

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA
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TO: School Board Members

FROM: Katherine Blasik, Ph.D., Associate Superintendent
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VIA: Frank Till
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SUBJECT: **RELEASE OF 2005 FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT TEST (FCAT)
RESULTS FOR GRADE 3**

Last week, preliminary results of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Sunshine State Standards (SSS) Reading and Mathematics tests for third grade students in Broward County were released. Today, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) released additional results from the 2005 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). These results include the Grade 3 Reading and Mathematics state, district, and school-by-school summary data for both the SSS and Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) portions of the FCAT.

These scores are viewed in terms of percent of students scoring in Achievement Levels 1-5 for the SSS portion and median national percentile ranks for the NRT component of the FCAT tests. It is important to note that in 2005, the FDOE adopted a new version of the FCAT NRT, based on the tenth edition of the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-10). Previously, the FCAT NRT was based on the ninth edition of the Stanford (SAT-9). **Consequently, the NRT score results from 2005 should not be directly compared to previous years, as students taking the FCAT NRT in 2005 participated in a new version of this assessment with updated normative data used for scoring.**

As noted in the preliminary release dated May 3, 2005:

- The percentage of third grade students in Broward County scoring at Achievement Level 3 or higher on the SSS Reading test has increased steadily over the past four years, from 62% in 2002 to 67% in 2005. A similar trend can be seen in Mathematics, where the percent of third grade students in Broward County scoring at Achievement Level 3 or higher has increased from 66% in 2002 and 2003 to 74% in 2005.
- The proportion of grade 3 students scoring at Achievement Level 1 in Reading continues to decline; this rate has decreased from 23% in 2002 to 20% in 2005. This decline is also demonstrated in Mathematics, with the rate decreasing from 17% in 2002 to 13% in 2005.
- At least 80% of Broward third graders are eligible for promotion to the fourth grade, based solely upon their performance on the SSS Reading subtest.

- In examining the Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) data, Broward student median score was slightly below the state in Reading (State 50, BCPS 49), and slightly above the state in Mathematics (State 62, BCPS 64).

Grade 3 Reading and Mathematics Results

Table 1 shows the results from the FCAT SSS and NRT Reading subtest for Broward's third grade students over the past four years. The rate of students performing at Achievement Level 2 or higher in Reading increased by 2% in 2005 (from 78% to 80%) as compared to the previous year, and the proportion of students performing at Achievement Level 3 or higher in Reading also increased by 2% this year (from 65% to 67%). This represents a continuing trend of increased performance in FCAT Reading on the SSS from 62% in 2002 to 63% in 2003 to 65% in 2004 to 67% in 2005. The percentage of third grade students performing within Achievement Level 1 decreased slightly from 2004 to 2005 (from 21% to 20%).

On the NRT portion of the FCAT this year, Broward students scored at a median rank of 49 in Reading, slightly below the national and statewide average (50th percentile). **Although the Reading median percentile rank scores earned by students in Broward County from 2002 to 2004 are reported, keep in mind that the 2005 NRT assessment is a new version of the test (SAT-10). As a result, direct comparisons with previous year data are not appropriate.**

Table 1: Broward Third Grade Student Performance in FCAT Reading

School Year	FCAT SSS Achievement Levels*			FCAT NRT
	% in Achievement Level 1	% in Achievement Level 2 or Higher	% in Achievement Level 3 or Higher	Median National Percentile Rank
SAT-9				
2002	23% (4,686)	77% (15,687)	62% (12,631)	59
2003	23% (4,739)	77% (15,866)	63% (12,981)	62
2004	21% (4,666)	78% (17,330)	65% (14,442)	62
SAT-10				
2005	20% (4,208)	80% (16,831)	67% (14,096)	49**
*Due to rounding procedures, these percentages may sum to slightly more or less than 100%.				
**2005 data is based on the new FCAT NRT (SAT-10) and should not be directly compared to prior year data (SAT-9).				

