



**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT  
OF EDUCATIONAL  
PROGRESS**

**National Assessment of  
Educational Progress 2007  
Grade 8 Writing  
Report for Florida**

This report provides selected results from Florida's National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for public school students at Grade 8 in writing. Writing has been assessed in three different years at the state level: 1998, 2002, and 2007. Writing results are reported for all three years by average scale scores (on a 0–300 point scale) and, using that point scale, by achievement levels (*Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*).

In 2007, 47 jurisdictions participated in the assessment: 45 states, the Department of Defense Schools, and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). This report only compares Florida's performance to that of the other 44 participating states.

NAEP is a project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). For additional information about the assessment, see The Nation's Report Card, an interactive database at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>. Released test questions, scoring guides, and question-level performance data, as well as national, state, and trial urban district results, are available on the Web site.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF GRADE 8 WRITING**

- Florida's Grade 8 writing average scale score moved from below the national average in 1998 to above the national average in 2007, an improvement of 16 points—from 142 to 158.
- Florida is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> overall in the number of students achieving at or above *Proficient*. This moves Florida's ranking up two places from 11<sup>th</sup> in 2002, and up 16 places from 25<sup>th</sup> in 1998.
- Florida's African American students moved up to 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the percent of students in this subgroup scoring at or above *Proficient*. This is up two places from 6<sup>th</sup> in 2002.
- Florida's Hispanic students are ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in the percent of students in this subgroup achieving a score at or above *Proficient*. This ranking is down one place from 1<sup>st</sup> in 2002.
- The results show that Florida is now equal to or above the national average in nearly every scoring category and student subgroup. Comparatively, in 1998, Florida was below or equal to the national average in these same measures.

- Florida had the greatest increase in average scale scores of the 33 states that participated in both the 1998 and 2007 Grade 8 writing assessment.
- For the first time, Florida scored significantly better than the nation in the percent at or above *Proficient*. This improvement is indicative of the progress Florida's Grade 8 students are making in writing.
- Of the 45 states that participated in NAEP 2007 Grade 8 writing, Florida placed 9<sup>th</sup> in terms of students scoring at or above *Proficient*, performing higher than the nation and 26 states, not significantly different from 14 states, and lower than only four states: New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont.
- Of the 45 states that participated in NAEP 2007 Grade 8 writing, Florida placed 11<sup>th</sup> in terms of scale scores, performing higher than the nation and 23 states, not significantly different from 18 states, and lower than only 3 states: New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.
- In 2007, Florida's Grade 8 students outperformed 76 percent of the states participating in the writing assessment in terms of scale scores, up from outperforming 23 percent of the participating states in 1998.
- Florida's subgroups with average scale scores higher than those of their national counterparts in Grade 8 writing include the racial/ethnic groups of White, African American, and Hispanic students; students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; students with disabilities; students without disabilities; and students who are not English language learners (ELLs).
- Florida's subgroups with a higher percentage of students scoring at or above *Proficient* than their national counterparts in Grade 8 writing include the racial/ethnic groups of White, African American, and Hispanic students; students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; students without disabilities; and students who are not ELL.
- Florida's Hispanic Grade 8 students continued to outperform their national counterparts in writing. Between 1998 and 2007, the average scale score for Florida's Hispanic students improved by 14 points, from 136 to 150. The average scale score of the nation's Grade 8 Hispanic students improved by 9 points, from 130 to 141.
- Florida's increase in average scale scores between 1998 and 2007 was twice that of the nation's, except in the case of Hispanic students and English language learners (ELLs). The increase in average scale scores of Florida's Hispanic and ELL students was equal to that of the nation's.
- Florida's African American students were the only racial/ethnic group to improve their average scale scores between 1998 and 2007 and between 2002 and 2007.

## CONTENTS

<b>Highlights of Grade 8 Writing</b> .....	1
<b>NAEP General Information</b> .....	4
<b>NAEP Writing Assessment Information</b> .....	6
<b>Grade 8 Writing Introduction</b> .....	11
Florida and the Nation—Average Scale Scores .....	12
Florida and the Nation—Achievement-Level Scores .....	13
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
Average Scale Scores .....	15
Achievement Levels .....	21
Comparison of NAEP and FCAT Proficiency Results .....	31
<b>Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL)</b>	
Average Scale Scores .....	33
Achievement Levels .....	35
Comparison of NAEP and FCAT Proficiency Results .....	38
<b>Students with Disabilities (SD)</b>	
Discussion of Identified, Assessed, and Excluded .....	39
Average Scale Scores .....	40
Achievement Levels .....	42
Comparison of NAEP and FCAT Proficiency Results .....	45
<b>English Language Learners (ELL)</b>	
Discussion of Identified, Assessed, and Excluded .....	46
Average Scale Scores .....	47
Achievement Levels .....	49
Comparison of NAEP and FCAT Proficiency Results .....	52
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	53
Comparing the FCAT with Florida NAEP	
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	54
NAEP 2007 Writing Scoring Guide and Item Map, Grade 8 Writing	
<b>Appendix C</b> .....	58
Chronology of NAEP	
<b>Appendix D</b> .....	60
Glossary of NAEP Terms	

## NAEP GENERAL INFORMATION

### What is NAEP?

- The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) was authorized by Congress and implemented in 1969.
- NAEP (or the Nation’s Report Card) is the only ongoing nationally representative measure of what students in the United States know and can do in various subject areas.
- NAEP is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES).
- In 1988, Congress established the 26-member National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) to oversee and set policy for NAEP.
- NAGB establishes the frameworks on which NAEP is based.
- NAEP at the state level began in 1990. In 2003, NAEP participation became mandatory for all states and territories under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).
- Each student in a selected sample takes only a portion of the assessment (approximately 10 percent). Results are then assembled to form projected state and national scores.
- Reports are produced on the performance of groups of students at a given time and across time.
- NAEP reports scores in two different ways: by average scale scores and by achievement levels.
- Results are used to compile national and state data. No results are generated for schools or individual students.
- NAEP serves as an assessment of overall national and state achievement, not as a diagnostic test for individual students.

### What are the benefits of NAEP?

- NAEP provides an opportunity for Florida to compare the achievement of its students to that of students across the nation.
- NAEP provides student performance data broken down by subgroups, such as the racial/ethnic groups of White, African American, and Hispanic. This allows policy makers to examine grade-level student achievement across states at the subgroup level.
- NAEP data provides states with an external “check” on state assessment data.

### Who participates in NAEP?

- A stratified random sample of Grade 4 and 8 students is assessed at the state and national levels. A stratified random sample of Grade 12 students is assessed at the national level.
- Samples are drawn and weighted to represent public schools in states and 10 urban districts.\* Charter schools are included in the public school results.
- Both public school and nonpublic school students are assessed at the national level.
- Fifty-two jurisdictions participate in NAEP—the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Schools.
- Accommodations are offered to English language learners (ELLs), students with 504 plans, and students with disabilities (SD) who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The most typical accommodations include:
  - extended testing time,
  - individual or small-group administrations, and
  - large-print booklets.

### What does NAEP measure?

- The NAEP subject assessments are based on [frameworks](#) that provide the theoretical basis for the assessment, specific directions for what kinds of knowledge and skills should be assessed, how the exercises should be designed and administered, and how student responses should be scored. Frameworks are available at the NAGB Web site ([www.nagb.org/](http://www.nagb.org/)) under “Frameworks.”
- State NAEP measures and reports the knowledge of Grade 4 and 8 students in four subject areas:
  - [mathematics](#),
  - [reading](#),
  - [science](#), and
  - [writing](#).

\*Results are presently available for 10 districts classified as Trial Urban Districts. The districts are: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, and San Diego.

## NAEP WRITING ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

### Who is assessed?

- The NAEP 2007 writing assessment was administered to a stratified random sample of students from Grades 8 and 12 at the national level and Grade 8 students at the state level.
- Both public school and nonpublic school students were assessed at the national level.
- At the state level, only the results of public school students are reported.
- Forty-seven jurisdictions participated—45 states, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and Department of Defense Schools.
- Alaska, District of Columbia, Maryland, Nebraska, Oregon, and South Dakota did not participate in the NAEP 2007 state writing assessment, but were included in the nationally representative sample.

### What years have the writing assessments been administered?

- National samples
  - Grade 4 in 1998 and 2002;
  - Grades 8 and 12 in 1998, 2002, and 2007.
- State samples
  - Grade 4 in 2002;
  - Grade 8 in 1998, 2002, and 2007.

### What is assessed?

- The NAEP writing framework specifies what is to be assessed and how it is to be assessed. The framework can be accessed at [www.nagb.org/frameworks/writing-framework-07.pdf](http://www.nagb.org/frameworks/writing-framework-07.pdf).
- The framework is organized to assess three primary writing purposes:
  - narrative,
  - informative, and
  - persuasive.
- The writing framework encompasses 6 overarching objectives:
  - students should be able to write for a variety of purposes (narrative, informative, and persuasive).
  - students should be able to perform a variety of writing tasks for many different audiences.
  - students should be able to write using a variety of stimulus materials, and within different time constraints.
  - students should be able to generate, draft, evaluate, revise, and edit ideas and forms of expression in their writing.

- students should be able to display effective choices in the organization of their writing. They should include details to illustrate and elaborate their ideas, and use appropriate conventions of written English.
- students should value writing as a communicative activity.
- The assessment is designed to measure a student’s ability to use individual writing processes and appropriate writing strategies to compose with clarity, ease, and precision.
- Emphasis varies by grade to reflect differing levels of student development and instructional focus.

Essay Type	Grade 8
Narrative	33%
Informative	33%
Persuasive	33%
	99%

### How is NAEP writing assessed?

- Student samples for writing assessments are selected using a complex multi-stage sampling process.
- NAEP uses a matrix-sampling design of test items so that no one student responds to all of the prompts.
- For the NAEP 2007 writing assessment there are 17 prompts at each grade level. Each student takes a subset of two of the prompts.
- Each student receives 25 minutes to complete each prompt for a total assessment time of 50 minutes.
- Each student participating in the assessment receives a brochure on planning and editing their writing. Students are also given special planning pages in their assessment booklets.
- Some of the narrative prompts ask students to write stories in response to photographs, cartoons, or poems.
- Several of the informative prompts ask students to respond to letters, cartoons, or articles.
- Many of the persuasive prompts ask students to write in response to information provided with the assessment, such as newspaper articles, charts, photographs, and reported dialogues.
- Because each set of prompts is administered to a representative sample of students, the results can be combined to produce average group and subgroup results based on the entire assessment.

- Students also respond to general background questions and writing-specific background questions.

### How are NAEP writing responses scored?

- All student responses are evaluated according to a 6-point scale using a focused holistic scoring rubric (see Appendix B, Scoring Guide).
  - Excellent response – *Advanced* achievement level,
  - Skillful response – *Proficient* achievement level,
  - Sufficient response – *Basic* achievement level,
  - Uneven response – Below *Basic*,
  - Insufficient response – Below *Basic*, or
  - Unsatisfactory response.
- Scoring guides are developed for each writing purpose at each grade level based on a wide sampling of field test papers. Elements of scoring guides assess the student’s ability to
  - develop and elaborate ideas,
  - organize thoughts,
  - recognize a writing purpose and an intended audience, and
  - write grammatically correct prose.
- Anchor (prototyped) student responses are identified and used by the scorers.
- Student responses are scored as first drafts and evaluated accordingly.
- Only the completed responses are scored; scorers do not see the planning pages.
- The scoring process includes
  - expert scorers who are extensively trained to score by applying the criteria consistently and fairly, and
  - a monitoring process to ensure that the scoring standards are being reliably implemented.
- Item maps are constructed after the results for the assessment have been scored and scaled. They show the location on the scale where the scoring categories lie (See Appendix B, Item Map).

### How are NAEP writing scores reported?

- Results are used to compile national and state data. No results are generated for schools or individual students.
- National results reflect the performance of all Grade 8 students in public schools, private schools, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools, and Department of Defense schools.
- State results reflect the performance of students in public schools only.
- NAEP reports scores in two different ways: average scale scores and achievement levels. Both scores are based on the performance of samples of students, not the entire population.



- Average scale scores indicate how much a student *knows and can do* based on a 0–300 point scale. The scores are reported as
  - Average scale scores (range from 0–300), and
  - Percentiles (10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup>).
- Achievement levels are performance standards showing what students *should know and be able to do*. They are reported as percentages.
  - The achievement levels set by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) are
    - *Advanced*,
    - *Proficient*, and
    - *Basic*.
  - Below *Basic* is reported, but is not considered to be an achievement level.
  - Achievement levels are based on scale scores. They identify percentages of students who have demonstrated certain writing proficiencies.
  - Achievement-level descriptors for Grade 8 writing can be found at [www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/writing/achieveall.asp#grade8](http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/writing/achieveall.asp#grade8).

Achievement Level	Grade 8 Scale Score
<b><i>Advanced</i></b>	<b>224 or higher</b>
<b><i>Proficient</i></b>	<b>173 – 223</b>
<b><i>Basic</i></b>	<b>114 – 172</b>
<b><i>Below Basic</i></b>	<b>113 or lower</b>

### How are NAEP writing scores interpreted?

- Differences between average scale scores or between achievement-level percentages are discussed in this report only when they are statistically significant. Statistically significant means we are assured that the differences in scores are not likely to be associated with chance variations. The differences are referred to as “significant differences” or as being “significantly different.”
- NAEP assesses a representative sample of students in each state. The number of students tested in a state determines the standard error for that particular state. Because of the sample design, performance standard error must be considered in reporting NAEP results. Statistical tests that factor in the standard errors are used to determine whether the differences are significant at the 0.05 level.
- Estimates based on smaller groups are likely to have relatively large standard errors. In these cases, some seemingly large differences may not be statistically significant. However, NAEP sample sizes have continually increased since 2002, resulting in a smaller standard error.

Consequently, smaller differences can be detected as statistically significant.

- Data for results discussed in this report and other results can be found at the NAEP Data Explorer Web site at [www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde](http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde).

## GRADE 8 WRITING INTRODUCTION

This report provides selected results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for Florida's and the nation's public school students at Grade 8 in writing. Beginning in 1998, writing has been assessed three times at the state level: in 1998, 2002, and 2007.

Students in the states listed below did not participate in the state-level NAEP 2007 Grade 8 writing assessment but were part of the national sample:

- Alaska,
- Maryland,
- Nebraska,
- Oregon, and
- South Dakota.

The results of student performance on the NAEP 2007 assessment are reported for various groups of students: race/ethnicity, free/reduced-price lunch (FRPL), students with disabilities (SD), English language learners (ELLs), and gender. Writing performance results for groups of students are reported in two ways: as average scale scores and as percentages of students performing at various achievement levels.

### Scale Scores

NAEP writing results are reported on a 0–300 scale. Because NAEP scales are developed independently for each subject, average scores cannot be compared across subjects even when the scale has the same range. In addition to reporting an overall writing score for each grade, scores are reported at five percentiles (10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, and 90<sup>th</sup>) to show trends in performance for lower-, middle-, and higher-performing students.

### Achievement Levels

Achievement levels are performance standards defining what students should know and be able to do. NAEP results are reported as percentages of students performing at or above the *Basic* or *Proficient* levels and at the *Advanced* level. Below *Basic* is reported, but is not considered to be an achievement level.

