

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Gerard Robinson  
Commissioner of Education

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Dear Parent/Guardian of a Grade 3 Student,

The Florida Department of Education has transitioned to new standards that set expectations for what students need to learn by each grade level and in various subjects to help better prepare students as they move through school and on to college and careers. New assessments measure a student's progress toward meeting the standards.

Raising educational standards and measuring a student's progress toward meeting them is the right thing to do. Every time we have raised the bar in Florida, after dropping at first, scores have moved higher. In December, after input from educators, parents, and the community, the State Board of Education set higher achievement levels for reading and mathematics.

Your student's spring 2012 FCAT 2.0 Reading and Mathematics score report is enclosed. While it may seem early to be thinking about your child graduating and moving into the next phase of life, studies show that third grade is a critical year for measuring learning, especially when it comes to reading. A child who does not learn how to read proficiently by the end of third grade is more likely to have difficulty and fall behind in school. Identifying struggling readers early allows teachers and schools to provide the resources students need to succeed. If you have concerns about your child's scores, we encourage you to contact your child's teacher to determine the next steps in meeting his or her academic goals.

You can find more information about your student's report on the Department's website in *Understanding FCAT 2.0 Reports Spring 2012* (<http://fcats.fldoe.org/fcat2/pdf/s12uf2r.pdf>). More information about Florida's third grade reading policy is available at <http://www.justreadflorida.com/pdf/2011ReadToLearnFinal.pdf>. There is also a new website for parents where you can sign up to receive information about your child's education (<http://www.floridapathtosuccess.org>).

Thank you for supporting your child's education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Gerard Robinson".

Gerard Robinson