Table 2 shows the results from the FCAT SSS Mathematics subtest for Broward's third grade students over the past four years. The percent of students who are performing at Achievement Level 3 or higher has increased by 8% since 2002, including a significant gain of 6% from 2004 (68%) to 2005 (74%). It can be seen that as the number of students in Achievement Level 1 decreases, there are corresponding increases in students performing at higher levels. On the Mathematics portion of the FCAT NRT, Broward students scored at a median National Percentile Rank of 64, slightly above the statewide average of 62 and well above the national average percentile rank of 50. **As with the Reading NRT assessment, although the Mathematics median percentile rank scores earned by students in Broward County from 2002 to 2004 are reported, keep in mind that the 2005 NRT assessment is a new version of the test (SAT-10). As a result, direct comparisons with previous year data are not appropriate.**

Table 2: Broward Third Grade Student Performance in FCAT Mathematics

School Year	FCAT SSS Achievement Levels*			FCAT NRT
	% in Achievement Level 1	% in Achievement Level 2 or Higher	% in Achievement Level 3 or Higher	Median National Percentile Rank
SAT-9				
2002	17% (3,462)	84% (17,107)	66% (13,441)	67
2003	17% (3,506)	83% (17,115)	66% (13,610)	69
2004	15% (3,337)	85% (18,910)	68% (15,128)	71
SAT-10				
2005	13% (2,737)	88% (18,524)	74% (15,577)	64**

*Due to rounding procedures, these percentages may sum to slightly more or less than 100%.
 **2005 data is based on the new FCAT NRT (SAT-10) and should not be directly compared to prior year data (SAT-9).

Comparison to Statewide Results and Other Large Districts in Florida

The results released by FDOE today reflect that third grade students in Broward County continue to demonstrate gains in both Reading and Mathematics on the SSS version of FCAT. In addition, these results indicate that Broward County students continue to perform in line with statewide averages and to earn scores in line with or higher than students in other large districts throughout the state.

Table 3 below presents the proportions of third grade students scoring in each Achievement Level in Reading for Broward, Florida as a whole, and four of the largest school districts in the State (Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach, and Hillsborough). The proportion of third grade students scoring at Achievement Level 3 or higher in Reading in Broward County was in line with the State average and Palm Beach County and higher than the percent of students in Miami-Dade, Orange, and Hillsborough. Note that although the proportion of students scoring at Level 3 or above is the same for Broward and Palm Beach Counties, the proportions of students scoring at Levels 3, 4, and 5 is not the same. This is due to rounding procedures employed by the FDOE and reflects that Broward's students actually slightly outperformed students in Palm Beach. Table 3 also reflects that fewer third grade students in Broward are scoring at Achievement Level 1 in Reading than in Miami-Dade, Orange, and Hillsborough Counties. Again, Broward is in line with the State and Palm Beach County. With regard to the FCAT NRT Reading data, Table 3 reflects that Broward students are scoring at a median national percentile rank that is slightly below the performance of students statewide and in Palm Beach County, but in line with Hillsborough County students and slightly above the performance of students in Orange and Miami-Dade Counties.

Table 3: FCAT SSS and NRT Reading Results (Grade 3) by Achievement Level 2005*

District/State	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	% Scoring Level 3 or Above	NRT Median National Percentile Rank
State	20%	13%	33%	28%	6%	67%	50
Broward	20%	13%	32%	28%	7%	67%	49
Miami-Dade	25%	14%	33%	23%	4%	61%	43
Orange	22%	13%	34%	25%	6%	65%	48
Palm Beach	20%	13%	33%	27%	6%	67%	50
Hillsborough	21%	13%	31%	27%	7%	66%	49

*Due to rounding, percent totals may sum to slightly more or less than 100%

Table 4 below presents the proportions of third grade students scoring in each Achievement Level in Mathematics for Broward, Florida as a whole, and four of the largest school districts in the State (Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach, and Hillsborough). The proportion of third grade students scoring at Achievement Level 3 or higher in Mathematics in Broward County exceeded the State average and all four of the largest districts in Florida. Table 4 also reflects that fewer third grade students in Broward are scoring at Achievement Level 1 in Mathematics than the State and all four of the largest districts in Florida. In general, Broward third grade students are outperforming their counterparts in other large districts in Mathematics. Similar results are demonstrated on the FCAT NRT Mathematics assessment, where Broward students scored at a median national percentile rank that is above the State, as well as above the median score earned by students in Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach, and Hillsborough Counties.