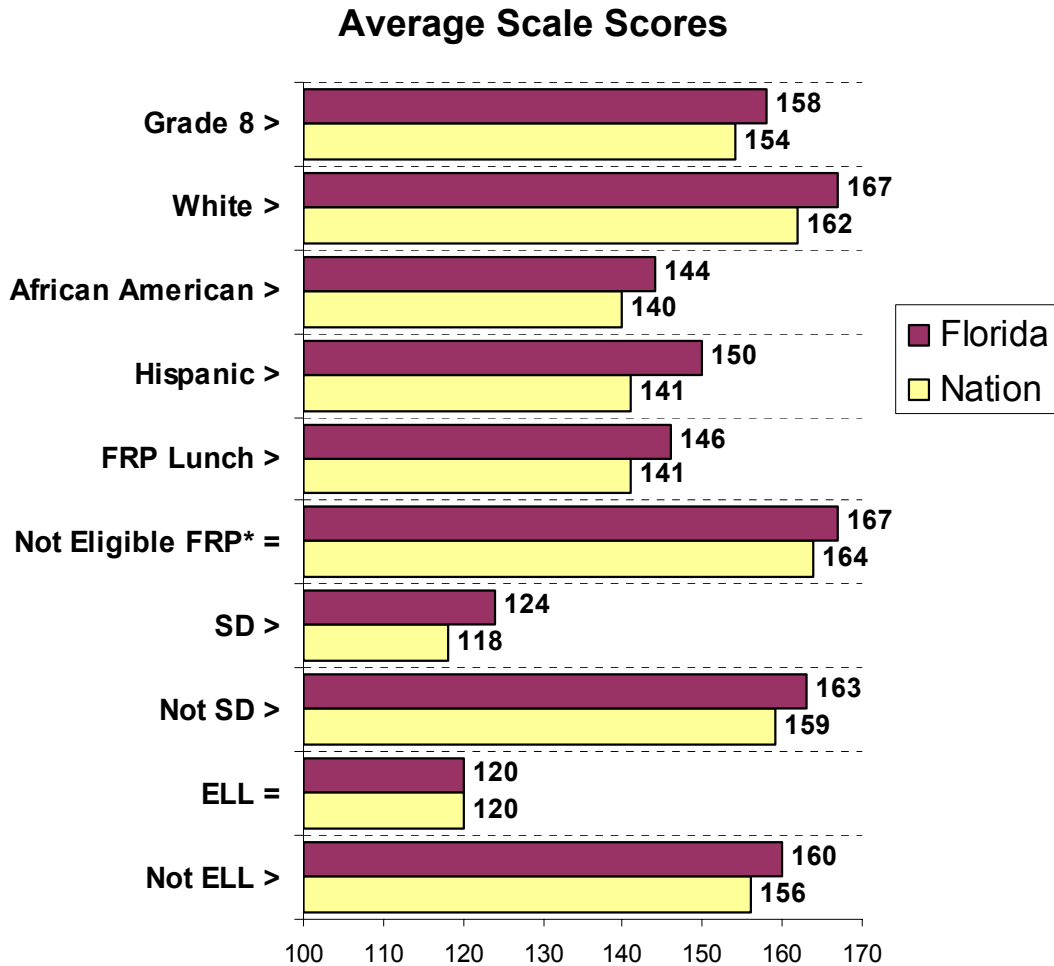
- *Basic* denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at a given grade.
- *Proficient* represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter.
- *Advanced* represents superior performance.

Achievement levels are applied to first drafts (not final or polished student writing) that are generated within limited time constraints in a large-scale assessment environment.

**Florida and the Nation—Average Scale Scores**

Grade 8 Writing 2007  
Demographic Groups

**Figure 1**



In 2007, Florida’s Grade 8 students’ average scale score in NAEP writing was higher than that of their national counterparts, as were those of Florida’s students in all demographic groups except students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch and not English language learners (ELLs).

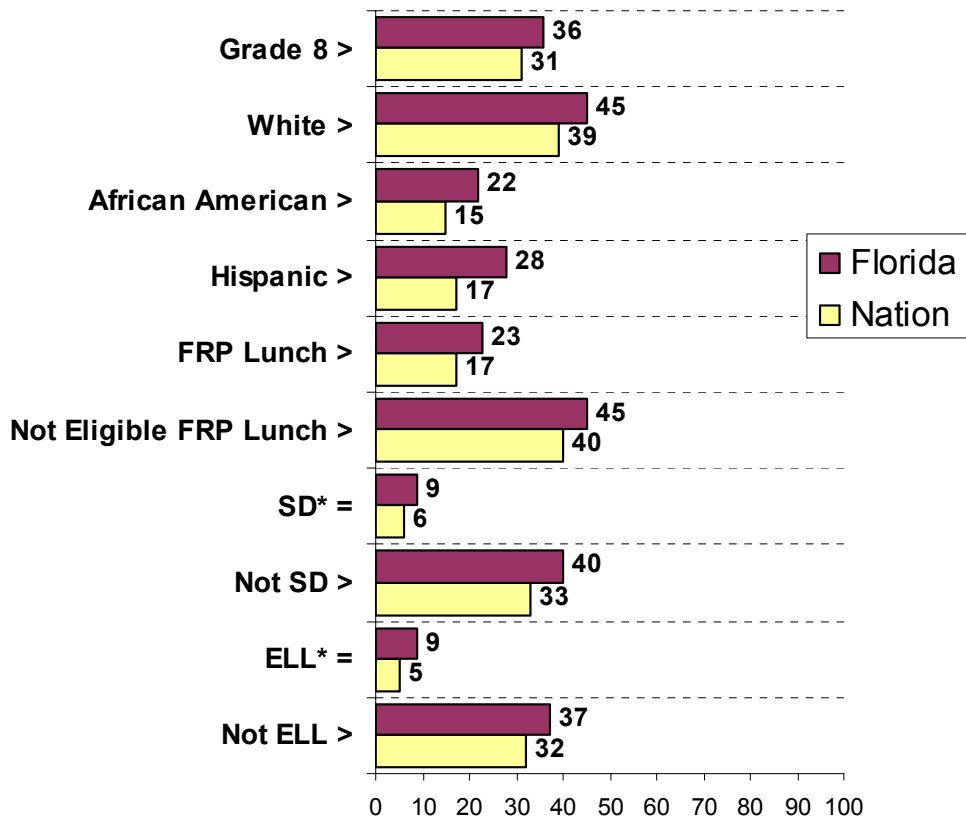
The average scale scores of students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch and ELLs were statistically equal to those of their national counterparts.\*

\*Scores are not significantly different based on statistical tests (0.05 level) that consider sample size, magnitude of difference, and standard errors.

**Florida and the Nation—Achievement-Level Scores**  
 Grade 8 Writing 2007  
 Demographic Groups

**Figure 2**

**Percentage at or above *Proficient***



In 2007, Florida’s subgroups scoring at or above *Proficient* in higher percentages than their national counterparts include: the racial/ethnic groups of White, African American, and Hispanic students; students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; students without disabilities; and students who are not English language learners (ELLs).

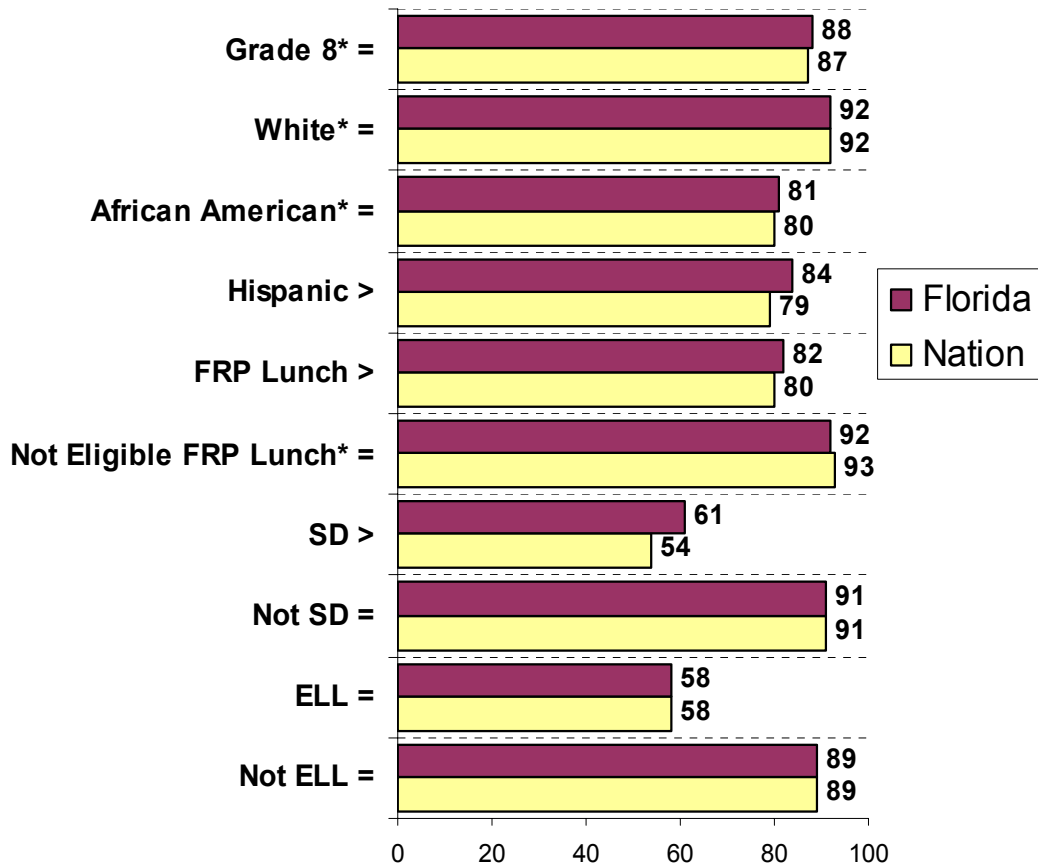
The percentages of Florida’s Grade 8 students with disabilities (SD) and ELLs who scored at or above *Proficient*, were statistically equal to the percentages of their national counterparts.\*

\*Scores are not significantly different based on statistical tests (0.05 level) that consider sample size, magnitude of difference, and standard errors.

**Florida and the Nation—Achievement-Level Scores**  
 Grade 8 Writing 2007  
 Demographic Groups

**Figure 3**

**Percentage at or above *Basic***



In 2007, Florida’s subgroups scoring at or above *Basic* in higher percentages than their national counterparts include: Hispanic students, students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch, and students with disabilities (SD).

In 2007, the percentages of Florida’s Grade 8 White and African American students, students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch, students not SD, English language learners (ELLs), and students not ELLs performing at or above *Basic* equaled those of their national counterparts.\*

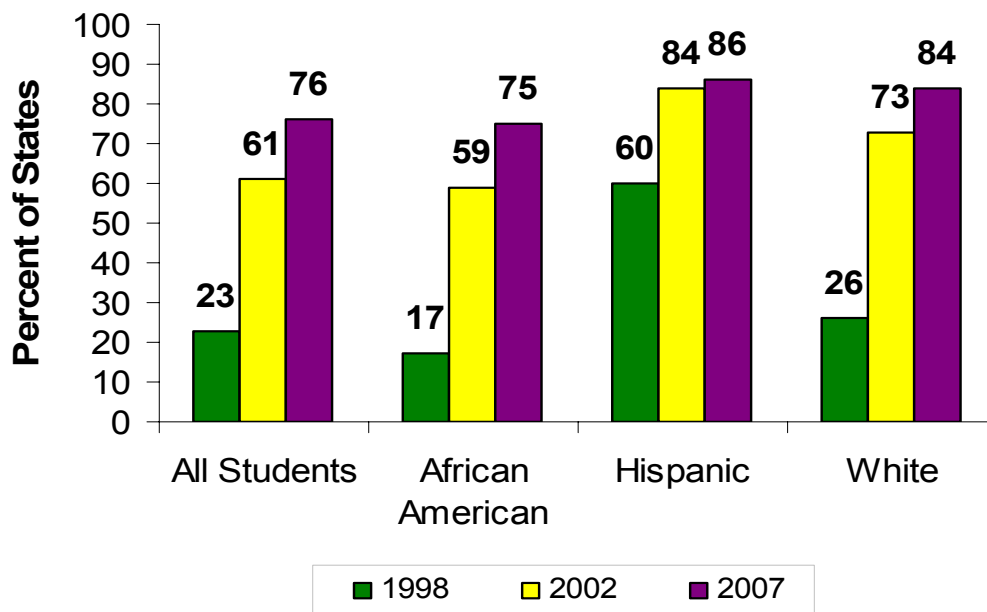
\*Scores are not significantly different based on statistical tests (0.05 level) that consider sample size, magnitude of difference, and standard errors.

**RACE/ETHNICITY****Grade 8 Writing**

Schools report the racial/ethnic subgroups that best describe the students eligible to be assessed. The six mutually-exclusive categories are White, African American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Unclassified. Florida has reportable populations in the White, African American, and Hispanic racial/ethnic groups.

**Average Scale Scores****Figure 4**

Percentage of States and Jurisdictions Florida Outperformed by *Race/Ethnicity*  
Based on Average Scale Scores 1998–2007



In 2007, Florida's White students scored higher than 84 percent of the 44 other states with reportable White student populations.

In 2007, Florida's African American students scored higher than 75 percent of the 35 other states with reportable African American student populations.

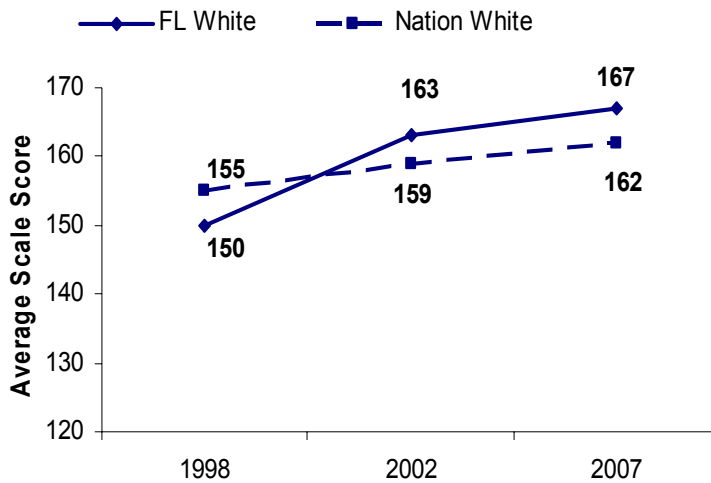
In 2007, Florida's Hispanic students scored higher than 86 percent of the 36 other states with reportable Hispanic student populations.

