Education 1-6
- Primary Education K-3
- Emotionally Handicapped K-12
- Specific Learning Disabilities K-12
- Mentally Handicapped K-12
- Varying Exceptionalities K-12
- Physically Impaired K-12

2005 Examinations in the following subject areas were no longer administered after June 30, 2005:

- Economics 6-12
- Physical Education 6-12
- Geography 6-12
- Political Science 6-12
- History 6-12
- Psychology 6-12
- Physical Education K-8
- Sociology 6-12



The discontinued Physical Education tests were replaced by the Physical Education K-12 test, which was first administered in July 2003. Additionally, the subject area examination, Kindergarten – Grade 6 was renamed Elementary Education K-6. The competencies and skills pertaining to Kindergarten-Grade 6 remained the same under the new name, Elementary Education K-6, until later revised in 2006.

2006 In conjunction with the Just Read, Florida! comprehensive reading initiative, the competencies and skills of selected FTCE SAEs were revised to incorporate scientifically based research. The revised examinations, effective for the October 2006 test administration, include:

- Educational Media Specialist PK-12
- Professional Education
- Elementary Education K-6 (Language Arts and Reading section)
- Reading K-12
- Prekindergarten/Primary PK-3

Additionally, the Industrial Arts-Technology Education 6-12 examination was renamed Technology Education 6-12; revisions were made to the competencies and skills, effective for the July 2006 administration.

FCAT

II – The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT)

Frequently Asked Questions about the FCAT

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is the FCAT?

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) is part of Florida's overall plan to increase student achievement by implementing higher standards. The FCAT, an assessment test administered to students in grades 3 through 11, contains two basic components: criterion-referenced tests (CRT) measuring selected benchmarks from the Sunshine State Standards (SSS or Standards) in mathematics, reading, science, and writing and norm-referenced tests (NRT) in reading comprehension and mathematics problem solving measuring individual student performance against national norms.

2. Why do students take the FCAT?

The FCAT is given to measure achievement of the Standards. The skills and competencies (called benchmarks) outlined in the Standards are also embedded in the material of a student's core classes. The best understanding of a student's academic achievement comes from looking at multiple pieces of evidence (including FCAT scores) collected over time.

3. What is the legislative authority for the FCAT?

In the early 1970s, the statewide assessment of students in selected grades was authorized. In 1976, the Florida Legislature approved assessments in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11, including the nation's first high school graduation test. Since then, the Legislature has continuously supported assessment and evaluation activities in the state's public school system. The purpose and design of the statewide assessment program is articulated in s. 1008.22, F.S., and the public school student progression plan is in s. 1008.25, F.S.

4. How does the FCAT fit into the A+ Plan for Education in Florida?

Accountability for student learning is the key focus of Florida's system of school improvement. Student achievement data from the FCAT are used to report educational status and annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the State. The A+ school grades are based on the percent of students meeting high standards and the percent of students who make learning gains.

5. Who takes the FCAT?

Approximately 1.7 million public school students in grades 3 through 11 participated in the 2006 administration of the FCAT. These students, including limited English proficient students and students with disabilities, are all working toward a regular high school diploma. Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship and McKay Scholarship students also take the FCAT and, at the request of their parents, home-schooled students may take the FCAT. Beginning in 2004, Florida Virtual School students also take the FCAT.

6. What does the FCAT cost to administer, score, and report results?

The estimated cost of FCAT in 2007 is $15.14 per student. This includes the costs for developing test questions, holding review meetings with Florida educators, field testing, production and printing of tests, shipment and return of test materials, scoring, and reporting scores to parents, schools, districts, and the State. The cost of testing at all grades is less than one-fourth of one percent of the state's K-12 educational budget. Additional costs are associated with releasing tests.

FCAT ADMINISTRATION AND CONTENT

1. How many times has the FCAT been administered?

The FCAT has been administered annually since 1998. In 1998, the FCAT was administered to students in Grades 4 (Reading), 5 (Mathematics), and 8 and 10 (Reading and Mathematics). An NRT component was added in 2000 for grades 3 through 10. The March 2001 FCAT administration included Reading and Mathematics tests for grades 3 through 10. In 2003, FCAT Science was added for students in Grades 5, 8, and 10, and in March 2005, the Grade 10 FCAT Science was moved to Grade 11.

FCAT Writing has been administered to Grade 4 students since 1992, but from 1992 to 2000, the assessment was referred to as the Florida Writing Assessment Program (FWAP). Grade 8 was added to the Writing Assessment in 1993, and Grade 10 was added in 1994. In 2000, the writing assessment was incorporated into the FCAT program and its name changed to FCAT Writing. In 2005, multiple-choice items were added to the writing assessment and the name was again changed to FCAT Writing+.

2. When is the FCAT administered?

Students take the FCAT Writing+ assessment (Grades 4, 8, and 10) in February and the FCAT Reading and Mathematics (grades 3 through 10) and FCAT Science (Grades 5, 8, and 11) assessments in March. Students needing to retake the Grade 10 FCAT are offered opportunities in fall, spring, and summer of their junior and senior years.

3. How much time is needed to administer the FCAT to a student?

The total amount of time required to administer the FCAT depends on the grade level. In general, students spend from four to eleven hours over a two-week period taking different parts of the FCAT. Grade 3, 6, 7, and 9 students spend the least amount of time testing (four hours), and Grade 8 students spend the most time testing (11.75 hours). To view the daily schedule for FCAT administration, go to http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat.htm on the Department of Education website.

4. Do students with disabilities receive accommodations on the FCAT?

Federal law (the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997) requires the inclusion of ESE students in regular assessment programs. Therefore, every effort is made to provide a level playing field for students with disabilities taking the FCAT and seeking a standard high school diploma. In accordance with s. 1007.02(2), F.S. and Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, school districts may request unique accommodations for individual students with disabilities. Section 1007.02(2), F.S., permits these testing accommodations for a student who:

- has been assigned to a special program, according to State Board Rule 6A-6.0331, FAC, and
- has a current Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

The school, district, and state FCAT score averages represent all students taking the test, including students with disabilities. Exemption from the graduation test requirement for students with disabilities seeking a high school diploma is described in s. 1003.43(11)(b), F.S.

5. Do students with limited English proficiency (LEP) take the FCAT?

Yes. LEP students are expected to take the FCAT. State Board Rule 6A-1.09432, FAC, exempts some LEP students from participating in the statewide assessment program:

- if the student has been receiving services in an approved district LEP plan for one year or less, and
- if the student's LEP committee determines that the FCAT is not appropriate.

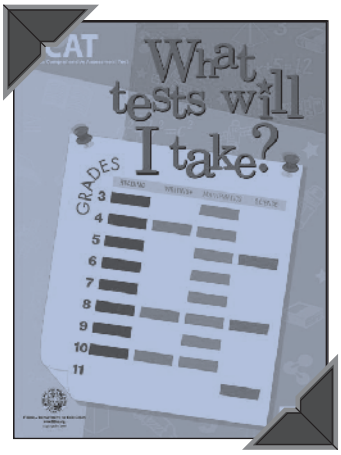
LEP students may take the FCAT using accommodations appropriate for the particular need of the student. It is the responsibility of local school educators to work with students and parents to identify the allowable testing accommodations.

6. What subject areas are measured by the FCAT?

The FCAT presently includes Reading, Writing+, Mathematics, and Science.

7. What can you tell me about FCAT Science?

The A+ Plan for Education, passed by the Florida Legislature in 1999, required a science assessment for students in Grades 5, 8, and 10. In 2000, development of science test items began, and a field test of these items was conducted in April 2002. In 2003, FCAT Science was operational for the first time for all students in Grades 5, 8, and 10. In 2005, FCAT Science was administered to Grade 11 students, rather than Grade 10 students, in response to requests by Florida science educators to allow an additional year for students to receive high school-level science instruction, but the standards by which Grade 11 students are assessed are congruent with the previously administered Grade 10 FCAT.



The Science assessment includes life and environmental science, physical and chemical science, earth and space science, and scientific critical thinking questions. The FCAT Science format is similar to the FCAT Reading and Mathematics tests; it includes multiple-choice and short- and extended-response items.

8. What changes have been made to FCAT Writing?

FCAT Writing, formerly known as Florida Writes, now contains sections that include multiple-choice items with three-and four-answer options; therefore, the test was renamed FCAT Writing+ (plus). The sample types on which items are based include: writing samples that model student draft writing, stand-alone samples that provide a succinct context for measuring knowledge of conventions, cloze samples that contain high-interest materials and numbered blanks, and writing plans that provide a prewriting structure.

FCAT-BASED PROMOTION, RETENTION, GRADUATION POLICIES, AND REMEDIATION

1. At what grade levels must students pass the FCAT?

Grade 3 students must earn an FCAT Reading score of Level 2 or higher on a scale of 1 – 5 in order to be promoted to Grade 4. Graduating seniors must pass both the Reading and Mathematics sections of the Grade 10 FCAT to graduate from high school with a standard high school diploma. Students will be required to pass the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ assessment beginning in 2010. Requirements of FCAT scores for passing to the next grade level are set by school districts throughout Florida, as stated in each district's *Student Progression Plan,* as permitted in s. 1008.22(2)(c), F.S.

2. What is the passing score for the FCAT?

Students in Grade 10 must earn a developmental scale score of 1926 (scale score of 300) or above to pass FCAT Reading and a developmental scale score of 1889 (scale score of 300) or above to pass FCAT Mathematics. Students in Grade 3 must score in Level 2 or higher on FCAT Reading, on a scale of 1 – 5, to be promoted. Good cause exemptions are available for Grade 3 students.

3. What promotion options are available for Grade 3 students who have not passed the FCAT?

Grade 3 students are not retained solely because they do not pass the Reading portion of the Grade 3 FCAT. For promotion to Grade 4, there are six good cause exemptions for students scoring at a Level 1 on the Grade 3 FCAT Reading test, and they include:

- limited English proficient (LEP) students with less than two years in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program,
- students with disabilities whose individual educational plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the FCAT is not appropriate,
- demonstration of an acceptable level of performance on the alternate assessment (*SAT 10*) or scoring at the 51st percentile or higher on the Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) portion of the FCAT,
- demonstration of proficiency in accordance with the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks of Language Arts through a student portfolio,
- students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT, but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading after more than two years of intensive remediation, and were previously retained in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade, and
- students who still demonstrate a deficiency in reading after two or more years of intensive remediation and were previously retained in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade for a total of two years.

In 2004, Rule 6A-1.094222, FAC, entitled "Standards for Mid-Year Promotion of Retained Third Graders," was passed, and it became effective for the 2004-05 school year. A retained Grade 3 student is eligible for mid-year promotion during the first semester of the academic year if the student demonstrates mastery of the Grade 3 Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks of Language Arts and beginning mastery of the Benchmarks for Grade 4 (mastery should be consistent with the month of promotion to Grade 4). With teacher supervision, a student may complete a portfolio that demonstrates mastery of the appropriate Benchmarks, or a student may demonstrate proficiency by performing at an acceptable level on a locally-selected standardized assessment.

4. May graduating seniors substitute alternate assessment scores for passing scores on the FCAT?

Since the graduating class of 2003, students have been permitted to substitute concordant scores on the SAT or ACT for passing scores on the FCAT, if they took the Grade 10 FCAT three times without receiving a passing score on either the Grade 10 FCAT Reading or Mathematics assessments, or both. (See the section entitled "Graduation Requirement" for further details.)

5. How many times can a high school student retake the FCAT prior to graduation?

Students in Grades 11 and 12 who have not passed the Grade 10 FCAT have up to six additional opportunities to pass the Grade 10 FCAT before graduation. Students may retest on the Reading or Mathematics section of the FCAT, or both sections, in fall, spring, and summer of their junior and senior years. Students who have not successfully passed the Grade 10 FCAT prior to their expected graduation may retake the FCAT as many times as they want until they pass it.

6. What options are available to high school seniors who have not passed the FCAT?

Options available to high school seniors who have not passed a portion of the FCAT

include continuing opportunities to take the FCAT until they pass it, the option of earning a General Education Diploma (GED), or the opportunity to enroll in any community college in the state with a Certificate of Completion by taking the Florida College Entrance-Level Placement Test (FCELPT, but commonly referred to as CPT). This information is posted on the Department of Education website at the following address: http://www.12thgradeoptions.org/hsDiploma_1.asp.

7. *Do students receive remediation based on their FCAT scores?*

Students in the middle grades and in high school who score at Level 1 on FCAT Reading must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year, and Level 2 readers must be placed in an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered as determined by diagnosis of reading needs. Students in the middle grades and in high school who score a Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics must receive remediation the following year, which may be integrated in the student's required mathematics course.

All students who score below a Level 3 on FCAT Reading or Mathematics must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for appropriate intervention and instruction as described in the student's individualized progress monitoring plan.

REPORTING STUDENT FCAT SCORES

1. *How and when are student FCAT results returned to students?*

Individual student FCAT results are shipped by the test-scoring contractor to school districts in early May for distribution to schools and students. The scores of graduating seniors and Grade 3 students are returned first, with the scores of all other student participants arriving shortly afterward. Each school district determines the manner in which student results will be distributed to students.

2. *How do I obtain a copy of my child's FCAT scores?*

If a parent does not receive a hard copy of their child's FCAT scores, the parent should contact the child's school directly for a copy of FCAT results. Duplicate copies of student FCAT scores can be obtained by making a request to the District Coordinator of Assessment of the school district. In the event of a move to another school district, the request for a duplicate copy of the scores should be made to the District Coordinator of Assessment of the county in which the student tested.

FCAT Reading and Mathematics results for students are also posted on the FCAT Parent Network (www.fcatparentnetwork.com) after each test administration. Parents should receive letters from their child's school that contain passwords and logins for accessing student scores. If a parent does not receive a letter, the parent should contact the child's school for this information.

3. *Are individual student FCAT scores posted on the Internet?*

Individual student FCAT Reading and Mathematics scores are posted on the FCAT Parent Network (www.fcatparentnetwork.com) following each test administration. FCAT Writing+ and Science scores are now posted on the FCAT Parent Network.

4. *What accounts for the delay between student assessment in March and the return of FCAT scores?*

The scoring process for the FCAT is a complex one. In order to assure accuracy, the test scoring contractor scans the FCAT answer sheets and puts them through a rigorous quality control process. This includes a mock data component which simulates

the entire scoring process for the whole state. Mock data are created and checked in random sets of student test answers that replicate every possible response that can occur on the multiple-choice questions. Then, as real student responses are returned to the scoring contractor, student results from several counties are hand-checked at every line and bubble on the answer sheet. Lastly, a rechecking of the results of the whole state takes place, and answer sheets undergo a third, lengthy process of intense scrutiny.

Additional time is needed to score each of the short-response and extended-response performance task items, as these are each read and hand-scored by two different scorers. If the scorers' two scores are not adjacent, a third scorer rescores the response to resolve the difference.

Once the Department of Education is satisfied that the results are accurate, reports containing FCAT results for each student are sent to districts. Districts then send the FCAT Student and Parent Reports to schools, and schools are responsible for distributing them to each student who participated in the assessment. For the March administrations, results for all FCAT assessments are provided in electronic format for districts and schools prior to the delivery of hardcopy results. Results for the FCAT Reading and Mathematics assessments are provided in electronic format for parents on the FCAT Parent Network (www.fcatparentnetwork.com).

5. How do Achievement Levels based on scale scores differ from Achievement Levels based on developmental scale scores?

FCAT Reading and Mathematics student results are reported by Achievement Levels based on their scale scores, and, after conversion, their developmental scale scores. Scale scores, ranging from 100 to 500 for each grade level, are converted to developmental scale scores, which place the scores of students on a scale ranging from 0 to 3000 for all grade levels tested. Based on their scale scores (or, after conversion, developmental scale scores), students are assigned one of five Achievement Level classifications. The levels range from lowest level (Level 1) to the highest level (Level 5). Level 3 indicates that a student's performance is on grade level.

Developmental scale scores were introduced in 2002 to track student progress over time and across grade levels to indicate student "growth," or "learning gains." For this reason, they are the scores students and parents receive on their FCAT SSS Reading and FCAT SSS Mathematics Student and Parent Reports. By using FCAT developmental scale scores, parents can monitor their student's academic progress from one grade to the next. By comparing a student's scores in the same FCAT subject for two or more years with the associated mean scores (or with the various Achievement Levels) for those years, it is possible to identify whether a student's performance improved, declined, or remained consistent.

Achievement Levels, based on scale scores (not developmental scale scores), were reported for FCAT Science beginning in 2006 and will be reported for FCAT Writing+ beginning in 2007. Developmental scale scores cannot be determined for FCAT Science and Writing+ because students are not tested in these subjects at each grade level.

6. What are some considerations when using developmental scale scores?

When using developmental scale scores to determine and interpret student "growth" across grade levels, subject areas, and school years, it is important to be aware of the following:

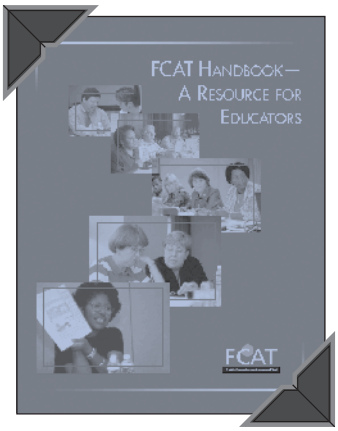
- Developmental scale scores are available only for FCAT Reading and Mathematics.
- Learning gains can be determined only for students in grades 4 through 10 who have two years of FCAT data.

- Developmental score scales typically show larger increases in student "growth" at the lower grade levels and less student "growth" at the higher grade levels.
- Annual "growth" information should be considered within the total context of the student's annual academic record of achievement.
- Some students may show no "growth" based on two years of FCAT scores.
- Learning gains and achievement level scores across two years are not always concordant because of the different scaling methodologies from which they are derived.

CONSTRUCTION AND SCORING OF THE FCAT

1. *Who writes the questions for the FCAT?*

Professional item writers employed by the Department of Education's test-development contractors prepare the first draft of all test questions. Committees of Florida classroom teachers and curriculum supervisors, working with department staff, review and revise each test item. Before a test question appears on the FCAT, it is reviewed for community sensitivity and possible bias. Over 600 Florida teachers, administrators, and citizens participate in the FCAT development process annually.



2. *What are the FCAT questions like?*

Most of the test questions are multiple-choice, but some of the mathematics questions require students to "bubble in" their answers on a grid. Other reading, mathematics, and science questions ask for a short, written answer, and a few ask for a more detailed or extended answer.

In some parts of the test, students write answers in response to an article or story to assess how well they understand what they have read. The table below shows the various item formats on the FCAT by the subject and grade level assessed.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS ON FCAT BY GRADE LEVEL

Item Format	SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS				NRT Reading, Mathematics
	Reading	Writing+	Mathematics	Science	
Essay		4, 8, 10			
Multiple-Choice	3-10	4, 8, 10	3-10	5, 8, 11	3-10
Gridded-Response			5-10	8, 11	
Short-Response	4, 8, 10		5, 8, 10	5, 8, 11	
Extended-Response	4, 8, 10		5, 8, 10	5, 8, 11	

FCAT Reading and Mathematics questions are drawn from different subject areas such as social studies, science, mathematics, reading, health/physical education, the arts, and the workplace. Many questions include graphics and illustrations to help students decide on the correct answer. The FCAT questions and performance tasks incorporate thinking and problem-solving skills that match the complexity of the Standard being assessed.

1. Who scores the FCAT? How are FCAT scorers trained?

Student-bubbled answer sheets are scanned by a professional test-scoring contractor. FCAT performance task responses are graded by a test support contractor who recruits and hires people who have at least a Baccalaureate Degree. Each person must participate in an intensive training program and pass qualifying tests before being hired. Each written student response is scored independently by two readers. As the readers score the student responses, their work is continuously monitored. If they drift from the desired levels of reliability, they are either retrained or discharged. This process is used across the nation by other states that have large-scale testing programs.

2. Can students or parents see the actual test taken? Why not?

Student participants and parents are not permitted to see the actual FCAT tests taken by students because FCAT questions are part of a test item bank, and some questions are reused in subsequent assessments. Allowing students or parents to read the FCAT questions would invalidate them, thereby depleting the supply of resource test questions for future FCAT administrations.

FCAT RESULTS, REPORTS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. When are FCAT results returned to districts?

The results of FCAT Writing+, administered in February, and Reading, Mathematics, and Science, administered later in the spring, are usually sent to school districts by early May. Results for students in Grades 3 and 12 are prioritized and returned first.

2. How are FCAT scores used for school accountability?

The A+ school accountability program is designed to encourage students and teachers to attain higher standards by offering financial incentives to Florida schools. Providing financial resources is part of the task; however, sometimes student learning does not improve even though more money has been spent on education. This is why Florida has the A+ Plan and why the federal government has enacted the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Students, teachers, and school administrators can improve their performance if they have a clear understanding that their first obligation is academic achievement at high levels.

3. Are the FCAT scores for schools adjusted for the socioeconomic status of students?

Schools are responsible for teaching all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status. All students are capable of making adequate learning progress, and all schools are held to equally challenging performance standards.

4. What is the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report?

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation requires all states to report student achievement based on statewide results on reading, mathematics, and writing assessments and, also, high school graduation rates for all schools, districts, and the State. The AYP Report, accessible by visiting www.fldoe.org/NCLB/, provides a breakdown of achievement test results for major racial groups, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. All groups must reach the annual proficiency target for their schools to make Adequate Yearly Progress.

FCAT RESOURCES ON THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WEBSITE

1. *What practice materials are available through the Department of Education to help students prepare for the FCAT?*

The Department of Education website provides valuable resources to help students practice and improve the skills needed to pass the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT). **Sample Test Materials** containing practice items for each subject area and grade level are accessible, with the answers keys, at the following Internet address: http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatsmpl.asp. Archived **test questions** and **released tests** are also available at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatrelease.asp.

A versatile, interactive site for students is the **FCAT Explorer**, which can be accessed at http://www.fcatexplorer.com.

2. *What other FCAT resources are available?*

A new publication, the ***FCAT Handbook—A Resource for Educators***, provides comprehensive information about the FCAT program, including the test development process, the design of the test, the scoring of the tests, and other information of interest to educators and policy makers. The PDF version of the ***FCAT Handbook*** is available on the department website at http://fcat.fldoe.org/handbk/fcathandbook.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

The ***Keys to FCAT,*** for Grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-11, are booklets in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole that have been distributed to district offices each year since 1997. They contain information for parents and students preparing for the FCAT. They also include helpful hints, sample test questions in multiple formats, and general information about the test. To access ***Keys to FCAT*** in PDF format, go to http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatkeys.asp on the department website.

Each year, the department plans to provide parents with a new FCAT product, the ***FCAT Results Folder: A Guide for Parents and Guardians***. This folder allows parents to store and track their children's FCAT reports and papers and provides important information about the FCAT assessments students take in each grade level. The FCAT Results Folder is available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. It is delivered to districts in April to coincide with the distribution of FCAT student reports. This product was first distributed in April 2006.

Another important publication is the document ***About the FCAT***, a web-based informational brochure in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. It provides parents and the general public with detailed information about the FCAT across grades and subject areas and links to other helpful online resources provided by the Department of Education. To access this brochure, visit http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatpub3.asp.

