


MEMORANDUM

May 18, 2012

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

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

SUBJECT: STATE RELEASE OF INITIAL RESULTS FOR THE SPRING 2012 FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT TEST: GRADES 9 AND 10, READING; AND READING AND MATHEMATICS RETAKE

Today the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) released the first round of results from the Spring 2012 administration of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). Specifically, results were released for FCAT 2.0 Reading for students in Grades 9 and 10; and FCAT/FCAT 2.0 Reading and Mathematics Retake results for students in Grades 11-12 who participated in this 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 remaining grade levels to facilitate graduation decisions. It should be noted that the results released include all students tested and do not represent the groupings that will be used by the State for accountability purposes.

In the first of many changes to the State's assessments and Florida's school accountability system, the FLDOE transitioned from FCAT to FCAT 2.0 in 2011 to align with new academic content specified in the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). **Expectations for high student performance on these new assessments are particularly challenging in Miami-Dade County, given the disproportionate number of English Language Learners (ELL) served in our schools: approximately 70,000 students districtwide, or nearly three times the numbers served by other large districts in the State. Although the results for Grades 9 and 10 are encouraging, the disproportionate numbers of ELL students enrolled in Miami-Dade County are faced with systematic bias in being held to the same high standards in their second year of instruction as their counterparts who are native English speakers.**

It should be noted that during the first year of administration in Spring 2011, students' FCAT 2.0 results were reported on an "FCAT Equivalent" scale. However, beginning this year, results for FCAT 2.0 are reported using new developmental scale scores which can range from 140 to 302 for FCAT 2.0 Reading across Grades 3 through 10, and from 140 to 298 for FCAT 2.0 Mathematics across Grades 3 through 8. In addition to the scale scores, results are also reported in terms of Achievement Levels, which can range from Level 1 (low) to Level 5 (high). Level 3 indicates satisfactory performance.

This spring, two editions of the Reading Retake were administered: FCAT 2.0, which measures the NGSSS and was administered to students who took FCAT 2.0 as 10th Grade students last year; and the previous edition of the FCAT, which measures the original Sunshine State Standards (SSS) and was administered to students who have not yet met the graduation test requirement and remain eligible to use this edition. Only one version of the FCAT (SSS) Mathematics Retake was administered, required for students who must still fulfill the mathematics graduation test requirement.

This year, the FCAT 2.0 Grade 6 and 10 Reading, FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake, and FCAT (SSS) Mathematics Retake assessments were administered as computer-based tests (CBT). Schools also had the option of administering the FCAT (SSS) Reading Retake as a CBT, and 38 of 73 M-DCPS high schools and alternative centers chose to do so.

Overall, 52,205 M-DCPS students in Grades 9 and 10 took FCAT 2.0 Reading. In addition, 10,811 students in Grades 11 and 12 participated in the Reading Retake administration while 4,400 participated in the Mathematics Retake administration. The numbers taking each test form, by grade level, may be found on the attached tables, along with a summary of State and District results.

Following are highlights of the results:

- M-DCPS 9th and 10th Grade students fared well on the FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment.
 - 48% of M-DCPS' 9th Grade students scored 3 or above in Reading on the new FCAT 2.0 scale.
 - 46% of current 10th Grade M-DCPS students scored 3 or above on the FCAT 2.0 Reading test, meeting the State's new criterion for passing the high school graduation test in reading.
- M-DCPS' 10th Grade students' scores on FCAT 2.0 Reading were on par with those of students statewide in the two years since its adoption. However, a slightly lower proportion of the District's 9th Grade students tended to score in Levels 3 or above.
- The percentage of 10th Grade students who passed the FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment on the first attempt in order to meet the high school graduation test requirement decreased across the State and District, due to a change in the passing criteria.
- The number of 11th and 12th Grade students participating in the Retake administrations in 2012 increased somewhat, after a decrease in 2011, due to students' ability to apply concordant ACT and SAT scores immediately to fulfill the graduation test requirement.
 - Combined across both Reading Retake forms, 18% of M-DCPS' 11th and 12th Grade students who had not previously achieved passing scores, met the graduation test criteria in reading.
 - In Mathematics, 22% of 11th and 12th Grade students who had not yet met the graduation test criteria also achieved passing scores.

Additional information on the testing program and tables summarizing District and State results are provided as attachments to this memorandum. Results for FCAT 2.0 Reading and Mathematics for students in Grades 3-8, and FCAT 2.0 Science for students in Grades 5 and 8 will be provided as soon as they become available. Complete District, State, and school summary reports are available on the FLDOE website at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/mediapacket/2012/default.asp>. School shipments of Individual Student Reports will be forwarded to schools for distribution to parents.