**Figure 5**  
 Number of States and Jurisdictions with Reportable\* Populations†

	1998	2007	Percentage Increase in Number of States and Jurisdictions with Reportable Populations Between 1998 and 2007
<b>White</b>	35	45	22%
<b>African American</b>	29	36	19%
<b>Hispanic</b>	20	37	36%
<b>All Students</b>	35	45	22%

\*Sufficient size  
 †Including Florida

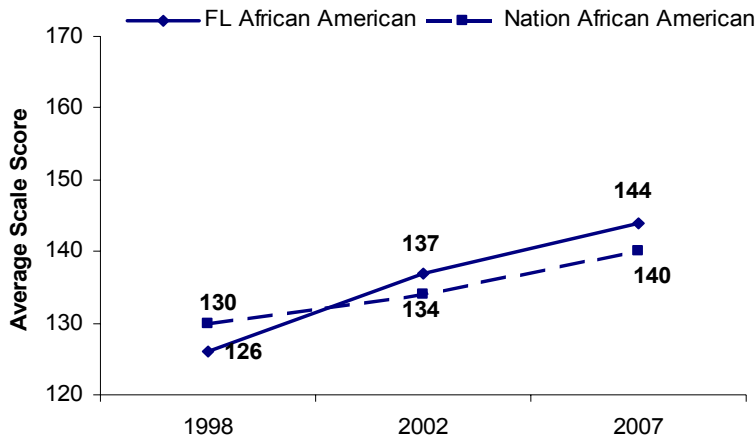
**Figure 6**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
 White Students



- The average scale score of Florida’s White students in 2007 continued to improve over that of the nation’s White students.
- Gains for Florida between 1998 and 2007 were 150 to 167 (17-point gain); gains for the nation were 155 to 162 (7-point gain).

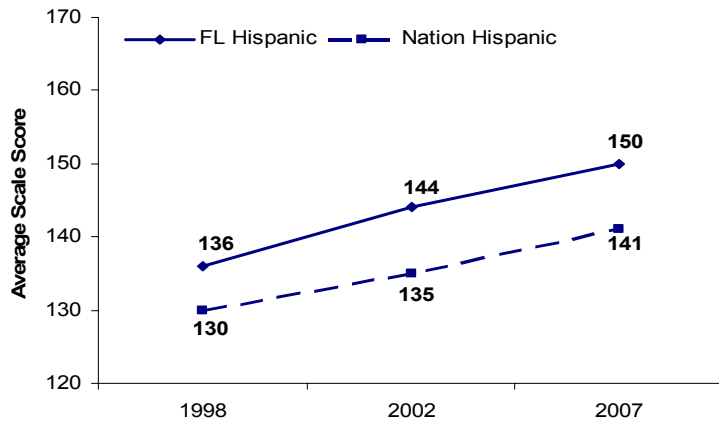


**Figure 7**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
 African American Students



- In 2007, for the first time, the average scale score of Florida’s African American students was statistically higher than that of the nation’s African American students.
- Gains for Florida between 1998 and 2007 were 126 to 144 (18-point gain); gains for the nation were 130 to 140 (10-point gain).

**Figure 8**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
 Hispanic Students

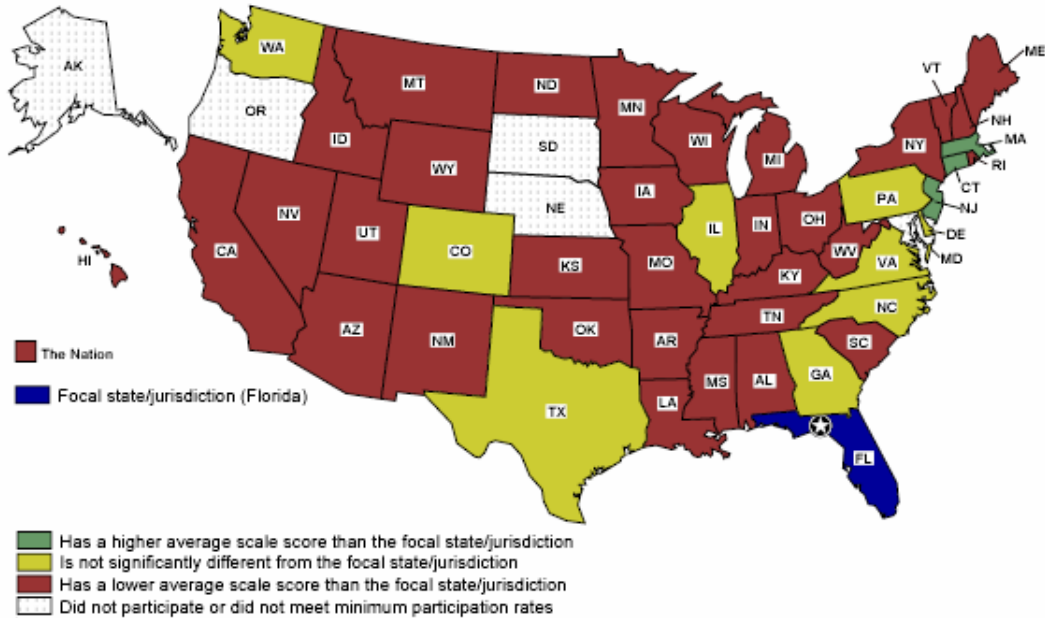


- The average scale score of Florida’s Hispanic students in 2007 remained higher than that of the nation’s Hispanic students.
- Gains for Florida between 1998 and 2007 were 136 to 150 (14-point gain); gains for the nation were 130 to 141 (11-point gain).

**Summary Figures 6, 7, and 8**

Florida’s African American average scale scores were higher in 2007 than in 2002 and 1998 and, for the first time, higher than the nation’s. While the average scale scores of Florida’s White and Hispanic students did not experience a significant improvement between 2002 and 2007, their scores did remain above the national average. In addition, the average scale scores of White and Hispanic students were higher in 2007 than in 1998.

**Figure 9**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Average Scale Scores  
 White Students



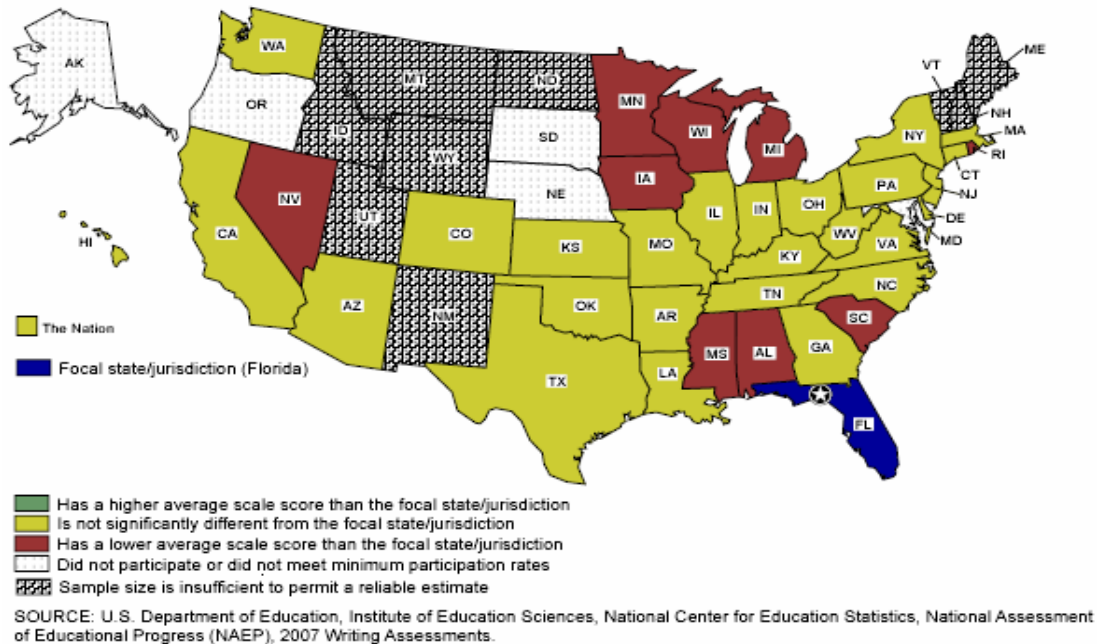
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

In 2007, Florida ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing average scale scores for White students. Florida ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation in improvement of White average scale scores between 1998 and 2007. Florida's White average scale score of 167 was

- **higher than the nation and the following 32 states:**  
 Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin, Maine, New Hampshire, California, Tennessee, New York, Montana, Wyoming, Minnesota, Kansas, Ohio, Arizona, Indiana, Iowa, Idaho, Alabama, Arkansas, Michigan, South Carolina, Missouri, Utah, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Mexico, Nevada, Mississippi, Hawaii, and West Virginia.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 9 states:**  
 Colorado, Illinois, Delaware, *Florida*, Texas, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, North Carolina, and Georgia.\*
- **lower than the following 3 states:**  
 New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.\*

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 10**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Average Scale Scores  
 African American Students



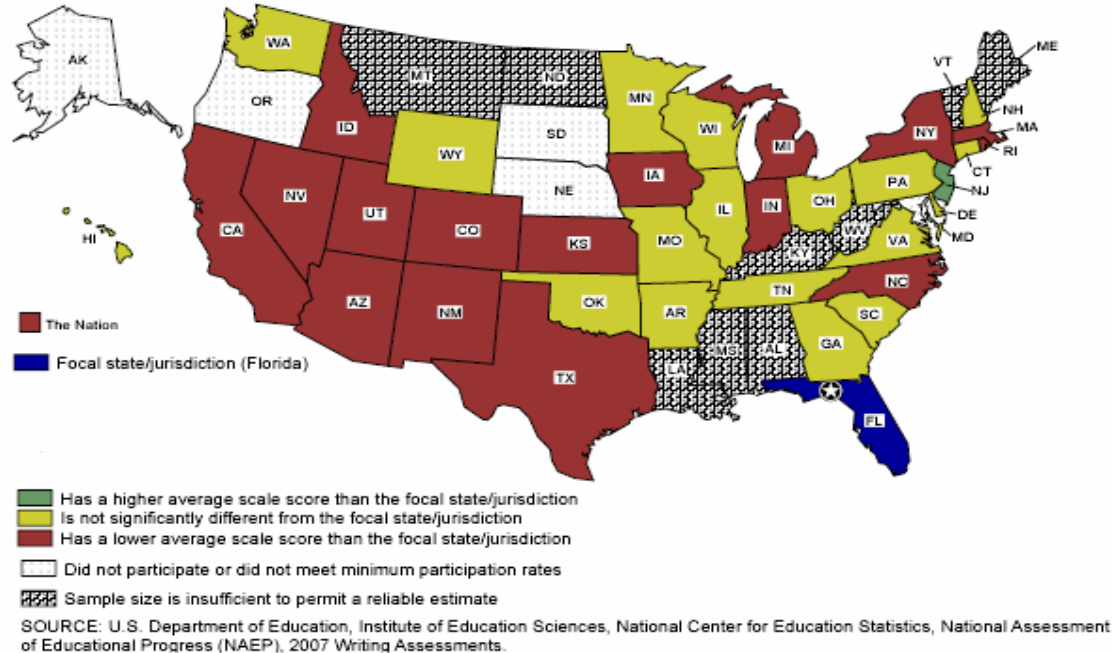
In 2007, Florida ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing average scale scores for African American students. Florida ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in improvement of African American average scale scores between 1998 and 2007. Florida's African American average scale score of 144 was

- **higher than the following 9 states:**  
 South Carolina, Rhode Island, Mississippi, Iowa, Nevada, Minnesota, Alabama, Michigan, and Wisconsin.\*
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 26 states:**  
 New Jersey, Connecticut, Washington, Delaware, Massachusetts, Colorado, Georgia, *Florida*, Tennessee, Arizona, Virginia, Texas, Illinois, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Missouri, New York, Indiana, Hawaii, Kansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, California, Arkansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.\*
- **lower than no states.**

The sample size in the following 9 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 11**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Average Scale Scores  
 Hispanic Students



In 2007, Florida ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing average scale scores for Hispanic students. Florida ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation in improvement of Hispanic average scale scores between 1998 and 2007. Florida's Hispanic average scale score of 150 was

- **higher than the nation and the following 16 states:**  
 Colorado, Texas, New York, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, California, Arizona, Idaho, Michigan, Iowa, Nevada, Rhode Island, and Utah.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 18 states:**  
 Wyoming, *Florida*, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Illinois, Oklahoma, Delaware, Georgia, Missouri, Arkansas, Ohio, Minnesota, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Washington, and Hawaii.\*
- **lower than the following 1 state:**  
 New Jersey.

The sample size in the following 9 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia.

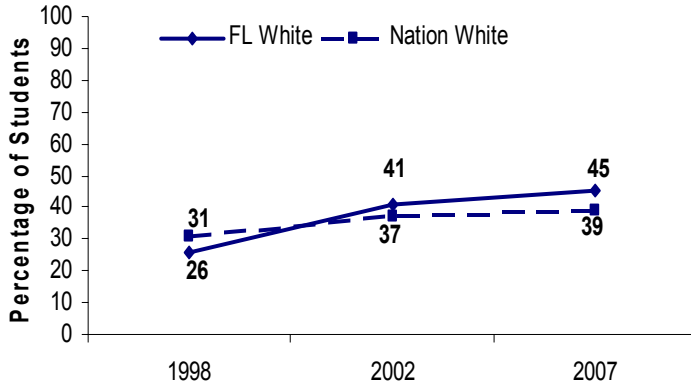
\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

### Achievement Levels

Percentage at or above *Proficient*

**Figure 12**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
White Students

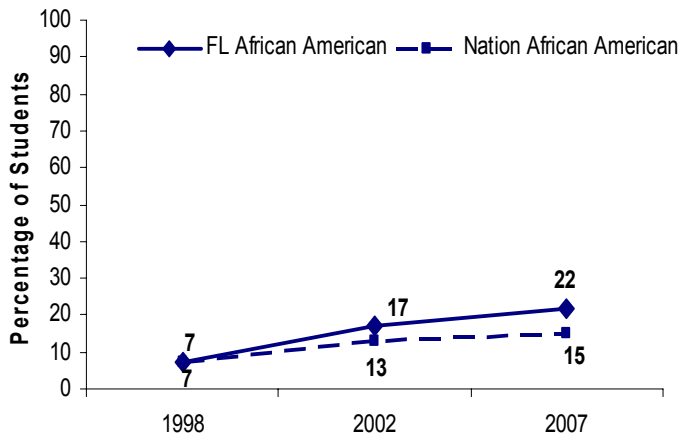


- The percentage of White students in Florida performing at or above *Proficient* in Grade 8 writing was, for the first time, significantly higher than the percentage of the nation’s White students performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved by 19 percentage points (from 26% to 45%); the nation by 8 percentage points (from 31% to 39%).

**Figure 13**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
African American Students



- The percentage of African American students in Florida performing at or above *Proficient* in Grade 8 writing was, for the first time, significantly higher than the percentage of the nation’s African American students performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved by 15 percentage points (from 7% to 22%); the nation by 8 percentage points (from 7% to 15%).