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

The Florida Department of Education produces six publications each spring to help educators understand the scoring of FCAT performance tasks. ***Florida Inquires! Report on the 2006 FCAT Science Released Items*** highlights the scoring of the short-response performance tasks included on the 2006 "Performance Task Student Report" for FCAT Science (Grades 5, 8, and 11). ***Florida Reads! Report on the 2006 FCAT Reading Released Items*** (Grades 4, 8, and 10) and ***Florida Solves! Report on the 2006 FCAT Mathematics Released Items*** (Grades 5, 8, and 10) provide information about the reading and mathematics performance tasks featured on the 2006 student reports. ***Florida Writes! Report on the 2006 FCAT Writing+ Assessment***

(three separate publications for Grades 4, 8, and 10) provides information about the writing assessment administered in 2006. These reports on the 2006 assessment are available on the department website at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatflwrites.asp.

Many districts find the FCAT publication, ***Lessons Learned—FCAT, Sunshine State Standards, and Instructional Implications***, to be helpful for school improvement planning and professional development. This can be accessed on the department website at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fclesn02.asp. A second volume of this publication will be produced with an analysis of statewide results for FCAT Reading and Mathematics during the years 2001–2005. The department hopes to complete this document for delivery to districts in fall, 2007. Following completion of this publication, an analysis of the results for FCAT Science and Writing/Writing+ will be produced. The latter document will provide an analysis of data from 2003–2005 for science and 2000–2005 for writing. At this time, dates for publication have not been determined.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Extensive lists of additional publications can be found on the **FCAT Home Page** under the heading "Publications." Information about the FCAT for students and parents is located at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatpub3.asp, information about the FCAT for educators is located at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatpub2.asp, and information about the FCAT for the general public is located at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatpub1.asp. Among these resources are the ***Content Focus Reports***, the ***Test Design Summary***, ***Understanding FCAT Reports***, ***FCAT Item Specifications***, and the ***FCAT Technical Reports***.

3. Why did the Department of Education first release tests in 2005?

The Department of Education has always wanted to release tests. However, in order to release a test, the supply of test questions must be large enough to replace those that are released. Question development is a time consuming and expensive process. It takes at least two years and $1,800-$2,000 to develop and try out each question. In order to have enough questions that meet the criteria for use on a test, the Department of Education must initially develop twice the number needed. This is necessary because questions may be eliminated by reviewers (educators and statisticians) at any stage during the test building process.

The release of FCAT Reading and Mathematics tests for Grades 4, 8, and 10 in 2005 and Grades 3, 7, 9, and 10 in 2006 was part of the department's efforts to increase public awareness about what is tested on the FCAT. It has been the department's desire for some time to provide more transparency to the FCAT and provide more examples of actual questions that are on the test. In addition, the department's goal of releasing the Grade 10 test every year will provide assurances that the expectations for high school students are realistic and attainable by all students.

Three years ago, the Department of Education began preparing to implement a planned release of tests, and we have annually requested funds from the Florida Legislature to support this effort. Although all of the funds needed have not been appropriated, the Department of Education has been able to accumulate enough questions to release three tests in 2005 and four tests in 2006. The 2005 tests were initially chosen because Grades 4, 8, and 10 have been tested since 1998 and have enough questions developed to begin releasing and retiring tests.

4. When will other FCAT tests be released?

The department plans to release the Grade 5 FCAT Reading, Mathematics, and Science tests, the Grade 6 FCAT Reading and Mathematics tests, and the Grade 8 FCAT

Science test in the fall of 2007. The 2005 releases will be repeated in 2008, with the addition of the Grade 11 FCAT Science test.

The department would prefer to release a form of the Grade 10 test every year, but the practical and technical details to support this activity are still being examined. Because the department prepares four Grade 10 tests each year (one for tenth graders and three for students retaking the test), many more questions must be written, field-tested, scored, and equated to support the release of this test.

5. *What information is available to assist the parent or guardian of a Grade 3 student who is retained due to a low score on the FCAT Reading assessment?*

Information regarding Florida's Third Grade Reading Progression or Third Grade Reading Promotion and Retention Plan is fully explained on the department website at the following Internet address: http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/progress/. Included on this site are options available to Grade 3 students for the use of alternate assessments or good cause considerations for promotion to Grade 4.

6. *Are FCAT scores available on the Internet?*

Yes. State, district, and school reports are available on the Internet at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatscor.asp and http://www.fcatresults.com/demog/. Parents may access student FCAT Reading and Mathematics scores using their login and password information on the FCAT Parent Network at www.fcatparentnetwork.com/.

LEGAL ISSUES CONCERNING THE FCAT

1. *What are the legal issues surrounding the FCAT?*

There are at least three clear legal issues regarding high-stakes graduation tests like the FCAT:

(1) Students must have advance notification of the testing requirement.

(2) Students must have opportunities to retake the test required for graduation if they initially earn a failing score.

(3) Students must be provided opportunities to learn the skills being tested; therefore, schools must be able to demonstrate that the skills being tested are being taught, using evidence such as lesson plans, texts, and curricular offerings.

The Financial Cost of the FCAT[1]

The statewide assessment program is funded using a combination of general revenue and federal sources. Department of Education employees and contracted staff direct and monitor the various activities required to develop, implement, and maintain a large-scale assessment program; however, contracts are necessary to operationalize the program. As the FCAT program has changed and expanded, the cost to provide the associated services has changed as well.

The current testing program includes Reading and Mathematics (both CRT and NRT components[2]), Writing (essay), and Science. Additional details about these components can be found in other sections of this briefing book. Note that when making a change from one contractor to another contractor, there is overlap in the contracted dates to allow for a transitional period which includes start-up and close-out activities.

Two tables are provided in this section. The first table shows the separate total annual contracting costs for development, administration, scoring, and reporting. The per student costs are based on the total annual cost of the program. The second table indicates the testing program and contract changes that have occurred during the same period of time.

	K 12 Testing Program Costs			
	CRT Development and the NRT	**Administration, Scoring, and Reporting**	**Total Fiscal Year Cost**	**Cost per K-12 Student**
1996*	$4,805,687	$2,434,906	$9,675,499	$4.44
1997*	$6,900,000	$2,561,594	$12,023,188	$5.37
1998*	$5,974,768	$3,210,615	$12,395,998	$5.40
1999*	$8,770,666	$2,977,593	$14,725,852	$6.30
2000	$2,779,500	$24,188,657	$28,016,442	$11.79
2001	$5,625,942	$21,749,558	$28,159,278	$11.59
2002	$5,792,768	$31,501,746	$38,076,440	$15.26
2003	$7,115,060	$33,663,006	$41,700,354	$16.45
2004	$10,449,697	$31,824,095	$42,945,838	$16.57
2005	$13,008,010	$30,518,314	$44,061,305	$16.69
2006	$14,617,082	$26,071,392	$40,688,474	$15.25
2007	$13,777,993	$26,547,890	$40,325,883	$15.14 (Est.)

* In these years, development also included some administration, scoring, and reporting costs.

[1] These figures include the cost of the HSCT and the cost of the Florida Writing Assessment before it was included as part of the FCAT.
[2] CRT stands for criterion-referenced test, and NRT stands for norm-referenced test. The Florida CRT, or the standards-based test, assesses student learning of the Sunshine State Standards. The Florida NRT is the Stanford Achievement Test series published by Harcourt Assessment, Inc.
[3] This contract included administration, scoring, and reporting of the test.
[4] This contract included development, administration, scoring, and reporting for three grade levels.
[5] This contract included development, administration, scoring, and reporting for three grade levels.

Testing Program and Contract Changes

Year	Tested Subjects & Grade Levels	Contracts
1996	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10	HSCT – Contract with DRC[3] ending HSCT – New contract with NCS[3] Writing – Contract with NCS[4] Read/Math – New contract with CTB[5]
1997	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Reading – 4, 8, 10 (field test) Mathematics – 5, 8, 10 (field test)	HSCT – Contract with NCS Writing – Contract with NCS Read/Math – Contract with CTB
1998	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Reading – 4, 8, 10 Mathematics – 5, 8, 10	HSCT – Contract with NCS Writing – Contract with NCS Read/Math – Contract with CTB
1999	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Reading – 4, 8, 10 Mathematics – 5, 8, 10	HSCT – Contract with NCS Writing – Contract with NCS Read/Math – Contract with CTB Read/Math – New contract with HAI[6] for program expanded by A+ legislation
2000	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Reading – 4, 8, 10, & field test new grades Mathematics – 5, 8, 10, & field test new grades NRT – 3-10	HSCT – Contract with NCS Read/Math – Contract with HAI Read/Math – New contract with NCS[7]
2001	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math 3-10 (SSS & NRT)	HSCT – Contract with NCS Read/Math – Contract with HAI Read/Writing/Math – Contract with NCS Science – New contract with NCS[4]
2002	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math – 3-10 (SSS & NRT) Science – 5, 8, 10 (field test) FCAT Retakes begin	HSCT – Contract with NCS Read/Math – Contract with HAI Read /Writing/Math – New contract with NCS[8] Science – Contract with NCS
2003	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math – 3-10 (SSS & NRT) & Retakes Science – 5, 8, 10	HSCT – New contract with FSU[9] Read/Writing/Math/Science – New contract with HAI[10] Read/Writing/Math – Contract with NCS Science – Contract with NCS
2004	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math 3-10 (SSS & NRT) & Retakes Science – 5, 8, 10	HSCT – Contract with FSU Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with HAI Read/Writing/Math – Contract with NCS Science – Contract with NCS
2005	HSCT – 11 Writing – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math 3-10 (SSS & NRT) & Retakes Science – 5, 8, 11	HSCT – Contract with FSU Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with HAI Read/Writing/Math – Contract with NCS Science – Contract with NCS Read/Writing/Math/Science – ***New*** Contract with CTB
2006	HSCT – 11 Writing+ – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math 3-10 (SSS & NRT) & Retakes Science – 5, 8, 11	HSCT – Contract with FSU Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with HAI Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with NCS Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with CTB
2007	HSCT – 11 Writing+ – 4, 8, 10 Read/Math 3-10 (SSS & NRT) & Retakes Science – 5, 8, 11	HSCT – Contract with FSU Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with HAI Read/Writing/Math/Science – Contract with CTB

DRC – Data Recognition Corporation; **CTB** – CTB McGraw-Hill; **HAI** – Harcourt Assessment, Inc.; **NCS** – NCS Pearson, Inc.

[6] This contract included development for eight grade levels and the NRT.
[7] This contract included administration and scoring of the Reading and Mathematics tests for eight grades and writing for three grade levels.
[8] This contract included the administration, scoring, and reporting for all tests.
[9] This contract included the administration, scoring, and reporting for as long as students still require the test.
[10] This contract included the development of Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing+ for all grades.

To provide cost effectiveness in the procurement of the FCAT program, which includes CRT and NRT tests in reading and mathematics at eight grade levels plus writing and science tests at three grade levels, the Department of Education uses the competitive bidding process to acquire required products and services. To illustrate, overall the NRT component accounts for only one-third of the cost of the FCAT program. If the services provided for the FCAT NRT were purchased using current catalog prices, the cost of that program alone would be approximately $15 per student. Therefore, full catalog price for the FCAT would be approximately $30-45 per student. The cost of all FCAT contracts is less than one-fourth of one percent of the state's K-12 educational budget.

Educator Involvement in the FCAT

The FCAT subject area content is defined by practicing classroom teachers and curriculum specialists who advise Department of Education personnel as test items are written, reviewed, and validated. The FCAT includes reading, mathematics, science, and writing assessments, but the test questions are placed in the context of social studies, science, mathematics, reading, the arts, health/physical education, and the workplace, and employ real-life situations to check student skills in the various subject areas. Committees of practicing classroom teachers and curriculum staff review all items, and committees of educational leaders and citizens make recommendations. People meet in structured conferences, inspect test questions, consider the performance of students on the test, and make recommendations as to what they believe should be reasonable standards for students. It takes careful effort and time to develop and implement an assessment program with the complexity and accuracy of the FCAT.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Rotating membership

1. **Reading Content Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 15–20 reading and/or language arts professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. They advise the Department of Education about the scope of the Reading assessment. Their recommendations may include which benchmarks should be assessed on the FCAT, the item types recommended for each benchmark, the types of reading materials to be used, the range of difficulty and complexity for passages to be used on the FCAT, and the number of benchmarks, passages, and items to be assessed per grade level. This committee meets once or twice a year.
2. **Writing Content Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 15–20 writing or language arts professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. They advise the Department of Education about the scope of the Writing+ assessment, including the benchmarks that should be assessed and the item types recommended for each benchmark. In years prior to 2000, this committee was constituted as separate grade-level committees and was used to advise the Department of Education about the implementation of the Florida Writing Assessment Program. In 2000-01, the title FCAT Writing was used, and the committee's discussions were broadened to include comprehensive writing assessment topics. In 2004-05, the title FCAT Writing+ was used, and the test was expanded to include multiple-choice items to test students' knowledge of the elements of the writing process. This committee meets once or twice a year.
3. **Mathematics Content Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 15–20 mathematics professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. They advise the Department of Education about the scope of the Mathematics assessment, including the benchmarks that should be assessed and the item types recommended for each benchmark. This committee meets once or twice a year.
4. **Science Content Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 15–20 science professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. They advise the Department of Education about the scope of the Science assessment, including the benchmarks that should be assessed and the item types recommended for each benchmark. This committee meets once or twice a year.
5. **Assessment and Accountability Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 15–20 members representing school district and university personnel. They advise the Department of Education about K-12 assessment and accountability policies. Their recommendations relate to processes or actions needed with FCAT Achievement Levels, school grading policies, and alternative assessments. This committee meets once a year.

6. **Technical Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 10–15 professionals with expertise in psychometrics. The members include Florida district test directors, representatives from the FCAT Content Advisory Committees, Florida university faculty members, and representatives of universities and state agencies outside Florida. In addition, the psychometric advisors of the Department of Education's contractors participate in the meetings of this committee. Committee members assist the Department of Education by reviewing technical decisions and documents and by providing advice regarding the approaches the Department of Education should use to analyze and report FCAT data. This committee meets once or twice a year.

7. **Interpretive Products Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 8–10 professionals that represent the many audiences for which FCAT interpretive products are prepared. Members from Florida school districts and the private sector bring experience related to exceptional student education (ESE), English speakers of other languages (ESOL), vocational education, post-secondary education, and parent involvement. This committee is a standing committee that meets on an ad hoc basis to review FCAT publications and provide input to the department for future products.

8. **Computer-Based Assessment Advisory Committee** – This committee is composed of 10-15 professionals from schools, districts, and universities with expertise in assessment, technology, and the field of exceptional student education (ESE). They advise the department about the current and proposed usage of computer technology in the assessment of students. This focus on technology includes the use of adaptive/assistive devices as ESE accommodations during testing. This committee meets at least once a year.

ANNUAL AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

Convened periodically; includes previous and new participants

1. **Prompt Review Committee** – This committee reviews the prompts and student responses from the FCAT Writing Pilot Test. The review ensures that prompts selected for the FCAT employ clear wording, are of appropriate difficulty and interest level, and are unbiased. The purpose of the committee is to select prompts for the FCAT Writing Field Test. Participants include language arts teachers from the targeted grade level, school and district curriculum specialists, and university faculty from the discipline area. This committee meets in the fall after the Pilot Test.

2. **Community Sensitivity Committee** – Florida citizens associated with a variety of organizations and institutions review all passages, prompts, and items for issues of potential concern to members of the community at large. This review ensures that the primary purpose of assessing achievement is not undermined by inadvertently including in the test any material that may be deemed inappropriate by parents and other citizens. Reviewers are asked to consider whether the subject matter and language of each reading passage, writing prompt, or test item will be acceptable to Florida students, their parents, and other members of Florida communities. The question posed to each participant is: "Considering the variety of cultural, regional, philosophical, political, and religious backgrounds throughout Florida, will the subject matter and language of this reading passage, writing prompt, or test question be acceptable to Florida students, their parents, and other members of Florida communities?" Participants in these committees include representatives of statewide religious organizations, parent organizations, community-based organizations, and cultural groups (e.g., Hispanic or Native American), school boards, school district advisory council members, and leaders in business and industry from across the state. Each Community Sensitivity Committee meets once a year.

3. **Bias Review Committee** – Groups of Florida educators representative of Florida's regional, racial/ethnic, and cultural diversity review passages, prompts, and items for potential bias. Reviewers look for the following types of bias: gender, racial/ethnic, linguistic, religious, geographic, and socioeconomic. The question posed to each participant about each passage, prompt, or item is: "Might this passage/prompt/item offend or unfairly penalize examinees on the basis of personal characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, disability, or geographic region?" A test item, prompt, or passage is considered biased if characteristics of the item, unrelated to the skill being measured, result in an unfair advantage or disadvantage for a particular group of students. Participants in these committees include representatives of Florida school districts, universities, and statewide organizations that serve the various groups that are potentially affected by the types of bias described [e.g., Title I, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and Equal Education Opportunity (EEO)]. Every attempt is made by the Department of Education to represent the various groups potentially affected by bias at a level well above their representation in the general population. In addition to this professional judgment model, differential item functioning (DIF statistic) is examined for all FCAT items. Each Bias Review Committee meets once a year.

4. **Item Content Review Committee** – Content reviews are conducted for reading passages and writing samples. Content reviews are also conducted for reading, mathematics, science, and writing items to determine whether the items are appropriate for the grade level for which each is proposed. In addition, participants are asked to evaluate whether the items measure the benchmark, are clearly worded, have one and only one correct answer, and are of appropriate difficulty. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area, school and district curriculum specialists, and university faculty from the discipline area. The Item Content Review Committees usually meet once a year.

5. **Rangefinder Committee** – After performance items (short- and extended-response) and writing prompts are field tested, scoring of a representative set of student responses for each item/prompt is conducted to establish guidelines for the handscoring of all student responses. Participants establish the range of student responses that represent each score point of the rubric for each item or prompt. As a result of these meetings, training materials for handscorers are assembled. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area and school and district curriculum specialists. Participants will have served on other FCAT committees, such as Item Content Review Committee, prior to serving on a Rangefinder Committee. The Rangefinder Committees meet after spring testing and prior to the handscoring of field-test performance items.

6. **Rangefinder Review Committee** – After performance items and writing prompts are selected for use on the FCAT, a scoring and review of a representative set of student responses is conducted to establish guidelines for the handscoring of all responses. Participants discuss and verify the range of student responses that represent each score point of the rubric for each item or prompt. As a result of these meetings, training materials for handscorers are reviewed and, if necessary, revised. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area, school and district curriculum specialists, and university faculty from the discipline area. Participants will have served on other FCAT committees, such as the Rangefinder Committee, prior to serving on a Rangefinder Review Committee. The Rangefinder Review Committees meet in the fall.

7. **Gridded-Response Adjudication Committee** – A review of all field-test responses to gridded-response questions is conducted to determine whether all possible correct answers have been included in the scoring key. The various responses are

examined and judged as either incorrect or correct. Committee members are asked to evaluate the possibility of finding the answer through an alternate process and determine if resulting answers are acceptable. Based on their advice, the Department of Education establishes rules for how each gridded-response item will be scored. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area and school and district curriculum specialists. The Gridded-Response Adjudication Committees for mathematics and for science meet after each spring administration before field-test gridded-response items are scored.

8. **Standards Setting Committees** – From time to time, Department of Education staff seek the advice of district educators and business/community representatives to recommend achievement-level standards for the FCAT. For example, committees were used to recommend the FCAT Achievement Levels currently in place. For these committees, member selection is made from persons familiar with the FCAT from prior committee participation and persons who may be unfamiliar with the FCAT, but have an interest in the standards being established. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area, school and district curriculum specialists, school and district administrators, university faculty from the discipline area, and business and community leaders.

9. **Science Expert Review Committee** – Due to the theory-based nature of the content area, all potential science test items undergo an extra level of scrutiny. Participants in this committee review newly developed science test items to ensure the accuracy and currency of the science content. Participants include practicing scientists from the private sector and university-level science researchers and faculty. The Science Expert Review Committee usually meets in the fall.

10. **Special Ad Hoc Committees** – On occasion, groups of parents, teachers, school/district administrators, and others are convened to review various aspects of the testing program and to advise the Department of Education on appropriate courses of action. These committees provide advice on topics such as score reporting, norm-referenced tests, and interpretive products.

One Year of FCAT Participants 2005-2006

677 participants
67 school districts
38 weeks of meetings
76 different meetings

WHAT?

Bias Committee – 43 Members
- Reading and Mathematics
- Science
- Writing+

Sensitivity Committee – 35 Members
- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Writing+

Advisory Committee – 47 Members
- Interpretive Products
- Assessment & Accountability
- Technical
- NRT
- FCAT Reports

Reading Committee – 158 Members
- Content Advisory
- Item Content Review
- Passage Review
- Rangefinder
- Rangefinder Review

Mathematics Committee – 121 Members
- Content Advisory
- Gridded Adjudication
- Item Content Review
- Rangefinder
- Rangefinder Review

Science Committee – 79 Members
- Content Advisory
- Expert Review
- Item Content Review
- Rangefinder
- Rangefinder Review
- Standard Setting

Writing+ Committee – 109 Members
- Content Advisory
- Prompt Review
- Item Content Review
- Rangefinder
- Rangefinder Review

FCAT
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test®

DEVELOPMENT

WHO?

Ethnicity

Asian	<1%
African Am.	20%
Caucasian	66%
Hispanic	8%
Other	3%

Gender

Female	77%
Male	21%

WHERE?

Region

Panhandle	23%
East Central	20%
Northeast	18%
South	21%
West Central	16%

County Size

Small	24%
Medium	37%
Large	38%

County Type

Rural	22%
Urban	38%
Suburban	39%

The Question of "Teaching to the Test"

Teaching to the test, or teaching students how to answer specific test questions, is not and has never been the intent of Florida's educational accountability program. Teachers should be focusing their lesson design and instruction on all relevant benchmarks in the Sunshine State Standards (Standards), not just those benchmarks assessed by the test. The State Board of Education adopted the Standards as policy; and, according to Florida law, the Standards must be part of each school's curriculum. Teachers should never interrupt instruction in their lessons to spend time teaching only the content and the methods of responding included on the FCAT. The skills and competencies detailed in the Standards should be taught daily.

Teaching the Standards is an important aspect of educational accountability. An important element of accountability for teaching the Standards is a standards-based test like the FCAT. The negative connotation of "teaching to the test" should not be associated with teaching the Standards that are being tested. It is instruction that focuses only on teaching the items on the test that is to be avoided. This cautionary note has been included by the Department of Education in the support materials for the recent release of FCAT tests, as well as for the annually-released sample test questions.

The Standards can and should be taught across the entire curriculum. For example, in many effective schools, students taking a history class are learning and reinforcing reading skills, analyzing the opinions of the author, writing answers to questions posed by the daily lessons, and using mathematics skills to draw graphs of population trends. A well-planned field trip in health education or sociology may involve reading as preparation, discussion and analysis, writing summary reports, and preparing data analyses of observed phenomenon. When teachers incorporate the Standards successfully, student learning and success on the FCAT should follow.

Teaching the subject matter required by the Sunshine State Standards and tested by the FCAT is entirely appropriate and desirable. No school should marginalize its responsibilities for effective teaching and learning by spending long hours in FCAT-preparation activities. High-quality, Standards-focused instruction will provide students the knowledge and skills needed to be successful on the FCAT.

Similarly, adults working toward teacher certification should avoid narrow practice on test questions. The focus should be the study and practice of knowledge and skills required to be an effective teacher. The certification tests include only a representative sampling of this knowledge.

All school districts have had the opportunity to review and influence the content of the Standards and of the FCAT. School districts are charged with instructional validity responsibilities to ensure that the Standards are being taught in every classroom; however, each teacher has a degree of autonomy in organizing class content. The state cannot monitor each student's daily classroom instruction, although every effort is made to ensure that teachers introduce academic information at the appropriate time during the school year. If parents have concerns about the curriculum taught at their child's school, they should offer their opinions to the educators and school board members in their district.