Should you have any questions about the attached 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 Cabinet
Superintendent's Senior Staff
Ms. Gisela Feild

**Summary of District and State Results for the
Spring 2012 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT/FCAT 2.0)
Reading: Grades 9 and 10; and
Reading and Mathematics Retake: Grades 11 – 12**

On May 18, 2012 the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) released data from the Spring 2012 administration of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT/ FCAT 2.0) Reading and Mathematics tests. The tables that follow provide summaries of the data for students in Grades 9 and 10 for Reading, and in Grades 11 and 12 for Reading and Mathematics Retake graduation test results.

The FCAT is a criterion-referenced test that measures students' mastery of grade-level content. Last year, the FLDOE transitioned from FCAT to FCAT 2.0 in Reading and Mathematics to align with new academic content specified in the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). Specifically, the FCAT 2.0 Reading was administered for the first time in Spring 2011 to students in Grades 3 through 10; and FCAT 2.0 Mathematics was administered to students in Grades 3 through 8. Note that senior high students no longer participate in comprehensive FCAT Mathematics assessments. This is due to Florida's transition to End-of-Course Assessments in mathematics and science, beginning with Algebra 1 in 2010-11; followed by Biology 1 and Geometry this year.

For the first administration of the FCAT 2.0 assessments in Spring 2011, students' results were reported on an "FCAT Equivalent" scale. However, beginning this year, students' FCAT 2.0 results are being reported as new developmental scale scores which can range from 140 to 302 for FCAT 2.0 Reading, and from 140 to 298 for FCAT 2.0 Mathematics. In addition, Achievement Levels based on these new scale scores have been established. The new FCAT 2.0 Achievement Levels retain the same values as reported for FCAT (Levels 1 – 5), however they are not directly comparable; Level 3 remains an indicator of satisfactory performance.

To facilitate comparisons across time, the FLDOE has "retrofitted" Spring 2011 scores to the new FCAT 2.0 reporting scale. The tables included in this summary include data using both the FCAT (SSS) Equivalent scores originally reported in Spring 2011, and the new retrofitted FCAT 2.0 scores, wherever applicable. Table 1 provides FCAT 2.0 Reading summary results for percentages of students scoring in Achievement Levels 1, 2, and 3-5 in Grades 9 and 10.

GRADE 10 FCAT 2.0 READING GRADUATION TEST PASSING RATE

Students who entered Grade 9 in the 2010-11 school year and beyond must score in Achievement Level 3 or above (scale score of 245 or above) on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading for graduation purposes. However, the FCAT Mathematics graduation test requirement was discontinued with this cohort of students, transitioning to high school End-of-Course Assessments in mathematics and science.

Students have multiple opportunities to meet the FCAT 2.0 Reading graduation test requirement prior to graduation, with the first opportunity taking place in the spring of 10th Grade. Table 2 provides the percentages of the Grade 10 students who met graduation requirements in reading on their first attempt.

Table 1
Grades 9 and 10: FCAT 2.0 Reading
District and State 2010, 2011, and 2012
Percentages of Students Scoring in Achievement Levels 1, 2, and 3-5

READING	Number Tested		Level 1			Level 2			Levels 3-5		
	2011	2012	2011 FCAT 2.0 (SSS)	2012 FCAT 2.0	Diff. 11- 12	2011 FCAT 2.0 (SSS)	2012 FCAT 2.0	Diff. 11- 12	2011 FCAT 2.0 (SSS)	2012 FCAT 2.0	Diff. 11- 12
GRADE 9											
District	26,663	27,214	27	24	22	31	30	-1	42	45	3
State	195,884	197,063	22	19	18	30	30	1	48	51	+1
GRADE 10											
District	24,453	24,991	33	20	23	29	30	0	38	51	-5
State	185,956	184,403	32	19	20	29	30	0	39	52	-2

Note. Achievement Levels range from Level 1 (lowest) to Level 5 (highest). Scores for 2011 are represented both as FCAT Equivalent Scores, as reported in Spring 2011, and using the new "retrofitted" levels based on FCAT 2.0 scale scores. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding, and include all students tested, including students with disabilities and English language learners. Only Grade 10 students participating in the standard FCAT 2.0 Reading administration are included in this summary, not those participating in the FCAT Retake.

