

## INTRODUCTION

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is a statewide assessment designed to measure students' skills in Writing, Reading, and Mathematics. The FCAT was developed as a result of the 1991 Education Reform and Accountability Act which required the creation of state academic standards and an assessment program. In 2000, the FCAT was expanded from one component, measuring students' mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in Reading and Mathematics, to three distinct components:

- The **FCAT Sunshine State Standards (SSS)** component (the original FCAT component) is designed to assess levels of student proficiency as they relate to the SSS benchmarks in Reading and Mathematics. The FCAT SSS was administered in February 2000 to measure students' reading skills in grades 4, 8, and 10 and mathematics skills in grades 5, 8, and 10.
- The **FCAT Writing** component (formerly the Florida Writing Assessment) assesses students' ability to organize and clearly express their thoughts in writing. The Florida Writing Assessment was incorporated into the FCAT in February 2000 and renamed FCAT Writing. The assessment remained unchanged from previous years. The FCAT Writing was administered to all eligible students in grades 4, 8, and 10.
- The **FCAT Norm-Referenced Test (NRT)** component was added to the original FCAT in order to compare the performance of Florida's students to the performance of a national norm group. In March 2000, students in grades 3-10 were administered the FCAT NRT component for the first time in Reading Comprehension and Mathematics.

**This report provides 1999 and 2000 district and school level FCAT results based on all students tested; in addition, it provides separate reports for each of the three curriculum groups (Standard Curriculum, Exceptional Student Education, and Limited English Proficient Two Years or Less).** The majority of district and school level FCAT scores in this report are provided for all students tested and for each of the three curriculum groups; the school level gain analyses that are also included in the report are based on the FCAT scores used for accountability purposes. For a complete report on the FCAT scores used for accountability purposes, refer to the Florida Department of Education's (FDOE) *School Accountability Report, 1999-2000* to obtain information on individual schools' grades and the criteria used to determine school grades.

Detailed information regarding the district scores on all three components of the FCAT, including results by ethnicity and content area, as well as state and school level results, is provided in this report. Section 1 of the report presents the results of the FCAT Writing; Section 2 presents the results of the FCAT SSS Reading and Mathematics component; and Section 3 presents the results of the FCAT NRT Reading and Mathematics component. Additionally, school level gain analyses for each FCAT component, based on

the FCAT scores used for accountability purposes, are provided within each section of the report. The FDOE has reported summary scores based on **all students tested**, regardless of how long they were in attendance at a school and regardless of curriculum group.

Unlike the past, separate reports for the three curriculum groups (Standard Curriculum, ESE, and LEP Two Years or Less) have not been issued. The reporting of the FCAT scores for all students tested is significantly different from the manner in which the scores were reported in prior years, when scores were reported for Standard Curriculum students only. Because of this change in reporting formats, the 2000 FCAT scores that were released by the FDOE are based on a different population of students than were the 1999 Florida Writing Assessment and 1999 FCAT scores that were reported last year.

In order to address this discrepancy and to provide the basis for a comparison between the 1999 and the 2000 data, the FDOE has recalculated the state's 1999 Florida Writing Assessment scores and the 1999 FCAT SSS Reading and Mathematics scores. Specifically, the FDOE has summarized these scores across all students tested, including ESE and LEP Two Years or Less students. In the same manner, the district has recalculated the 1999 Florida Writing Assessment scores and the 1999 FCAT SSS scores to include all students tested. Please note that, although the district's 1999 scores have been recalculated, caution should be used when comparing 1999 and 2000 scores. This is because, in 1999, fewer ESE and LEP Two Years or Less students participated in the Florida Writing Assessment and in the FCAT SSS.

Because the FDOE released the 2000 FCAT scores of all students tested, regardless of curriculum group, the district has also recalculated the 2000 FCAT data to analyze the FCAT scores separately for each of the three curriculum groups.

Standard Curriculum students include Gifted, Hospital/Homebound, and Speech Impaired students, as well as LEP students who have been enrolled in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for more than two years. ESE students include all categories of exceptional education students, excluding Gifted, Hospital/Homebound, and Speech Impaired students. LEP Two Years or Less students include students who have been receiving ESOL services for two years or less.

More students participated in the FCAT 2000 than in previous years. Across all subject areas, the number of students tested increased from 1999 to 2000 by approximately 10% at the elementary school level, 9% at the middle school level, and 18% at the senior high school level. Although more students participated in the 2000 FCAT, the make-up of the student population participating in the assessment has changed from 1999 to 2000. Table 1 on the following page depicts how the percent of ESE and LEP Two Years or Less students, as a proportion of the total population of students tested on the FCAT Writing and the FCAT SSS, increased from 1999 to 2000.

**Table 1. FCAT Writing and FCAT SSS Reading and Mathematics:  
Percent\* of Students Tested in Each Curriculum Group, 1999, 2000, and Difference**

	Std. Curriculum			ESE			LEP Two Yrs. or Less		
	1999	2000	Diff.	1999	2000	Diff.	1999	2000	Diff.
<b>Grade 4 Writing</b>	91%	84%	-7%	7%	10%	+3%	2%	6%	+4%
<b>Grade 8 Writing</b>	87%	84%	-3%	10%	11%	+1%	3%	5%	+2%
<b>Grade 10 Writing</b>	90%	86%	-4%	7%	8%	+1%	4%	6%	+2%
<b>Grade 4 Reading</b>	91%	84%	-7%	8%	10%	+2%	2%	6%	+4%
<b>Grade 8 Reading</b>	87%	84%	-3%	9%	10%	+1%	4%	6%	+2%
<b>Grade 10 Reading</b>	91%	86%	-5%	6%	7%	+1%	3%	7%	+4%
<b>Grade 5 Math.</b>	88%	83%	-5%	10%	11%	+1%	2%	6%	+4%
<b>Grade 8 Math.</b>	87%	84%	-3%	9%	10%	+1%	4%	6%	+2%
<b>Grade 10 Math.</b>	91%	86%	-5%	6%	7%	+1%	3%	7%	+4%

\*Note: Percents may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 1 provides the following information:

- The percent of Standard Curriculum students, as a proportion of the total population of students tested, decreased from 1999 to 2000 at all grade levels in Writing, Reading, and Mathematics.
- The percent of ESE students, as a proportion of the total population of students tested, increased from 1999 to 2000 at all grade levels in Writing, Reading, and Mathematics.
- The percent of LEP Two Years or Less students, as a proportion of the total population of students tested, increased from 1999 to 2000 at all grade levels in Writing, Reading, and Mathematics.