Reporting Student Test Results

FCAT results are reported at the individual student, school, district, and state levels. Various combinations of summary reports are provided at the school and district levels to assist local educators in determining the performance of their students.

FCAT Reading and Mathematics student results are reported by scale score, developmental scale score, and Achievement Levels based on both scale scores and developmental scale scores. (See Appendix A for 2006 FCAT results.) Achievement Levels based on scale scores (not developmental scale scores) were reported for FCAT Science beginning in 2006, and FCAT Writing+ performance will be reported by Achievement Levels based on scale scores beginning in 2007. Developmental scale scores cannot be determined for FCAT Science and Writing+ because students are not tested in these subjects at each grade level.

SCALE SCORE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Achievement Levels for each subject area and at each grade level are reported on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) and describe the success a student has attained on the Florida Sunshine State Standards (SSS) tested on the FCAT. The five levels (defined by cut-scores on a 100 to 500 scale) were adopted by the State Board of Education. There are no scale scores lower than 100. Level 1 performance was designated by the Commissioner of Education to be low enough to question the student's academic progress. The state average score was about 300 when the test was first administered in 1998. Since then, the average score has fluctuated as students have been tested. The levels do not indicate passing scores.

The tables below list Achievement Levels for FCAT SSS Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing+, along with the scale score ranges associated with each Achievement Level and grade.

FCAT Achievement Levels

Reading						Mathematics				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
100-258	259-283	284-331	332-393	394-500	3	100-252	253-293	294-345	346-397	398-500
100-274	275-298	299-338	339-385	386-500	4	100-259	260-297	298-346	347-393	394-500
100-255	256-285	286-330	331-383	384-500	5	100-287	288-352	326-354	355-394	395-500
100-264	265-295	296-338	339-386	387-500	6	100-282	283-314	315-353	354-390	391-500
100-266	267-299	300-343	344-388	389-500	7	100-274	275-305	306-343	344-378	379-500
100-270	271-309	310-349	350-393	394-500	8	100-279	280-309	310-346	347-370	371-500
100-284	285-321	322-353	354-381	382-500	9	100-260	261-295	296-331	332-366	367-500
100-286	287-326	327-354	355-371	372-500	10	100-286	287-314	315-339	340-374	375-500

Science

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
5	100-272	273-322	323-376	377-416	417-500
8	100-269	270-324	325-386	387-431	432-500
11	100-278	279-323	324-379	380-424	425-500

Writing+

4	100-239	240-289	290-364	365-426	427-500
8	100-249	250-298	299-355	356-415	416-500
10	100-249	250-299	300-341	342-402	403-500

DEVELOPMENTAL SCALE SCORES

A developmental scale score (DSS or vertical scale score), is used to understand whether a student has "gained" in achievement. Developmental scale scores are only available for Reading and Mathematics because students are tested at each grade level from grades 3 through 10 in these subjects. For the individual student reports (started in 2002), student scale scores, ranging from 100 to 500, are converted to scores on the developmental scales. The FCAT developmental scores range from 0 to about 3000 across grades 3 through 10 and link two years of student FCAT data that track student progress over time. By using vertical scale scores, parents and educators can assess changes in scores across years and monitor a student's academic progress from one grade to the next. Vertical scale scores make it possible to identify whether a student's performance improved, declined, or remained consistent. Each year, student scores should increase according to the student's increased achievement.

In comparing student "growth" across grade levels, subject areas, and school years, it is important to consider the following limitations of the developmental scale:

- Developmental scores are available to students in grades 3 through 10, who have two years of FCAT data; current year, Grade 3 students will not have annual learning gains because they lack two years of FCAT data.
- Developmental scale scores typically show larger increases (more student growth) at the lower grade levels and less student growth at the higher grade levels.
- Student FCAT data reflect only one year of FCAT "growth" information, which should be considered within the total context of the student's annual academic record of achievement.
- Some students may show no "growth" based on their two years of FCAT scores.

The table below lists the FCAT developmental scale scores for each Achievement Level.

FCAT Achievement Levels for the Developmental Scale

Reading						Mathematics				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
86-1045	1046-1197	1198-1488	1489-1865	1866-2514	3	375-1078	1079-1268	1269-1508	1509-1749	1750-2225
295-1314	1315-1455	1456-1689	1690-1964	1965-2638	4	581-1276	1277-1443	1444-1657	1658-1862	1863-2330
474-1341	1342-1509	1510-1761	1762-2058	2059-2713	5	569-1451	1452-1631	1632-1768	1769-1956	1957-2456
539-1449	1450-1621	1622-1859	1860-2125	2126-2758	6	770-1553	1554-1691	1692-1859	1860-2018	2019-2492
671-1541	1542-1714	1715-1944	1945-2180	2181-2767	7	958-1660	1661-1785	1786-1938	1939-2079	2080-2572
886-1695	1696-1881	1882-2072	2073-2281	2282-2790	8	1025-1732	1733-1850	1851-1997	1998-2091	2092-2605
772-1771	1772-1971	1972-2145	2146-2297	2298-2943	9	1238-1781	1782-1900	1901-2022	2023-2141	2142-2596
844-1851	1852-2067	2068-2218	2219-2310	2311-3008	10	1068-1831	1832-1946	1947-2049	2050-2192	2193-2709

Additional information concerning student academic "growth" at each grade level in mathematics and reading based on FCAT scores is available on the Florida Department of Education website at http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/fcatscor.htm.

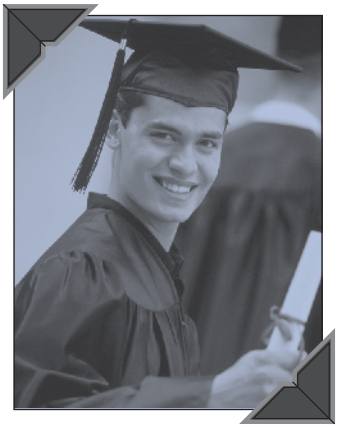
Graduation Requirement

Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT are required for high school graduation. In 2001, the State Board of Education adopted administrative rule 6A-1.09422, FAC, which specified passing scores on FCAT Reading and Mathematics. The State Board acted on recommendations from the Commissioner of Education that were based on input from the education community as well as from citizens throughout the state. As a result, students who expect to graduate from high school must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics assessments.

The current[11] Grade 10 passing scores, as determined by the State Board of Education, are as follows:

FCAT SSS Reading Test	1926 (scale score of 300) or above
FCAT SSS Mathematics Test	1889 (scale score of 300) or above

Performance on the FCAT is not the sole criteria in determining eligibility for graduation. Section 1003.43, F.S., is very specific in that no student can receive a standard high school diploma from a Florida public school unless that student has met all academic requirements. Students must take required courses, earn the requisite number of credits, maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or higher, and pass Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics before graduating.



If students do not earn passing scores on the FCAT the first time they take the test, they have additional opportunities to retake it. The Grade 10 FCAT Retake exam is administered in fall, spring, and summer to Grade 11 and 12 students who have not previously passed. Most students in grades 10 through 12 have up to six opportunities to pass the Grade 10 FCAT before graduation.

A senior can graduate by receiving a score comparable to the FCAT passing score on the ACT or SAT. See the chart below for the concordant scores that have been in place since the 2003-2004 school year.

Concordant Scores			
Reading		**Mathematics**	
FCAT	1926	FCAT	1889
ACT	15	ACT	15
SAT	410	SAT	370

Per s. 1008.22(9), F.S., a student shall be required to take the Grade 10 FCAT a total of three times without earning a passing score in order to use scores from the ACT or SAT. This requirement does not apply to a student new to the public school system in Grade 12.

In 2006, the Legislature amended s. 1008.22(9), F.S., to allow for the use of concordant scores without limiting the implementation to a specific school year. Section 1008.22(9), F.S., now authorizes the Commissioner of Education to adopt concordant scores for FCAT scores when a concordance is supported by an alignment of the content of the assessments as well as a determination of a strong statistical relationship within the data sets. In addition, the section was amended to specify each time that test content or scoring procedures are changed for the FCAT or one of the identified tests (ACT or SAT), new concordant scores must be determined.

The amended statute provides the legislative authority to continue the use of the current concordant scores adopted by the State Board of Education; however, the College Board updated the SAT, so the department is required to conduct another concordance study to determine the content alignment and the statistical relationship between the

FCAT and the new SAT. The department now has a sufficient number of students who have taken both the FCAT and the new assessment to study score relationships between the assessments. Once the department has completed the concordance study of the new version of the SAT, it may be found that the score relationship is different and the concordant scores may need to change. The department anticipates that students participating in the SAT after new concordant scores are approved will be held accountable for achieving the new concordant scores. For example, if new SAT concordant scores are approved by January 1, 2007, all students taking the SAT after January 1, 2007, would need to meet the new score requirements. The Department of Education does not intend to apply score changes retroactively that may negatively impact those eligible students with the current concordant scores satisfying the current assessment requirements for the purpose of high school graduation.

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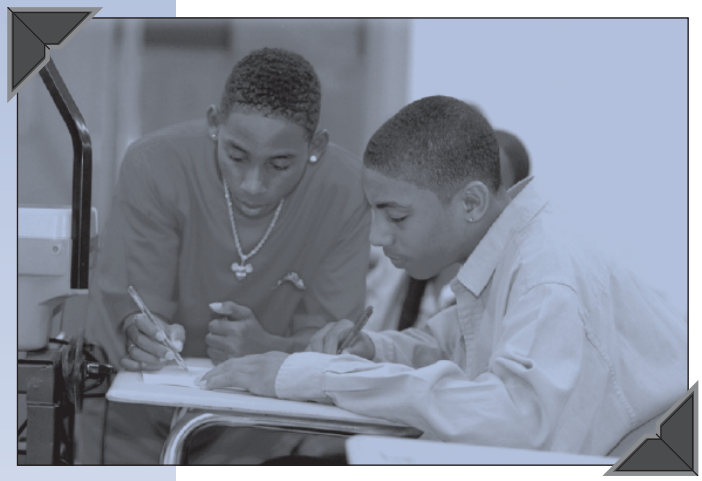
[11] Students will be required to earn a passing score of 300 on the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ assessment beginning with the graduating class of 2010. This means that students enrolled for the first time in Grade 9 in 2006-07, and thereafter, must meet the FCAT Writing+ graduation requirement in addition to all other established graduation requirements.

There are alternate passing scores for students in certain categories: seniors (Grade 12 or Grade 13) who took the Grade 10 FCAT in March 2003; students who took the Grade 10 FCAT for the first time in 2001; students who took the Grade 10 FCAT for the first time prior to 2001; and students who were in Grade 9 in school year 1999-2000.



Reliability and Validity of the FCAT

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) was designed to assess student achievement of the Sunshine State Standards (SSS). The test meets all professional standards of psychometric quality traditionally associated with standardized achievement tests. Two constructs that are generally used to indicate the quality of a standardized test are reliability and validity. In this section, several measures of the technical quality of the FCAT show that scores from the FCAT are both reliable and valid. More detailed technical information than presented here is available from the Florida Department of Education upon request.

TEST DESCRIPTION

The FCAT is used to assess the levels of students' knowledge and skill in reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 10. Two types of scale scores are reported on the FCAT: (1) scale scores for each grade level (100-500 points), and (2) developmental scale scores (DSS) that span all grade levels tested (0-3000 points). In addition, five levels of achievement are reported. Level 1 is low and Level 5 is high. High school students must attain a scale score of 300 or above on the Grade 10 FCAT SSS Reading and Mathematics examinations and a developmental scale score of 1926 or above in Reading and 1889 or above in Mathematics in order to satisfy the testing component of the graduation requirements. At Grade 3, students must attain a satisfactory FCAT SSS Reading score before being promoted to Grade 4 without good cause. Initially, students must attain a score above Level 1; however, alternate methods of demonstrating reading skills are also provided.

RELIABILITY

Reliability can be represented in several ways, but the concept essentially means that the test provides consistent measurement of an examinee's knowledge. Reliability measures help users generalize student performances from one test administration to another. Four kinds of reliability coefficients can be used in relation to the FCAT:

(a) internal consistency

(b) test-retest reliability

(c) inter-rater reliability

(d) reliability of classifications

For any of the four types of reliability, the coefficient is expressed as a number from zero to one (0.0-1.00). A value of zero indicates a lack of reliability that results in inconsistent scores from one test administration to the next. On the other hand, a value of one indicates perfect consistency. The most common measure of reliability is the internal consistency reliability coefficient. Test-retest reliability requires a special study where students take the FCAT twice in a very short period of time. Because the internal consistency measures of reliability have been shown to produce similar results using only one administration per student, this method is used for ongoing testing programs. Summaries of inter-rater reliability and the reliability of classifications are provided in the FCAT technical reports.

Internal consistency reliabilities for the FCAT are reported using two methods: Cronbach's Alpha and Item Response Theory (IRT) marginal reliabilities. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, found in Tables 1 and 2, are reported for the FCAT-SSS tests and for the FCAT-NRT (KR-20 is used). The IRT marginal reliabilities are available only for the FCAT-SSS and are found in Table 3. Both of these methods are used to estimate the reliability of test scores from a single test. Cronbach's Alpha (and the KR-20) coefficients are

based on classical test theory. The KR-20 formula is used with tests that contain only dichotomously scored items (right or wrong). Some performance items on the FCAT are scored on a scale from 0-4; therefore, Cronbach's Alpha is the more appropriate statistic for the FCAT-SSS test.

Tables 1 and 2 show FCAT reliability coefficients using Cronbach's Alpha for the FCAT-SSS component and KR-20 for the NRT component. The FCAT-NRT reliability coefficients are those reported by the test publisher. The data in Tables 1 and 2 confirm that the FCAT is a highly reliable test for assessing the educational achievement of Florida students.

TABLE 1

Classical Reliability of FCAT (2005 – 2006)

Grade	Reading			
	Cronbach's Alpha - SSS		KR-20[12]	KR-20
	2005	2006	2005 NRT	2006 NRT
3	0.89	0.89	0.92	0.92
4	0.86	0.85	0.90	0.91
5	0.86	0.87	0.90	0.90
6	0.90	0.89	0.91	0.90
7	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.91
8	0.88	0.85	0.92	0.90
9	0.89	0.90	0.92	0.92
10	0.89	0.85	0.92	0.91
Grade	**Mathematics**			
	Cronbach's Alpha - SSS		KR-20	KR-20
	2005	2006	2005 NRT	2006 NRT
3	0.89	0.90	0.92	0.92
4	0.88	0.88	0.90	0.91
5	0.92	0.87	0.91	0.91
6	0.91	0.86	0.91	0.91
7	0.91	0.86	0.91	0.93
8	0.93	0.89	0.90	0.93
9	0.92	0.85	0.90	0.91
10	0.94	0.88	0.87	0.90

TABLE 2

Classical Reliability of FCAT (2001 – 2004)

Grade	Reading				
	Cronbach's Alpha - SSS				KR-20[13]
	2001	2002	2003	2004	NRT
3	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.89	0.94
4	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.86	0.93
5	0.88	0.87	0.90	0.87	0.93
6	0.91	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.92
7	0.92	0.91	0.91	0.89	0.93
8	0.90	0.89	0.89	0.86	0.94
9	0.91	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.94
10	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	0.93

Grade	Mathemtaics				
	Cronbach's Alpha - SSS				KR-20
	2001	2002	2003	2004	NRT
3	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	0.90
4	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.87	0.90
5	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.86	0.90
6	0.87	0.88	0.87	0.85	0.90
7	0.90	0.88	0.89	0.86	0.90
8	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.87	0.91
9	0.92	0.91	0.89	0.87	0.87
10	0.93	0.92	0.92	0.88	0.88

TABLE 3

IRT Marginal (RIJ) Reliability of FCAT

Grade	Reading					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
3	0.88	0.90	0.91	0.89	0.92	0.92
4	0.91	0.89	0.91	0.87	0.91	0.92
5	0.89	0.87	0.90	0.88	0.89	0.90
6	0.90	0.89	0.90	0.89	0.92	0.93
7	0.90	0.90	0.91	0.89	0.92	0.92
8	0.91	0.87	0.90	0.88	0.91	0.91
9	0.90	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.91	0.92
10	0.90	0.89	0.88	0.87	0.91	0.92
Grade	Mathematics					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
3	0.88	0.89	0.88	0.87	0.93	0.90
4	0.88	0.89	0.88	0.87	0.93	0.88
5	0.94	0.93	0.93	0.86	0.94	0.87
6	0.88	0.89	0.87	0.85	0.94	0.86
7	0.90	0.88	0.89	0.84	0.94	0.86
8	0.94	0.93	0.93	0.86	0.95	0.89
9	0.91	0.91	0.90	0.86	0.94	0.85
10	0.94	0.93	0.92	0.88	0.95	0.88

The data in Table 3 provide additional confirmation that the FCAT is a highly reliable test. In IRT, marginal reliabilities are used to represent the variability of test scores for a specific group of examinees. These marginal reliabilities estimate the standard error of measurement (SEM) for the test and can be interpreted in the same way as Cronbach's Alpha. Table 3 shows the reliabilities using the average SEM for all students.

[12] KR-20 data are found in the technical materials for the Stanford 9, published by Harcourt Educational Measurement. Note: The Stanford 10 replaced the Stanford 9 in 2005.

[13] KR-20 data are found in the technical materials for the Stanford 10, published by Harcourt Educational Measurement. Note: The Stanford 10 replaced the Stanford 9 in 2005.

VALIDITY

We usually do not talk about a test having validity. Instead, we say that interpretations of test scores are valid. The test score tells us something about the student, and we want those interpretations to be valid. In general, validity refers to the extent to which the test measures the characteristic it is supposed to measure. FCAT is intended to measure a student's achievement of the skills and content described in the Sunshine State Standards. Validity cannot be directly observed; therefore, we depend on various pieces of evidence that indicate the presence or absence of validity. The types of validity evidence are often grouped into these three interrelated categories:

(a) content-related evidence

(b) criterion-related evidence

(c) construct-related evidence

Content validity evidence refers to the degree to which an assessment reflects the content it was designed to assess. The American Psychological Association (APA) standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1985) state that:

> Content-related evidence of validity is a central concern during test development. . . . Expert professional judgment should play an integral part in developing the definition of what is to be measured, such as describing the universe of content, generating and selecting the content sample, and specifying the item format and scoring system. (p. 11)

The FCAT is designed to assess the Sunshine State Standards that were developed with involvement of instructional specialists. Annual reports of participation of Florida educators in this process are available upon request. To ensure high content validity of the FCAT, the Department of Education has implemented the following steps for all of the items included on the FCAT:

- Educators and citizens judged the standards and skills acceptable.
- Item specifications were written.
- Test items were written according to the guidelines provided by the item specifications.
- The items were pilot tested using randomly selected groups of students at appropriate grade levels.
- All items were reviewed for cultural, ethnic, language, and gender bias and for issues of general concern to Florida citizens.
- Instructional specialists and practicing teachers reviewed the items.
- The items were field tested to determine their psychometric properties.
- The tests were carefully constructed with items that met specific psychometric standards.
- The constructed tests were equated to the base test to match both content coverage and test statistics.

Because the FCAT assesses the content of the Standards and is developed using credible and trustworthy methods, the content validity of the test is substantiated.

Evidence of criterion-related validity is presented as the correlation of one test with a criterion. Criterion validity usually is presented as either concurrent evidence or predictive evidence. Concurrent validity refers to the comparisons of test performance with

an external criterion that is obtained at relatively the same time as the administration of the test. Predictive validity compares test performances with an external criterion that is obtained at some point in the future. Concurrent validity is more relevant for the FCAT than predictive validity and can be examined by the correlation of scores on the criterion-referenced portion (SSS) with scores on the norm-referenced portion (until 2005, Stanford 9). Both components of the FCAT are administered at approximately the same time. The data presented in Table 4 confirm that the FCAT demonstrates concurrent validity with the Stanford 9 test; however, the validity coefficients do not indicate that the tests provide exactly the same information.

TABLE 4

Correlations Between the FCAT SSS and the NRT Tests

Grade	Reading					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
3	0.84	0.84	0.85	0.83	0.83	0.84
4	0.80	0.83	0.82	0.80	0.78	0.83
5	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.80	0.83
6	0.83	0.84	0.83	0.82	0.83	0.83
7	0.83	0.82	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83
8	0.82	0.83	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82
9	0.82	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.82	0.79
10	0.80	0.80	0.78	0.78	0.80	0.80
Grade	**Mathematics**					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
3	0.85	0.84	0.84	0.85	0.85	0.84
4	0.83	0.82	0.81	0.79	0.82	0.82
5	0.82	0.84	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.84
6	0.84	0.84	0.82	0.84	0.82	0.83
7	0.84	0.83	0.83	0.84	0.82	0.83
8	0.81	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.84
9	0.82	0.80	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.83
10	0.79	0.77	0.76	0.76	0.72	0.76

Construct-related evidence of validity is the degree to which the test measures the skills intended to be measured. Confirmatory and explanatory factor analysis and correlational methods are often used to evaluate construct validity. Another approach to establishing construct validity is to conduct convergent and discriminant analyses. FCAT technical reports present detailed information regarding these types of validity and provide evidence that both FCAT-SSS Reading and Mathematics tests have substantial convergent validity.

SUMMARY

The evidence of reliability and validity supports the claim that the FCAT is technically sound and meets or exceeds the professional standards for standardized achievement tests.

Other K-12 Assessments

III – Other K-12 Assessments

Reading Diagnostic Assessment Program

The Florida Legislature has identified reading as a subject of great importance for elementary children. In fact, students are at risk of being retained if reading proficiency is not attained, as defined in s. 1008.25, F.S. In an effort to help school districts increase student achievement in reading, the Florida Department of Education implemented the Reading Diagnostic Assessment Program. This program was established to give districts an opportunity to order Grades K-12 Reading Diagnostic Assessment materials to help schools improve student achievement in reading. The state has transitioned the funding for reading diagnostic assessments from the department to the reading allocation within the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). After January 2007, all reading diagnostic purchases will be the responsibility of the district.

The purpose of the Reading Diagnostic Assessments is to provide teachers with valid and reliable assessment tools to better inform their professional judgments about a student's reading skill and to plan appropriate instruction that addresses deficiencies. Reading assessment materials are offered to all Florida public school districts for students in grades Kindergarten through 12. Districts may purchase at state rate from two diagnostic instruments for grades Kindergarten through 3 and one for grades 4 through 12. The assessments measure the five essential components of reading: (1) phonemic awareness, (2) phonics, (3) fluency, (4) comprehension, and (5) vocabulary.

Early Reading Diagnostic Assessment, Second Edition (ERDA2) – The ERDA2 is a battery of tests that evaluate all five essential components of reading to assess students in grades Kindergarten through 3. ERDA2 provides classroom teachers with an assessment tool to determine student reading strengths and weaknesses to plan instruction. This assessment is offered for use in the public school system by the Florida Department of Education and The Psychological Corporation.

Diagnostic Assessment of Reading, Second Edition (DAR) – The DAR is an assessment tool used to evaluate students in grades Kindergarten through 12. The DAR is comprised of early reading tests (print awareness, phonological awareness, and letters and sounds), word recognition, word analysis, oral reading, silent reading comprehension, spelling, and word meaning. The DAR offers viable information to teachers: it assesses a student's relative strengths and weaknesses, provides an in-depth analysis of a student's reading proficiency, and presents teachers with diagnostic information to plan individual or group instruction. This assessment is offered for use in the public school system by the Florida Department of Education and Riverside Publishing.

Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

In 2006-07, the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) was first administered to assess the readiness of each student for Kindergarten. The FLKRS replaces the Student Kindergarten Readiness Screening (SRUSS), which was administered from the 2002-03 to the 2005-06 school year. Section 1002.69 (1), F.S., directed the Department of Education to establish a Kindergarten readiness screening based upon Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards.[14] The VPK Education Standards describe what children should know and be able to do at the end of the VPK year in the areas of physical health, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and communication, emergent literacy, cognitive development, and motor development.

Section 1002.69, F.S., also specifies that the department shall require each public school to administer a Kindergarten readiness screening to all Kindergarten students in the school district within the first 30 school days of each school year. Additionally, each parent who enrolls his or her child in the VPK Education Program in the previous school year must voluntarily submit the child for the FLKRS, regardless of whether the child is admitted to Kindergarten in a public or nonpublic school. Section 1002.69 (4), F.S., also requires each school district to designate sites for administering the FLKRS for VPK Education Program participants who will be attending Kindergarten in a non-public school.

The FLKRS is designed to provide for the assessment of each child's readiness for Kindergarten. It includes a subset of the Early Childhood Observation System™ (ECHOS™) and the first two probes of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS™) measures for Kindergarten (Letter Naming Fluency and Initial Sounds Fluency) to gather information on the child's development in emergent literacy.

Prior to 2006-07, the School Readiness Uniform Screening System (SRUSS) was administered to gather information about the readiness of all public school children as they enter Kindergarten. Section 411.01(10), F.S., entitled "School Readiness Uniform Screening," required that the Department of Education implement the SRUSS beginning with the 2002-03 school year. The corresponding requirement in school law may be found in s. 1008.21, F.S., (formerly Section 229.567, F.S.), entitled, "School readiness uniform screening (kindergarten)."

Public school system educators were required to administer the SRUSS, which consisted of the Early Screening Inventory Kindergarten (ESI-K) and either the Work Sampling System (WSS) or the Ready-for-School Behavioral Screener (RFS), to students entering Kindergarten in the fall of the 2002-03 school year. The ESI-K is a developmental screening instrument that takes approximately 20 minutes to administer and gives a quick overview of a student's development in three areas: visual motor/adaptive, language and cognition, and gross motor skills. In 2004-05 and 2005-06, the WSS and RFS, behavioral screening instruments, were replaced by DIBELS' Letter Naming Fluency and Initial Sounds Fluency.

Data from the FLKRS will be used to determine the readiness of children entering Kindergarten for the first time in 2006 to inform instruction and to provide useful information to parents. These data will also be used to annually calculate a readiness rate for private and public school providers of the VPK Education Program, according to s. 1002.69 (2) and (5), F.S.

Prior to 2002-03, school districts completed a "School Readiness Checklist" for students entering Kindergarten. Based on the results of the checklist, a determination was made regarding whether the child was "ready" for Kindergarten. Since the SRUSS replaced the previous "School Readiness Checklist," school districts have not been required to complete this checklist or submit these data to the Department of Education.

[14] Adopted by the department under Section 1002.67 (1), F.S.

College Board's Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) and ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (PLAN)

Schools are being strongly encouraged to offer and promote rigorous course work to help increase students' skills necessary for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. As a result, there has been more interest in identifying students who are likely to be successful in rigorous college preparatory courses.

The State of Florida entered into a partnership with the College Board and ACT, Inc. to provide free Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) or PLAN testing for all enrolled Grade 10 students at a public high school, including, but not limited to, schools and alternative sites and centers of the Department of Juvenile Justice. However, a written notice shall be provided to each parent that shall include the opportunity to exempt his or her child from taking the PSAT or PLAN. Florida Statute 1007.35 and a directive of the 2005 Florida Legislature in Specific Appropriation 128 provided $1,600,000 to the statewide administration of the PSAT and PLAN. Funding is allocated each year to the Florida Department of Education's Office of Assessment and School Performance via the Governor's One Florida Initiative that pays for the PSAT and PLAN testing for all 72 public school districts. The Office of Equity and Access personnel in the department work with school district personnel to encourage 100 percent participation of Grade 10 students in this program.

High school sophomores are at a particularly important transitional stage in their high school experience. The College Board's PSAT and ACT's PLAN assessment are excellent practice opportunities for students wishing to take the SAT and ACT. The PSAT and PLAN have been found to be good predictors of student achievement on the SAT and ACT assessments. The diagnostic reports that schools and parents receive from the PSAT/PLAN tests provide useful information to assist in determining student readiness for Advanced Placement and/or Level 3 courses. Level 3 courses include honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, and other college-preparatory classes.

The PSAT and PLAN, typically given in Grade 10, serve as a midpoint review of a student's academic progress. The PLAN assessment covers four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. The PSAT measures critical reading, mathematics problem-solving, and writing skills that students have developed throughout their primary and secondary educational careers. PSAT and PLAN results help Grade 10 students build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provide information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. Most importantly, scores on the PLAN and PSAT help students make the most of their remaining years in high school and guide them in planning for their post-graduation transition to further education or the workplace.

These tests give students first-hand practice for the ACT and SAT. PSAT and PLAN results can help all students—those who are college-bound as well as those who are likely to enter the workforce directly after high school.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Known as the "Nation's Report Card," the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) collects and compiles data at the national, regional, and state levels on student performance in a variety of subject areas. The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires the administration of NAEP every two years in all states, in the District of Columbia, in the Department of Defense Activity Schools, and in ten selected large, urban school districts. This component of NAEP, also known as Main NAEP, includes reading and mathematics, which are assessed every two years, while science and writing alternate, each being assessed every four years. During the intervening years, the Long-term Trend component of NAEP is assessed and includes other subject areas. Section 1088.22(2), Florida Statutes, requires participation by all of Florida's schools selected for the assessment.[15]

NAEP has two major goals: (1) to measure and compare student achievement in states and other jurisdictions and (2) to track changes in achievement of fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders over time in reading, mathematics, writing, science, and other content areas. It is the only measure of student achievement in the United States where the performance of students in one state can be compared with the performance of students across the nation and in other states.

Every two years, NAEP assesses nationally representative samples of more than 120,000 public and private school students in Grades 4, 8, and 12. Schools are randomly selected for NAEP based on demographic variables representative of the nation's and each state's schools. Students are also selected randomly, with their confidentiality ensured.

NAEP was designed as a survey assessment in 1969 to produce national results. In 1990, NAEP was expanded to produce state-level results, and, in 2002, a limited number of large, urban districts were assessed. In 1998, NAEP began offering accommodations for students with disabilities (SWD) and English language learners (ELL). Main NAEP is administered at Grades 4 and 8 (at the state level) plus Grade 12 at the national level. The long-term trend assessment reports national results (in reading and mathematics only) for age samples 9, 13, and 17 in public and nonpublic schools and is administered every four years.

A twenty-five member National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) was established in 1988 (P.L. 100-297) as an independent body to oversee the development of the NAEP frameworks that underlie the assessments and specifications used to guide the development of the assessment instruments. In May 1990, NAGB identified appropriate achievement levels and performance standards for each age and grade in each subject area tested under NAEP. NAGB is also responsible for setting NAEP's schedule of assessments.

NAEP reports performance by subgroups of students (e.g., by gender, racial/ethnic group, English language learners (ELLs), and participation in exceptional education programs); however, NAEP does NOT provide scores at the school or student level. NAEP plays an important role in evaluating how well our children are doing in school. It is an important part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education.

NAEP assessments are implemented by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education with the help of contractors, such as the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and Westat Research.

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[15] The Florida legislation was initially adopted as Florida Statute 229.57(2) in 1990.

NOTES

School Accountability in Florida

IV – School Accountability in Florida

Florida's current school accountability system is implemented according to the guidelines provided in the 1999 A+ Plan legislation and the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Prior to 1999, the Florida school accountability system was called "Critically Low Schools." Each of these systems is described briefly in this section.

Critically Low Schools – 1995

In November 1995, Florida identified 158 schools as having critically low student performance. These schools had low student performance for two years in a row in all three areas tested: reading, writing, and mathematics. After schools were identified as low performing, they received focused technical assistance and additional resources from the district and state. Student performance at these schools improved because of these additional efforts; however, most schools did not remain on the list because of their improvement in writing. In the first year school grades were assigned, only four of the original 158 critically low-performing schools received a grade of "C" or higher, but by 2003, the number receiving a "C" or higher had increased to 88.

A+ School Grades – 1999

In 1999, the Florida Legislature passed the Bush/Brogan A+ Plan (Section 1008.34, F.S.). The legislation required increased public accountability for schools in the form of school ratings from "A" to "F" and included several other important features.

- **Student achievement**—Schools in Florida must be child centered, not school or district centered. Educational programs should revolve around the individual needs of each child. An academic improvement plan was required for all students with low scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT).
- **Student gains**—The FCAT was expanded to include standards-based and norm-referenced assessments of reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 10. Subsequently, the standards-based tests were designed to accurately assess annual student learning gains based on the benchmarks in the Sunshine State Standards.
- **Choices for parents**—School choice and opportunity scholarships are required for students in schools receiving a grade of "F" in two of four consecutive years.
- **Resources for low performing schools**—Schools are required to implement comprehensive school improvement plans to help students reach the goals set forth in the A+ Plan. The school district and the Department of Education provide additional funds and assistance to "D" and "F" schools.
- **Rewards for improvement and success**—Funds are made available for successful schools earning a grade of "A" or improving a letter grade from one year to the next.
- **Program changes for students**—When students do not make progress during the year, schools are required to offer an educational program that is different from the educational program students received in the current year. These changes are documented in an academic improvement plan.

The A+ Plan called for a transition to student learning gains by the 2001-2002 school year. At that time, Florida implemented a growth model that tracks individual student progress across grades 3 through 10. After meetings across the state and receiving input from teachers, principals, and education groups, such as the Florida Parent Teacher Association, the Florida School Board Association, the Florida Superintendents Association, and community leaders, the State Board of Education unanimously approved the

components of the school grading system in December 2001. For the first time, in 2002, Florida's school grading system contained the component of annual learning gains. This was an original and integral component of the Bush/Brogan A+ Plan and was enthusiastically embraced by educators and parents alike. Three years of research and development contributed to reaching this goal.

With new methods available for determining student learning gains, school grades could be based on both the progress of students from one year to the next and their achievement of high academic standards. The school grading system, begun in 2002, emphasized student performance and student learning gains equally – with half of the six components measuring performance and learning gains. Schools earn points for each of the six components according to the percent of students who attain each of the criteria:

1. Reading – Meeting High Standards (FCAT > Level 3)
2. Mathematics – Meeting High Standards (FCAT > Level 3)
3. Writing – Meeting High Standards (FCAT > Level 3.5)
4. Reading – Learning Gains
5. Mathematics – Learning Gains
6. Reading Learning Gains of the lowest 25 percent of students

Raising the Bar for A+ – 2003

On November 18, 2003, the State Board of Education amended Rule 6A-1.09981 (Implementation of Florida's System of School Improvement and Accountability) and Rule 6A-1.09422 (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® Requirements). The changes to these rules raised the bar for student and school performance in requirements of the school grading system and for maintaining high achievement level standards on the FCAT.

CHANGES EFFECTIVE FOR THE 2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR

- All new schools will be graded in their first year, as long as they have at least 30 eligible students with valid FCAT assessment scores in Reading and at least 30 eligible students with valid FCAT assessment scores in Mathematics for both the current and previous years.
- Schools will receive a school letter grade based on guidelines issued by the Commissioner. The district accountability coordinator is responsible for verifying that each school is appropriately classified before school grades are issued.
- District average writing scores for all students will be used as the school writing score when a school does not contain the grade level assessed by writing (Grades 4, 8, or 10) or when fewer than 30 students are tested.
- Scores of the lowest performing students will be used when fewer than 30 students are among the lowest scoring 25 percent. Scores for all students at or below the identified cut point will be included. To be included in the lowest performing group, students must have scored at or below FCAT Achievement Level 3 in the previous year.
- The Commissioner can assign a lower letter grade than represented in the points earned when the percent of students tested is less than 90 percent.

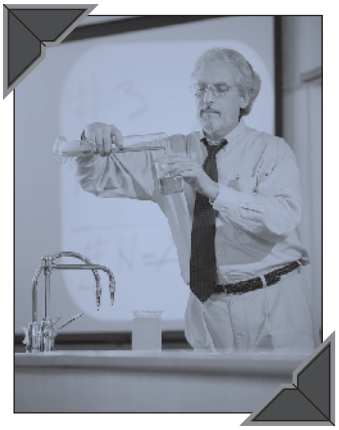
Changes effective for 2004-05 and 2005-06

- The criterion score for FCAT Writing increased to 3.5.
- All students are included in determining learning gains. Students with disabilities,

limited English proficient (LEP) students, and standard curriculum students are all included in the components addressing annual learning gains. The three components addressing challenging content standards continue to include only standard curriculum students.

CHANGES EFFECTIVE FOR 2006-07 AND BEYOND

- Science will be added to the school grading calculation. Science will be the seventh component for calculating school grades. The component will measure the percent of students meeting high standards in science for Grades 5, 8, and 11. Science will not be used to assess annual learning gains.
- Learning gains of the lowest 25 percent of students in mathematics will be added to the school grading calculation as the eighth component.
- The addition of two components to the school grade calculation will lead to an adjustment in the grading scale. Two hundred total points will be added to the scale, an increase of 600 to 800 points possible. The new scale will require an additional 115 points above the current ranges to earn an A – F.
- High Schools will be eligible for ten bonus points added to their total school grade points accumulated through the eight components if at least half of the Grade 11 and 12 students in the school retaking the Grade 10 FCAT meet the graduation requirement. At least 50 percent of students retaking the Grade 10 FCAT Reading and 50 percent of the students retaking the Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics must meet the graduation requirement for a school to receive the ten bonus points.



No Child Left Behind & Adequate Yearly Progress

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires states to evaluate the performance of all students in all public schools in order to determine whether schools, school districts, and the state have made adequate yearly progress (AYP). Florida's approved accountability plan uses the same FCAT scores and definitions of "grade level" used in the A+ Plan. In addition, the plan identifies the specific criteria for determining and reporting AYP for all schools.

Not making AYP means that a school has not met the proficiency criterion or the percent passing standard for at least one subgroup of students. The measures included in determining AYP are reading and mathematics proficiency, writing proficiency, graduation rate improvement, and percent tested in each group (see also the section that follows called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Criteria).

Although all schools in the state are identified as making or not making AYP, only Title I schools not making AYP in two consecutive years will be identified as "schools in need of improvement." For example, in the 2003-04 school year, the schools "in need of improvement" were the Title I schools that received a performance grade of "F" for the 2001-02 school year and that did not make AYP for the 2002-03 school year. Students attending these schools were eligible for public school choice options for the 2003-04 school year. Title I schools that do not make AYP for more than two consecutive years (i.e., schools that missed AYP in 2003-04 and 2004-05) are required to provide supplemental educational services to students and to implement strategies for improving school performance.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP) CRITERIA

All of the criteria for AYP must be evaluated for nine separate groups of students: all students in the school[16], White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian students,

economically disadvantaged students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities.

To make AYP, schools must:

- test 95 percent of the students on the statewide assessment (FCAT) or an alternate assessment method,
- meet the reading proficiency target[17] (percent of students scoring at Level 3 or above on FCAT or the alternate assessment),
- meet the mathematics proficiency target[17] (percent of students scoring at Level 3 or above on FCAT or the alternate assessment),
- have 90 percent of students achieving at FCAT Writing 3 and above or improve by at least 1 percent the students scoring Level 3 and above on FCAT Writing, and
- attain an 85 percent graduation rate or improve by at least 1 percent in the graduation rate for high schools.

Safe Harbor Provisions: Schools or districts with subgroups that do not meet the annual objectives for reading or mathematics can meet AYP by reducing the proportion of non-proficient students in that subgroup by at least 10 percent from the prior school year.

Schools rated as "D" or "F" under the A+ school grading system cannot make AYP.

The U.S. Department of Education has invited States to participate in a pilot project where growth models would determine whether schools made AYP under the No Child Left Behind Act. This model would allow Florida to incorporate student growth in determining AYP for the state, districts, and schools. Florida is currently pursuing this approach, but has not been approved at the time of this printing.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Benchmarks in Florida

	Reading	Mathematics
2001 02	31	38
2002 03	31	38
2003 04	31	38
2004 05	37	44
2005 06	44	50
2006 07	51	56
2007 08	58	62
2008 09	65	68
2009 10	72	74
2010 11	79	80
2011 12	86	86
2012 13	93	93
2013 14	100	100

16 Schools must have more than 10 students in the school to receive an AYP designation. Subgroups must have 30 or more students for inclusion in the AYP calculation.

17 Annual proficiency targets are described in Florida's No Child Left Behind accountability plan. Annual targets are incremental steps toward the goal of having 100 percent of all students proficient by 2013-14. These annual targets identify the percentage of students who must be proficient in reading and mathematics. (See chart, Annual Yearly Progress Benchmarks in Florida, for annual proficiency targets.)

NOTES

Certification Examinations for Florida Educators

V – Certification Examinations for Florida Educators

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *What are the Certification Examinations for Florida Educators?*

They are examinations taken for certification in the State of Florida that consist of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations (FTCE) and the Florida Educational Leadership Examinations (FELE).

The FTCE comprises three types of tests:

- the General Knowledge Test, which is a test of basic skills
- the Subject Area Examinations (SAE), which consist of 42 different content area tests
- the Professional Education Test, which is a test of pedagogy and professional practices

The tests are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards.

2. *Why do educators take the FTCE and FELE examinations?*

Florida law requires that teachers take and pass FTCE tests that demonstrate mastery of basic skills, professional knowledge, and content area of specialization in order to be certified to teach in the State of Florida, covering Prekindergarten and Early Childhood through Grade 12. Administrators, such as school principals, are required by Florida law to take and pass the FELE in order to be certified in Educational Leadership in the State of Florida.

3. *What is the legislative authority for the FTCE and FELE examinations?*

Testing requirements for teacher candidates seeking certification in Florida are described in Section 1012.56, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and in 6A-4.0021, Florida Administrative Code (FAC). Testing requirements for candidates seeking certification in Educational Leadership in Florida are described in Section 1012.56, F.S., and in 6A-4.00821, FAC.

4. *Who takes the FTCE and FELE examinations?*

The FTCE tests are taken by candidates for teacher certification in the State of Florida. The FELE is taken by candidates for certification in Educational Leadership in the State of Florida. There are no restrictions on who may register for and take the examinations; however, for the tests to be valid for certification purposes, the candidate must have a B.A. or B.S. degree as a minimum requirement for teacher certification, and additional requirements may be specified by the Bureau of Educator Certification (see Number 5 below).

5. *How do candidates for teacher certification know what FTCE tests to take?*

The Bureau of Educator Certification at the Florida Department of Education in Tallahassee determines individualized testing requirements for certification. Teacher candidates should submit an application for certification. After the application is on file, the Bureau issues an Official Statement of Status of Eligibility that indicates individualized testing requirements.

6. *Are all new elementary school teachers required to pass rigorous tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and the other areas of the elementary school curriculum to*

demonstrate subject-matter competency?

To qualify for a temporary certificate, teacher candidates must meet subject area specialization through a degree in the subject area or by satisfying course requirements. To be issued a professional teaching certificate, elementary school teachers must take an FTCE certification examination specific to the elementary grades in which they seek to teach. For most certification areas requiring a minimum of a bachelor's degree, including elementary education, teacher candidates with a bachelor's degree in another field can also pass one of the FTCE subject area examinations applicable to the elementary grades to meet subject area specialization for a temporary certificate. The broadest elementary certification area is for Kindergarten through Grade 6. The FTCE Elementary Education Kindergarten-Grade 6 FTCE subject area examination consists of five sections: Science and Technology; Mathematics; Language Arts; Social Science; and a section that combines Physical Education, Health, Music, and Visual Arts.

Within one calendar year of being hired as a teacher in the State of Florida under a temporary certificate, elementary school teachers, as well as other new teachers, must also take and pass all four subtests of the General Knowledge Test (Reading, Essay, English Language Skills, and Mathematics subtests). For the Professional Certificate, elementary school teachers, as well as other new teachers, must also pass the Professional Education Test of pedagogy and professional practices.

History of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations (FTCE)

EARLY TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAM PROGRAM

Beginning in 1980, all teacher candidates seeking certification in the State of Florida were required to take the original Florida Teacher Certification Examination, which was known as the FTCE-0, and the Professional Education Examination. The FTCE-0 included a basic skills component that consisted of writing an essay and multiple-choice tests in Reading and Mathematics. The professional educator component was a multiple-choice test assessing general knowledge in five areas: human development, appropriate student behavior, planning instruction, implementing instruction, and evaluating instruction. All candidates for new certificates (academic, degreed vocational, and Occupational Specialist) were required to pass both tests. The original basic skills test has been phased out and is no longer an accepted measure of basic skills for teacher candidates.

ADDING CLAST AS THE BASIC SKILLS TEST

In 1986, legislation was enacted to amend the FTCE basic skills requirement (s. 1012.56, F.S.). Under this legislation and beginning July 1, 1988, the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) was used for testing the basic Reading, Writing, and Mathematics competencies of teacher candidates (Rule 6A-4.0021(2)(d), FAC).

The CLAST is a basic skills test administered to students in public community colleges and universities. (Many private institutions also require their students to take and pass the CLAST.) To become certified on or after July 1, 1988, teacher candidates had to receive passing scores on all four subtests of the CLAST. While the CLAST is no longer accepted for certification purposes, teacher candidates who passed the CLAST, or any subtests of the CLAST, before July 1, 2002, have been permitted to submit those subtest scores for certification purposes.

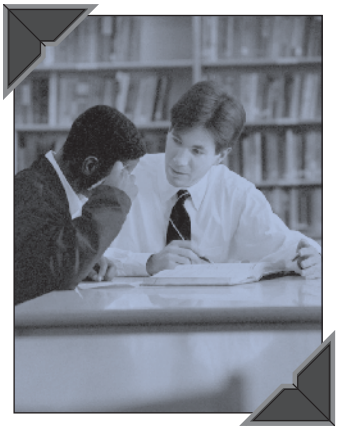
ADDING SUBJECT AREA EXAMINATIONS

Also included in the 1986 legislation (s. 1012.56, F.S.) was a requirement for subject

area examinations. These tests assess knowledge of specific content areas and have been required for teacher certification since 1988. During the early stages of development, committees of educators from throughout the state reviewed existing commercial tests and determined that the tests available were not sufficient to meet the Florida legislative mandate. At this point, the Florida Department of Education established contracts with Florida universities for the development of the exams. The universities included Florida State University, the University of Central Florida, the University of Florida, the University of South Florida, and the University of West Florida.

CURRENT TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION

In 2000, the Florida Legislature mandated the creation of a new basic skills test (s. 1012.56, F.S.). Effective July 1, 2002, teacher candidates applying for new certificates in Florida are required to pass the General Knowledge Test instead of the CLAST. Candidates must also pass the Professional Education Test and a subject area test in each content area for which certification is sought.



GENERAL KNOWLEDGE TEST

Effective July 1, 2002, the General Knowledge Test is the required basic skills test teacher candidates must pass in order to become certified. The General Knowledge Test is aligned to the content standards Florida teachers must teach and for which schools are accountable, the Sunshine State Standards. Like the CLAST, the General Knowledge Test contains four subtests: a written Essay and multiple-choice tests of English Language Skills, Reading, and Mathematics.

The Essay subtest measures general writing skills, such as formulating a thesis statement, providing supporting details, using a logical organizational pattern, and following conventions in word choice, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. The English Language Skills subtest measures knowledge of conceptual and organizational skills, word choice, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. The Reading subtest includes passages with questions measuring literal and inferential comprehension. The Mathematics subtest includes number sense, concepts, and organization; measurement; geometry; algebra; and data analysis and probability.

