

# Grading Florida's Public Schools, 2009-10

## FCAT Performance and Learning Gains: 100% of Grade for Elementary and Middle Schools, 50% of Grade for High Schools

Schools are awarded one point for each percent of students who score high on the FCAT and/or make annual learning gains (800 possible points).

### Scoring High on the FCAT

(400 possible points)

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 at FCAT achievement levels 3, 4, or 5 in reading; one point for each percent of students who score at FCAT levels 3, 4, or 5 in mathematics; and one point for each percent of students who score at FCAT levels 3, 4, or 5 in science. (100 possible points each for reading, mathematics, and science)
- ⇒ Students earn a score of 1 to 6 on the FCAT writing exam. The earns grading points for writing based on the average of (a) the percent of students scoring 3 or higher and (b) the percent of students scoring 4 or higher. (100 possible points for writing)

### Making Annual Learning Gains

(400 possible points)

Schools earn one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in reading (100 possible points) and one point for each percent who make learning gains in math (100 possible points). Students can demonstrate annual learning gains in one of the following ways:

1. Score at a higher achievement level than in the previous year (applies to FCAT results and Florida Alternate Assessment [FAA] results for students with disabilities).
  2. Maintain a proficient achievement level (applies to the FCAT and FAA).
  3. For students taking the FCAT who remain at level 1 or 2, demonstrate more than one year's growth through increased developmental scale scores (does not include retakes).
- ⇒ Special attention is given to the reading and mathematics gains of students in the lowest 25% at FCAT 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 (100 possible points for each subject). At least 50% of these students must make gains in reading and mathematics for the school to make adequate progress. Schools that fall short of 50% can still meet this requirement if they show annual improvement in this percentage.

In addition, high schools are eligible for 10 bonus points if at least 50% of the students retaking the grade 10 FCAT in reading and math attain scores required for graduation in each subject area.

## School Grading Scale for Elementary and Middle Schools

Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>525 points or more</b></li> <li>• Meet adequate progress of lowest 25% in reading and mathematics.</li> <li>• Test at least 95% of eligible students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>495 to 524 points</b></li> <li>• Meet adequate progress of lowest 25% in reading and mathematics within two years.</li> <li>• Test at least 90% of eligible students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>435 to 494 points</b></li> <li>• Meet adequate progress of lowest 25% in reading and mathematics within two years.</li> <li>• Test at least 90% of eligible students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>395 to 434 points</b></li> <li>• Test at least 90% of eligible students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fewer than 395 points</b></li> </ul>

Note: Schools that fail to test at least 90% of eligible students are initially assigned a grade of "I" (for incomplete data). Such schools are further investigated to determine whether sufficient data are available to accurately assign a regular school grade. The Commissioner of Education also has the authority to assign a lowered grade to a school that fails to test at least 90% of eligible students.

Which students are included in school grade calculations? As in previous years, the components for scoring high on the FCAT include only standard curriculum students, speech impaired students, gifted students, hospital homebound students, and English language learners (ELLs) with more than two years in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program who are enrolled in the same school in both October and February. All students, including students with disabilities and ELL students, are included in the learning gains components of the school grade calculation.

What happens if the lowest performing students in the school (the low 25%) do not make "adequate progress" in reading and mathematics? For schools that would otherwise be graded A, B, or C but do not meet the adequate progress requirement, the final (assigned) grade will be reduced by one letter grade.

# Grading Florida's High Schools in 2009-10

## 50% of Grade Based on FCAT & Learning Gains, 50% Based on New Non-FCAT Components

As established in s. 1008.34, F.S., for school grading in 2009-10 and thereafter, Florida's high schools are graded using the FCAT and learning gains components described in the grading criteria for elementary and middle schools (worth 800 points), plus several non-FCAT based components that account for 50 percent of the high school grade (also worth 800 points). The non-FCAT-based grading components include the following measures (note that measures counting for more than 100 points are double-weighted):

- Graduation rate: the percentage of students graduating with a standard or special diploma within four years of initial enrollment in grade 9, adjusting for transfers. Double-weighted. (200 points)
- Graduation rate for at-risk students. At-risk students are those who scored at Level 2 or below on both the FCAT reading and FCAT math tests in grade 8. (100 points)
- Accelerated coursework participation for students in grades 9 – 12, based on exams taken for AP, IB, AICE, and industry certification, as well as dual enrollment course enrollments. This component measures the combined weighted student participation count divided by the membership count of students in grades 11-12. Students in grades 9 and 10 may only be included as participants in the numerator if they have successful completions (passing test scores, or, for dual enrollment, passing course grades of "C" or higher). Double weighted. (200 points)
- Accelerated coursework performance: the weighted measure of successful completions in accelerated coursework divided by the count of accelerated coursework participants. (100 points)
- Postsecondary readiness: calculated separately for reading and math, the count of on-time graduates scoring "ready" or higher on ACT, SAT, or Common Placement Test (CPT) examinations divided by the total count of on-time graduates scoring at FCAT level 3 or higher. Cut scores for readiness are provided online at <http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/perfCPT/default.asp>. (100 points for math; 100 points for reading)
- Annual growth or decline in the measures mentioned above. Schools that demonstrate an annual increase in their component points receive additional points based on the annual increase in points, up to 20 points per component (up to 40 points for double-weighted components). Schools lose five points for this component if performance declines by 10 or more percentage points annually (with up to ten points subtracted for double-weighted components).
- In addition to meeting adequate progress requirements (learning gains) for low-performing students and requirements to test at least 90% of students (95% to qualify for an "A"), high schools that would otherwise earn an "A" on points must meet a statewide target of 75% for the graduation rate of at-risk students or show sufficient annual improvement in that rate to qualify for a grade of "A." Sufficient annual improvement = 1% or more for schools that have an at-risk graduation rate of at least 65%. Schools that have an at-risk graduation rate of below 65% must show at least a 5% annual increase in the rate to meet this requirement.

### Grade Scale for High Schools and Combination Schools (Based on a 1600-Point Scale)

A = At least 1,050 points, B = 990 to 1,049 points, C = 870 to 989 points, D = 790 to 869 points, F = Fewer than 790 points.

### Grading Combination Schools (Weighting Factors)

For school grading purposes, combination schools serving the high school grades will be classified as either K-12 schools or 6-12 schools based on the closest match for the range of grades served. These schools will have points calculated using the same components and grading scale applicable to high schools, except the following weighting factor will be applied to the subtotals for points on the FCAT-based components and non-FCAT-based components.

K-12 schools: Total points for FCAT components = 80% of grade. Total points for Non-FCAT components = 20% of grade.

6-12 schools: Total points for FCAT components = 70% of grade. Total points for Non-FCAT components = 30% of grade.



Florida Department of Education  
Dr. Eric J. Smith, Commissioner