



JEB BUSH
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GOVERNOR BUSH AND COMMISSIONER WINN ANNOUNCE FCAT RESULTS FOR 3RD AND 12TH GRADE

~ More 3rd graders reading at or above grade level than ever before ~

CHARLOTTE HARBOR—Governor Jeb Bush today announced Florida students continue to achieve at high levels with more third graders than ever before reading at grade level. The results show more than two-thirds of all Florida third grade students are reading at or above grade level—the largest number in the state's history. The Governor was joined by Education Commissioner John Winn to release the results of the third and twelfth grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) at Peace River Elementary School. Students at Peace River Elementary were forced to attend a neighboring elementary school, in afternoon sessions, from 12:30 until 6:10 p.m. after their school was destroyed by Hurricane Charley. Despite adverse conditions, third grade scores at Peace River went from 56 percent of students reading at or above grade level in 2004 to 80 percent in 2005, an increase of 24 percent.

“Our students, teachers and parents achieved tremendous results in the face of adversity. Today's results show the state is moving in the right direction with more third grade students reading at or above grade level,” said Governor Bush. “I’m extremely proud of our progress so far. These scores are more than just numbers or a trend line on a chart. Each year when scores improve it means more students are learning.”

“I could not be more proud of the achievements of our students, teachers and parents,” Peace River Principal Lynne Kratochvil said. “This was a team effort building the literacy skills necessary for the students to achieve this success.”

Ending social promotion three years ago has had a positive impact on student achievement. In 2005, sixty-two percent of retained third graders scored at Level 2 or above, up from 59 percent in 2004. Overall, the percentage of third graders reading at or above grade level rose to 67 percent this year, up from 66 percent last year and 57 percent when third graders began taking the FCAT in 2001. Meanwhile, the percentage of third graders scoring below basic (Level 1) in reading dropped to 20 percent from 22 percent in 2004 and 29 percent in 2001.

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“Teachers in Florida have been working extremely hard to prepare students to succeed in the classroom and life,” Lt. Governor Toni Jennings said. “These results show children are making gains in reading and math and more are advancing to the next stage of their education.”

Other FCAT results include:

- Florida students continue to close the achievement gap. African American third grade reading scores have increased from 36 percent reading at or above grade level in 2001 to 52 percent in 2005. Hispanic students made similar increases with 46 percent reading at or above grade level in 2001 to 61 percent in 2005.
- Florida students made similar improvements in mathematics with 68 percent of third graders calculating math at or above grade level, compared to 52 percent in 2001.
- In 2002, nine percent of the graduating class did not pass the 8th grade level high school competency test (HSCT) whereas only 7 percent of this year’s seniors will not graduate solely because they have not yet met the 10th FCAT graduation requirement. This has improved from 10 percent in 2004.

“In Florida, students are responding positively to the challenge set before them through high standards and accountability,” Commissioner Winn said. “We want to ensure that when a student leaves the classroom at the end of the year, he or she has achieved the necessary skills to succeed in school and in life.”

The FCAT is not the sole determiner of a child’s promotion to fourth grade. Parents of third graders in need of additional remediation may learn more at www.justreadflorida.com. High school seniors and their parents who want to learn more about their options should visit <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/12-grade/twelhome.htm>.

The options available to third graders who were not successful on the FCAT include:

- **Summer Reading Camps**—These reading camps will consist of six to eight weeks of intensive targeted-specific remedial reading instruction. The camp will include 5 _ hours of instructional time per day for four days a week.
- **Reading Mentors**—These mentors will work in coordination with the summer reading camps to give participating students another opportunity to improve their reading ability.
- **Families Building Better Readers Workshops**—These workshops are designed to educate parents on simple ways to help improve their child's literacy. The sessions will also highlight strategies and methods to help their children through the remedial process.

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For those twelfth graders who did not meet the FCAT graduation requirements, there are numerous options (detailed in the attached *Stay in the Loop* flyer), including the following opportunities:

- **FCAT Remediation**— Schools offer many opportunities for students to participate in intensive remediation programs to assist them in earning passing scores on the FCAT, including before and after school programs, summer school, tutoring, intensive reading or mathematics classes, and computer assisted instruction. Many students take advantage of this remediation and retake the FCAT in June.
- **Common Placement Test (CPT)-Eligible Certificate of Completion**—Students who meet all requirements for a standard high school diploma except earning passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT are eligible to receive the Common Placement Test (CPT)-Eligible Certificate of Completion. Students who receive this may enroll directly into Florida community colleges. These students will be allowed to take the CPT and be admitted to remedial or college credit courses based on their CPT scores. These students may also enroll directly into postsecondary career and technical education programs offered at school district technical centers and at community colleges.
- **GED Preparation**— Students who did not earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT may choose to participate in an adult education program and prepare to take the GED tests. Students who pass the GED tests will earn the State of Florida high school diploma.
- **GED Exit Option**— Students who did not earn passing scores on the FCAT are eligible to participate in the high school GED Exit Option. These students will continue taking courses that meet high school graduation requirements, prepare for the GED, and if they pass the GED tests, graduate with a State of Florida high school diploma.
- **Technical/Vocational Training**—Students will also be counseled about high demand occupational training programs in which they can enroll while pursuing their high school diploma.
- **Community College Acceptance**—Once students earn their GED, CPT eligible Certificate of Completion or high school diploma, they are eligible to enroll at a Florida public community college.

Full FCAT results are not yet available. For preliminary third and twelfth grade results, please visit <http://fcat.fldoe.org>.

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