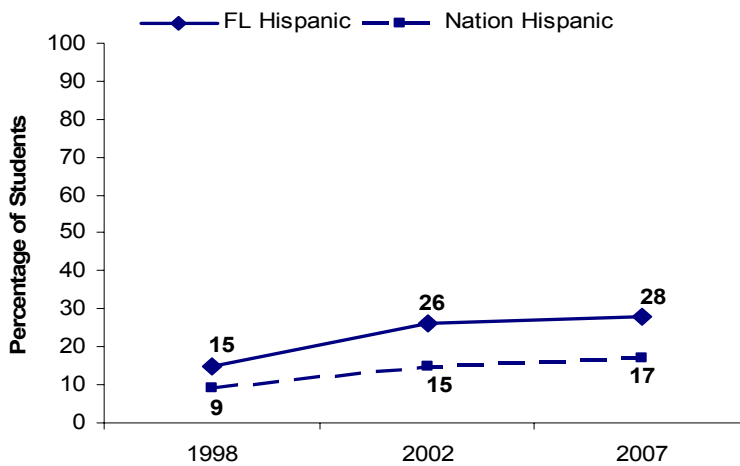
## Achievement Levels

Percentage at or above *Proficient*

**Figure 14**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007

Hispanic Students

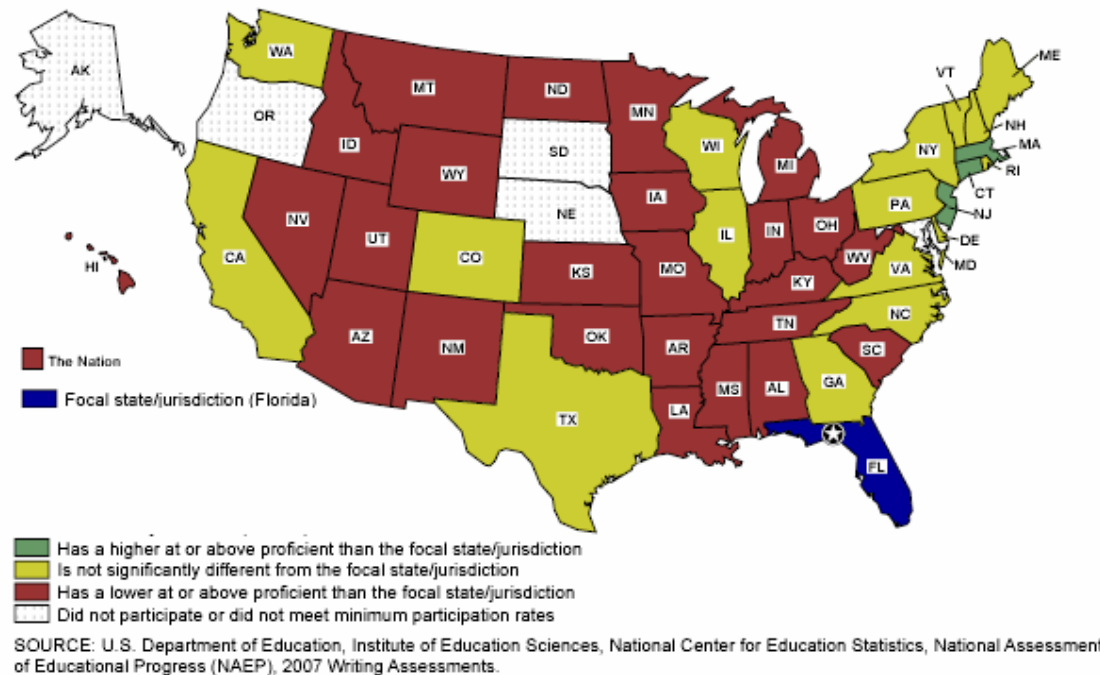


- The percentage of Hispanic students in Florida performing at or above *Proficient* in Grade 8 writing continued to be higher than the percentage of the nation's Hispanic students performing at that level.
- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 13 percentage points (from 15% to 28%); the nation by 8 percentage points (from 9% to 17%).

### Summary of Figures 12, 13, and 14

In 2007, the percentages of Florida's White, African American, and Hispanic students performing at or above *Proficient* were significantly greater than the percentages of the nation's White, African American, and Hispanic students performing at or above *Proficient* (White: 45 percent vs. 39 percent; African American: 22 percent vs. 15 percent; and Hispanic: 28 percent vs. 17 percent).

**Figure 15**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*  
 White Students

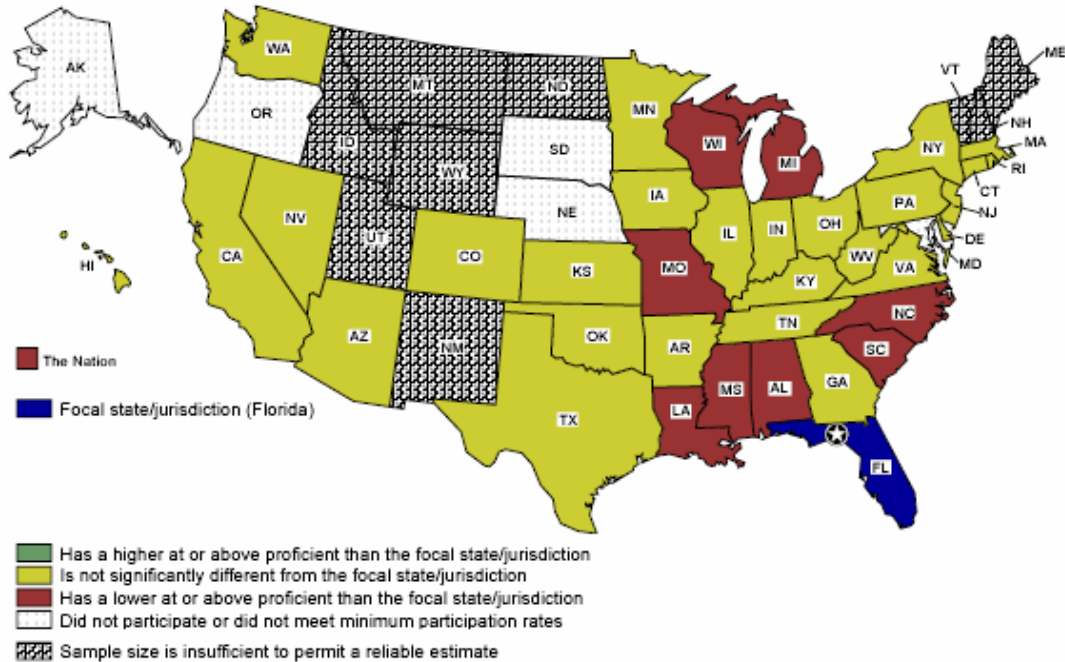


In 2007, Florida ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for White students who performed at or above *Proficient*. Florida's White student score of 45 percent was

- **higher than the nation and the following 25 states:**  
 Kansas, Wyoming, Tennessee, Ohio, Montana, Minnesota, Utah, Arizona, Iowa, Indiana, Alabama, Idaho, Arkansas, Michigan, South Carolina, Missouri, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Nevada, Kentucky, New Mexico, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, and West Virginia.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 16 states:**  
 Colorado, Illinois, Delaware, *Florida*, Pennsylvania, Texas, New Hampshire, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Virginia, Georgia, Maine, North Carolina, California, and New York.\*
- **lower than the following 3 states:**  
 New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.\*

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 16**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*  
 African American Students



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

In 2007, Florida ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for African American students who performed at or above *Proficient*. Florida's African American student score of 22 percent was

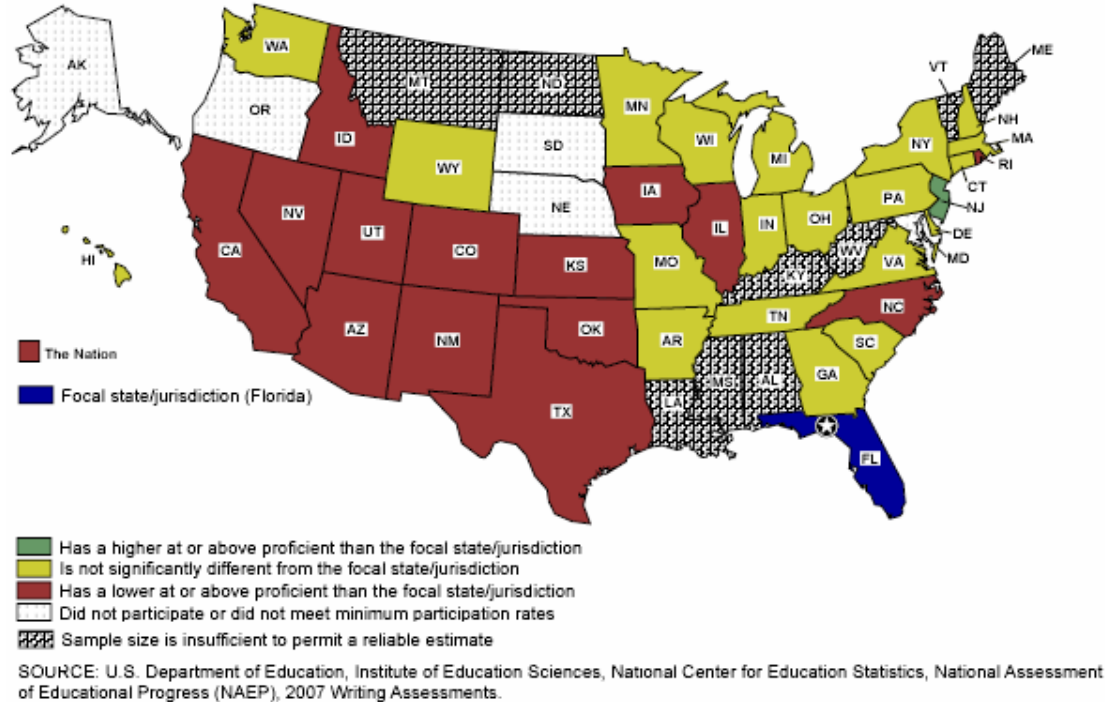
- **higher than the nation and the following 8 states:**  
 North Carolina, South Carolina, Missouri, Wisconsin, Michigan, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 27 states:**  
 New Jersey, Connecticut, Washington, *Florida*, Colorado, Kansas, Massachusetts, Delaware, Tennessee, Illinois, Georgia, Texas, Arizona, New York, West Virginia, Hawaii, Virginia, Arkansas, Kentucky, California, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Iowa, Nevada, Indiana, Rhode Island, and Oklahoma.\*
- **lower than no states.**

The sample size in the following 9 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.



**Figure 17**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*  
 Hispanic Students



In 2007, Florida ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for Hispanic students who performed at or above *Proficient*. Florida's Hispanic student score of 28 percent was

- **higher than the nation and the following 14 states:**  
 Illinois, Colorado, North Carolina, Texas, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, California, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Arizona, and Utah.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 20 states:**  
*Florida*, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Ohio, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Arkansas, Delaware, Michigan, Minnesota, Hawaii, Massachusetts, and Missouri.\*
- **lower than the following 1 state:**  
 New Jersey.

The sample size in the following 9 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia.

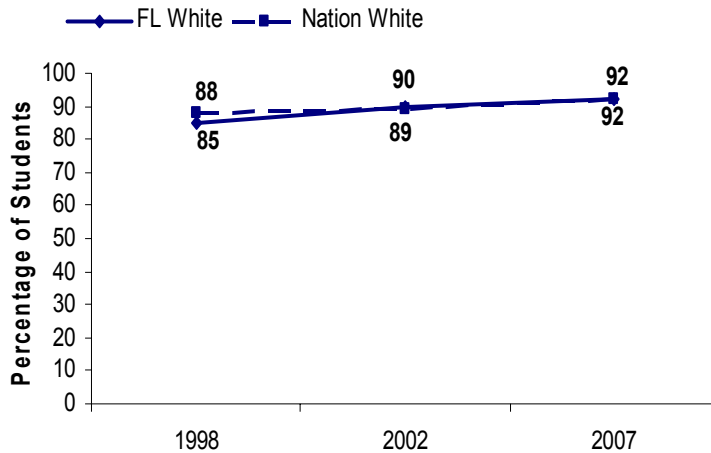
\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

### Achievement Levels

Percentage at or above *Basic*

**Figure 18**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
White Students

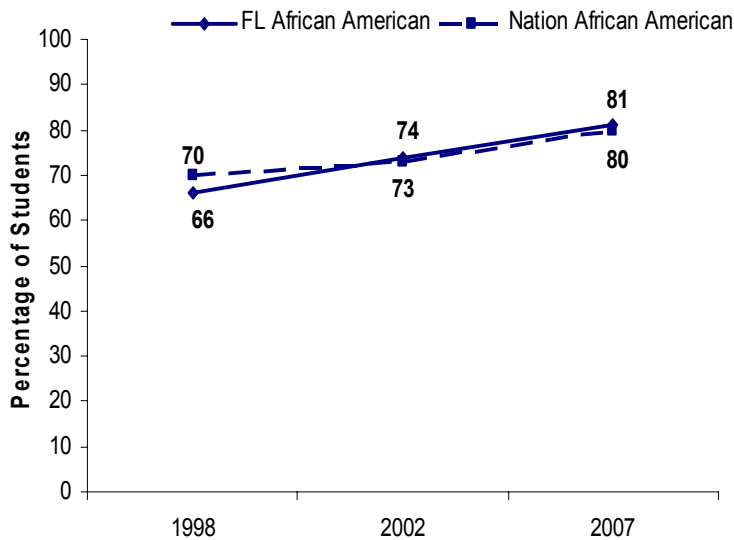


- The percentages of White students in Florida and in the nation performing at or above *Basic* in Grade 8 writing improved between 1998 and 2007.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 7 percentage points (from 85% to 92%); the nation by 4 percentage points (from 88% to 92%).

**Figure 19**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
African American Students



- The percentages of African American students in Florida and in the nation performing at or above *Basic* in Grade 8 writing improved between 1998 and 2007 and between 2002 and 2007.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 15 percentage points (from 66% to 81%); the nation by 10 percentage points (from 70% to 80%).

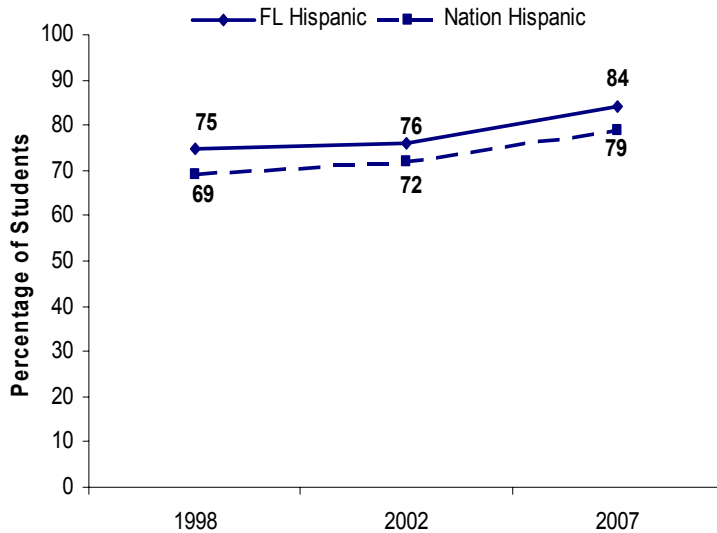
## Achievement Levels

Percentage at or above *Basic*

**Figure 20**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007

*Hispanic Students*



- The percentage of Hispanic students in Florida performing at or above *Basic* in Grade 8 writing in 2007 continued to be higher than the percentage of the nation's Hispanic students performing at that level.

- The percentages of Hispanic students in Florida and in the nation performing at or above *Basic* in Grade 8 writing improved between 1998 and 2007 and between 2002 and 2007.