Table 2
Grade 10: FCAT 2.0 Reading
District and State 2010, 2011, and 2012
Percentages of Students Meeting Graduation Requirements on the First Attempt

GRADE 10	PERCENT PASSING*		
	2010	2011	2012
District	58%	59%	46%
State	60%	60%	50%
			Difference 2011-2012
			-13
			-10

* Passing rates reported for 2010 and 2011 are not directly comparable to those in 2012, due to new passing criteria of Level 3 or above on FCAT 2.0 Reading, established in 2012; prior years were based on scores of 300 or above on the FCAT (SSS) scale.

GRADES 11 and 12 FCAT/FCAT 2.0 RETAKE

Students who entered Grade 9 *prior to* the 2010-11 school year must pass the appropriate form of the FCAT/FCAT 2.0 Reading and Mathematics tests to meet Florida's graduation requirement for a standard diploma. 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, a FCAT/FCAT 2.0 Retake administration is offered in the fall.

Two versions of the Reading Retake were administered in Spring 2012, the FCAT Sunshine State Standards (SSS) and FCAT 2.0 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS), while only one version of the FCAT Mathematics Retake was administered. This year, the FLDOE required all schools to administer the FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake and FCAT (SSS) Mathematics Retake assessments on the computer. All eligible students took the computer-based test (CBT) with the exception of students with disabilities who were unable to test on the computer and had appropriate accommodations documented on a current Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. In addition, the FLDOE offered schools the option of administering the FCAT (SSS) Reading Retake via computer. Thirty-eight of the District's 73 senior high schools and alternative centers opted to do so. The scores for all students participating in either CBT or paper-based administrations are included in these summary results.

The Spring 2012 FCAT administration was the last opportunity for current Grade 12 students to pass the FCAT/FCAT 2.0 Retake prior to their scheduled graduation. Students may participate in Retake administrations after their scheduled graduation date if they meet eligibility requirements

Interpreting FCAT/FCAT 2.0 Retake Results

Several factors must be considered in interpreting the FCAT/FCAT 2.0 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 of students 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/FCAT 2.0 graduation test during an earlier opportunity are eligible to participate in the Retake administration. Also, beginning in the 2010-11 school year, students were permitted to apply concordant scores earned on the College Board SAT or ACT exams to meet the high school graduation test requirement, without having to take the FCAT/FCAT 2.0 graduation test three times, as was the case in past years.

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 (SSS) Retake scores are reported in terms of scale scores, ranging from 100 to 500. Students must attain a score of 300 on both the FCAT (SSS) Reading and Mathematics to be eligible to graduate with a standard diploma. However, FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake scores are reported using the new FCAT 2.0 developmental scale scores, which can range from 188 to 302. Students who entered Grade 9 in 2009-10 (most students currently in Grade 11 and repeating Grade 10 students) must achieve a lower passing FCAT 2.0 scale score of 241, which is equivalent to the previously applied FCAT equivalent scale score of 300.

Results for the two Reading Retake versions are provided separately in Table 3 and 4. Tables 3, 4, and 5 list the numbers of Grade 11 and 12 students tested in reading and mathematics, and the passing rates from 2010 through 2012 as available. Also included in tables 3, 4, and 5 are the percentages of the total number of enrolled Grade 11 and 12 students participating in this administration of the FCAT Retake.

Note that some additional students 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 3
FCAT (SSS) Reading Retake
Grades 11 and 12: District and State, 2010, 2011, and 2012
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	2010	8,402	33	20%	52,875	27	23%
	2011	5,743	25	18%	42,294	23	22%
	2012*	482	2	10%	2,915	1	14%
Grade 12	2010	4,629	20	14%	22,071	13	16%
	2011	4,406	18	13%	22,336	13	15%
	2012*	3,217	14	11%	19,373	11	17%

*These students are part of the 08-09 cohort, or earlier.

**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 4
FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake
Grades 11: District and State 2012
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	2012*	7,112	28	21	47,472	24	24

*These students are part of the 09-10 cohort and took the FCAT 2.0 Reading graduation test for the first time in spring 2011.

**Denotes the number of students participating in this FCAT 2.0 Retake administration as a percentage of the total number of enrolled students.

Table 5
FCAT (SSS) Retake Mathematics
Grades 11 and 12: District and State, 2010, 2011, and 2012
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	2010	3,567	14	35%	22,617	12	37%
	2011	2,337	10	25%	17,695	9	29%
	2012	3,216	13	24%	21,573	11	27%
Grade 12	2010	1,849	8	25%	8,565	5	28%
	2011	1,469	6	16%	7,084	4	21%
	2012	1,184	5	18%	6,864	4	21%

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