

## MEMORANDUM

August 13, 2008

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

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



**SUBJECT: SPRING 2008 RESULTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH LEARNING ASSESSMENT (CELLA)**

The Florida Department of Education has released results from the 2007-08 administration of the Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA). Specifically, state, District, and individual school results were released. District and school summary reports are being distributed to schools along with individual student reports which should be distributed to students' parents.

Florida has implemented the CELLA to measure growth in English language proficiency for students classified as English Language Learners (ELL), as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The CELLA was administered to ELL students in Florida for the first time in the Fall of 2006 as a baseline assessment, with subsequent administrations annually in the Spring of each school year. Although proficiency levels for CELLA outcomes have been established by the State Board of Education recently, they were not in place in time for inclusion on the 2008 reports. As such, 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.

The number of students participating in the Spring 2008 CELLA was approximately 63,200. 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. Gisela Feild, Administrative Director, Assessment, Research and Data Analysis, at 305-995-7512.

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Attachments

cc: School Board Attorney  
Superintendent's Senior Staff

**Highlights of the Florida Department of Education's  
Spring 2008 Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA)  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS)  
Kindergarten – Grade 12**

- In 2008, approximately a third of all primary grade (Kindergarten - Grade 3) ELL students tested statewide were from the M-DCPS.
  - More than 35% of the District's English language learners (ELL) were enrolled in Kindergarten or Grade 1.
- District and State average scale scores increased at nearly every grade level and across each content level from Spring 2007 to Spring 2008.
  - Increases of at least 10 scale score points in Listening/Speaking were seen for District students enrolled in grades 3, 4, 5, 8, 10 and 11 in 2008, when compared to their counterparts' results in 2007.
  - Increases of at least 10 scale score points in Reading were seen for District students enrolled in grades K, 1, 2, 4, and 5 in 2008, when compared to students' outcomes in 2007.
  - An increase of at least 10 scale score points in Writing was seen for District students enrolled in grade 4 from 2007 to 2008.
- Increases in the average scale scores of M-DCPS students from 2007 to 2008 were generally greater than the increases observed statewide.

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Summary of District and State Results for the**  
**Spring 2008 Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA)**  
**Kindergarten – Grade 12**

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 students who are classified as English Language Learners (ELL). CELLA is a four-skill language proficiency assessment that tests ELL's 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.

Beginning in the 2006-07 school year, CELLA has been administered to ELLs in Florida annually in the Spring of each academic year. It is important to note that yearly outcomes represent a cross-sectional view of English language acquisition. Any year-to-year summary comparisons are based on largely different student groups because new, beginning English language learners join the English for Speakers of Other Language program, while other students exit the program as they become proficient in English.

Although proficiency levels for CELLA outcomes have been established by the State Board of Education recently, the levels were not in place in time for inclusion in the 2008 report. Consequently, the test 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. For example, a grade K student who achieved a scale score of 640 can be characterized as having achieved a "low intermediate" level of oral English language acquisition. This student "speaks in English and understands spoken English that is at or below grade level and requires some support."

The CELLA Interpretive Guide is provided on the following page followed by a summary of the State and District results.

## CELLA Interpretive Guide

| Scale Score<br>By Grade Cluster |     |     |      | <b>LISTENING AND SPEAKING<br/>PROFICIENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTORS</b>   |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|------|---|
| K-2                             | 3-5 | 6-8 | 9-12 |   |
| 564                             | 618 | 623 | 631  | Beginning students speak in English and understand spoken English that is below grade level and require continuous support.             |
| 641                             | 687 | 697 | 698  | Low Intermediate students speak in English and understand spoken English that is at or below grade level and require some support.      |
| 661                             | 709 | 723 | 726  | High Intermediate students, with minimal support, speak in English and understand spoken English that is at grade level.                |
| 714                             | 763 | 782 | 787  | Proficient students speak in English and understand spoken English at grade level in a manner similar to non-English Language Learners. |
| Scale Score<br>By Grade Cluster |     |     |      | <b>READING<br/>PROFICIENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTORS</b>  |
| K-2                             | 3-5 | 6-8 | 9-12 |   |
| 445                             | 640 | 657 | 674  | Beginning students read below grade level text and require continuous support.  |
| 587                             | 702 | 728 | 753  | Low Intermediate students read at or below grade level text and require some support.   |
| 659                             | 724 | 750 | 770  | High Intermediate students read at grade level text with minimal support.   |
| 745                             | 772 | 787 | 799  | Proficient students read at grade level text in a manner similar to non-English Language Learners.                                      |
| Scale Score<br>By Grade Cluster |     |     |      | <b>WRITING<br/>PROFICIENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTORS</b>  |
| K-2                             | 3-5 | 6-8 | 9-12 |   |
| 576                             | 625 | 634 | 645  | Beginning students write below grade level and require continuous support.  |
| 647                             | 689 | 704 | 705  | Low Intermediate students write at or below grade level and require some support.   |
| 674                             | 715 | 733 | 733  | High Intermediate students write at grade level with minimal support.   |
| 733                             | 776 | 796 | 798  | Proficient students write at grade level in a manner similar to non-English Language Learners.  |