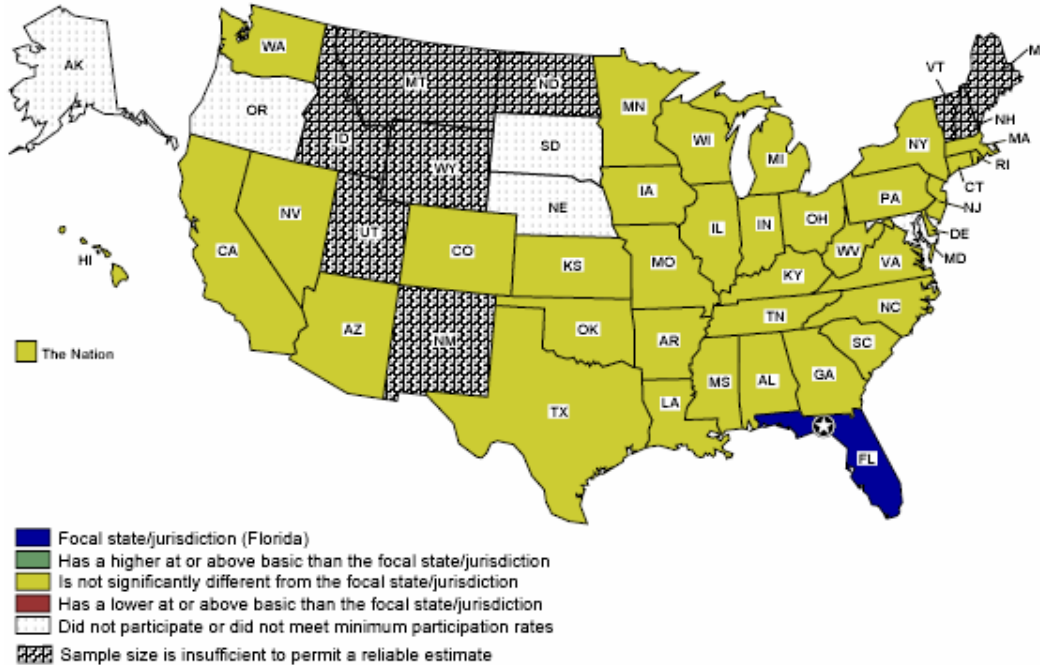
- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved by 9 percentage points (from 75% to 84%); the nation by 10 percentage points (from 69% to 79%).

### Summary of Figures 18, 19, and 20

In 2007, the percentage of Florida's Hispanic students performing at or above *Basic* (84 percent) is significantly greater than the percentage of the nation's Hispanic students performing at or above *Basic* (79 percent). There is no significant difference in the percentages of Florida's and the nation's White students performing at or above *Basic* (92 percent for both). This is also true of the percentage of Florida's African American students when compared to the nation's (81 percent vs. 80 percent).



**Figure 22**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*  
 African American Students



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

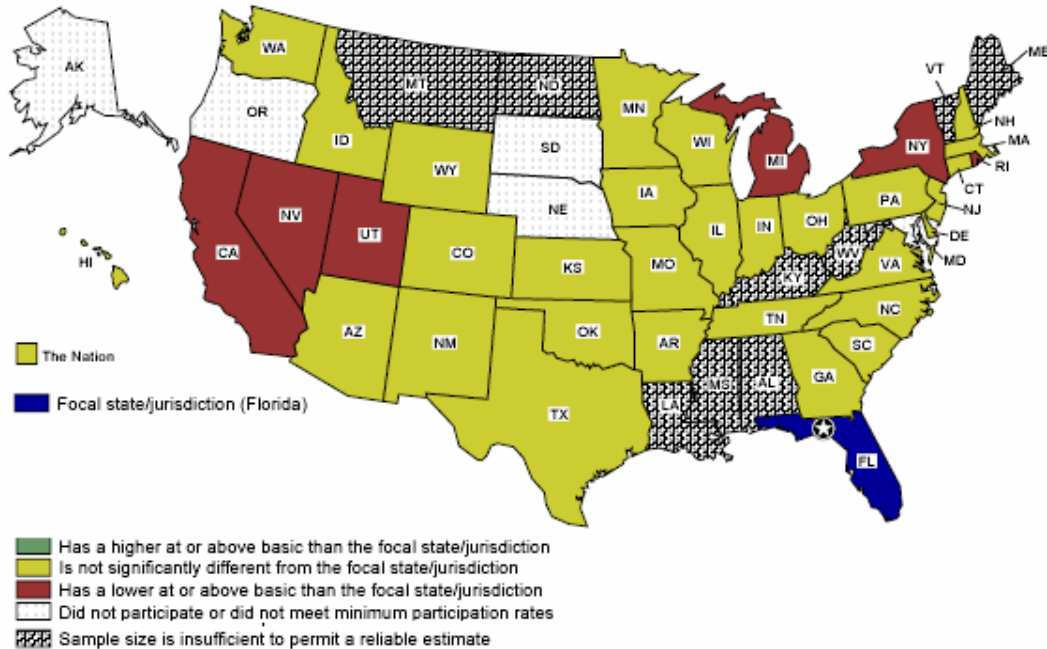
In 2007, Florida ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for African American students who performed at or above *Basic*. Florida's African American student score of 81 percent was

- **higher than no state.**
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 35 states:**  
 Delaware, New Jersey, Washington, Massachusetts, Louisiana, Virginia, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Georgia, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, *Florida*, Arizona, Colorado, Ohio, New York, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Hawaii, Mississippi, California, West Virginia, Kansas, Nevada, Rhode Island, Alabama, Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin.\*
- **lower than no state.**

The sample size in the following 9 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 23**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*  
*Hispanic* Students



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

In 2007, Florida ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for Hispanic students who performed at or above *Basic*. Florida's Hispanic student score of 84 percent was

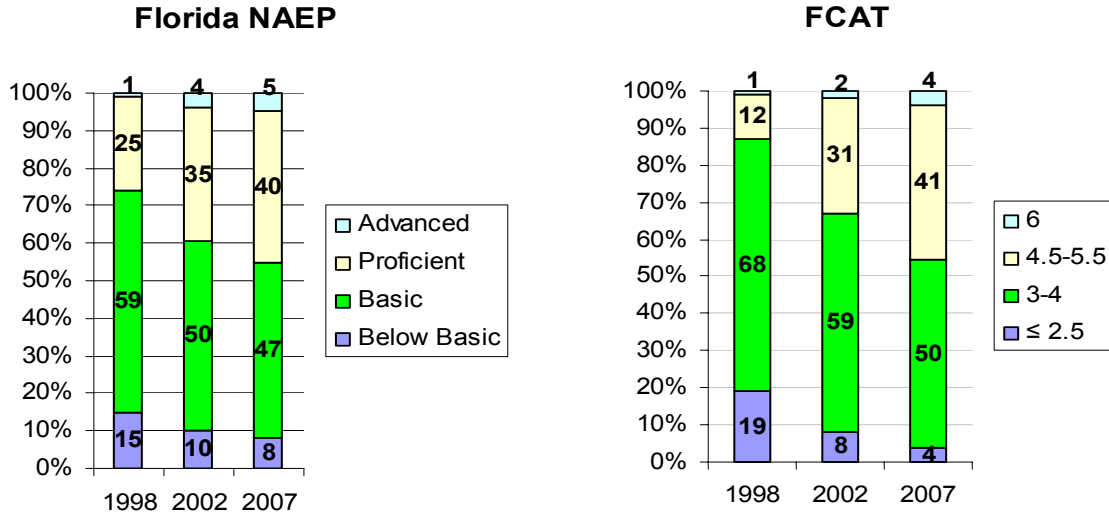
- **higher than the following 6 states:**  
 California, New York, Nevada, Michigan, Rhode Island, and Utah.\*
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 29 states:**  
 Wyoming, New Jersey, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Missouri, *Florida*, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Delaware, Virginia, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Connecticut, Georgia, Arkansas, Minnesota, Arizona, Indiana, Kansas, Washington, South Carolina, Hawaii, Idaho, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, and Iowa.\*
- **lower than no states.**

The sample size in the following 9 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia.

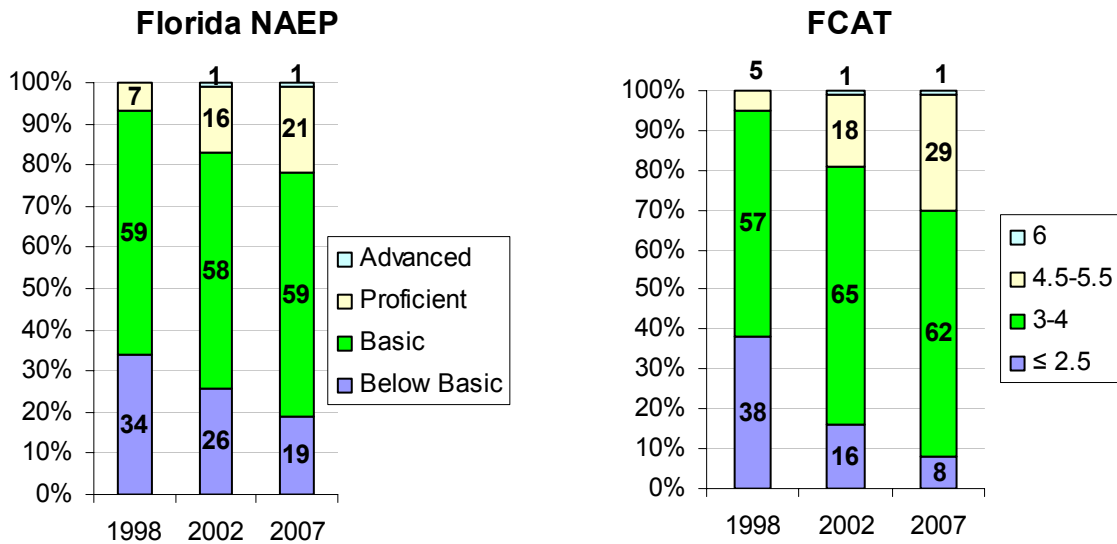
\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

### Comparison of FCAT and NAEP Proficiency Results 1998–2007

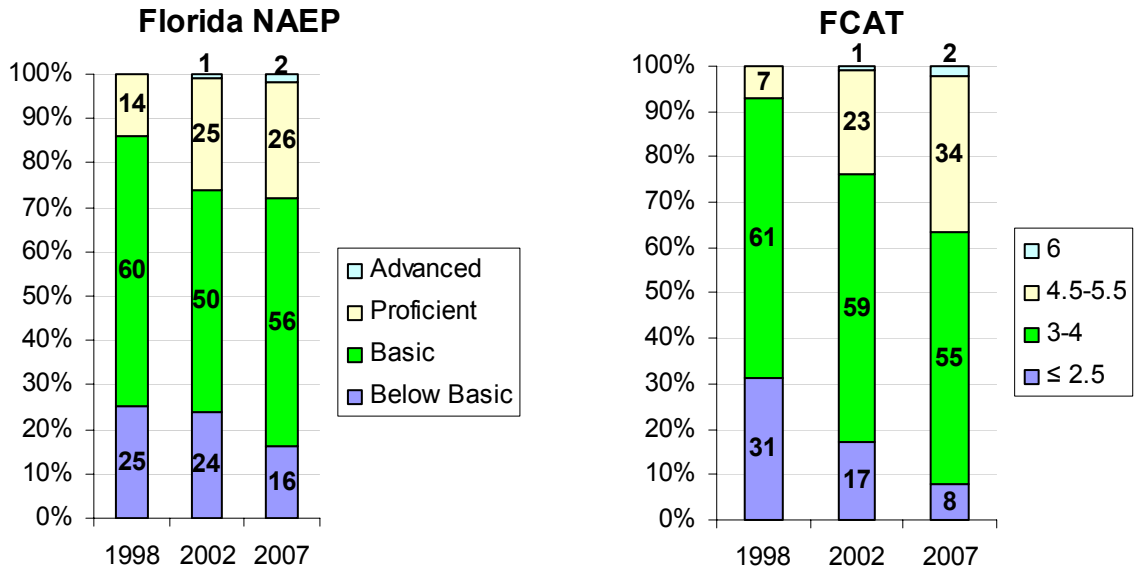
**Figure 24**  
*White Students*



**Figure 25**  
*African American Students*



**Figure 26**  
Hispanic Students



**Summary Figures 24, 25, and 26**

White and African American students improved their performance on both NAEP and the FCAT between 1998 and 2007. Their NAEP scores moved from below *Basic* to *Basic* and *Proficient*. FCAT writing scores moved from between Levels 2.5 and below and Levels 3 and 4 to between Level 4.5 and 5.5 on the essay portion of the assessment.

The performance of Hispanic students remained the same on NAEP, but improved dramatically on the essay portion of the FCAT.

When comparing the FCAT with NAEP, it is important to remember that the two assessments differ in purpose and context of testing, content assessed and/or item characteristics, and the development of the scale scores and reporting metrics. It is also important to remember that the FCAT assesses all students, while NAEP only assesses a sample of the student population.



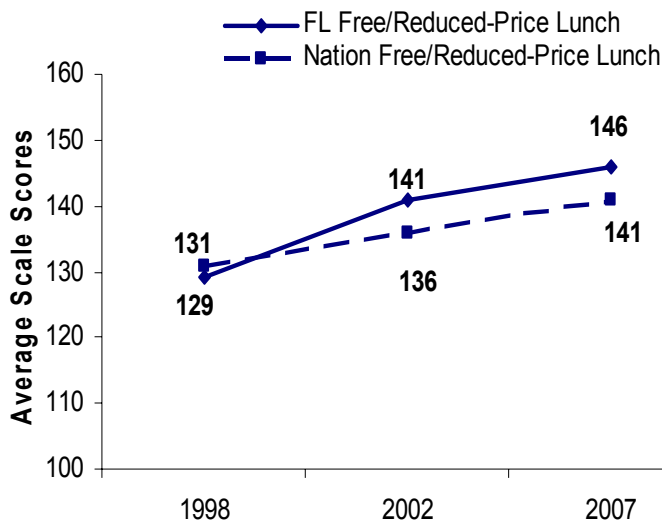
## STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE/REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH

### Grade 8 Writing

NAEP collects data on eligibility for the federal program providing free or reduced-price school lunches. Results for this subgroup of students are included as an indicator of socio-economic status (SES).