General Knowledge Test			
Subtest	**Item Format**	**Items**	**Passing Score**
Writing Essay	Prompt	Select 1 of 2 prompts	6★
English/Lang. Skills	Multiple-choice	40	200 (Scale Score)
Reading	Multiple-choice	40	200 (Scale Score)
Mathematics	Multiple-choice	45	200 (Scale Score)

✧ Passing scores were established for the first time during 2002-2003. Scale scores are derived for each administration to ensure comparable difficulty of subsequent test forms.

★ Two readers rate each essay on a rating scale from 1 to 6 points. The readers' scores are then combined to achieve a total score, which ranges from 2 to 12 points.

A candidate must receive passing scores on all four subtests of the General Knowledge Test; however, examinees need only to retake the subtest that was not passed. There is no limit to the number of times an examinee may retake a subtest; however, State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.0021(3)(d) does prohibit examinees from retaking a test within 31 calendar days.

The General Knowledge Test is offered throughout the state during regular administrations in January, April, July, and October. In addition to the regular administrations, teacher candidates also have the opportunity to take the test during supplemental administrations that are given in four cities—Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, and Pensacola—during March, June, September, and December. Examinees also have the opportunity to take the English Language Skills, Reading, and Mathematics exams on computers at designated locations. The Essay portion, however, cannot be taken on a computer.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION TEST

The Professional Education Test assesses general knowledge of pedagogy and professional practices.

On February 18, 2003, the Florida Board of Education amended Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC, to include revisions to the competencies and skills in Professional Education. A revised, updated version of the test was administered for the first time in July 2003. A newly revised, updated version will be available in 2007.

The Professional Education Examination is a multiple-choice test containing 120 items. It is offered throughout the state during regular administrations in January, April, July, and October. In addition to the regular administrations, teacher candidates also have the opportunity to take the test during supplemental administrations that are given in four cities—Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, and Pensacola—during February, May, September, and December. Examinees also have the opportunity to take the Professional Education Test on computers at designated sites.

SUBJECT AREA EXAMINATIONS

In 1998, there were 16 subject area tests, but the number grew steadily until by the 1996 testing year, 54 subject area tests had been developed. Some of these subject areas have since been discontinued, and the content has been included in other newer examinations that cover a broader content area. There are currently 42 subject area tests. These are listed in the following table:

FTCE Subject Area Examinations	
Agriculture 6-12	Latin K-12
Art K-12	Marketing 6-12
Biology 6-12	Mathematics 6-12
Business Education 6-12	Middle Grades English 5-9
Chemistry 6-12	Middle Grades General Science 5-9
Computer Science K-12	Middle Grades Integrated Curriculum 5-9
Drama 6-12	Middle Grades Mathematics 5-9
Earth/Space Science 6-12	Middle Grades Social Science 5-9
Educational Media Specialist PK-12	Music K-12
Elementary Education K-6	Physical Education K-12
English 6-12	Physics 6-12
ESOL K-12	Prekindergarten/Primary PK-3
Exceptional Student Education K-12	Preschool Education (Birth-Age 4)
Family and Consumer Science 6-12	Reading K-12
French K-12	School Psychologist PK-12
German K-12	Social Science 6-12
Guidance and Counseling PK-12	Spanish K-12
Health K-12	Speech 6-12
Hearing Impaired K-12	Speech-Language Impaired K-12
Humanities K-12	Technology Education 6-12
Journalism 6-12	Visually Impaired K-12

The subject area examinations are offered throughout the state during regular administrations in January, April, July, and October. In addition to the regular administrations, teacher candidates also have the opportunity to take the test during supplemental administrations that are given in four cities—Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, and Pensacola—during March, June, September, and December. Examinees also have the opportunity throughout the year to take some of the subject area examinations on computer at designated locations inside and outside the state of Florida. The FTCE Registration Bulletin contains details about the availability of these tests.

TEST DEVELOPMENT

All of the tests required for teacher certification are developed according to the same procedures. Statewide committees for the various subject areas determine the body of knowledge to be measured through extensive literature reviews, surveys of practicing educators across the state, and professional discussion among committee members. The committees then develop the competencies (broad categories of knowledge) and skills (more specific abilities) to be tested, as well as the test blueprints (the percentage of the test that comes from each competency). At each stage of the test development process, separate teams of content area experts develop the competencies, skills, blueprints, and items; then other teams evaluate, revise, and validate the first teams' products. Teams include practicing classroom teachers, district supervisors, principals, and university professors.

SCORING

Most of the FTCE examinations, which include the General Knowledge Test, the subject area examinations, and the Professional Education Test, are composed of multiple-choice items that are scored right or wrong, with the total "raw" score being equal to the total number of correct items. The "raw" score is then converted to a scale score, either by a linear transformation formula or by the Angoff equating method, depending on the number of examinees taking the examination. Except for the General Knowledge subtest, FTCE test results are reported as scale scores. The minimum passing scale score is set at 200 for all subject area examinations and for the three multiple-choice subtests of the General Knowledge Test. The General Knowledge Essay subtest, however, is scored separately on a scale from 1 to 6 by two scorers whose ratings are combined to form the subtest score. Beginning July of 2006, the Professional Education and General Knowledge examinations will use a P-value Item Substitution method to establish equivalency of examination forms.

Some subject area tests include performance components, such as essays, speaking portions, or videotaped portions, in addition to multiple-choice items. The subject area examinations with performance components include English 6-12, Middle Grades English 5-9, French K-12, German K-12, Spanish K-12, and Speech 6-12. For these examinations (except German and Speech, see below), a composite score is determined by combining the raw multiple-choice score and the performance score assigned by two raters into a composite scaled score; as with other tests, the passing scaled score is 200. For German and Speech, each examination is divided into two parts that are scored separately (and may be retaken separately if one part is not passed). For German, there is a combined multiple-choice and performance scaled score for the first part and a separate performance score for the second part that consists of a tape-recorded individual interview with a German interviewer; for Speech, there is a multiple-choice scaled score for the first part and a performance score for the second part consisting of an individual videotaped speech presented by the examinee.

Florida Educational Leadership Examination (FELE)

Candidates seeking certification in Educational Leadership in the State of Florida are required to take and pass the Florida Educational Leadership Examination (FELE) as specified in s. 1012.56, F.S., and in Rule 6A-4.00821, FAC.

HISTORY OF THE FELE

In 1983-84, panels of experts, including university professors and practicing school leaders, organized the 19 principle competencies identified in studies commissioned by the Florida Council on Educational Management into the eight domains tested on the FELE. The teams then developed the competencies (broad categories of knowledge) and skills (more specific abilities) to be tested, as well as the test blueprints (the percentage of the subject test that comes from each competency). At each stage of the process, separate teams developed the competencies, skills, blueprints, and items; then other teams evaluated, revised, and validated the first teams' products. Each team included education administrators, district-level personnel, and university professors.

The FELE was pilot tested by the University of West Florida in 1986. Then, in 1987, it was given to candidates under "norming" administrations. Under these administrations, all examinees taking the test were considered "passing." The results from these special administrations were valid for certification purposes only for a period of two years from the administration date.

The first administration for which passing scores were required occurred in November 1988. The University of West Florida administered forms of the FELE twice a year—in May and November—from November 1988 through May 1991. Other universities have assisted the Department of Education with the administration of the FELE since 1991. The Institute of Instructional Research and Practice (IIRP) at the University of South Florida administered the FELE twice a year from November 1991 through November 1993. The University of Florida administered the test from April 1994 through September 2001 and administered forms of the test four times a year, along with the regular FTCE administrations. Starting in June 1996, it also became possible to take the FELE during the four supplemental testing dates. Beginning with the October 2001 administration, the IIRP at the University of South Florida has administered the FELE.

CURRENT REQUIREMENTS FOR FELE

The FELE examination covers the eight domains of the Florida Educational Leadership core curriculum specified in Rule 6A-4.00821, FAC. The eight areas are divided among three subtests and include the number of items indicated in the following table:

Florida Educational Leadership Examinations

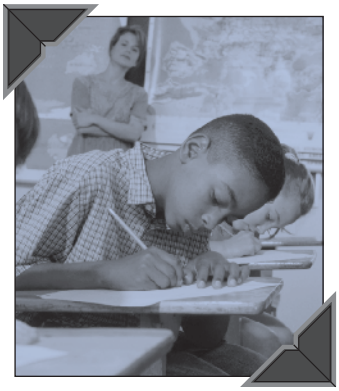
Subtest	Domain	Items	Testing Time
1. School Management	Leadership	40	2 hours
	Management	40	
	Personnel	40	
2. School Communications	Multiple Choice	27	2 hours
	Essay	1	
3. School Operations	Curriculum	40	2 ½ hours
	Finance	40	
	Law	40	
	Technology	40	

An examinee must receive passing scores on all three subtests of the FELE; examinees can retake a failed subtest on another administration date. Each subtest, including School Communications (subtest 2), must be retaken in its entirety. For the essay part of the School Communications subtest, two qualified readers rate each examinee's essay on a rating scale from 1-4 points. The readers' scores are then combined to achieve a total essay score, which ranges from 2-8 points. Any rater discrepancies that may occur are refereed by a third reader.

The FELE is administered four times a year, along with the regular FTCE administrations in January, April, July, and October, and it is also administered four times a year, along with the FTCE supplemental administrations in February, May, September, and December.

FTCE/FELE Test Administrations

The number of examinees taking certification tests has increased significantly since 2002. For example, the number of Subject Area Examinations given in 2001-02 was 20,355 and in 2002-03 this amount doubled to 42,472. In 2003-04, the number of Subject Area Examinations given was 52,092. In 2004-05, the number of Subject Area Examinations given increased slightly to 52,159. Additionally, the number of General Knowledge (GK) subtests has increased. As an example, the number of GK Mathematics subtests given in 2002-03 was 16,935; the number of GK Mathematics subtests given in 2004-05 was 25,609. These increases are due to many factors including revised certification requirements, the highly qualified teacher requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and class size reduction efforts. Data on the number of tests given during the past two administration cycles are presented in the following two tables: October 2003 through September 2004 and October 2004 through September 2005.



Number of Tests or Subtests Administered
From October 2003 through September 2004

Test	Regular Administrations	Supplemental Administrations	Computer based Test	Total
Subject Area Exam	43,040	2,824	6,228	52,092
Professional Education Exam	15,179	675	1,608	17,462
General Knowledge				
Essay	12,992	886	N/A	13,878
English Language Skills	12,087	630	2,809	15,526
Reading	11,750	620	2,792	15,162
Math	14,058	681	4,701	19,440
FELE				
Subtest 1	1,890	63	N/A	1,953
Subtest 2	1,845	60	N/A	1,905
Subtest 3	1,870	63	N/A	1,933

N/A = Not Applicable

Number of Tests or Subtests Administered
From October 2004 through September 2005

Test	Regular Administrations	Supplemental Administrations	Computer based Test	Total
Subject Area Exam	35,574	2,437	14,148	52,159
Professional Education Exam	10,237	457	4,166	14,860
General Knowledge				
Essay	18,219	1,522	N/A	19,741
English Language Skills	15,282	869	5,445	21,596
Reading	15,815	901	5,891	22,607
Math	16,959	949	7,701	25,609

FELE				
Subtest 1	1,668	82	N/A	1,750
Subtest 2	1,572	78	N/A	1,650
Subtest 3	1,679	84	N/A	1,763

N/A = Not Applicable

FTCE/FELE Registration and Fees

In 2001, the Department of Education contracted with the Institute for Instructional Research (IIRP) at the University of South Florida in Tampa for the development and administration of the FTCE. All examinees' registration forms and fees are processed by IIRP. Examinees can obtain an FTCE registration bulletin and test registration application for all certification exams from any of the following:

- online at http://www.cefe.usf.edu
- the FTCE/FELE-USF Testing office in Tampa at (813) 974-2400
- a university college of education
- a local school district office
- the Bureau of Educator Certification office at the Department of Education
- the Department of Education FTCE office at (850) 245-0513

Applicants must correctly complete the form and sign the application included in the bulletin. The application, along with appropriate payment, must be submitted to the FTCE/FELE-USF testing office (IIRP) at the University of South Florida via a postal delivery service, as described in the bulletin, by the deadlines printed in the bulletin.

Upon receipt of the correctly completed application form and associated fees by the deadline published in the bulletin, confirmation of the processed information is posted on the website http://www.cefe.usf.edu. Each examinee for a regular test administration is sent an acknowledgment postcard after his/her registration has been processed.

The application fee for FTCE tests received by the regular administration deadline is $25.00 for each test (General Knowledge, Professional Education, or subject area). A late registration charge of $15.00 is assessed for each test for applications received during the late registration period. There is no late registration period for supplemental administrations. For supplemental test administrations an additional charge of $100.00 is required, in addition to the regular test fee, to cover the additional expense of offering these expedited registrations and administrations.

The fee for the FELE is $50.00 if an application for the regular administration is received by the regular registration deadline. The test fee and charge for late registration is $80.00. Supplementary examinations require an additional charge of $100.00, in addition to the $50.00 test fee, to cover the additional expense of offering these expedited registrations and administrations.

The registration and payment information given above is for taking a test at a paper-and-pencil test administration. Information for computer-based tests given at computer test sites can be accessed online at the FTCE/FELE website (http://www.cefe.usf.edu).

Dates for the mailing of score reports are posted in the FTCE Registration Bulletin. Examinees for regular administrations are sent their results 30 days after the test date; supplemental administration results are sent within two weeks of the test date. Examinees who fail an examination may retake the test (or subtest) at a subsequent administration date as long they allow 31 calendar days after the first examination (Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC). Examinees must pass all appropriate tests and subtests of the FTCE or FELE for certification purposes as required by the Official Statement of Status of Eligibility issued by the Florida Bureau of Educator Certification.

NOTES

Other Postsecondary Assessments

VI – Other Postsecondary Assessments

Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT)

Section 1008.30, F.S., requires the State Board of Education to develop and implement a common placement testing program to assess the basic computation and communication skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at any public community college or state university. This policy has been implemented by the State Board through Rule 6A-10.0315, FAC. Beginning August 1, 1995, postsecondary institutions began implementing the common placement testing program using one common test, the Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT). Areas tested on the CPT are reading comprehension, sentence skills, and elementary algebra. The CPT test books and related materials are provided to institutions by the College Board through a contract awarded by the Florida Department of Education. Using these materials, institutions administer and score the tests. Students who do not achieve cut scores on the CPT, as specified in Rule 6A-10.0315, FAC, are required to successfully complete the appropriate college preparatory coursework and pass the Florida College Basic Skills Exit Test.

Florida College Basic Skills Exit Test

Through s. 1008.30, F.S., the 1997 Legislature made passing an exit test a condition for meeting basic college computation and communication skills requirements. As a service to the institutions offering college preparatory programs, the Florida Department of Education developed test forms and related materials to meet the requirements of the legislation. The Florida College Basic Skills Exit Test comprises subtests in writing, reading, and mathematics. Students who do not achieve passing scores on the Florida CPT must pass the appropriate remedial course(s), as well as the Florida College Basic Skills Exit Test. Institutions are responsible for the administration of the exit test. This includes maintaining test security and setting test dates, length of administration time, and passing requirements.

The College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)

The College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) is part of Florida's system of educational accountability that satisfies the mandates of s. 1008.29, F.S. (previously s. 229.55, F.S.). The CLAST measures students' attainment of the college-level communication and mathematics skills that were identified by the faculties of community colleges and state universities through the College-Level Academic Skills Project (CLASP). The CLASP was begun as a response to considerable variation in the preparation of community college transfer students and their ability to perform at the upper-division level in the state university system. The program was established by the Legislature to ensure that students entering upper-division status had mastered a set of skills that faculty deemed important for success in communications and computations. The program was begun in the early 1980s and the first test was administered in October 1982.

The skills have been adopted by the State Board of Education and are listed in Rule 6A-10.0316, FAC. Since August 1, 1984, students in public institutions in Florida have been required to demonstrate achievement of these skills for the award of an Associate in Arts degree and for admission to upper-division status in a state university in Florida. During 1985 and 1989, an extensive review of the CLASP skills resulted in the addition, deletion, and/or modification of some of the original skills. As a result of the 1985 review, revised skills were adopted by the State Board of Education and were measured by the CLAST beginning with the fall 1987 administration. The revised skills resulting from the 1989 review have been incorporated into the CLAST since the fall 1992 administration.

Rule 6A-10.0311, FAC, describes the requirements for alternatives to the CLAST. Since 1996, students have been able to exempt one or more of the CLAST subtests by achieving certain scores on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT), or by earning a 2.5 grade point average in qualifying college courses.

The CLAST consists of four subtests: Essay, English Language Skills (ELS), Reading, and Mathematics. Each subtest yields a single score that is reported to the student and to the institution needing the scores.

A teacher certification candidate who passed the CLAST before July 1, 2002 could present CLAST scores for certification; after July 1, 2002, passing scores from the General Knowledge Test were required. Section 1012.56, F.S. (formerly s.231.17, F.S.), was revised to replace the CLAST with the General Knowledge Test to meet basic skills requirements for teacher certification. For any subtests of the CLAST not taken and passed before July 1, 2002, the corresponding subtests of the General Knowledge Test are required.

NOTES

Appendices

Appendix A

FCAT Results

The FCAT has been administered to selected grades from 1998 to 2006. While there are several ways to describe student performance on the Sunshine State Standards (SSS or Standards) testing component, the following two tables are particularly useful to track changes in the state average scores and changes in the percent of students scoring in each of the five FCAT Achievement Levels for Reading and Mathematics.

FCAT Reading

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS (SSS) TEST

Grade	Year	Number of Students	Developmental Scale Score (DSS)	Mean Scale Score	Percent of Students by Achievement Level					Achievement Level 3 & 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
	2006	204,238	1382	313	14	11	37	33	5	75
4	**1998**[a]	150,246	NA	294	32	18	32	17	2	51
	1999	174,923	NA	288	36	17	29	17	2	48
	2000	183,733	NA	293	33	16	29	19	4	52
	2001	188,696	1455	298	31	16	28	18	7	53
	2002	191,866	1463	299	30	15	28	21	6	55
	2003	193,391	1497	305	25	15	31	23	6	60
	2004	176,148	1571	318	16	14	35	27	7	70
	2005	195,678	1575	319	15	13	35	29	8	71
	2006	192,480	1547	314	19	16	34	26	7	66
5	**2001**	187,570	1493	282	31	17	29	18	5	52
	2002	192,604	1507	285	28	18	30	19	4	53
	2003	192,881	1540	290	25	18	33	21	4	58
	2004	196,343	1562	294	24	17	31	22	6	59
	2005	181,651	1611	303	18	16	34	25	7	66
	2006	197,054	1619	304	17	16	35	26	7	67
6	**2001**	187,234	1604	292	30	18	29	18	5	52
	2002	194,125	1601	291	30	18	28	18	5	51
	2003	196,333	1619	295	28	18	30	18	5	53
	2004	199,083	1634	297	26	20	31	18	6	54
	2005	201,609	1644	299	25	20	31	19	5	56
	2006	186,948	1709	311	18	17	33	25	6	64

7	**2001**	183,272	1677	292	32	21	28	14	5	47
	2002	191,991	1690	294	29	21	29	16	5	50
	2003	197,417	1704	297	28	21	29	17	6	52
	2004	201,346	1710	298	27	20	30	17	6	53
	2005	202,520	1712	299	27	21	30	17	5	53
	2006	202,438	1773	310	19	21	34	21	6	61
8	**1998**[a]	136,011	NA	298	26	30	30	12	1	43
	1999	161,752	NA	295	28	28	31	12	1	44
	2000	170,139	NA	290	32	29	27	11	1	39
	2001	174,016	1814	295	30	27	26	13	4	43
	2002	184,483	1813	295	29	26	28	14	3	45
	2003	192,116	1842	301	26	26	30	16	3	49
	2004	197,778	1815	295	30	26	26	14	4	45
	2005	201,758	1824	297	27	30	30	12	2	44
	2006	200,421	1834	299	24	30	32	13	2	46
9	**2001**	191,518	1781	286	46	26	16	7	5	28
	2002	204,728	1789	287	44	27	17	8	4	29
	2003	205,965	1807	291	43	27	18	8	5	31
	2004	214,994	1830	295	39	29	19	8	5	32
	2005	214,984	1860	301	35	28	21	10	6	36
	2006	212,904	1890	306	30	30	24	11	5	40
10	**1998**[a]	117,023	NA	299	36	35	19	6	4	29
	1999	131.070	NA	302	33	37	19	6	5	30
	2000	144,789	NA	298	35	36	19	6	4	29
	2001	144,471	1964	307	31	31	20	8	9	37
	2002	150,135	1942	303	32	33	21	8	7	36
	2003	167,396	1939	302	33	32	20	8	8	36
	2004	166,955	1927	300	37	29	17	7	10	34
	2005	179,354	1906	296	39	29	17	7	8	32
	2006	185,568	1918	298	38	29	17	7	9	32

[a] NOTE: The 1998 data include only standard curriculum students.

NOTE: The 1999 - 2006 data include students from all curriculum groups. This tends to lower the average score.

NOTE: Achievement Level information was not reported in May 2001 for Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9. Data shown here reflect retroactive application of the Achievement Level criteria.

NOTE: Developmental Scale Score (DSS) data was not reported from 1998 – 2000.

FCAT Mathematics

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS (SSS) TEST

Grade	Year	Number of Students	Developmental Scale Score (DSS)	Mean Scale Score	Percent of Students by Achievement Level					Achievement Level 3 & 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
	2006	204,402	1409	324	12	16	34	27	10	72
4	2001	188,633	1394	286	31	24	29	13	3	45
	2002	192,366	1428	294	26	24	32	15	4	51
	2003	193,503	1446	298	22	23	34	16	4	54
	2004	176,316	1508	312	15	21	37	20	6	64
	2005	195,866	1509	312	15	21	38	21	6	64
	2006	192,610	1534	318	14	19	36	23	8	67
5	1998[a]	145,734	NA	300	36	32	21	10	1	32
	1999	173,105	NA	303	33	32	21	12	2	35
	2000	182,300	NA	314	26	29	24	17	5	46
	2001	187,623	1579	314	27	25	22	20	6	48
	2002	192,472	1598	318	25	27	23	19	6	48
	2003	192,692	1607	320	23	26	24	21	7	52
	2004	196,233	1616	322	21	27	24	21	7	52
	2005	181,434	1648	329	16	27	27	24	6	57
	2006	186,792	1681	312	26	21	28	17	8	53
6	2001	187,054	1592	291	39	21	24	12	4	40
	2002	193,948	1622	298	35	22	25	13	5	43
	2003	196,134	1642	302	31	22	27	14	6	47
	2004	198,905	1637	301	33	22	26	14	5	46
	2005	201,550	1653	305	31	22	26	15	6	47
	2006	186,792	1681	312	26	21	28	17	8	53
7	2001	183,131	1724	290	35	20	24	15	6	45
	2002	191,786	1734	292	33	21	26	14	7	47
	2003	197,161	1747	296	31	21	26	15	6	47
	2004	201,188	1760	299	30	21	27	16	7	50
	2005	202,361	1778	303	26	22	28	17	8	53
	2006	202,303	1791	307	23	22	30	18	7	55
8	1998[a]	136,637	NA	299	30	24	30	11	5	46
	1999	161,073	NA	296	33	23	27	11	6	44
	2000	170,287	NA	303	29	20	28	13	10	51
	2001	174,067	1847	308	25	21	31	14	10	55
	2002	184,379	1837	305	24	22	31	14	8	53
	2003	191,656	1856	310	22	22	32	14	10	56
	2004	197,646	1858	311	23	21	31	15	11	56
	2005	201,488	1866	313	21	20	32	15	11	59
	2006	200,431	1872	314	20	20	33	16	11	60

9	**2001**	191,094	1863	284	30	24	24	15	7	46
	2002	203,911	1871	286	28	24	26	15	6	47
	2003	205,079	1892	293	23	25	28	17	6	51
	2004	214,168	1903	296	22	23	28	19	8	55
	2005	214,360	1918	300	20	21	30	20	9	59
	2006	212,359	1924	302	18	23	30	20	9	59
10	**1998**[a]	117,693	NA	302	33	25	20	17	4	41
	1999	131,493	NA	308	27	26	24	19	4	47
	2000	144,830	NA	311	26	23	23	22	6	51
	2001	144,236	1975	321	20	21	24	25	10	59
	2002	149,784	1967	319	19	21	25	27	8	60
	2003	165,624	1970	320	19	20	24	27	9	60
	2004	166,227	1982	323	16	21	26	29	9	63
	2005	178,530	1979	322	15	22	27	28	8	63
	2006	184,635	1987	324	15	19	26	31	8	65

[a] NOTE: The 1998 data include only standard curriculum students.

