


## MEMORANDUM

November 21, 2007

**TO:** The Honorable Chair and Members of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

**FROM:** Rudolph F. Crew, Superintendent of Schools 

**SUBJECT: 2006-2007 RESULTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING ASSESSMENT (CELLA)**

The Florida Department of Education has released results from the administration of the Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) for the 2006-07 school year. Specifically, state, district, and individual school reports were released, and student reports were provided to schools for distribution to students' parents.

Florida has implemented the CELLA to measure growth in English language proficiency for students classified as limited English proficient (LEP), as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The CELLA was administered to LEP students in Florida for the first time in the Fall of 2006 as a baseline assessment and again in the Spring of 2007. The 2006-07 school year is the only academic year in which CELLA will be administered twice. Beginning with the 2007-08 academic year, CELLA will be administered to LEP students annually in the Spring of each school year. Because proficiency levels are not yet established for CELLA outcomes, results are reported only in terms of mean scale scores for each grade level and area tested: Listening/Speaking, Reading and Writing. CELLA results may be used to track students' progress over time, and diagnostically to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in English.

Overall, approximately 45,000 LEP students in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools took part in the Fall 2006 administration of CELLA. The number of students participating in the Spring 2007 CELLA was approximately 50,000. Highlights of the results, as well as district and state summary results by grade level and area tested, are provided as an attachment to this memorandum. In addition, an interpretation guide clarifying the meaning of scale score reference points is provided.

Should you have any questions about the attached results, please contact Ms. Antoinette Dunbar, Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction, at 305-995-1451, or Ms. Gisela Feild, Administrative Director, Assessment, Research and Data Analysis, at 305-995-2943.

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Attachment

cc: School Board Attorney  
Superintendent's Cabinet  
Ms. Gisela Feild  
Dr. Sally Shay

**Highlights of the Florida Department of Education's  
Summary Report for Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
2006 and 2007 Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment Results**

The Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) was created by Educational Testing Service (ETS) and a consortium of five states (Florida, Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee). It was developed in response to a requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to annually assess the progress made by limited English proficient (LEP) students in English language acquisition. CELLA is a four-skill language proficiency assessment that tests LEP students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. These four areas are assessed in each of four test levels: Level A (Grades K-2), Level B (Grades 3-5), Level C (Grades 6-8) and Level D (Grades 9-12). Beginning English language learners may be assessed using a lower level of the assessment in Reading and Writing. CELLA results may be used to track students' progress over time, and to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in English.

During the 2006-07 school year, the CELLA was administered to LEP students in Florida twice: in the Fall of 2006 and in the Spring of 2007. Consequently, the results of the 2006 and 2007 CELLA assessments represent largely a longitudinal view of student progress in English language acquisition over the course of one school year. In the future, CELLA will only be administered at the end of each academic year. Thus, beginning with the 2007-08 school year, yearly outcomes will represent a cross-sectional view of English language acquisition, and any year-to-year summary comparisons will be based on largely different student groups as new, beginning English language learners join the English for Speakers of Other Languages program, while other students exit the program as they become English proficient.

Because proficiency levels are not yet established for CELLA outcomes, results are reported only in terms of mean scale scores for each grade level and area tested: Listening/Speaking, Reading and Writing. To help in the interpretation of results reported in terms of mean scale scores, the CELLA Interpretive Guide is provided by ETS. In this guide, achievement descriptions for specific reference scale score points are provided. These describe what typical students scoring at the reference point know and are able to do in each language domain. When a student's score falls between two reference points, the description for the point closer to the student's score should be used. The CELLA Interpretive Guide is provided below. For example, a grade K student who achieved a scale score of 630 in Listening/Speaking can be characterized as having "small vocabulary" in English and knowing "only a little grammar." Such a student is still learning how to ask and answer basic questions.

## CELLA Interpretive Guide

Scale Score Reference Point	Listening/Speaking
620	Students with a score of 620 usually have a small vocabulary and know only a little grammar. They are still learning how to ask and answer basic questions.
660	Students with a score of 660 have a basic vocabulary. They can ask and answer basic questions but are still learning how to participate in conversations.
700	Students with a score of 700 know enough vocabulary and grammar to take part in conversations. They are still learning to use English to understand what is being taught in class.
740	Students with a score of 740 have a good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. They can participate in most conversations and can use English to learn new ideas in their classes.
Scale Score Reference Point	Reading
620	Students with a score of 620 are just beginning to read. They can recognize many common words in English and can read and understand some very simple sentences.
660	Students with a score of 660 are still learning to read, but are close to becoming independent readers. They can read and understand short passages written in very simple language.
700	Students with a score of 700 are developing as independent readers. They can easily read short passages written in very simple language and are learning to read passages that are moderately complex.
740	Students with a score of 740 are independent readers developing their skills. They can easily read and understand short passages that are moderately complex and are learning to read challenging short passages.
780	Students with a score of 780 are capable independent readers. They have a good vocabulary and are learning to read challenging short passages with thorough comprehension.
Scale Score Reference Point	Writing
620	Students with a score of 620 are learning to write letters and single words.
660	Students with a score of 660 can write letters and single words and are learning to write sentences independently.
700	Students with a score of 700 can write sentences and are learning to write simple paragraphs. Their writing may contain errors that make it hard to understand.
740	Students with a score of 740 can write simple paragraphs and are learning to write more complex paragraphs. Their writing still contains some errors, but it can usually be understood.
780	Students with a score of 780 can write simple or complex paragraphs. Their writing can be understood easily and shows a strong vocabulary and the ability to use advanced grammar.