### Average Scale Scores

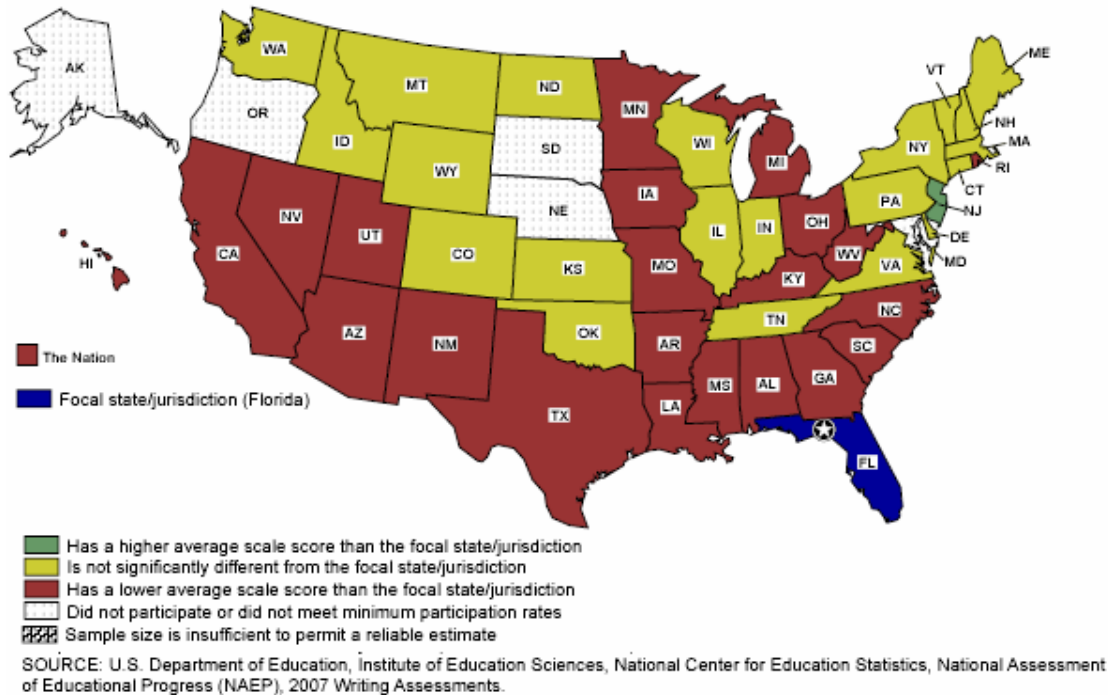
**Figure 27**  
Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*



- The average scale scores of Florida's students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch continued to be higher than those of the nation's students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch.

- Gains for Florida between 1998 and 2007 were 129 to 146 (17-point gain); gains for the nation were 131 to 141 (10-point gain).

**Figure 28**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Average Scale Scores  
 Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*



In 2007, Florida ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing average scale scores for students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch. Florida's average scale score of 146 was

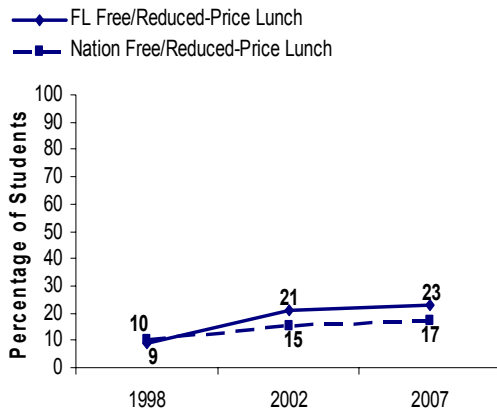
- **higher than the nation and the following 22 states:**  
 North Carolina, Georgia, Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Iowa, Ohio, South Carolina, Utah, West Virginia, New Mexico, Michigan, California, Arizona, Mississippi, Rhode Island, Alabama, Hawaii, and Nevada.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 21 states:**  
 Maine, Connecticut, *Florida*, Tennessee, Delaware, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, New York, North Dakota, Wyoming, Vermont, Idaho, Pennsylvania, Washington, Colorado, New Hampshire, Montana, Illinois, Kansas, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Virginia.\*
- **lower than the following 1 state:**  
 New Jersey.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

## Achievement Levels

**Figure 29**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*  
Percentage at or above *Proficient*

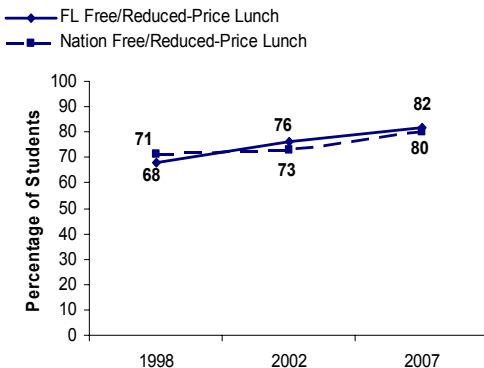


- Florida's percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performing at or above *Proficient* in 2007 is, for the first time, significantly higher than the percentage of the nation's students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida's students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch improved by 14 percentage points (from 9% to 23%); the nation by 7 percentage points (from 10% to 17%).

**Figure 30**

Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*  
Percentage at or above *Basic*



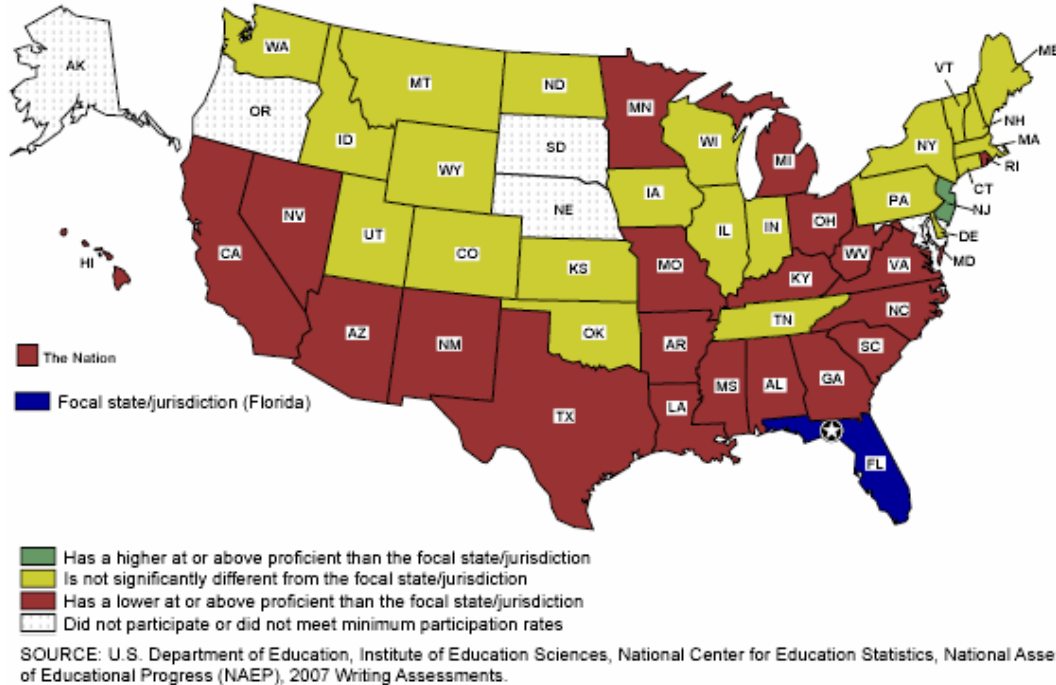
- Florida's percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performing at or above *Basic* in 2007 was similar to the percentage of the nation's students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 14 percentage points (from 68% to 82%); the nation by 9 percentage points (from 71% to 80%).

### Summary Figures 29 and 30

In 2007, the percentage of Florida's students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch performing at or above *Proficient* was higher than that of their national counterparts. The percentages performing at or above *Basic* were the same for Florida and the nation.

**Figure 31**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*  
 Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*

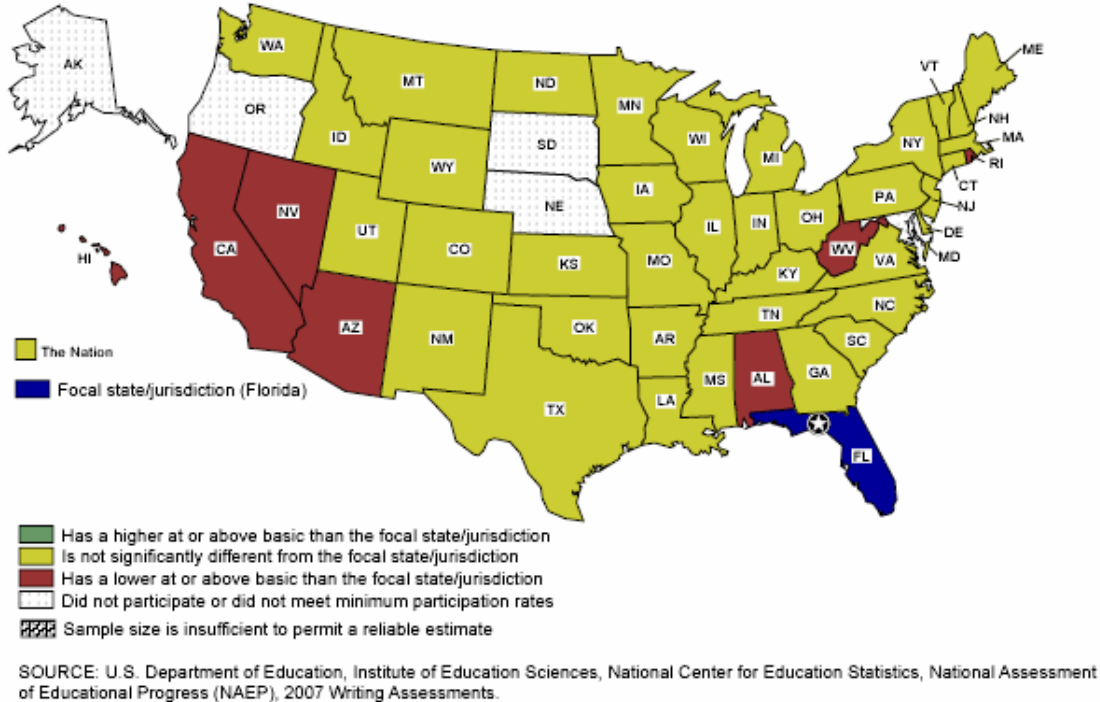


In 2007, Florida ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch who performed at or above *Proficient*. Florida's score of 23 percent was

- **higher than the nation and the following 21 states:**  
 Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, Minnesota, Kentucky, Texas, Ohio, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Michigan, California, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia, Nevada, New Mexico, Alabama, Hawaii, Arizona, Louisiana, and Mississippi.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 22 states:**  
 Connecticut, Maine, *Florida*, Vermont, New York, Massachusetts, Wyoming, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, Washington, Montana, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, North Dakota, Idaho, Delaware, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Utah, Indiana, and Illinois.\*
- **lower than the following 1 state:**  
 New Jersey.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 32**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*  
 Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*



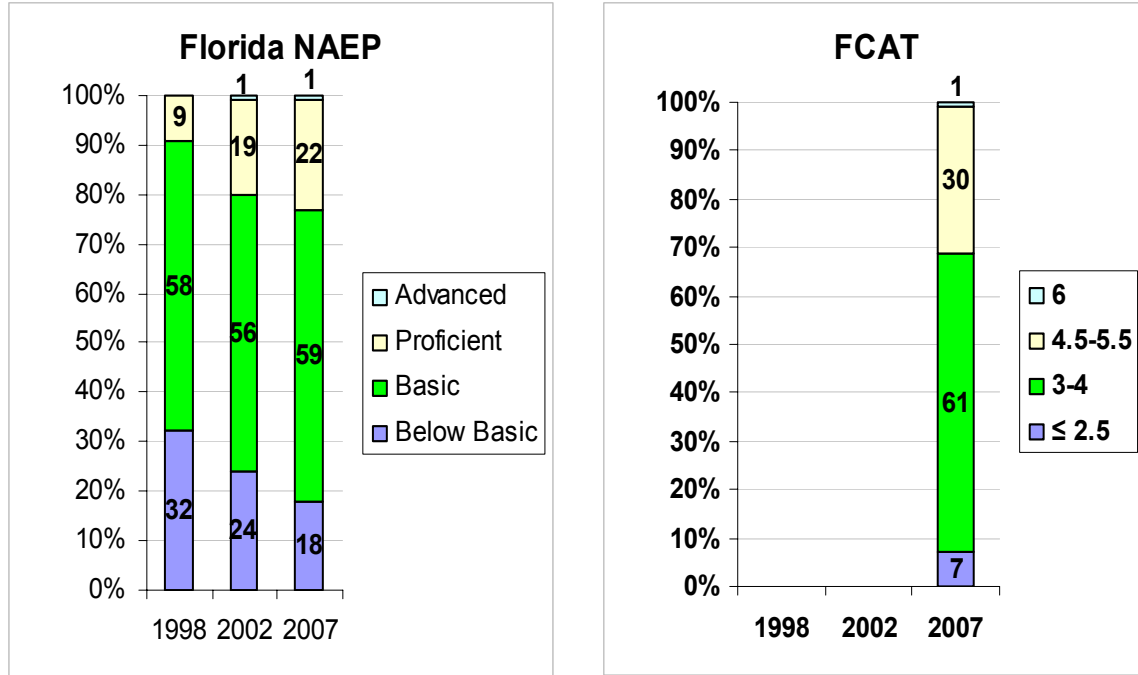
In 2007, the percent of Florida's Grade 8 writing students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch who performed at or above *Basic* (82 percent) was

- **higher than the following 7 states:**  
 California, West Virginia, Alabama, Rhode Island, Utah, Hawaii, and Nevada.\*
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 37 states:**  
 New Jersey, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Delaware, Louisiana, Wyoming, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Colorado, North Dakota, *Florida*, Indiana, Idaho, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, Kansas, Virginia, North Carolina, New York, Kentucky, Montana, Washington, Texas, South Carolina, Mississippi, Arkansas, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, New Mexico, Vermont, Arizona, Iowa, and Michigan.\*
- **lower than no state.**

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

### Comparison of FCAT and NAEP Proficiency Results 2002–2007

**Figure 33**  
Students Eligible for *Free/Reduced-Price Lunch*



**Summary Figure 33**

Students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch increased their NAEP at *Basic* and at *Proficient* achievement level scores between 1998 and 2007. FCAT scores for students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch are only available for 2007. The percentage of students scoring at Level 3 on the FCAT and at *Basic* on NAEP was statistically comparable.

When comparing the FCAT with NAEP, it is important to remember that the two assessments differ in purpose and context of testing, content assessed and/or item characteristics, and the development of the scale scores and reporting metrics. It is also important to remember that the FCAT assesses all students while NAEP only assesses a sample of the student population.

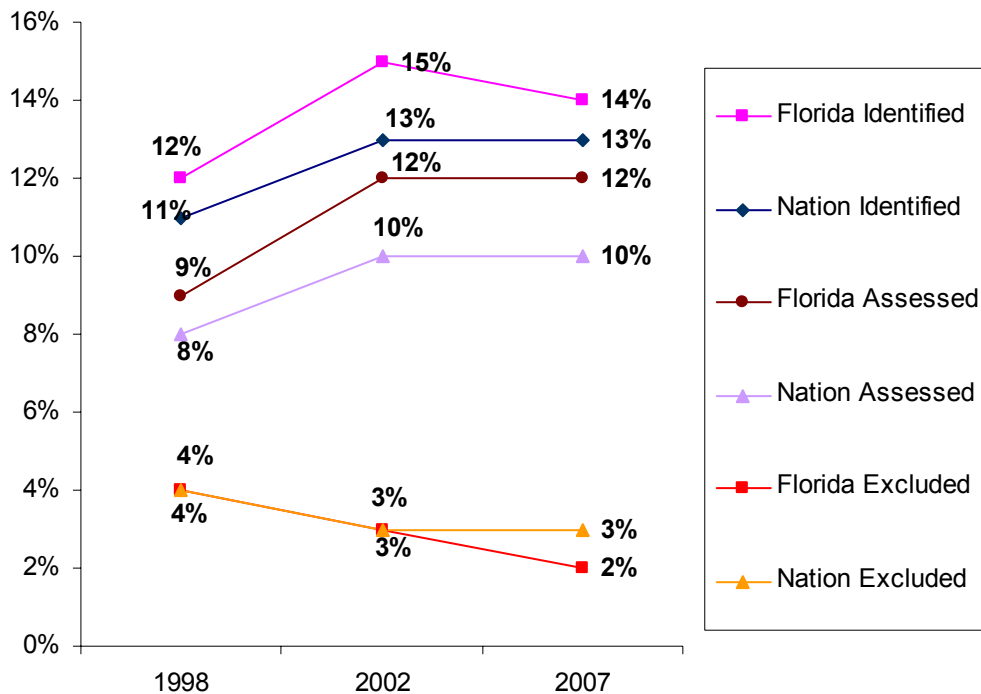
## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES Identified, Assessed, and Excluded

School staff make the decision about whether to include a student with disabilities in a NAEP assessment and which accommodations, if any, the student should receive. The NAEP program furnishes tools to assist school personnel in making that decision. Inclusion in NAEP is encouraged if the student participates in the regular state assessment and if the student can participate in NAEP in a meaningful way with the accommodations NAEP allows. Because percentages of students excluded from NAEP may vary considerably across states and within a state across years, comparisons of results across and within states should be interpreted with caution.