NOTE: The 1999 - 2006 data include students from all curriculum groups. This tends to lower the average score.

NOTE: Achievement Level information was not reported in May 2001 for Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9. Data shown here reflect retroactive application of the Achievement Level criteria.

NOTE: Developmental Scale Score (DSS) data was not reported from 1998 – 2000.

The FCAT Reading and Mathematics results are reported as Developmental Scale Scores ranging from about 0 to 3000 and as scale scores ranging from 100 to 500 at each grade. These scores are divided into Achievement Levels. Achievement Level 5 students have success with the most challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards and correctly answer most of the test questions. The percentage of students scoring in each Achievement Level, along with state and district mean scores, are reported to districts and schools.

FCAT Writing

STATEWIDE RESULTS | GRADES 4, 8, AND 10

The FCAT writing component, formerly known as the Florida Writing Assessment Program (FWAP), has been administered in Grades 4, 8, and 10 since 1993. The statewide results for the subsequent years are shown below.

Grade	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
4	2.0	2.2	2.4	2.5	2.6	3.0	3.0[a]
8	3.0	2.7	3.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.3[a]
10	NA	2.9	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.5[a]

Grade	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
4	3.2[a]	3.4[a]	3.4[a]	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.9
8	3.7[a]	3.7[a]	3.8[a]	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.0
10	3.9[a]	3.8[a]	3.8[a]	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9

[a] NOTE: Data for 1999 - 2006 are for all curriculum students. Prior years are for standard curriculum students.

FCAT NRT Reading and Mathematics

NORM-REFERENCED TEST (NRT) SCORES
STATEWIDE COMPARISON FOR 2000-2005

		Reading[a]		Mathematics[a]	
Grade	Year	Scale Score	Median[b] NPR[c]	Scale Score	Median NPR
3	2000	616	49	612	56
	2001	622	56	615	59
	2002	624	57	618	62
	2003	629	61	623	66
	2004	629	62	625	68
	2005[d]	620	50	624	62
	2006	633	61	631	67
4	2000	640	56	626	57
	2001	643	56	632	59
	2002	644	57	634	62
	2003	645	58	637	64
	2004	651	63	643	69
	2005	635	55	634	63
	2006	654	70	645	71
5	2000	647	45	654	63
	2001	652	51	651	59
	2002	654	52	653	61
	2003	656	55	654	63
	2004	651	56	655	63
	2005	635	61	652	64
	2006	663	69	661	71
6	2000	656	43	655	55
	2001	659	49	662	61
	2002	662	52	664	63
	2003	663	53	666	64
	2004	664	54	667	66
	2005	661	54	667	61
	2006	675	67	673	67
7	2000	671	48	668	56
	2001	678	54	677	62
	2002	680	56	680	64
	2003	681	57	681	65
	2004	682	57	682	67
	2005	680	56	680	65
	2006	679	65	686	69
8	2000	691	54	680	56
	2001	696	59	684	62
	2002	697	60	687	64
	2003	695	58	688	65
	2004	697	60	689	66
	2005	690	67	696	67
	2006	688	65	705	73

9	2000	683	38	693	52
	2001	688	44	702	63
	2002	688	44	704	65
	2003	689	44	705	66
	2004	689	44	708	69
	2005	696	63	710	71
	2006	698	65	715	74
10	2000	683	33	701	54
	2001	700	49	711	64
	2002	701	50	714	67
	2003	696	46	713	66
	2004	695	45	713	66
	2005	703	61	708	58
	2006	708	67	720	70

[a] NOTE: These scores are from the Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) portion of the FCAT.

[b] NOTE: Median is the score that identifies the middle point.

[c] NOTE: 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.

[d] NOTE: From 2000-2004, the FCAT NRT was the *Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition (Stanford 9 or SAT9);* The new FCAT NRT, first administered in March 2005, is the *Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition (Stanford 10 or SAT10)*.

The achievement of Florida students can be compared to that of a national sample of students in grades 3 through 10 because the FCAT administrations include nationally norm-referenced tests. The median national percentile rank is shown for each grade level and subject area in the shaded columns.

In 2005, a new FCAT NRT was required due to the out-of-date norms on the previous FCAT NRT, the *Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition (Stanford 9 or SAT9)*. The Florida Department of Education selected the *Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition (Stanford 10 or SAT10),* through a competitive bid process that considered both the technical qualities of the test and the cost. Because the comparison group (norm group) content of the SAT10 is not the same, the median NPR should not be directly compared to previous years.

Appendix B

Scoring of FCAT Performance Tasks

Student responses to the FCAT Writing+, Reading, Mathematics, and Science performance tasks are scored using a process called "handscoring." Trained scorers read and evaluate the student responses using a "hands-on" process. Scoring involves comparing student responses to a scoring rubric and rangefinder, or anchor papers, and assigning each response a single, holistic score. The scoring rubric describes the performance characteristics for each possible score, while the anchor papers provide examples for each score point.

WHAT IS HOLISTIC SCORING?

The term "holistic" is used to emphasize the importance of the whole work, including the interdependence of its parts. A rubric is the scoring guide for evaluating student responses to each task. Different rubrics are used for the different subjects and the different types of tasks (short- and extended-response). The Writing rubric describes the expected qualities of performance in four elements of writing (focus, organization, support, and conventions). The Reading rubric considers the student's use of text-based information and details from the passage to support the student's answer. For Mathematics and Science, the rubrics address the level of understanding related to the task that is demonstrated by the student's work. Rubrics for each subject area are published in the document, *Understanding FCAT Reports,* available in PDF format at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatpub2.asp.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR SCORING?

Florida educators score tasks. Teams of Florida educators (classroom teachers and content specialists) meet to review each task on the FCAT. These teams meet to apply the FCAT scoring rubrics to specific tasks to determine the scoring criteria for student papers. This process is referred to as "rangefinding" because educators identify the range of responses that are acceptable for each score point in the rubric. After the educators have scored a sufficient number of papers, they select the rangefinder papers (also called anchor papers) to be used to train the professional scorers who will score each student's paper.

Professional "scorers" are hired. The FCAT scoring contractor is responsible for hiring professional staff to read and score student papers. The Florida Department of Education has established minimum qualifications for each scorer. The department's requirements include that scorers have a bachelor's degree in the content area or a field related to the subject area being scored (English, mathematics, science, or education). For example, persons scoring reading or writing papers could have degrees in English, communications, journalism, or literature, and scorers of mathematics items might have degrees in accounting, statistics, mathematics, or another quantitative field.

Scorers must take a qualifying exam. All "scorers" must participate in rigorous training designed by Department of Education staff and delivered by contractor staff. The training involves developing an understanding of how to use the rubric, how to score holistically, and how to apply the scoring standards established by Florida educators. Scorers are trained during a thorough, multi-day training program. During this time, they read and score many papers under the supervision and instruction of an experienced scoring director and a Department of Education content area expert. In addition, scorers are not permitted to score student papers until they have passed a

qualifying examination. The qualifying examination is a previously scored set of papers, and the prospective scorer has to average 80 percent or above on short-response items and 70 percent or above on extended-response items for reading, mathematics and science. To qualify for writing, the scorers must average 70 percent or higher. This process is called qualifying. Florida educators have previously scored the papers used for qualifying, as well as those used in the training materials. The qualification process occurs at the conclusion of the multi-day training program.

All papers are read twice. Each student's paper is read by at least two qualified scorers. For writing, reading, mathematics, and science performance tasks, the student's score is the average of two exact or adjacent scores. If the scores of the first two scorers are not exact or adjacent, a third scorer assigns a score without knowing the two previous scores. The score of the third scorer that matches either of the previous two scores becomes the final score. Scores on the reading, mathematics, and science short-response tasks must always be identical. If exact scores are not obtained, a third scorer is required. The scorers never know the names of the students, the schools they represent, or the scores assigned by other scorers.

Scorers are monitored every day. Although intensive training is required at the beginning of the scoring process, training does not end there. Training concepts are reviewed throughout the scoring session. Periodically through the day, validity papers, previously scored by Florida educators, are presented to all scorers to verify their scoring accuracy. The reliability of ratings is monitored daily to determine the amount of agreement between scorers. The resulting validity statistics and the inter-rater agreement (reliability) statistics are key quality-control measures used during scoring. Supervisors also read behind their team of scorers to check on the correctness of the scores given to each paper. When the quality control procedures indicate areas of concern, these are addressed in daily training sessions (called calibration sessions) conducted for the large group or for individuals. In addition, specific papers and scorer questions are discussed daily throughout the scoring process. If scorers cannot maintain scoring accuracy, they are dismissed.

DO MACHINES GRADE STUDENT PAPERS?

Professional scorers who are trained and qualified according to the process described above do the scoring of FCAT performance tasks. The scorers view actual student responses using an electronic image-based scoring system. Answer documents are scanned using imaging technology (book pages must be scanned), and images are routed to computer workstations, where they are scored. The electronic system for distributing images to scorers permits student responses from one school to be spread across an entire room of scorers. Responses also are randomly redistributed for the second read.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO SCORE FCAT PERFORMANCE TASKS?

The answer to this question depends on how many scorers are hired to do the scoring and how successful and skilled they are at scoring. If the targeted number of scorers is successfully qualified, it takes four to five weeks to complete the training and score all the tasks. To score the writing responses, it takes 800 scorers. To score the reading, mathematics, and science tasks it takes 1,500 to 2,000 scorers scheduled to one of two shifts to complete the scoring. Because the scoring of FCAT performance tasks does not require a year-round commitment, the FCAT contractor relies on temporary professional employees. Scoring must be conducted in numerous locations around the country since a sufficiently large pool of professionals seeking temporary employment does not exist in a single large city.

Appendix C

Glossary of Terms

Achievement Levels—Five categories of achievement that represent the success students demonstrate with the content assessed on the FCAT SSS.

Benchmark—A specific statement that describes what students should know and be able to do. The benchmarks are part of the Sunshine State Standards (SSS or Standards).

Cluster—A grouping of related benchmarks from the SSS. Clusters are used to summarize and report achievement for FCAT SSS Reading, FCAT SSS Mathematics, and FCAT SSS Science.

Content Subscores—The number of raw score points earned by a student in each sub-content area of FCAT SSS Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing+ (multiple-choice questions only). Content subscores are reported for clusters or strands within each content area. For example, in Mathematics, subscores are reported for number sense, measurement, geometry, algebra, and data analysis and probability.

Developmental Scale Score—A type of scale score used to determine a student's annual progress from grade to grade. The FCAT Developmental Scale for Reading and Mathematics ranges from 86 to 3008 across grades 3 through 10. On the Student Report, the Developmental Scale Score is called the "FCAT Score."

National Percentile Rank (NPR)—A score that shows the percent of students who earned the same or a lower score. NPRs show the rank of an individual compared to the national sample of students or norm group. They do not compare an individual to the Florida students who took the test.

Norm-Referenced Test (NRT)—A test designed to compare the performance of one group of students to the national sample of students, called the norm group.

Raw Score—A score that reports the number of points a student earned on each test question. Students earn one raw score point for each correctly answered multiple-choice item and gridded-response item, and up to four raw score points on performance tasks. Raw scores are reported by content subscores.

Rubric—The scoring guidelines or criteria used to evaluate all FCAT performance tasks and essays. The rubric describes what is required for each possible score point.

Scale Score—A score used to report test results on the entire test. FCAT SSS scale scores range from 100 to 500 and are determined by which test questions the student responded to correctly. FCAT NRT scale scores are solely determined by raw score point totals.

Stanine—Standard scores that divide a distribution of scores into nine parts. The word stanine comes from the fact that it is a STAndard score on a scale of NINE units, hence STANINE.

Strands—The broad divisions of content in the SSS. For example, in the Language Arts SSS there are seven strands (reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language, and literature).

Sunshine State Standards (SSS or Standards)—Florida's curriculum framework that includes curriculum content area, strands, standards, and benchmarks. The SSS provide guidelines for the educational curriculum in Florida.

Content Assessed by the FCAT

The FCAT content is derived from the Sunshine State Standards (SSS or Standards) developed by committees of practicing classroom teachers and curriculum specialists and adopted by the State Board of Education. The Standards are broad statements of what students should know and be able to do. They are subdivided into smaller units called benchmarks. The FCAT measures some of these benchmarks in reading, writing, mathematics, and science, although not all benchmarks can be measured on each test annually. While students are expected to know how to conduct library research and write a research paper, the FCAT could never assess such a learning outcome. The benchmarks measured by the FCAT are indicated on the following pages:

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS (SSS) TESTED ON THE FCAT FOR GRADES 3–5

WRITING+ CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Writing+ test measures the writing elements of *focus, organization, support,* and *conventions,* which are integral to the Sunshine State Standards. The test includes a prompt that presents a topic to which students must respond and multiple-choice questions. Grade 4 students demonstrate their writing skills by producing, within 45 minutes, a written draft response to one of two randomly assigned prompts, which asks them to tell a story (narrative writing) or to explain (expository writing). Students also respond to multiple-choice questions which assess prewriting, drafting and revising, and editing skills. The editing skills include capitalization, punctuation, spelling, usage, and sentence structure.

Writing Process

The student prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas, and identifying the purpose for writing.

The student drafts and revises writing in cursive* that:

- focuses on the topic
- provides a logical organizational pattern, including a beginning, middle, conclusion, and transitional devices
- includes ample development of supporting ideas
- demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness
- demonstrates a command of language, including precision in word choice
- indicates a general knowledge of the correct use of subject/verb agreement and verb and noun forms

READING CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Reading tests employ a wide variety of written material to assess students' reading comprehension as defined in the Sunshine State Standards. These tests include informational and literary reading passages. Informational passages are written to provide readers with facts about a particular subject and may include magazine and newspaper articles, editorials, and biographies. Literary passages are written primarily for readers' enjoyment and may include short stories, poems, folktales, and selections from novels.

Tests for Grades 3, 4, and 5 assess the following SSS reading comprehension skills and processes:

Words and Phrases in Context

- uses strategies to increase vocabulary through word structure clues (prefixes, suffixes, roots), word relationships (antonyms, synonyms), and words with multiple meanings
- uses context clues to determine word meanings

Main Idea, Plot, and Purpose

- determines the stated or implied main idea or essential message in a text
- identifies relevant details and facts
- recognizes and arranges events in chronological order
- identifies author's purpose in a text
- recognizes when a text is intended to persuade
- understands plot development and conflict resolution in a story

- includes, with few exceptions, sentences that are complete except when fragments are used purposefully
- uses a variety of sentence structures
- demonstrates a knowledge of the basic conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

The student produces final documents that have been edited for correct spelling, correct use of punctuation, correct capitalization, correct usage, and effective sentence structure.

* Language Arts Writing Benchmark 1.2.2 for Grade 4 states that students should write in cursive. For FCAT Writing+, students may print or write in cursive.

Comparisons and Cause/Effect

- recognizes the use of comparison and contrast
- recognizes cause-and-effect relationships
- identifies similarities and differences among characters, settings, and events in various texts

Reference and Research

- reads, organizes, and interprets written information for various purposes, such as making a report, conducting an interview, taking a test, or performing a task
- uses maps, charts, photos, or other multiple representations of information for research projects

MATHEMATICS CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Mathematics tests assess the achievement of the Sunshine State Standards in mathematics. FCAT Mathematics tests for Grades 3 and 4 include only multiple-choice questions. The FCAT Mathematics test for Grade 5 combines gridded-response questions with multiple-choice questions and also includes several performance tasks, scored on 2-point and 4-point rubrics. Approximately the same number of questions is used for each of the five strands in Grades 3, 4, and 5.

FCAT Mathematics assesses what students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 know and are able to demonstrate in the following content strands:

Number Sense, Concepts, and Operations

- identifies operations (+, -, ×, ÷) and the effects of operations
- determines estimates
- knows how numbers are represented and used

Measurement

- recognizes measurements and units of measurement
- compares, contrasts, and converts measurements

Geometry and Spatial Sense

- describes, draws, identifies, and analyzes two- and three-dimensional shapes
- visualizes and illustrates changes in shapes
- uses coordinate geometry

SCIENCE CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Science tests assess the achievement of the Sunshine State Standards in science. Approximately the same number of questions is used for each of the four clusters: *Physical and Chemical Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, Life and Environmental Sciences, and Scientific Thinking*. The FCAT Science test for Grade 5 mainly consists of multiple-choice questions and also includes short-response tasks and extended-response tasks, scored on 2-point and 4-point rubrics.

Physical and Chemical Sciences

- understands that matter can be described, classified, and compared
- traces the flow of energy in a system
- identifies the differences between renewable and non-renewable energy sources
- describes, predicts, and measures the types of motion and effects of forces
- identifies the types of force that act upon an object

Earth and Space Sciences

- understands that changes in climate, geological activity, and life-forms can be traced and compared
- recognizes that Earth's systems change over time
- identifies the cause of the phases of the moon and seasons
- recognizes the role of Earth in the vast universe

Algebraic Thinking

- describes, analyzes, and generalizes patterns, relations, and functions
- writes and uses expressions, equations, inequalities, graphs, and formulas

Data Analysis and Probability

- analyzes, organizes, and interprets data
- identifies patterns and makes predictions, inferences, and valid conclusions
- uses probability and statistics

Life and Environmental Sciences

- understands that living things are different but share similar structures
- recognizes that many characteristics of an organism are inherited
- explains the relationship and interconnectedness of all living things to their environment
- understands that plants use carbon dioxide, minerals, and sunlight to produce food (photosynthesis)

Scientific Thinking

- uses scientific method and processes to solve problems
- recognizes that most natural events occur in consistent patterns
- understands the interdependence of science, technology, and society

FCAT NORM-REFERENCED TEST (NRT) CONTENT FOR GRADES 3–5

NRT READING CONTENT TESTED*

The FCAT NRT (*Stanford 10*) Reading Comprehension test is composed of reading selections accompanied by questions about each selection. The selections reflect the kinds of literature students read in school and are written to appeal to students of different backgrounds, experiences, and interests.

Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 read and answer questions about the following types of literature:

Literary—material typically read for enjoyment

Informational—material typically found in grade-appropriate textbooks and other sources of information

Functional—material typically encountered in everyday-life situations

The test questions are classified by these standards:

Initial Understanding—demonstrates the ability to comprehend explicitly stated relationships in a variety of reading selections

Interpretation—demonstrates the ability to form an interpretation of a variety of reading selections based on explicit and implicit information in the selections

Critical Analysis—demonstrates the ability to synthesize and evaluate explicit and implicit information in a variety of reading selections

NRT MATHEMATICS CONTENT TESTED*

Student proficiency in mathematics is tested by the FCAT NRT (*Stanford 10*) at grades 3 through 8 with the Mathematics Problem Solving test and at Grades 9 and 10 with the Mathematics test. Test questions require the student to use logical reasoning and non-routine problem-solving strategies. Each test question is classified first according to its mathematics content and then according to the mathematics process it assesses.

Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 are assessed on the following mathematics content:

Number Sense and Operations—demonstrates understanding of the meaning and use of numbers, the various representations of numbers, number systems, and the relationships between and among numbers. Demonstrates understanding of the meaning of operations, the relationship between operations, and the practical settings in which a specific operation or set of operations is appropriate

Patterns, Relationships, and Algebra—describes, completes, continues, and demonstrates understanding of patterns involving numbers, symbols, and geometric figures (patterns with numbers include those found in lists, function tables, ratios and proportions, and matrices). Demonstrates understanding of elementary algebraic principles, as found in the relationships between mathematical situations and

Strategies—demonstrates the ability to recognize and apply text factors and reading strategies in a variety of reading selections

algebraic symbolism

Data, Statistics, and Probability—describes, interprets, and makes predictions based on the analysis of data presented in a variety of ways, including graphs, plots, tables, and lists. Demonstrates understanding of basic probability concepts

Geometry and Measurement—demonstrates understanding of the characteristics and properties of plane and solid figures, coordinate geometry, and spatial reasoning. Demonstrates understanding of the meaning and use of various measurement systems, the tools of measurement, and the integral role of estimation in measurement

* The FCAT NRT is part of the *Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition,*

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS (SSS) TESTED ON THE FCAT FOR GRADES 6–8

WRITING+ CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Writing+ test measures the writing elements of *focus, organization, support, and conventions,* which are integral to the Sunshine State Standards. The test includes a prompt that presents a topic to which students must respond and multiple-choice questions. Grade 8 students demonstrate their writing skills by producing, within 45 minutes, a written draft response to one of two randomly assigned prompts, which asks them to persuade (persuasive writing) or to explain (expository writing). Students also respond to multiple-choice questions which assess prewriting, drafting and revising, and editing skills. The editing skills include capitalization, punctuation, spelling, usage, and sentence structure.

Writing Process

The student prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas, and identifying the purpose for writing.

The student drafts and revises writing that

- focuses on the topic, is purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation
- conveys a sense of completeness and wholeness and adherence to the main idea
- provides an organizational pattern with a logical progression of ideas
- includes support that is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete, and/or illustrative

READING CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Reading tests employ a wide variety of written material to assess students' reading comprehension as defined in the Sunshine State Standards. These tests include informational and literary reading passages. Informational passages are written to provide readers with facts about a particular subject and may include magazine and newspaper articles, editorials, and biographies. Literary passages are written primarily for readers' enjoyment and may include short stories, poems, folktales, and selections from novels.

Tests for Grades 6, 7, and 8 assess the following SSS reading comprehension skills and processes:

Words and Phrases in Context

- uses various strategies, including contextual and word structure clues, to analyze words and text
- draws conclusions from a reading text
- recognizes organizational patterns

Main Idea, Plot, and Purpose

- determines the stated or implied main idea or essential message in a text
- identifies relevant details and facts
- recognizes how an organizational pattern supports the main idea
- identifies and uses the author's purpose and point of view to construct meaning from text
- recognizes persuasive text

- demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject
- presents ideas with clarity
- employs creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper
- demonstrates a command of language (word choice) with freshness of expression
- includes sentences that are complete except when fragments are used purposefully
- uses a variety of sentence structures
- contains few, if any, convention errors in mechanics, usage, and punctuation

The student produces final documents that have been edited for correct spelling, correct use of punctuation, correct capitalization, correct usage, and effective sentence structure.