### **Highlights of CELLA Results**

- More than 30% of all LEP students in the M-DCPS are concentrated in grades K and 1. Students in these grade levels achieved higher combined mean scale scores in both Fall of 2006 and Spring of 2007 than did students in Florida. This was true in all assessed areas: Listening/Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
- In grades 2-12, except for grade 3, students in the District made as large or larger learning gains between 2006 and 2007 as did students in the state in all areas tested.
- Students in grades K and 1 made the largest learning gains between the two test administrations compared with students in other grade levels. These gains were especially pronounced in the areas of Reading and Writing.

The Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 CELLA mean scale scores are shown by grade level in the table on the following page.

### Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 CELLA results for M-DCPS and Florida by grade

Grade	District vs. State	Listening/Speaking					Reading					Writing				
		Spring 2007		Fall 2006		07-06	Spring 2007		Fall 2006		07-06	Spring 2007		Fall 2006		07-06
		<i>n</i>	Scale Score	<i>n</i>	Scale Score	Dif	<i>n</i>	Scale Score	<i>n</i>	Scale Score	Dif	<i>n</i>	Scale Score	<i>n</i>	Scale Score	Dif
K	M-DCPS	11,907	650	10,493	613	37	10,693	527	9,561	398	129	10,805	625	9,868	549	76
	Florida	35,300	646	28,171	611	35	32,567	530	25,697	396	134	32,847	620	26,299	545	75
1	M-DCPS	10,396	676	9,275	649	27	9,442	643	8,810	555	88	9,442	671	8,921	631	40
	Florida	32,006	675	29,526	648	27	29,474	643	28,056	555	88	29,625	668	28,438	627	41
2	M-DCPS	6,687	688	5,979	666	22	6,777	680	5,765	641	39	6,900	686	5,993	668	18
	Florida	25,586	692	23,741	672	20	25,668	686	22,782	648	38	26,031	687	23,462	669	18
3	M-DCPS	3,989	697	3,747	676	21	3,919	689	3,380	666	23	4,017	688	3,563	672	16
	Florida	21,320	709	20,015	687	22	21,001	702	19,113	677	25	21,372	697	19,755	678	19
4	M-DCPS	2,327	700	1,937	677	23	2,223	696	1,664	677	19	2,322	695	1,817	680	15
	Florida	16,250	719	14,677	699	20	15,902	716	14,101	699	17	16,290	709	14,459	694	15
5	M-DCPS	2,149	703	1,853	680	23	1,979	704	1,602	688	16	2,183	696	1,741	686	10
	Florida	14,588	725	13,212	706	19	14,193	727	12,719	712	15	14,656	714	13,086	705	9
6	M-DCPS	1,995	699	1,601	678	21	2,017	709	1,659	693	16	1,978	699	1,660	685	14
	Florida	12,213	726	11,278	710	16	12,446	725	11,560	714	11	12,331	718	11,474	708	10
7	M-DCPS	2,114	701	1,780	681	20	2,154	715	1,854	702	13	2,099	700	1,817	690	10
	Florida	11,275	725	10,258	710	15	11,486	728	10,537	718	10	11,312	719	10,370	710	9
8	M-DCPS	2,229	704	1,970	681	23	2,282	719	2,054	707	12	2,226	704	1,988	695	9
	Florida	11,688	729	10,806	711	18	11,903	734	11,070	725	9	11,797	722	10,877	714	8
9	M-DCPS	2,449	700	2,050	682	18	2,609	717	2,148	710	7	2,427	692	1,957	685	7
	Florida	11,564	724	10,815	711	13	12,069	734	11,442	730	4	11,726	710	10,995	704	6
10	M-DCPS	2,394	709	2,272	691	18	2,454	728	2,356	718	10	2,311	702	2,188	691	11
	Florida	10,094	732	10,187	716	16	10,509	744	10,647	736	8	10,275	717	10,227	709	8
11	M-DCPS	1,788	717	1,865	697	20	1,855	736	1,933	728	8	1,764	707	1,837	697	10
	Florida	8,148	737	8,408	723	14	8,511	750	8,821	745	5	8,347	720	8,550	715	5
12	M-DCPS	1,081	727	1,256	706	21	1,133	747	1,303	737	10	1,094	713	1,239	703	10
	Florida	5,045	746	5,898	729	17	5,366	756	6,188	751	5	5,271	725	6,015	718	7