Exclusion rates can vary widely, rendering state comparisons suspect. While Florida’s included and assessed percentages of students are slightly higher than the nation’s, Florida’s excluded percentages are equal to or below the nation’s.

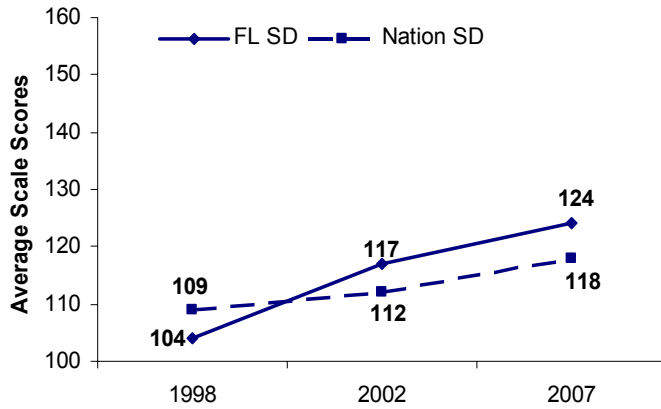
### Graph 1

Percentages of Florida’s and the Nation’s SD Identified, Assessed, and Excluded Students for Grade 8 Writing 1998–2007



## Average Scale Scores

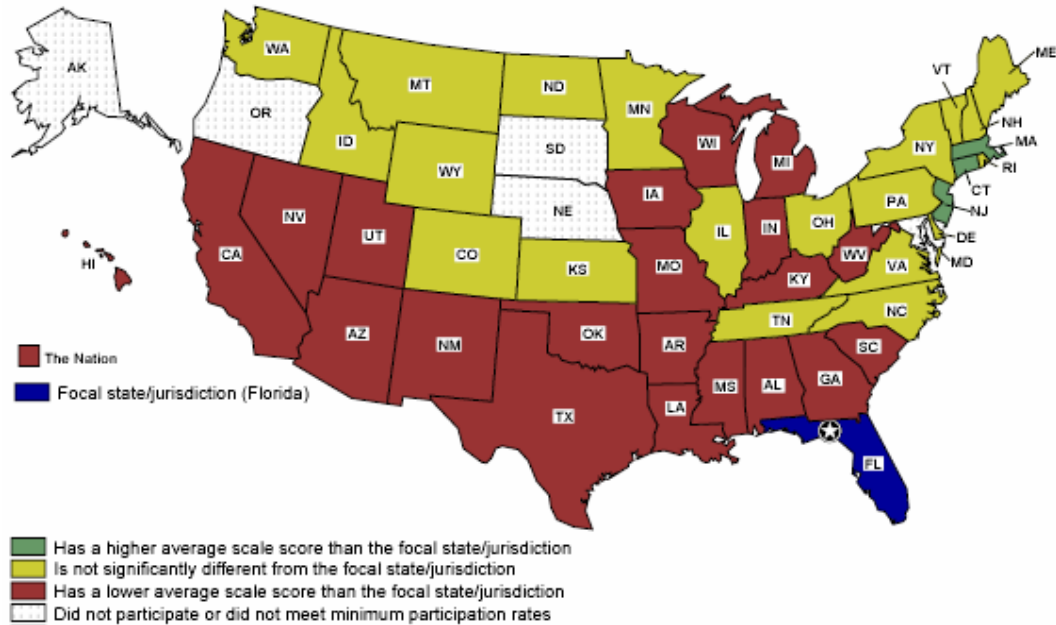
**Figure 34**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
*Students with Disabilities*



- The average scale scores of Florida’s students with disabilities in 2007 were, for the first time, higher than those of the nation’s SD.
- Gains for Florida between 1998 and 2007 were Florida 104 to 124 (20-point gain); gains for the nation were 109 to 118 (9-point gain).



**Figure 35**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Average Scale Scores  
 Students with Disabilities



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

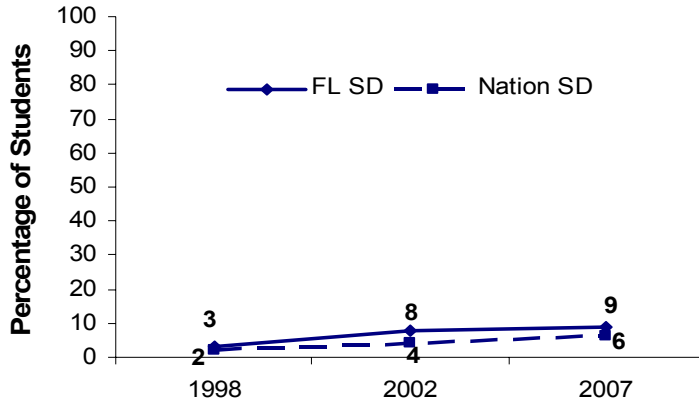
In 2007, Florida ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing average scale scores for students with disabilities. Florida's score of 124 was

- **higher than the nation and the following 21 states:**  
 Indiana, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Arizona, Missouri, Texas, Iowa, Georgia, Michigan, California, Louisiana, Nevada, Kentucky, South Carolina, Arkansas, Mississippi, Hawaii, New Mexico, Alabama, West Virginia, and Utah.\*
- **not significantly different from the following 21 states:**  
 New Hampshire, Delaware, Virginia, North Dakota, Vermont, *Florida*, Pennsylvania, Maine, Colorado, Tennessee, Illinois, North Carolina, Kansas, New York, Rhode Island, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, Idaho, Ohio, and Minnesota.\*
- **lower than the following 3 states:**  
 Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Connecticut.\*

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

### Achievement Levels

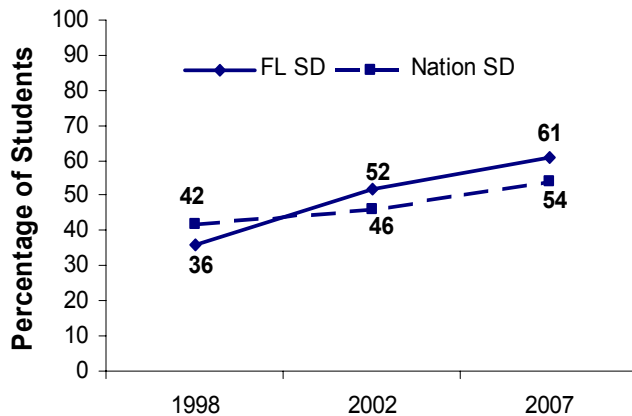
**Figure 36**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
*Students with Disabilities*  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*



- Florida’s percentage of students with disabilities performing at or above *Proficient* was similar to the percentage of the nation’s SD performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 6 percentage points (3% to 9%); the nation by 4 percentage points (2% to 6%).

**Figure 37**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
*Students with Disabilities*  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*



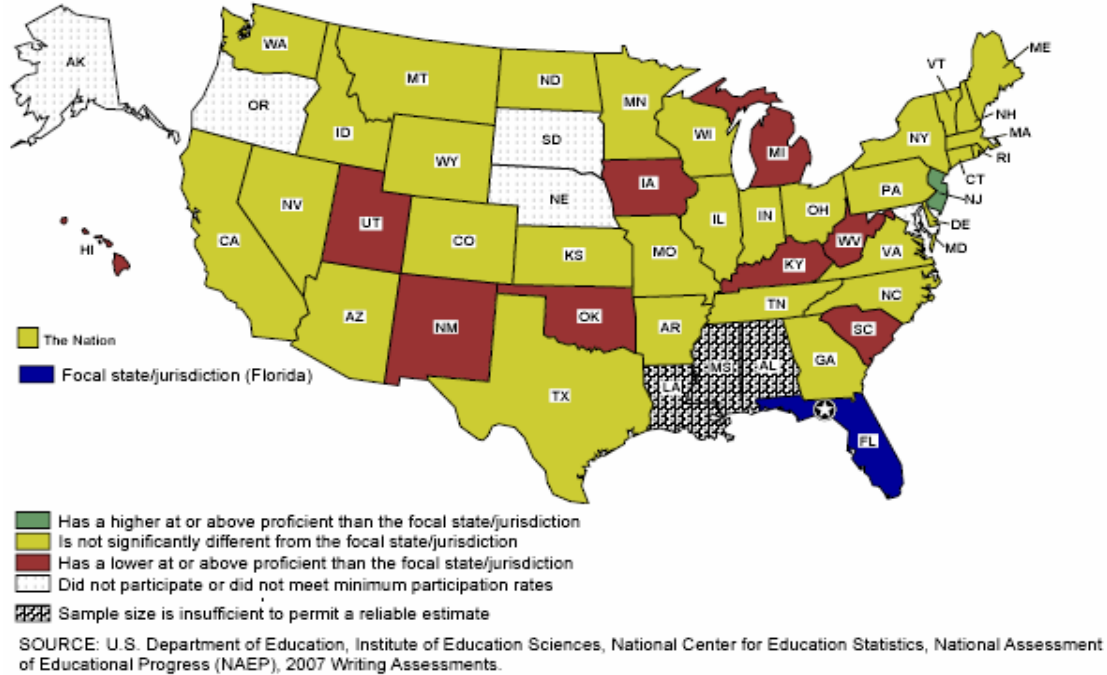
- Florida’s percentage of students with disabilities performing at or above *Basic* was, for the first time, significantly higher than the percentage of the nation’s SD performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 25 percentage points (36% to 61%); the nation by 12 percentage points (42% to 54%).

**Summary Figures 36 and 37**

The percentage of Florida’s students with disabilities performing at or above *Basic* and at or above *Proficient* improved between 1998 and 2007. This upward trend was also reflected in the performance of the nation’s SD.

**Figure 38**  
 Florida’s National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*  
*Students with Disabilities*



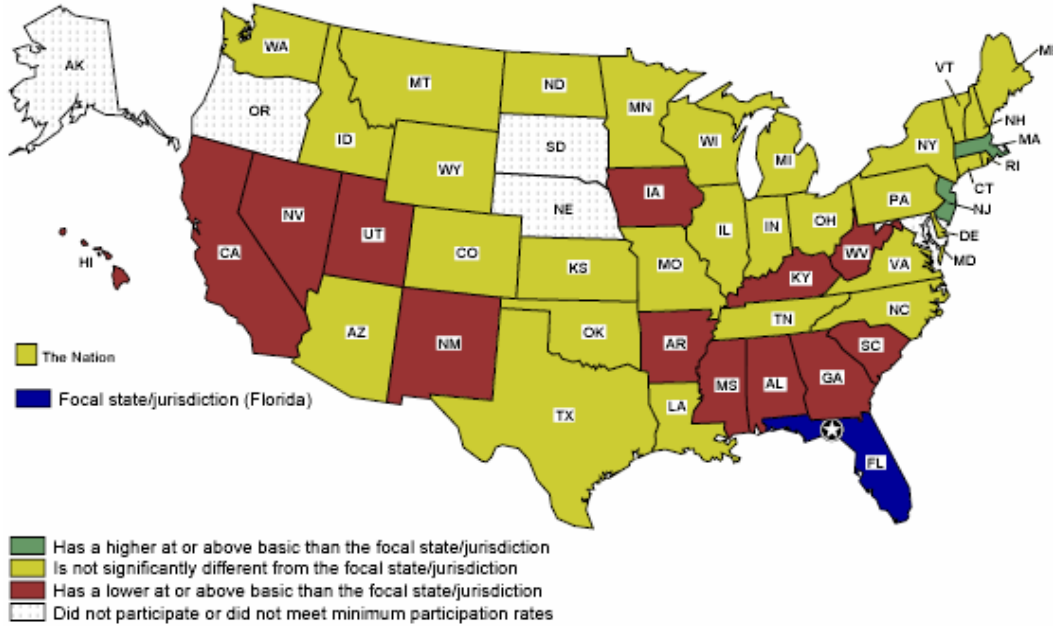
In 2007, Florida ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation in Grade 8 writing for students with disabilities who performed at or above *Proficient*. Florida’s score of 9 percent was

- **higher than the following 9 states:**  
 Michigan, Kentucky, Utah, West Virginia, Iowa, New Mexico, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Hawaii.\*
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 31 states:**  
 Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Tennessee, *Florida*, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Colorado, Vermont, Delaware, Maine, Wyoming, Nevada, Rhode Island, North Carolina, California, Illinois, Idaho, Texas, Virginia, Indiana, North Dakota, Montana, Georgia, Washington, Arkansas, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Arizona, New York, and Missouri.\*
- **lower than the following 1 state:**  
 New Jersey.