- recognizes and understands how literary elements support text (e.g., character and plot development, point of view, tone, setting, and conflicts and resolutions)

Comparisons and Cause/Effect

- recognizes the use of comparison and contrast
- recognizes cause-and-effect relationships

Reference and Research

- locates, organizes, and interprets written information for a variety of purposes
- uses a variety of reference materials to gather information for research projects (e.g., indexes, magazines, newspapers, journals, and card and computer catalogs)
- checks validity and accuracy of research information (e.g., strong versus weak arguments, fact versus opinion, and how authors' personal values influence conclusions)
- synthesizes and separates collected information into useful components

MATHEMATICS CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Mathematics tests assess the achievement of the Sunshine State Standards in mathematics. FCAT Mathematics tests for Grades 6 and 7 include multiple-choice questions and gridded-response questions. The FCAT Mathematics test for Grade 8 includes multiple-choice and gridded-response questions as well as several performance tasks, scored on 2-point and 4-point rubrics. Approximately the same number of questions is used for each of the five strands in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

FCAT Mathematics assesses what students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 know and are able to demonstrate in the following content strands:

Number Sense, Concepts, and Operations

- identifies operations(+, -, ×, ÷) and the effects of operations
- determines estimates
- knows how numbers are represented and used

Measurement

- recognizes measurements and units of measurement
- compares, contrasts, and converts measurements

SCIENCE CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Science tests assess the achievement of the Sunshine State Standards in science. Approximately the same number of questions is used for each of the four clusters: *Physical and Chemical Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, Life and Environmental Sciences, and Scientific Thinking.* The FCAT Science test for Grade 8 mainly consists of multiple-choice questions and gridded-response questions, and also includes short-response tasks and extended-response tasks, scored on 2-point and 4-point rubrics.

Physical and Chemical Sciences

- recognizes the differences between solids, liquids, and gases
- contrasts physical and chemical changes
- identifies atomic structures
- recognizes properties of waves
- describes how energy flows through a system
- describes, measures, and predicts the types of motion and effects of force

Earth and Space Sciences

- recognizes that forces within and on Earth result in geologic structures, weather, erosion, and ocean currents
- explains the relationship between the Sun, Moon, and Earth

Geometry and Spatial Sense

- describes, draws, identifies, and analyzes two- and three-dimensional shapes
- visualizes and illustrates changes in shapes
- uses coordinate geometry

Algebraic Thinking

- describes, analyzes, and generalizes patterns, relations, and functions
- writes and uses expressions, equations, inequalities, graphs, and formulas

Data Analysis and Probability

- analyzes, organizes, and interprets data
- identifies patterns and makes predictions, inferences, and valid conclusions
- uses probability and statistics

- understands that activities of humans affect ecosystems
- compares and contrasts characteristics of planets, stars, and satellites

Life and Environmental Sciences

- identifies the structure and function of cells
- compares and contrasts structures and functions of living things
- understands the importance of genetic diversity
- recognizes how living things interact with their environment

Scientific Thinking

- uses scientific method and processes to solve problems
- recognizes that most natural events occur in consistent patterns
- understands the interdependence of science, technology, and society

FCAT NORM-REFERENCED TEST (NRT) CONTENT FOR GRADES 6–8

NRT READING CONTENT TESTED*

The FCAT NRT (*Stanford 10*) Reading Comprehension test is composed of reading selections accompanied by questions about each selection. The selections reflect the kinds of literature students read in school and are written to appeal to students of different backgrounds, experiences, and interests.

Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 read and answer questions about the following types of literature:

Literary—material typically read for enjoyment

Informational—material typically found in grade-appropriate textbooks and other sources of information

Functional—material typically encountered in everyday-life situations

The test questions are classified by these standards:

Initial Understanding—Demonstrates the ability to comprehend explicitly stated relationships in a variety of reading selections.

Interpretation—Demonstrates the ability to form an interpretation of a variety of reading selections based on explicit and implicit information in the selections.

NRT MATHEMATICS CONTENT TESTED*

Student proficiency in mathematics is tested by the FCAT NRT (*Stanford 10*) at grades 3 through 8 with the Mathematics Problem Solving test and at Grades 9 and 10 with the Mathematics test. Test questions require the student to use logical reasoning and non-routine problem-solving strategies. Each test question is classified first according to its mathematics content and then according to the mathematics process it assesses.

Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 are assessed on the following mathematics content:

Number Sense and Operations—Demonstrates understanding of the meaning and use of numbers, the various representations of numbers, number systems, and the relationships between and among numbers. Demonstrates understanding of the meaning of operations, the relationship between operations, and the practical settings in which a specific operation or set of operations is appropriate.

Patterns, Relationships, and Algebra—Describes, completes, continues, and demonstrates understanding of patterns involving numbers, symbols, and geometric figures (patterns with numbers include those found in lists, function tables, ratios and proportions, and matrices). Demonstrates understanding of elementary algebraic principles, as found in the relationships between mathematical situations and algebraic symbolism.

Critical Analysis—Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and evaluate explicit and implicit information in a variety of reading selections.

Strategies—Demonstrates the ability to recognize and apply text factors and reading strategies in a variety of reading selections.

Data, Statistics, and Probability—Describes, interprets, and makes predictions based on the analysis of data presented in a variety of ways, including graphs, plots, tables, and lists. Demonstrates understanding of basic probability concepts.

Geometry and Measurement—Demonstrates understanding of the characteristics and properties of plane and solid figures, coordinate geometry, and spatial reasoning. Demonstrates understanding of the meaning and use of various measurement systems, the tools of measurement, and the integral role of estimation in measurement.

* The FCAT NRT is part of the *Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition,*

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS (SSS) TESTED ON THE FCAT FOR GRADES 9-11

WRITING+ CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Writing+ test measures the writing elements of *focus, organization, support,* and *conventions,* which are integral to the Sunshine State Standards. The test includes a prompt that presents a topic to which students must respond and multiple-choice questions. Grade 10 students demonstrate their writing skills by producing, within 45 minutes, a written draft response to one of two randomly assigned prompts, which asks them to persuade (persuasive writing) or to explain (expository writing). Students also respond to multiple-choice questions which assess prewriting, drafting and revising, and editing skills. The editing skills include capitalization, punctuation, spelling, usage, and sentence structure.

Writing Process

The student prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas, and identifying the purpose for writing.

The student drafts and revises writing that:

- focuses on the topic, is purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation
- provides an organizational pattern with a logical progression of ideas
- includes effective use of transitional devices that contribute to a sense of completeness
- includes support that is substantial, specific, relevant, and concrete
- demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject

READING CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Reading tests employ a wide variety of written material to assess students' reading comprehension as defined in the Sunshine State Standards. These tests include informational and literary reading passages. Informational passages are written to provide readers with facts about a particular subject and may include magazine and newspaper articles, editorials, and biographies. Literary passages are written primarily for readers' enjoyment and may include short stories, poems, folktales, and selections from novels.

Tests for Grades 9 and 10 assess the following SSS reading comprehension skills and processes:

Words and Phrases in Context

- selects and uses strategies to understand words and text
- makes and confirms inferences from a reading text
- interprets data presentations (e.g., maps, diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations)

Main Idea, Plot, and Purpose

- determines stated or implied main idea
- identifies relevant details
- identifies methods of development
- determines author's purpose and point of view
- identifies devices of persuasion and methods of appeal

- employs creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper
- demonstrates a mature command of language with freshness of expression
- uses a variety of sentence structures
- contains few, if any, convention errors in mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling

The student produces final documents that have been edited for correct spelling, correct use of punctuation, correct capitalization, correct usage, and effective sentence structure.

- identifies and analyzes complex elements of plot (e.g., setting, tone, major events, and conflicts and resolutions)

Comparisons and Cause/Effect

- recognizes the use of comparison and contrast
- recognizes cause-and-effect relationships

Reference and Research

- locates, gathers, analyzes, and evaluates information for a variety of purposes
- selects and uses appropriate study and research skills and tools according to the type of information being gathered or organized
- analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and uses the information appropriately
- synthesizes information from multiple sources to draw conclusions

MATHEMATICS CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Mathematics tests assess the achievement of the Sunshine State Standards in mathematics. The FCAT Mathematics tests for Grades 9 and 10 include multiple-choice questions and gridded-response questions. The Grade 10 test also includes several performance tasks, scored on 2-point and 4-point rubrics. At Grades 9 and 10, the *Geometry and Spatial Sense* strand and the *Algebraic Thinking* strand have slightly more questions than the other three strands.

FCAT Mathematics assesses what students in Grades 9 and 10 know and are able to demonstrate in the following content strands:

Number Sense, Concepts, and Operations

- identifies operations (+, -, ×, ÷) and the effects of operations
- determines estimates
- knows how numbers are represented and used

Measurement

- recognizes measurements and units of measurement
- compares, contrasts, and converts measurements

Geometry and Spatial Sense

- describes, draws, identifies, and analyzes two- and three-dimensional shapes
- visualizes and illustrates changes in shapes
- uses coordinate geometry

SCIENCE CONTENT TESTED

The FCAT Science tests assess the achievement of the Sunshine State Standards in science. Approximately the same number of questions is used for each of the four clusters: *Physical and Chemical Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, Life and Environmental Sciences, and Scientific Thinking*. The FCAT Science test for Grade 11 mainly consists of multiple-choice questions and gridded-response questions, but also includes short-response tasks and extended-response tasks, scored on 2-point and 4-point rubrics.

Physical and Chemical Sciences

- describes and explains the structure of an atom and its interactions with other atoms
- recognizes and explains chemical reactions
- describes how energy flows through a system
- describes, measures, and predicts the types of motion and effects of force

Earth and Space Sciences

- recognizes that forces within and on Earth result in geologic structures, weather, erosion, and ocean currents
- identifies and explains the interconnectedness of Earth's systems
- understands that activities of humans affect ecosystems
- compares and contrasts characteristics of planets, stars, and satellites

Algebraic Thinking

- describes, analyzes, and generalizes patterns, relations, and functions
- writes and uses expressions, equations, inequalities, graphs, and formulas

Data Analysis and Probability

- analyzes, organizes, and interprets data
- identifies patterns and makes predictions, inferences, and valid conclusions
- uses probability and statistics

Life and Environmental Sciences

- contrasts and compares the structure and function of major body systems
- recognizes that structures, physiology, and behaviors of living things are adapted to their environment
- identifies and explains the role of DNA
- explains the relationship and interdependence of all living things and their environment

Scientific Thinking

- uses scientific method and processes to solve problems
- recognizes that most natural events occur in consistent patterns
- understands the interdependence of science, technology, and society

FCAT NORM-REFERENCED TEST (NRT) CONTENT FOR GRADES 9-10

NRT READING CONTENT TESTED*

The FCAT NRT (*Stanford 10*) Reading Comprehension test is composed of reading selections accompanied by questions about each selection. The selections reflect the kinds of literature students read in school and are written to appeal to students of different backgrounds, experiences, and interests.

Students in Grades 9 and 10 read and answer questions about the following types of literature:

Literary—material typically read for enjoyment

Informational—material typically found in grade-appropriate textbooks and other sources of information

Functional—material typically encountered in everyday-life situations

The test questions are classified by these standards:

Initial Understanding—Demonstrates the ability to comprehend explicitly stated relationships in a variety of reading selections.

Interpretation—Demonstrates the ability to form an interpretation of a variety of reading selections based on explicit and implicit information in the selections.

Critical Analysis—Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and evaluate explicit and implicit

NRT MATHEMATICS CONTENT TESTED*

Student proficiency in mathematics is tested by the FCAT NRT (*Stanford 10*) at grades 3 through 8 with the Mathematics Problem Solving test and at Grades 9 and 10 with the Mathematics test. Test questions require the student to use logical reasoning and non-routine problem-solving strategies. Each test question is classified first according to its mathematics content and then according to the mathematics process it assesses.

Students in Grades 9 and 10 are assessed on the following mathematics content:

Number Sense and Operations—Demonstrates understanding of the meaning and use of numbers, the various representations of numbers, number systems, and the relationships between and among numbers. Demonstrates understanding of the meaning of operations, the relationship between operations, and the practical settings in which a specific operation or set of operations is appropriate.

Patterns, Relationships, and Algebra—Describes, completes, continues, and demonstrates understanding of patterns involving numbers, symbols, and geometric figures (patterns with numbers include those found in lists, function tables, ratios and proportions, and matrices). Demonstrates understanding of elementary algebraic principles as found in the relationships between mathematical situations and algebraic symbolism.

information in a variety of reading selections.

Strategies—Demonstrates the ability to recognize and apply text factors and reading strategies in a variety of reading selections.

Data, Statistics, and Probability—Describes, interprets, and makes predictions based on the analysis of data presented in a variety of ways, including graphs, plots, tables, and lists. Demonstrates understanding of basic probability concepts.

Geometry and Measurement—Demonstrates understanding of the characteristics and properties of plane and solid figures, coordinate geometry, and spatial reasoning. Demonstrates understanding of the meaning and use of various measurement systems, the tools of measurement, and the integral role of estimation in measurement.

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Appendix D

Statutes and Rules, Assessment: and Accountability

RELEVANT STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following references in the Florida Statutes (F.S.) are directly related to the statewide assessment program:

- Section 1002.69, F.S., requires the Department of Education to adopt a statewide kindergarten screening that assesses the readiness of each student for kindergarten based upon the performance standards adopted by the department under s. 1002.67(1) for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. The department shall require that each school district administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each kindergarten student in the school district within the first 30 school days of each school year.
- Section 1008.22, F.S., defines the statewide K-12 assessment program, its purposes, and its components; requires the State Board of Education to approve student performance standards in various subject areas and grade levels which form the basis for the statewide assessment tests; requires public school students to earn passing scores on the Grade 10 statewide assessment test or an alternative test to qualify for a standard high school diploma; authorizes the use of alternative tests to the Grade 10 FCAT when concordant scores can be determined and establishes certain requirements for the use of concordant scores.
- Section 1008.23, F.S., provides for the confidentiality of the assessment instruments, including developmental materials and work papers; removes the tests from the provisions of s.119.07(1) and s.1001.52.
- Section 1008.24, F.S., specifies that the various tests administered in accordance with Section 1008.22, F.S., shall be maintained in a secure manner.
- Section 1008.25, F.S., requires districts to have a comprehensive program for student progression that incorporates statewide assessment results; specifies participation in the statewide assessment tests is required for all students; requires students scoring at a Level 1 on the statewide assessment test in reading for Grade 3 to be retained; provides for good cause exemptions to the required retention.
- Section 1008.29, F.S., requires the State Board of Education to implement the College-level communication and mathematics skills test (CLAST), which serves as a mechanism for students to demonstrate mastery of their academic competencies prior to upper-division undergraduate instruction.
- Section 1008.30, F.S., authorizes the State Board of Education to develop and implement a common placement test for the purpose of assessing basic computation and communication skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at any public postsecondary educational institution.
- Section 1008.31, F.S., authorizes a performance accountability system to assess the effectiveness of Florida's seamless K-20 education delivery system.
- Section 1008.34, F.S., requires the Commissioner of Education to prepare annual state, district, and school reports of results of the statewide assessment program.
- Section 1012.56, F.S., specifies the requirements for educator certifications.

The following laws and regulations relate to the various assessment and accountability programs:

Assessment Programs and Information	Florida Statutes	Florida Rules
Statewide Kindergarten Screening	F.S.1002.69	None
Sunshine State Standards	F.S.1003.41	6A-1.09401
Middle Grades Promotion	F.S.1003.4156	None
General Requirements for High School Graduation; revised	F.S.1003.428	None
General Requirements for High School Graduation	F.S.1003.43	None
Learning Opportunities for Transfer Students and Students Needing Additional Instruction	F.S. 1003.433	None
Graduation Requirements for Certain Exceptional Students	F.S.1003.438	6-1.0996
University, Community College, and School District Articulation	F.S.1007.23	6A-10.024
Universities, Admissions of Students	F.S.1007.261	6C-6.002
Community Colleges, Admissions of Students	F.S.1007.263	None
Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement	F.S. 1007.35	None
Student Assessment Programs	F.S.1008.22	6A-1.0942
High School Competency Test (HSCT) Requirements	F.S.1008.22	6A-1.09421
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) Requirements	F.S.1008.22	6A-1.09422
Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities	F.S.1008.22	6A-1.0943
Procedures for Special Exemption from Graduation Test	F.S.1008.22	6A-1.09431
Concordant Scores for the FCAT	F.S.1008.22	None
Access, Maintenance, and Destruction of Assessment Instruments	F.S.1008.23	6A-1.0944
Test Security	F.S.1008.24	6A-10.042
Student Progression Plan	F.S.1008.25	None
Assessment of Limited English Proficient Students	F.S.1008.25	6A-1.09432
Third Grade Retention – Good Cause Promotion	F.S.1008.25	6A-1.094221
Third Grade Retention – Mid-Year Promotion	F.S.1008.25	6A-1.094222
Assessment and Remediation - Progress Monitoring Plan	F.S. 1008.25	None
Other Assessment Procedures for College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)	F.S.1008.29	6A-10.030
Attainment of CLAST Communication and Computation Skills	F.S.1008.29	6A-10.0311
Minimum Standards of CLAST Skills	F.S.1008.29	6A-10.0312
Application of CLAST Skills in State Postsecondary Systems	F.S.1008.29	6A-10.0314
CLAST Communication and Computation Skills	F.S.1008.29	6A-10.0316
Participation in the CLAST by Non-public Institutions	F.S.1008.29	6A-10.0317
Florida College Entrance-Level Placement (FCELP)	F.S.1008.30	6A-10.0315
School Improvement and Accountability	F.S.1008.31	None
School Grades	F.S.1008.34	6A-1.09981
Florida Teacher Certification Examinations (FTCE)	F.S.1012.56	6A-4.0021
Florida Educational Leadership Examination (FELE)	F.S.1012.56	6A-4.00821
Confidentiality of Teacher Certification Assessment Instruments	F.S.1012.56	6A-10.042

Statewide Uses of The FCAT

	Promotion/ Graduation Requirement	Middle Grades and High School Reform**	Progress Monitoring Plan***	School Grades	Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
Reading					
Grade 3	✓		✓	✓	✓
Grade 4			✓	✓	✓
Grade 5			✓	✓	✓
Grade 6		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 7		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 8		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 9		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 10	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics					
Grade 3			✓	✓	✓
Grade 4			✓	✓	✓
Grade 5			✓	✓	✓
Grade 6		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 7		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 8		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 9		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grade 10	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science					
Grade 5				✓	
Grade 8				✓	
Grade 11				✓	
Writing+ (Plus)					
Grade 4				Essay Only	Essay Only
Grade 8				Essay Only	Essay Only
Grade 10	Beginning in 2010			Essay Only	Essay Only

* Grade 10 FCAT Retake examinations are offered in Reading and Mathematics three times a year. In addition to the use of the regular FCAT Grade 10 Reading and Mathematics exams in school grading calculations, FCAT Retake results apply toward possible School Grades bonus points. (See s. 1008.22, F.S., and 6A-1.09981, FAC)

** Students who score below a Level 3 are required to receive intensive remediation in the subject. (See s. 1003.4156, F.S., and s. 1003.428, F.S.)

*** Students who score below a Level 3 are required to have a Progress Monitoring Plan. (See s. 1008.25 (4), F.S.)

For more information about FCAT, visit: http://fcat.fldoe.org.

For more information about School Grades, visit: www.firn.edu/doe/schoolgrades.

For more information about student progression, visit: www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/sig/studentprogression.

Appendix E

Historical Chronology – Assessment and Accountability

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

1963 Francis Keppel, the U.S. Commissioner of Education from 1962 to 1965, was concerned about the lack of information regarding the academic achievement of American students. He hired Ralph W. Tyler, a psychologist and the nation's most prominent education evaluator, to form a committee to make recommendations on how to obtain the information. Tyler proposed periodically assessing a small sample of different students rather than trying to test all students on the national level; however, several influential educational associations were opposed to any student assessment data being collected and released at the state level because they feared that the results would be used to make improper and harmful comparisons. Several years later, Florida began work that eventually led to a state assessment program.

1968 State legislation, Section 229.551, Florida Statutes (F.S.), instructed the Department of Education to improve educational effectiveness. The Commissioner was instructed to use "all appropriate management tools, techniques, and practices which will cause the state's educational programs to be more effective and which will provide the greatest economics in the management and operation of the state's system of education."

1969 The Commissioner defined the state's major role in education by outlining nine principles which were adopted by the Florida State Board of Education in August. The six relating to assessment were: (1) the establishment of state educational objectives in priority order, (2) provision of sound financial support, (3) creation of minimum standards for achievement and quality controls, (4) assistance to districts for evaluating results, (5) creation of an information system, and (6) efficient use of funds. The Legislature approved the establishment of the Education Research and Development Program and appropriated an annual sum for sponsoring the program beginning with the 1970-71 fiscal year. The Research and Development Program contributed to Florida's accountability efforts by developing preliminary objectives and test items for assessment and by piloting alternative educational practices.

The National Assessment for Education Progress (NAEP) was administered for the first time. The first NAEP was in the subject of science. Florida did participate in this assessment.

1970 Between 1970 and 1988, additional content areas were assessed by NAEP at the national level. In the early 1980's, NAEP was redesigned to assess four major subject areas (reading, mathematics, writing, and science) on a more regular basis. In addition to the traditional assessment of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds, children in Grades 3, 7, and 11 were to be assessed. Florida consistently participated in all NAEP assessments, understanding how important it is to measure the academic progress of the Nation's students.

The Legislature enacted Chapters 70-339, Laws of Florida, which authorized the Commissioner of Education to develop a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs. The goal of this initiative was to provide each school district with the relevant comparative data and, to the extent possible, be compatible with NAEP.

1971 Section 229.57, F.S., entitled the Educational Accountability Act, implemented the Statewide Assessment Program. Key responsibilities of the Statewide Assessment Program were: (1) yearly establishment of statewide objectives, (2) assessment of student achievement of these objectives, (3) public reporting of results for the State, each district, and each school, (4) testing basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, and (5) development of a cost-effectiveness plan. The Research and Development Program contracted with the Center for the Study of Education (CSE), University of California at Los Angeles, to supply a catalog of reading objectives and items for Grades 2 and 4. Local educators reviewed and evaluated these objectives to reduce and prioritize the list. In September, the State Board of Education adopted the objectives. Following the implementation of this legislation, the first statewide assessment was given to students in Grades 2 and 4.

1973 During 1972 and 1973, approximately 200 students from Grades 3, 6, and 9 participated in special test-retest studies for Florida's second statewide assessment.

1974 The Educational Accountability Act of 1971 was amended to require assessment in the subject areas of reading, writing, and mathematics to students in Grades 3 and 6 in the 1974-75 school year and all students in grades 3 through 6 by the close of the 1975-76 school year.

1975 The goals for education in Florida adopted by the State Board of Education in 1971 were revised to outline general, desirable student skills in seven areas, ranging from basic to advanced learning. In setting these goals, the State defined its responsibilities to ensure that every child acquire essential skills.

In February, all students in Grades 3, 6, and 9 (approximately 360,000 students) were assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics with the exception of Trainable Mentally Handicapped (TMH), Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH), and Visually Impaired students. The fourth statewide assessment was unique in that it marked the first time that Florida tested all students instead of using random, grade-level samples.

For the 1975-76 statewide assessment, approximately 227,000 students in Grades 3 and 6 were tested in October instead of spring, and results were utilized during the school year. Visually handicapped students basically took the same exam and were assessed for the first time.

1976 The Educational Accountability Act of 1976 expanded provisions of the 1971 and 1974 state legislations. Changes included developing assessments for students in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11. In addition, this legislation authorized the nation's first high stakes graduation test by requiring students in the graduating class of 1978-79 to pass a state-administered functional literacy test before receiving a high school diploma.

