

Grading Florida Public Schools

2008-09



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DR. ERIC J. SMITH, COMMISSIONER

School grades for 2008-09 utilize a point system. Schools are awarded one point for each percent of students who score high on the FCAT and/or make annual learning gains.

Scoring High on the FCAT

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is the primary measure of students' achievement of the Sunshine State Standards. Student scores are classified into five achievement levels, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

- ⇒ Schools earn one point for each percent of students who score in achievement levels 3, 4, or 5 in reading, one point for each percent of students who score 3, 4, or 5 in mathematics, and one point for each percent of students who score 3, 4, or 5 in science. If a school has fewer than 30 students with science scores, the district average for science will be used.
- ⇒ The writing exam is scored by at least two readers on a scale of 1 to 6. Schools earn one point for each percent of students scoring 3.5 or above. If a school has fewer than 30 students with writing scores, the district average for writing will be used.

Making Annual Learning Gains

Since FCAT reading and mathematics exams are given in grades 3 – 10, it is possible to monitor how much students learn from one year to the next.

- ⇒ Schools earn one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in reading and one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in mathematics. Students can demonstrate learning gains in any one of three ways:
 1. Improve achievement levels from 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, or 4-5; or
 2. Maintain within the relatively high levels of 3, 4, or 5; or
 3. Demonstrate more than one year's growth within achievement levels 1 or 2 (does not include retained students).
- ⇒ Special attention is given to the reading and mathematics gains of students in the lowest 25%¹ in levels 1, 2, or 3 in each school. Schools earn one point for each percent of the lowest performing students who make learning gains from the previous year in reading and mathematics. It takes at least 50% in both reading and mathematics to make "adequate progress" for this group. Schools that fall short of 50% can still meet the requirement if they show annual improvement in this percentage.

¹For schools with fewer than 30 students in the lowest 25%, the 30 lowest performing students will be substituted.

SCHOOL GRADING SCALE

A

- 525 points or more
- Meet adequate progress of lowest students in reading and mathematics
- Test at least 95% of eligible students

B

- 495-524 points
- Meet adequate progress of lowest students in reading and mathematics within two years
- Test at least 90% of

C

- 435-494 points
- Meet adequate progress of lowest students in reading and mathematics within two years
- Test at least 90% of eligible students

D

- 395-434 points
- Test at least 90% of eligible students

F

- Fewer than 395 points
- OR
- Less than 90% of eligible students tested

Which students are included in school grade calculations? As in previous years, only standard curriculum students (including Speech impaired, gifted, hospital/home bound, and English Language Learner students (ELL) with more than two years in an English Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) program) enrolled in the same school in both October and February are included in the components for scoring high on the FCAT. All students, including Students with Disabilities (SWD) and ELL students, are included in the learning gains components of the school grade calculation.

What happens if the lowest students in the school do not make "adequate progress" in reading and mathematics? Schools that do not make adequate progress with their lowest students in reading and mathematics must develop a School Improvement Plan component that addresses this need. If a school, otherwise graded "A", does not demonstrate adequate progress in the current year, the final grade will be reduced by one letter grade. If a school, otherwise graded "B" or "C", does not demonstrate adequate progress in either the current or prior year, the final grade will be reduced by one letter grade.

Sample School Grade Report for 2009