**Table 1**  
**Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA)**  
**District and State, 2007 and 2008**  
**Mean Scale Scores, by Grade**

| Grade | District vs. State | Listening/Speaking |             |        |             |            | Reading |             |        |             |            | Writing |             |        |             |            |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------------|------------|
|       |                    | 2008               |             | 2007   |             | 08-07      | 2008    |             | 2007   |             | 08-07      | 2008    |             | 2007   |             | 08-07      |
|       |                    | N                  | Scale Score | N      | Scale Score | Difference | N       | Scale Score | N      | Scale Score | Difference | N       | Scale Score | N      | Scale Score | Difference |
| K     | M-DCPS             | 12,209             | 649         | 11,907 | 650         | -1         | 12,151  | 538         | 10,693 | 527         | 11         | 12,252  | 629         | 10,805 | 625         | 4          |
|       | Florida            | 37,904             | 648         | 35,300 | 646         | 2          | 37,817  | 542         | 32,567 | 530         | 12         | 38,004  | 626         | 32,847 | 620         | 6          |
| 1     | M-DCPS             | 11,902             | 680         | 10,396 | 676         | 4          | 11,970  | 654         | 9,442  | 643         | 11         | 12,003  | 675         | 9,442  | 671         | 4          |
|       | Florida            | 34,475             | 677         | 32,006 | 675         | 2          | 34,722  | 651         | 29,474 | 643         | 8          | 34,764  | 671         | 29,625 | 668         | 3          |
| 2     | M-DCPS             | 9,961              | 696         | 6,687  | 688         | 8          | 10,216  | 694         | 6,777  | 680         | 14         | 10,252  | 691         | 6,900  | 686         | 5          |
|       | Florida            | 30,024             | 695         | 25,586 | 692         | 3          | 30,317  | 691         | 25,668 | 686         | 5          | 30,652  | 689         | 26,031 | 687         | 2          |
| 3     | M-DCPS             | 6,869              | 707         | 3,989  | 697         | 10         | 6,705   | 702         | 3,919  | 689         | 3          | 6,862   | 697         | 4,017  | 688         | 9          |
|       | Florida            | 25,380             | 709         | 21,320 | 709         | 0          | 25,035  | 703         | 21,001 | 702         | 1          | 25,425  | 698         | 21,372 | 697         | 1          |
| 4     | M-DCPS             | 3,312              | 714         | 2,327  | 700         | 14         | 3,217   | 711         | 2,223  | 696         | 15         | 3,316   | 705         | 2,322  | 695         | 10         |
|       | Florida            | 17,894             | 724         | 16,250 | 719         | 5          | 17,678  | 720         | 15,902 | 716         | 4          | 17,971  | 712         | 16,290 | 709         | 3          |
| 5     | M-DCPS             | 2,609              | 713         | 2,149  | 703         | 10         | 2,499   | 715         | 1,979  | 704         | 11         | 2,633   | 704         | 2,183  | 696         | 8          |
|       | Florida            | 15,588             | 729         | 14,588 | 725         | 4          | 15,302  | 730         | 14,193 | 727         | 3          | 15,669  | 717         | 14,656 | 714         | 3          |
| 6     | M-DCPS             | 2,442              | 708         | 1,995  | 699         | 9          | 2,494   | 713         | 2,017  | 709         | 4          | 2,470   | 703         | 1,978  | 699         | 4          |
|       | Florida            | 13,366             | 727         | 12,213 | 726         | 1          | 13,551  | 725         | 12,446 | 725         | 0          | 13,466  | 720         | 12,331 | 718         | 2          |
| 7     | M-DCPS             | 2,431              | 710         | 2,114  | 701         | 9          | 2,451   | 716         | 2,154  | 715         | 1          | 2,421   | 705         | 2,099  | 700         | 5          |
|       | Florida            | 12,237             | 731         | 11,275 | 725         | 6          | 12,353  | 730         | 11,486 | 728         | 2          | 12,244  | 722         | 11,312 | 719         | 3          |
| 8     | M-DCPS             | 2,440              | 718         | 2,229  | 704         | 14         | 2,498   | 727         | 2,282  | 719         | 8          | 2,454   | 712         | 2,226  | 704         | 8          |
|       | Florida            | 11,498             | 735         | 11,688 | 729         | 6          | 11,702  | 737         | 11,903 | 734         | 3          | 11,596  | 726         | 11,797 | 722         | 4          |
| 9     | M-DCPS             | 2,867              | 709         | 2,449  | 700         | 9          | 2,990   | 724         | 2,609  | 717         | 7          | 2,869   | 700         | 2,427  | 692         | 8          |
|       | Florida            | 12,300             | 726         | 11,564 | 724         | 2          | 12,716  | 735         | 12,069 | 734         | 1          | 12,522  | 711         | 11,726 | 710         | 1          |
| 10    | M-DCPS             | 2,634              | 719         | 2,394  | 709         | 10         | 2,694   | 736         | 2,454  | 728         | 8          | 2,602   | 707         | 2,311  | 702         | 5          |
|       | Florida            | 10,624             | 736         | 10,094 | 732         | 4          | 10,933  | 745         | 10,509 | 744         | 1          | 10,767  | 718         | 10,275 | 717         | 1          |
| 11    | M-DCPS             | 2,065              | 727         | 1,788  | 717         | 10         | 2,135   | 744         | 1,855  | 736         | 8          | 2,054   | 713         | 1,764  | 707         | 6          |
|       | Florida            | 8,877              | 741         | 8,148  | 737         | 4          | 9,121   | 750         | 8,511  | 750         | 0          | 8,960   | 722         | 8,347  | 720         | 2          |
| 12    | M-DCPS             | 1,433              | 732         | 1,081  | 727         | 5          | 1,490   | 747         | 1,133  | 747         | 0          | 1,445   | 715         | 1,094  | 713         | 2          |
|       | Florida            | 5,810              | 747         | 5,045  | 746         | 1          | 5,981   | 755         | 5,366  | 756         | -1         | 5,883   | 724         | 5,271  | 725         | -1         |