Grade 5 students took norm-referenced reading assessments chosen by districts in spring 1976. Since all districts were collecting nationally normed data, the decision was made to allow districts to conduct the Grade 5 reading assessment to comply with the Educational Accountability Act of 1971 which required assessment of all students in grades 3 through 6 by the close of the 1975-76 school year. In order to make data from these assessments comparable, the Student Assessment Section used the Anchor Test Study conducted by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in 1972-73. This study used one test as a common base or "anchor" to generate equivalent tables,

individual score norms, and school mean norms on eight different reading tests. All but eight districts in Florida were using one of these eight tests.

In April, the first statewide assessment of all students in the intermediate level of the Trainable Mentally Handicapped (TMH) program took place. Students were individually assessed on an instrument designed to show progress toward priority objectives of the TMH program.

The 1976-77 assessment, administered in October, was based on a revised set of statewide objectives that identified basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics for all students entering Grades 3 and 5. More than 200,000 Grade 3 and 5 students were assessed.

1977 In April, the State Board of Education adopted the new Minimum Student Performance Standards for Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 developed by the Performance Standards and Personnel Data Section of the Department of Education. State curriculum specialists worked with teachers, district-level administrators, and citizens to validate the standards which were very similar in content to the previously used minimal objectives.

In October, approximately 460,000 Grade 3, 5, 8, and 11 students took the new statewide basic skills tests in communications (language arts and reading) and mathematics. In addition, approximately 118,000 Grade 11 students took the Functional Literacy Test as a prerequisite for graduation to comply with the Educational Accountability Act of 1976.

1978 The first legal challenge to the statewide assessment program was filed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Dade County contesting the department's right to limit public access to the Functional Literacy Test. The case was dropped in June 1979.

The second legal challenge to the statewide assessment program was brought by Florida citizen John Brady, who disputed the legality of the scoring system used for the test. Both the hearing officer and the District Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the State Board of Education and upheld the decision to implement the scoring procedures adopted by the State Board.

In the third legal challenge to the statewide assessment program, Mr. Brady, joined by plaintiff Blount et al., argued that the testing criteria were arbitrary and unfair. The hearing officer refused to address the issues surrounding the test and ruled in favor of the State Board of Education. The decision was appealed to the District Court of Appeals, where it was upheld.

In February, approximately 1,600 Grade 5 and 2,200 Grade 11 students took a consumer education assessment that was implemented due to a concern that students have knowledge of free enterprise, consumer, and economic concepts.

In April, 66 students participated in the first assessment for Hearing Impaired students.

In August, the name Functional Literacy Test was changed to State Student Assessment Test, Part II (SSAT-II).

In October, approximately 435,000 students in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 were tested. Since the graduating class of 1979 was the first to be affected by the testing component of the graduation requirement, approximately 35,000 Grade 12 students and 4,400 adults who had failed one or both sections of

the 1977 Functional Literacy Test were retested. (Note that due to litigation, the graduation requirement was not in effect until the 1982-83 school year.)

The first writing assessment was administered in October to a sample of students in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11.

The Compensatory Education Act of 1977 enacted a compensatory education program funded at a level of $26.5 million to provide remedial help for students. Funding was allocated on the basis of the percent of students in the district who scored at or below the state twenty-fifth percentile cut-off score, and each district received a share. The funds were to be used in the form of instructional services to supplement students' instruction and not supplant local or federal funds already utilized for students.

1979

The fourth legal challenge was filed on October 16, 1978 in federal court in Tampa by the Bay Area Legal Services and the Center for Law and Education at Harvard against the SSAT-II as a requirement for high school graduation, and the case was heard in May 1979. In July, the Appeals Court upheld the test but delayed the implementation of the SSAT-II as a graduation requirement until the 1982-83 school year. In 1979, diplomas were awarded if students met local district requirements, passed all of their school subjects, and mastered the standards assessed on the SSAT-I. No diploma was withheld on the basis of a student's failure to pass the SSAT-II, but the SSAT-II was administered and used to identify students needing remedial assistance.

January marked the first special test administration for adult high school students, regular students with extended excused absences, migrant students, and students transferring to Florida schools. These special test administrations were offered in January, July, October, and April.

In April, 169 17-year-old Hearing Impaired students took the special basic skills test for Hearing Impaired students.

In October, approximately 440,300 students were assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 took the SSAT-I, and Grade 11 and retesting Grade 12 students took the SSAT-II.

Effective with the 1979-80 school year, accommodations for exceptional students participating in the regular assessment were delineated in State Board Rule 6A-1.943.

1980

In the fifth and sixth legal challenges, two groups, representing plaintiffs in Love v. Turlington and Debra P. v. Turlington, filed cases against the state's basic skills testing program, alleging that its tests had not been properly validated and that its implementation schedule was unfair. These cases were resolved in 1982 and 1983 respectively.

In April, 82 17-year-old Hearing Impaired students participated in the special Hearing Impaired assessment.

During October, approximately 442,300 public school students were assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics. The SSAT-I was administered to students in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11, and Grade 11 and retesting Grade 12 students took the SSAT-II.

1981 Before graduation, Hearing Impaired students had to master a special set of basic skills for 17-year-olds; the 17-year-old Hearing Impaired test took place each spring.

The SSAT-II, traditionally administered in October to Grade 11 students, was first administered in April to approximately 108,000 Grade 10 students. Moving the test from Grade 11 to Grade 10 provided additional retesting opportunities for students trying to meet Florida's graduation requirement. Approximately 105,000 Grade 10 students took the SSAT-I and SSAT-II each spring until 1984 when the SSAT-II was renamed SSAT-II/High School Competency Test (HSCT). Approximately 325,000 students in Grades 3, 5, and 8 took the SSAT-I each October until 1984.

An assessment of Free Enterprise/Consumer/Economic Education (FE/C/EE) was administered during the week of April 27 – May 1, 1981, to a statewide sample of more than 2,000 students in Grades 5 and 11.

A statewide eleventh-year-in-school basic skills test for EMH students was field tested in May 1981 with all EMH students (approximately 1,600 participating).

1982 The first statewide special assessment of Grade 10 and 11 EMH students and some Physically Impaired (PI) and Emotionally Handicapped (EH) students was held during the spring of 1982 in the form of a field test. Nearly 3,000 students were tested.

A writing production assessment was conducted on a statewide sample of Grade 10 students in April and on Grade 3, 5, and 8 students in statewide samples in October.

The National Comparison Project was conducted nationwide in October to obtain data comparing Grade 5 and 8 performance on mathematics and reading comprehension skills. Approximately 1,000 Grade 5 and 2,500 Grade 8 Florida public school students participated in the study.

In October, the Love v. Turlington court case was settled out of court. As part of the settlement, the plaintiff was awarded a high school diploma.

In response to a Debra P. v. Turlington case ruling, a study was conducted to ensure that skills assessed on the SSAT-II were taught in Florida public school classrooms.

Beginning with the 1982-83 school year, Hearing Impaired tests were administered annually each fall to 11-year-old Hearing Impaired students and to 17-year-old Hearing Impaired students in the spring.

1983 In the Debra P. v. Turlington case, the U.S. District Court ruled that Florida could deny diplomas to members of the graduating class of 1983 and beyond who did not demonstrate the minimum competencies assessed by the SSAT-II. To meet Florida's graduation requirement, approximately 101,000 Grade 10 students took the SSAT-II and the SSAT-I in March. The SSAT-II scoring system was changed to an equated scale score. Rule 6A-1.942, FAC, was changed to reflect the new passing scale score of 700, equivalent to the previous raw scores set, for both the communication (reading and writing) and mathematics portions. For the communications section, students had to answer 56 of 75 items correctly, and for the mathematics section, students had to answer 47 of 75 items.

In response to a 1983 request by the Florida Legislature, the Department of Education surveyed all school districts and many educational organizations and associations. The department then conducted public hearings to best determine steps to take in improving and expanding the Minimum Competency Program and provide a more significant challenge for Florida public education. As a result, recommendations included merging the SSAT-I and –II, changing spring administration to earlier in March, and providing an essay exam for Grade 8.

In April, districts received a District Item Bank containing 400 Grade 10 items measuring the 1985 Minimum Student Performance Standards (MSPS).

In April, the second statewide field test administration for Grade 10 EMH students and some Physically Impaired (PI) and Emotionally Handicapped (EH) students, based on 1985 MSPS for EMH students, was conducted, with approximately 2,000 students participating.

On September 20, 1983, the State Board of Education adopted Student Performance Standards of Excellence in Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies for Grades 3, 5, 8 and 12.

1984 In January, districts received complete sets of 1985 specifications covering all skills (both high and low priority) for all grade levels.

In February, the State Board of Education changed the Hearing Impaired Minimum Student Performance Standards (MSPS) from age levels to grade levels. The MSPS were then set at prekindergarten and Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11, and the Grade 5 test was administered in the fall of this year. The State Board also expanded Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, and these changes had a significant impact on exceptional students. A list of test administration and format modifications was provided, and district personnel became responsible for determining which modifications were most appropriate for each exceptional student who participated in the testing program. An additional rule to cover unforeseen circumstances allowed a school district superintendent to petition the Commissioner of Education for special modifications for exemptions to aid an exceptional student who has extraordinary circumstances that are not covered by existing guidelines.

In March, Grade 10 students took a new version of the SSAT-II, called the State Student Achievement Test-II/High School Competency Test (SSAT-II/HSCT). The SSAT-II/HSCT, based on revised Minimum Student Performance Standards adopted by the State Board of Education, raised standards to encourage students and teachers to attain higher achievement. The test was administered to approximately 100,000 Grade 10 students each year in March until 1992.

In the spring, districts received a District Item Bank for Grade 3. The 600 items measure the 1985 Minimum Student Performance Standards (MSPS).

The third statewide administration for Grade 10 EMH students and some Physically Impaired (PI) and Emotionally Handicapped (EH) students was conducted during April 3-13, 1984, and the special assessment for Grade 11 Hearing Impaired students was administered April 2-12, 1984.

1985 The fourth statewide assessment for Grade 10 EMH students and some Physically Impaired (PI) and Emotionally Handicapped (EH) students was conducted during the period of March 20 – April 9, 1985. Beginning in April

1985, Grade 10 Hearing Impaired students were tested on the Grade 11 MSPS each spring.

In April, the Free Enterprise/Consumer/Economic Education Assessment was administered to a sample of students in Grades 5, 8, and 11.

The National Achievement Comparison Project was a special project that took place in Florida, Tennessee, and Virginia to link these states to the nation through a special subset of NAEP test items. In April, a sample of Grade 11 students from selected schools was tested in reading.

In the fall of 1985, the State Board of Education adopted MSPS in the areas of science and computer literacy.

1986 Eight southern states, including Florida, began a three-year test of a sample of their students using NAEP reading and/or writing achievement tests. This assessment was guided by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).

On February 17, 1986, a set of District Item Banks for Hearing Impaired Students for prekindergarten and Grades 3, 6, and 11 was sent to each district coordinator of accountability. In April, the Department of Education distributed District Item Banks for Grades 5 and 8.

The fifth statewide assessment for EMH students was conducted during the period of March 18 – April 9, 1986. The special assessment for all Grade 10 Hearing Impaired students occurred April 7-15, 1986.

1987 A NAEP study group headed by Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander and H. Thomas James recommended to the U.S. Department of Education changing grade-level sampling from Grades 3, 7, and 11 to the more important "transition" Grades of 4, 8, and 12. They also recommended adding a state-level NAEP to the assessment program. Florida education leaders endorsed the recommendation.

1988 The Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvements Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) further expanded the NAEP program by increasing the number of educational subjects assessed and authorizing state assessments on a trial basis in reading and mathematics. This legislation also authorized NAEP to report achievement level data on a basis that ensures valid, reliable trend reporting and information on special groups. Florida continued to participate in the NAEP program.

The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) was established as the independent overseer of NAEP (P.L. 100-297).

1990 In an effort to improve Florida's statewide assessment program and to move toward the measurement of higher-order thinking skills, s. 229.57, F.S., was radically revised. The SSAT-I was eliminated, and students in Grades 3, 5, and 8 were no longer assessed as part of the statewide assessment program. Districts became responsible for administering nationally-normed assessments each spring to students in Grades 4 and 7, and the State was required to administer a new nationally-normed assessment, compatible with college-level communication and computation skills, each spring to Grade 10 students. This legislation also called for a mandatory writing production assessment of all students in Grades 4, 7, and 10 (later amended in 1997 to read "at the elementary, middle, and high school level") and an optional career planning assessment for students in Grades 7 and 10. The SSAT-II/HSCT

was moved from Grade 10 to Grade 11, and Grade 11 students were required to earn a passing score on the HSCT in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma. High school testing graduation requirements in effect at the time a student entered Grade 9 were applicable to students seeking a standard high school diploma as long as student enrollment was continuous.

Florida Statute 229.57(2), now s. 1008.22(2), F.S., directed the Commissioner of Education "to provide for school districts to participate in the administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or a similar national assessment program, both for the nation sample and for any state-by-state comparison programs which may be initiated."

As part of the NAEP Trial State Assessments (TSAs), Florida eighth graders were assessed in mathematics.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EDUCATORS

1884 From 1884-85, 1,653 teachers were certified in Florida. By 1891–92, that number had increased to 2,782 certified teachers across the state.

1889 Florida has consistently assessed teacher candidates to meet the stringent requirements of professional standards. Under Section 26 of the School Law of 1889, an applicant for a teaching certificate, "before being eligible for examination, was required to produce satisfactory evidence of being of strictly temperate habits and maintaining a good moral character."

1890 Among the earliest evidence verifying Teacher Certification assessment is a certificate awarded on September 26, 1890, in recognition of "satisfactory evidence of maintaining a good moral character, and having sustained an examination by the Board of Public Instruction of St. Johns County."

1893 Under the Laws of Florida, Chapter 4191(78), the Legislature enacted "An Act to Prescribe Rules and Regulations for Licensing Teachers; to Provide for Uniform Examinations; to Secure Fairness in Examinations and in Issuing Teachers' Certificates, and for other purposes." Section 3 specified that "No certificate, except life certificates, shall be issued except on written examination, or written and oral examinations, as provided in this Act." The responsibility for examining teachers was vested within the school district.

Chapter 4191(78), Laws of Florida, required candidates for first, second, and third grade teaching certificates to "be examined by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction on questions prepared in all cases by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction," and granted authority to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to issue a state certificate to those holding a first grade certificate. In addition, the State Superintendent could issue a life certificate to a teacher who had completed 30 months of successful high school teaching, "without further examination, if endorsed by three persons holding State certificates."

1910s Teacher assessments using the Uniform Examinations for Teachers continued to be a county school district responsibility, rather than a state responsibility through the early 1900s.

1920s Faced with an increasing demand for qualified teachers to fill Florida's growing number of classrooms, the State Board of Education (SBE) endorsed the development of Teacher-Training Departments in Florida High Schools. This plan permitted students who had completed Grade 10 in a designated high school to enter a teacher-training program for Grades 11 and 12.

Regulations for Teacher-Training Departments were amended by the State Board of Education in April 1923. In addition, Chapter 9122(20), Acts of 1923, provided for the extension by one year of any or all valid certificates for teachers who attended "no less than six weeks" of coursework at a college or normal school, "completing 10 hours of academic and 5 hours of professional subject matter, or to those who satisfactorily completed the Reading Circle Course prescribed by" the SBE.

Teaching Certificates based on examinations were awarded in accordance with House Bill No. 491(8), passed by the Legislature of 1927. Those who scored an average of 70 percent with no grade below 50 percent on examinations in reading, writing, elementary arithmetic, spelling, primary geography, United States and Florida history, physiology and hygiene, and the theory and practice of teaching were issued a Third Grade certificate valid for teaching in the first eight grades of school for one year from the date of issue. Teacher candidates who passed all subjects above with an average of 80 percent and no grade below 60 percent, plus examinations in arithmetic, advanced geography, English grammar and composition, general history, and the elements of bookkeeping, received a Second Grade certificate valid for teaching the first eight grades of school for three years from the date of issue. By passing all examinations required for a Second Grade certificate with an average of 85 percent and no grade below 60 percent and additional examinations in algebra, biology, psychology, and general history and rhetoric and by earning a score of 85 percent or higher on an examination of the Constitution of the United States of America, candidates were entitled to a First Grade certificate valid for teaching the first eight grades and some subjects through tenth grade for five years.

1930s Counties continued to administer the Uniform Examinations for Teachers for teacher certification. Results were first published for 1928-30 by the State Superintendent of Instruction, Colin English, in his annual report. By 1937, the results published in the Superintendent's report showed 68 percent of Florida teachers held Graduate Certificates. Of these, 32 percent held certification based on two years of college or less.

Under the Education Acts of 1935, Title V, Chapter 17248, Article 4, qualified teachers became permanent employees of their county school system. It remained a duty of the county superintendent, under 892(126)(1), to administer examinations for Special Certificates to candidates with a minimum of 30 semester hours in an institute of higher education when teaching positions could not be filled by qualified teachers who were certified in the subject area needed.

The State Department of Education was created in 1939 under Laws of Florida, Chapter 19355. The state system of public education had been administered by the Department of Public Instruction from 1867-1939. Recognizing a need for changes, the State Superintendent and the SBE proposed the Florida School Code of 1938, which included the development of Education Chapter V, School Personnel—Certification of Administrators and Instructional Personnel.

1940s Revisions in the structure of teacher certification led to three additional levels of certification awarded as Undergraduate, Graduate, and Professional certificates defined by the Florida Statutes of 1941. Under § 231.21, the Undergraduate certificate, for those fulfilling the requirements given in § 231.17, authorized the "holder thereof to teach the grades, subjects or subject field indicated on the certificate," for three years as issued to those

who completed "not less than sixty semester hours at a standard institution of higher learning." The Graduate certificate, issued for five years under § 231.20, was issued to teachers who completed a four year course for graduation at an institution of higher learning, and the Professional certificate, under § 231.19, was issued to those who had been awarded the Graduate certificate and had completed at least twenty-four school months of satisfactory teaching.

Exception was made for the awarding of Special Certificates under § 231.22 in any field where the certified instructional personnel appeared inadequate. The State Superintendent had authorization to issue special certificates on the basis of examinations in the fields where additional personnel were needed.

County superintendents were authorized to conduct no more than one teacher examination per year in the county seat; the State Superintendent would also administer examinations in three or more county seats of his selection to begin on the first Thursday in July and continue for three days.

State Law effective July 1, 1947, under Section 31, 236-07, established methods for determining qualifications for Rank III certificates for all teachers, except those giving special types of instruction, such as trades and industrial education, instrumental music, and art and music education: (1) Graduation from a college offering a four-year degree, or (2) Scores establishing Rank III on the National Teachers Examinations (NTE).

Teachers' examination on the U.S. Constitution was last required in July 1948. After October 1, 1948, teachers were required to sign an Oath of Loyalty instead.

1950s

The NTE, administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS), was administered to "serve a two-fold purpose; namely: (1) Basis for issuance of an original Special Certificate (2) Basis for the establishment of a higher equivalency rank for certificates already held by teachers" (Certification Of Teachers, Bulletin B, Florida Department of Education, 1952). The NTE was an all objective type test consisting of two primary examinations: the Common Examinations tested Mental Abilities and Basic Skills, General Culture, and Professional Information. The Optional Examination, one of which must be taken, showed mastery of subject-matter in Education in the Elementary School, English Language and Literature, Social Studies, Mathematics, Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, French, German, Spanish, Latin, and Industrial Arts Education.

The NTE were administered annually in February on dates established by the National Committee on Teacher Examinations at five upper-level institutions. As requirement for a Post Graduate Certificate, teachers must achieve a score on the NTE or the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), "at least equal to the national median." These examination scores determined the Rank of New Special Certificates or Rank of Certificates Already Held for Ranks III, IV, and V. No certificate could be given a rank higher than Rank III on the basis of these examinations. This change in SBE Regulations was adopted February 19, 1952. Teachers were urged to "make every effort to complete their bachelor's degree and obtain a Rank III graduate certificate for the school year 1953-54" and make application to the State Department of Education (SDE) on or before October 1, 1953 in order to prevent their certificate from reverting to Rank IV.

On February 4-5, 1956, Florida joined with other National education agencies in conference to endorse and "commend the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) for leadership in clarifying the desirable qualifications of and means of preparing teachers of modern foreign languages. . . . Methods of certifying teachers should hereafter guarantee adequate preparation by including evidence of proficiency based on performance as well as upon credit hours." Within the five criteria stipulated by this recommendation, educators asserted that "standardized tests of proficiency should be developed as soon as possible."

1960s On July 24, 1962, pursuant to Section 231.161, F. S., the State Board of Education waived the examination requirement as prescribed in Section 231.16 for a period of one year. This resolution reads: "If the state board of education finds that the recruiting of teachers is unduly curtailed by the examination provisions of § 231.16(2) and (3) and the examination provisions of § 231.36, it may by a three-fifths vote waive the examination requirements of those subsections for a period not exceeding three years for teachers with previous experience." This provision was effective immediately and until July 1, 1963.

Political and social changes impacted teacher certification in August of 1962 when the Special Appeal Committee in Certification, responsible for hearing hardship cases, adopted a provision to "assist Cuban Refugees to obtain recertification by accepting the application for subsequent Temporary teaching certificates with reports of scores made on one of the required examinations, if the applicant can establish one full year of experience as a teacher in an accredited public or private school, junior or senior college." Other significant changes followed in 1963. The State Board of Education, in regular meeting, agreed to give the Certification Section of the State Department of Education the authority to interpret experience in a recognized school of Cuba as meeting the requirement for certification in lieu of the 500 score on the NTE. Recommendations were considered for eliminating the acceptance of the GRE for teacher certification purposes, as provided by the 1961 Law and subsequent State Board Regulations. Under State Superintendent Thomas D. Bailey, the ETS was asked to analyze the teacher examinations data for the February, July, and October examinations of 1962. The plan presented covered 22,000 candidates at a cost of $3,100 and would take four or more months to complete.

In 1966, the title of State Superintendent of Instruction was changed to that of Commissioner of Education. In 1969, the Florida Educational Leadership Training Act (FELTA) was enacted to identify and train potential candidates for employment in administrative and supervisory positions.

1970s As an important aspect of the adoption of the Educational Accountability Act of 1971, the Legislature stipulated the development of assessment procedures for use across the state, as required under § 9 (1), Chapter 70-399, F.S. In 1973, the Florida Council on Teacher Education (COTE) was created. COTE was integrally involved in the passage of the Teacher Education Center Act of 1973, later amended in 1974 and 1975 under Sections 231.600-231.611, F. S.

Teacher Education Centers (TEC), developed between 1974 and 1979, would provide educators with local, college-based Inservice Education Programs and training opportunities within the school district. Department memorandum dated 6-27-78 expands the word "teacher" to mean "all professional

personnel working toward an education career or already in education, including school administrators, supervisors, counselors, librarians, and others." Under Section 231.602(8), F.S., Master Inservice Plan Criteria were drafted to meet this specification.

In 1978, the State Department of Education undertook an "essential generic competency study" following the Guidelines for Planning and Conducting Essential Competency Studies of the Council on Teacher Education, for the purposes of developing a comprehensive written and performance-based teacher certification examination. Superintendent Ralph D. Turlington endorsed this "needs assessment study" for classroom teachers.

In 1979, the Florida Legislature, through Chapter 79-222, Laws of Florida (previously Section 229.55, F.S.), enacted legislation requiring the identification of skills to measure achievement of the essential academic skills of college students. The Department of Education then charged the Articulation Coordinating Committee with the task of implementing that part of the legislation dealing with the identification of skills and tests to measure achievement of those skills. The result was the establishment of the Essential Academic Skills Project (EASP, later CLASP).

Continuation of this chronology is found in the main section of this document.

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