

# MEMORANDUM

May 7, 2009

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

**FROM:** Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools *AMC*

**SUBJECT: STATE RELEASE OF RESULTS FOR THE SPRING 2009 FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT TEST (FCAT): GRADES 11 - 12 RETAKE**

Today, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) released results from the Spring 2009 administration of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Retake. Specifically, District and school summary reports were provided for the FCAT Retake in reading and mathematics, representing the scores of students in Grades 11 and 12 who participated in the Spring 2009 administration because they had not yet passed the reading and/or mathematics tests required for graduation. The State has released these results in advance of the results for the standard FCAT assessment program to facilitate graduation decisions.

In Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), 13,509 students in Grades 11 and 12 participated in the reading part of the graduation test and 5,447 participated in the mathematics part of the graduation test. Combined across Grades 11 and 12, 2,949, or 22% of those taking the reading assessment, and 1,515, or 28% of those taking the mathematics assessment, achieved passing scores. Summary reports and tables with District and State results are provided as attachments.

Results for FCAT Reading, Mathematics, and Science for students in Grades 3-11 will be released on a staggered schedule, between now and June 4, 2009. School performance grades are expected in mid-July.

Complete District, State, and school summary reports are available online at: <http://oada.dadeschools.net/FCAT/FCAT.asp>. School shipments of individual student reports for the FCAT Retake will be forwarded to schools as they are received. Additional reports of FCAT results will be released as they become available. Should you have any questions about the attached Retake results, please contact Ms. Deborah Karcher, Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Services, at 305-995-3751, or 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 2009 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Summary Report  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Grades 11 – 12 FCAT Retake**

- The passing rates on the FCAT Reading Retake improved substantially for M-DCPS 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who had not previously passed the reading test required for graduation with a standard diploma.
  - The improvement in the FCAT Reading Retake passing rates for M-DCPS students surpassed that of students statewide.
- The passing rates on the FCAT Mathematics Retake declined slightly from 2008 to 2009 for M-DCPS 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who had not previously passed the mathematics graduation test.
  - However, the decline of two percentage points in the passing rates of M-DCPS students was considerably less than a decline of six percentage points for students statewide.
- Research completed by the District has shown that M-DCPS students benefit from taking advantage of the multiple opportunities available to take the FCAT graduation test if they do not pass on its initial offering in the spring of 10<sup>th</sup> grade (<http://drs.dadeschools.net/ResearchBriefs/RB0805.pdf>).
  - Of the District's students who had not yet met the reading graduation test requirement, 24% of the participating 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 18% of the participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students met that requirement during this administration.
  - Of those who had not yet met the mathematics requirement, 31% of the participating 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 22% of the participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students met the graduation test requirement in mathematics.
- The number of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in this Retake administration declined somewhat from 2008 to 2009 in both the District and the State. This may be due to a number of factors, including the increased use of concordant scores on college entrance exams (SAT and ACT) to fulfill the graduation requirement.

**Summary of District and State Results for the  
Spring 2009 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)  
Grades 11 and 12 FCAT Retake**

On May 7, 2009, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) released State and District summary data from the Spring 2009 administration of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Retake. The initial summary data include FCAT Retake graduation examination results for students in Grades 11 and 12.

High school students must pass the FCAT reading and mathematics tests to meet Florida's graduation requirement for a standard diploma. Students have multiple opportunities to do so prior to graduation. The first FCAT administration that can be used to satisfy the graduation requirement takes place in the spring of tenth grade as part of the standard FCAT assessment program. Students who participate in FCAT Retake administrations represent a small proportion of the population; they may include students new to the State and/or District who have never taken the FCAT, as well as students who have taken the assessment one or more times previously. In addition to the yearly spring administration, which is offered in conjunction with the standard FCAT assessment program, an FCAT Retake administration is offered in the fall. Prior to the 2008-2009 school year, the FCAT Retake administration was also offered in the summer; however, the summer administration has been indefinitely suspended. The Spring 2009 FCAT administration was the last opportunity for current Grade 12 students to pass the FCAT Retake prior to their scheduled graduation. Students may participate in Retake administrations after their scheduled graduation date if they meet eligibility requirements.

### **Interpreting FCAT Retake Results**

Several factors must be considered in interpreting the FCAT Retake results. First, students need to take only the test(s) (reading, mathematics, or both) they have not yet passed. The number tested in reading and in mathematics cannot be added to represent the total number tested, as some students took both tests while others needed to take only one.

In addition, the Retake administrations are NOT census administrations; not all students in Grades 11 and 12 participate. Only those students who did not take or did not pass the FCAT graduation test during an earlier opportunity are eligible to participate in the Retake administration. Thus, the number of students tested varies from year to year and from school to school, and higher performing students represent smaller proportions of the test-takers as students near graduation. As a result, interpretations about changes in passing rates should be made with caution.

FCAT Retake scores are reported in terms of scale scores, ranging from 100 to 500. Students must attain a score of 300 on both the reading test and the mathematics test to be eligible to graduate with a standard diploma.

Tables 1 and 2 list the numbers of Grade 11 and 12 students tested in reading and mathematics, respectively, and the passing rates from 2007 through 2009. Also included in the tables are the percentages of the total number of enrolled Grade 11 and 12 students participating in this administration of the FCAT Retake. Note that other students also participated in this administration, such as those retained in Grade 10 or those who took the test after their scheduled graduation dates (Grade 13 and adult education students). However, summaries of the results for these other students are not provided, as the number of participants is too small to allow for appropriate comparisons.

**Table 1**  
**FCAT Retake Reading**  
**Grades 11 and 12: District and State, 2007, 2008, and 2009**  
**Number Tested, Percent of Enrolled Students Tested, and Passing Rates**

READING		DISTRICT			STATE		
		Number Tested	Percent of Enrolled Students Tested*	Passing Rate	Number Tested	Percent of Enrolled Students Tested*	Passing Rate
Grade 11	2007	9,129	37	16%	56,099	30	20%
	2008	8,780	36	17%	55,593	29	22%
	2009	8,635	35	24%	53,718	28	27%
Grade 12	2007	4,992	23	13%	25,815	16	15%
	2008	5,023	22	12%	24,069	15	16%
	2009	4,874	21	18%	22,925	14	20%

\* Denotes the number of students participating in this FCAT Retake administration as a percentage of the total number of enrolled students, by grade level.

**Table 2**  
**FCAT Retake Mathematics**  
**Grades 11 and 12: District and State, 2007, 2008, and 2009**  
**Number Tested, Percent of Enrolled Students Represented, and Passing Rates**

MATHEMATICS		DISTRICT			STATE		
		Number Tested	Percent of Enrolled Students Tested*	Passing Rate	Number Tested	Percent of Enrolled Students Tested*	Passing Rate
Grade 11	2007	4,523	18	25%	27,120	15	33%
	2008	4,282	17	33%	25,257	13	39%
	2009	3,520	14	31%	21,907	12	33%
Grade 12	2007	2,200	10	21%	10,633	7	26%
	2008	2,197	10	24%	9,971	6	32%
	2009	1,927	8	22%	8,540	5	26%

\* Denotes the number of students participating in this FCAT Retake administration as a percentage of the total number of enrolled students, by grade level.