Table 4: FCAT SSS and NRT Mathematics Results (Grade 3) by Achievement Level 2005*

District/State	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	% Scoring Level 3 or Above	NRT Median National Percentile Rank
State	15%	17%	34%	25%	9%	68%	62
Broward	13%	14%	33%	28%	13%	73%	64
Miami-Dade	18%	18%	33%	22%	8%	63%	54
Orange	18%	16%	33%	24%	9%	66%	59
Palm Beach	15%	16%	34%	25%	10%	69%	62
Hillsborough	17%	18%	33%	23%	9%	64%	63

*Due to rounding, percent totals may sum to slightly more or less than 100%

Promotion to Grade 4

The Grade 3 FCAT Reading tests are also used as criteria for promotion into the fourth grade. According to Florida Statute 1008.25, third grade students are eligible for promotion by either scoring at Achievement Level 2 or above on the SSS Reading subtest or demonstrating an exemption from this criterion through good cause. Among the available exemption methods for demonstrating readiness for promotion into the fourth grade is earning a score at or above proficient on the Reading subtest on the Norm-Referenced portion of the FCAT. At this time, the FDOE is recommending a cut score of the 45th percentile for grade 3 promotion. The final cut-off will be official when the State Board of Education meets on May 17, 2005.

It can be seen from Table 1 that 80% of students in Broward County satisfied the promotion requirement by scoring at Achievement Level 2 or higher on the SSS Reading portion of the FCAT. Conversely, these results lead to the conclusion that approximately 20% of Broward third graders (approximately 4,208 students) are at risk for not being eligible for promotion to the fourth grade solely based on their performance on the SSS Reading test. However, these students may have demonstrated readiness for promotion via the Reading portion of the FCAT NRT. Individual student NRT scores are expected to be available to schools the week of May 16, 2005. Once the appropriate cut score is identified by FDOE, schools will determine which third grade students have met the promotion criteria via the FCAT NRT.

For those students who did not demonstrate readiness for promotion on either the SSS or NRT portion of the FCAT Reading test, there will be several opportunities for promotion through alternative methods:

- The Reading Comprehension subtest of the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT-10) was administered on May 10, 2005 at the student's home school. Scoring at or above the identified cut score on the SAT-10 will satisfy requirements for promotion to the fourth grade.
- For those third grade students who still do not demonstrate readiness for promotion with the SAT-10, a Portfolio reading assessment will be conducted prior to the end of the 2004-05 school year.
- Students who do not meet the promotion criteria via the Portfolio assessment prior to the end of the 2004-05 school year will be eligible to attend Summer Reading Camp. Another Portfolio assessment will be administered at the conclusion of the Reading Camp.

Further information regarding promotion and retention issues will be forthcoming from the Core Curriculum Department.

School Accountability

The FCAT results released by FDOE today are not the same data that will be used to determine school grades under the A+ Plan or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Instead, these results are for all third grade students who participated in the Spring 2005 administration of the FCAT. Only those scores from specific eligible students as defined by each accountability system will be included in the calculation of school grades under the A+ Plan and AYP under NCLB. For example, students included in the school-by-school data released today may have only been enrolled at a school for a short period of time, while students must be enrolled for the full academic year in order to be included in the data calculations for school grades and AYP.

This memorandum can be accessed on the Student Assessment & School Performance website at <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentassessment/reports.htm>. School-by-school results, as well as state and district summary data, may be found on the Florida Department of Education website at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/>. If you have any questions regarding this release, please feel free to contact **me at (754) 321-2470 or Kimberley Kraft, Director of Student Assessment & School Performance, at (754) 321-4257.**

FT/KAB/KEK:sl

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