The sample size in the following 3 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 39**  
 Florida’s National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*  
*Students with Disabilities*



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

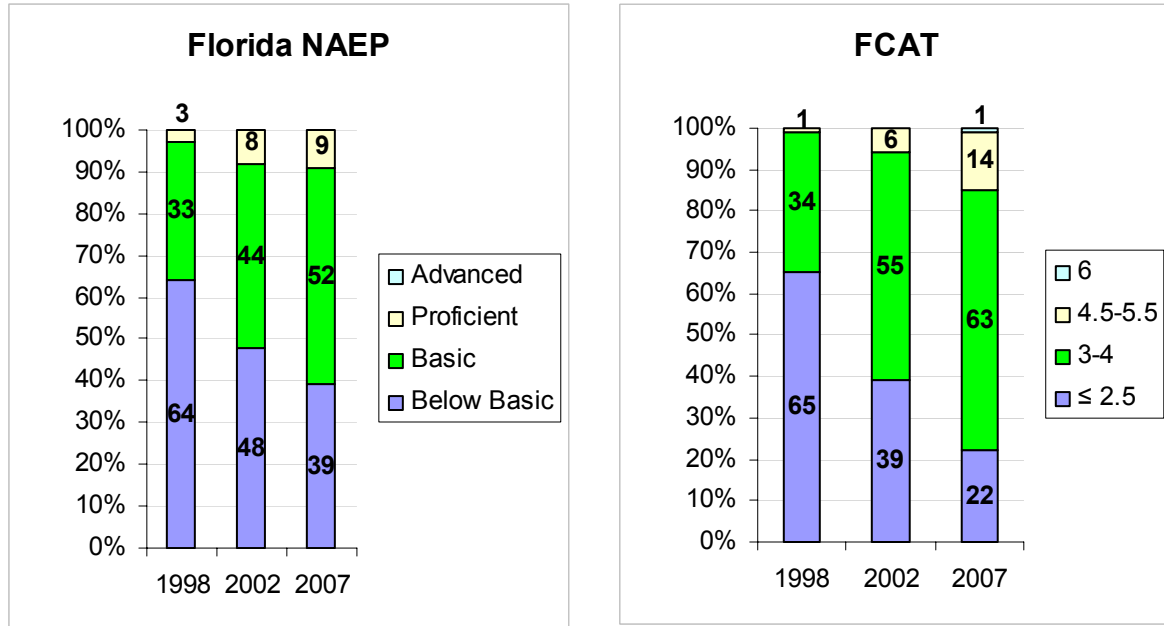
In 2007, Florida’s percentage of Grade 8 students with disabilities who performed at or above *Basic* (61 percent) was

- **higher than the following 13 states:**  
 Iowa, Louisiana, Georgia, California, Nevada, Kentucky, South Carolina, Mississippi, New Mexico, Arkansas, Alabama, Hawaii, West Virginia, and Utah.\*
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 29 states:**  
 Connecticut, North Dakota, Delaware, New Hampshire, Virginia, Vermont, Pennsylvania, *Florida*, Maine, New York, North Carolina, Illinois, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Kansas, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Ohio, Washington, Minnesota, Indiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Idaho, Texas, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Michigan.\*
- **lower than the following 2 states:**  
 Massachusetts and New Jersey.\*

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

## Comparison of FCAT and NAEP Proficiency Results 2002–2007

**Figure 40**  
Students with Disabilities



### Summary Figure 40

The percentage of Florida’s students with disabilities performing at *Proficient* and at *Basic* on NAEP improved between 1998 and 2007, while the percentage of students performing below *Basic* decreased. The percentage of students performing between 3 and 5.5 on the essay portion of the FCAT increased significantly during the same period.

When comparing the FCAT with NAEP, it is important to remember that the two assessments differ in purpose and context of testing, content assessed and/or item characteristics, and the development of the scale scores and reporting metrics. It is also important to remember that the FCAT assesses all students, while NAEP only assesses a sample of the student population.

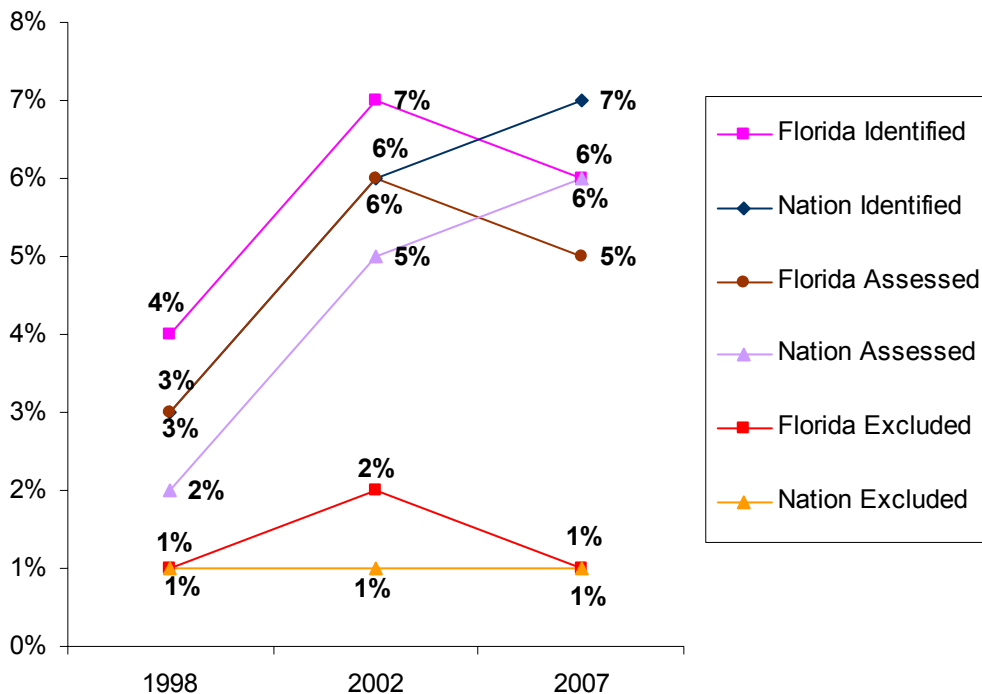
## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS Identified, Assessed, and Excluded

School staff make the decision about whether to include an English language learner in a NAEP assessment and which accommodations, if any, the student should receive. The NAEP program furnishes tools to assist school personnel in making that decision. Inclusion in NAEP is encouraged if the student participates in the regular state assessment and if the student can participate in NAEP in a meaningful way with the accommodations NAEP allows. Because percentages of students excluded from NAEP may vary considerably across states and within a single state across years, comparisons of results across and within a state across years should be interpreted with caution. Exclusion rates can vary widely, rendering such comparisons suspect.

In Florida, the percentage of ELLs identified and assessed increased between 1998 and 2002 and then dipped slightly between 2002 and 2007. Florida’s and the nation’s exclusion percentages are similar and have held steady between 1998 and 2007.

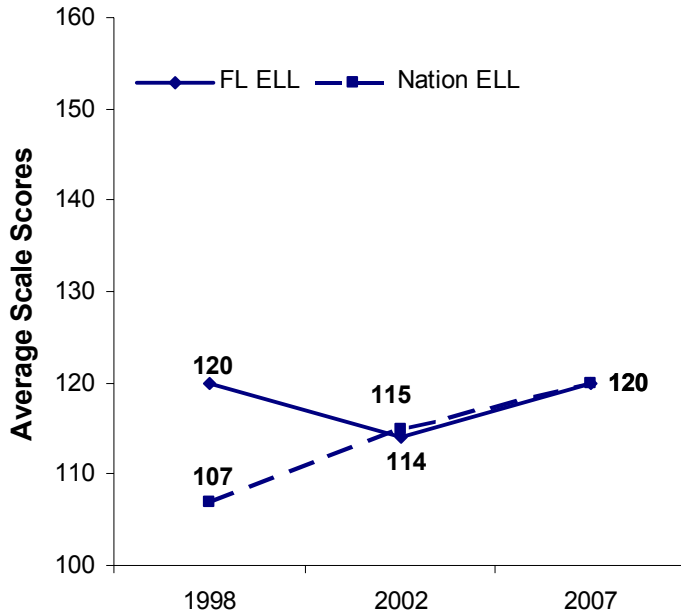
### Graph 2

Comparing Percentages of Florida’s and the Nation’s ELL Identified, Assessed, and Excluded Students for Grade 8 Writing 1998–2007



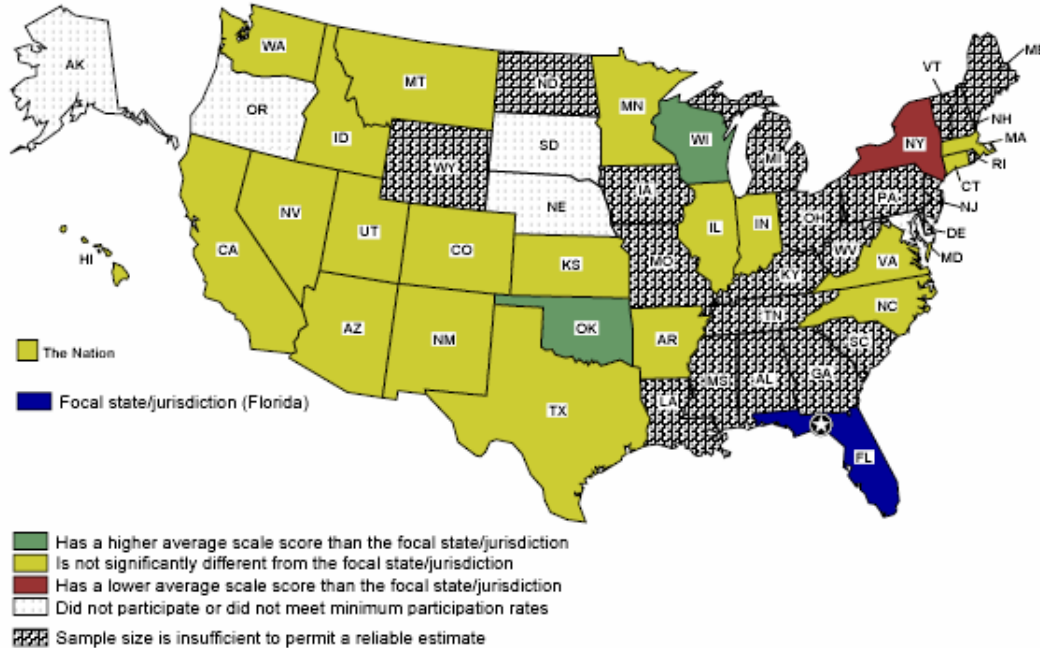
### Average Scale Scores

**Figure 41**  
 Florida and the Nation 2002–2007  
*English Language Learners*



- The average scale scores of Florida’s English language learners in 2007 were the same as those of the nation’s ELLs.
- Gains for Florida between 1998 and 2007 were Florida 120 to 120 (no change); gains for the nation were 107 to 120 (13-point gain).

**Figure 42**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Average Scale Scores  
 English Language Learners



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

In 2007, Florida's Grade 8 writing average scale score for English language learners (120) was

- **higher than the following 1 state:**  
New York.
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 20 states:**  
Virginia, Minnesota, Arkansas, Indiana, Utah, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, North Carolina, California, New Mexico, *Florida*, Washington, Hawaii, Montana, Colorado, Connecticut, Arizona, Massachusetts, Nevada, and Texas.\*
- **lower than the following 2 states:**  
Wisconsin and Oklahoma.\*

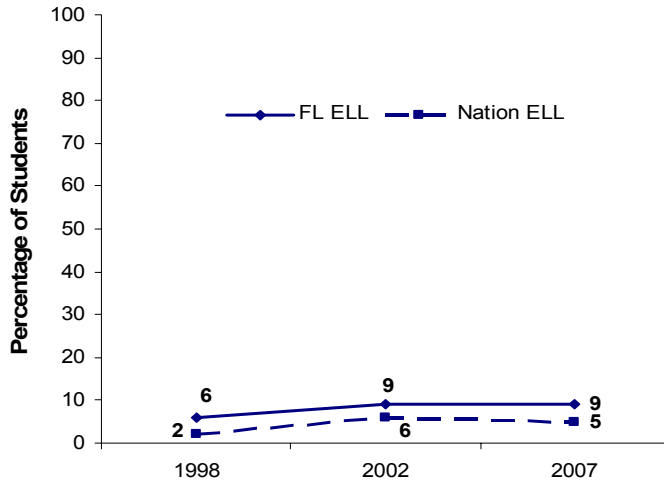
The sample size in the following 21 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.



## Achievement Levels

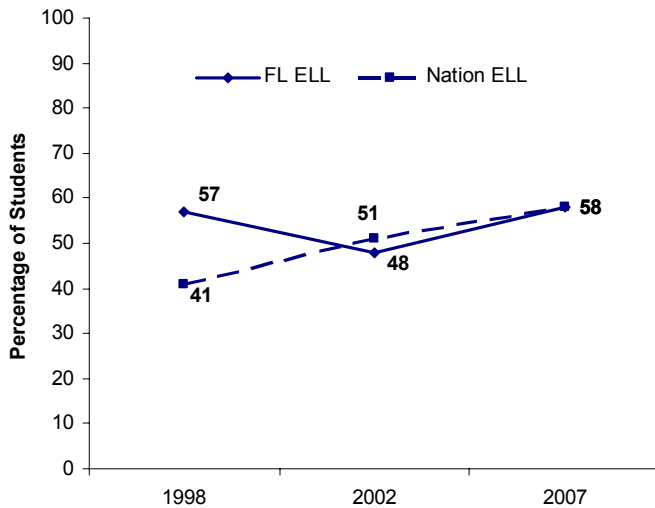
**Figure 43**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
*English Language Learners*  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*



- Florida’s percentage of English language learners performing at or above *Proficient* was similar to the percentage of the nation’s ELLs performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida gained 3 percentage points (6% to 9%); the nation, 3 percentage points (2% to 5%).

**Figure 44**  
 Florida and the Nation 1998–2007  
*English Language Learners*  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*



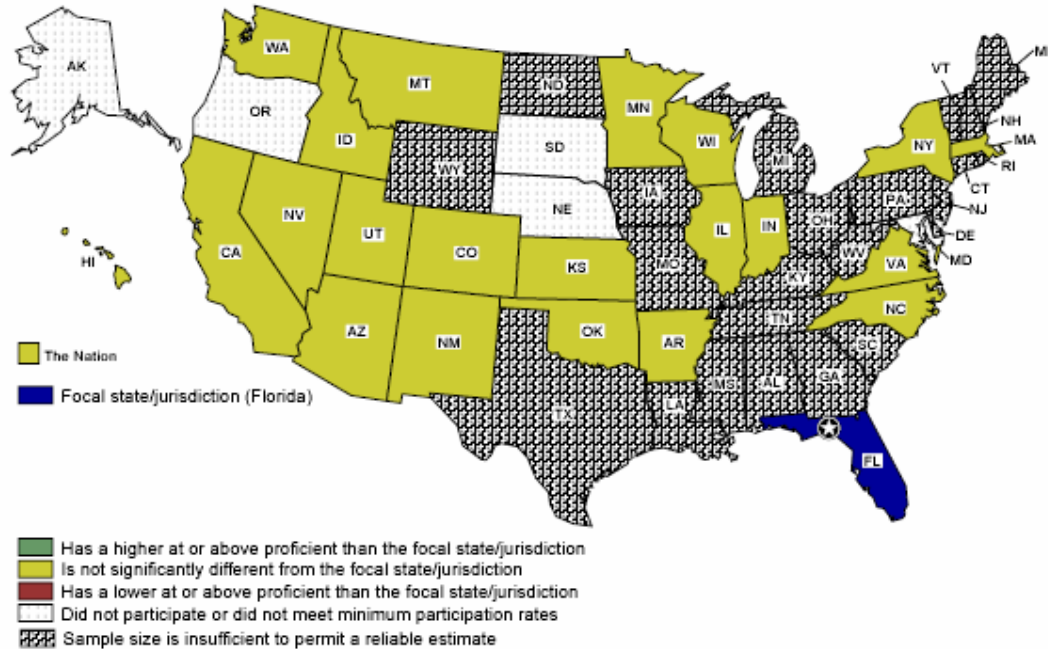
- Florida’s percentage of English language learners performing at or above *Basic* was similar to the percentage of the nation’s ELLs performing at that level.

- Between 1998 and 2007, Florida improved 1 percentage point (57% to 58%), the nation, 17 percentage points (41% to 58%).

### Summary Figures 43 and 44

Florida’s English language learners performing at or above *Basic* and at or above *Proficient* remained constant between 1998 and 2007. In 2007, both achievement level groups performed similarly to their national counterparts.

**Figure 45**  
 Florida's National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Proficient*  
 English Language Learners



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessments.

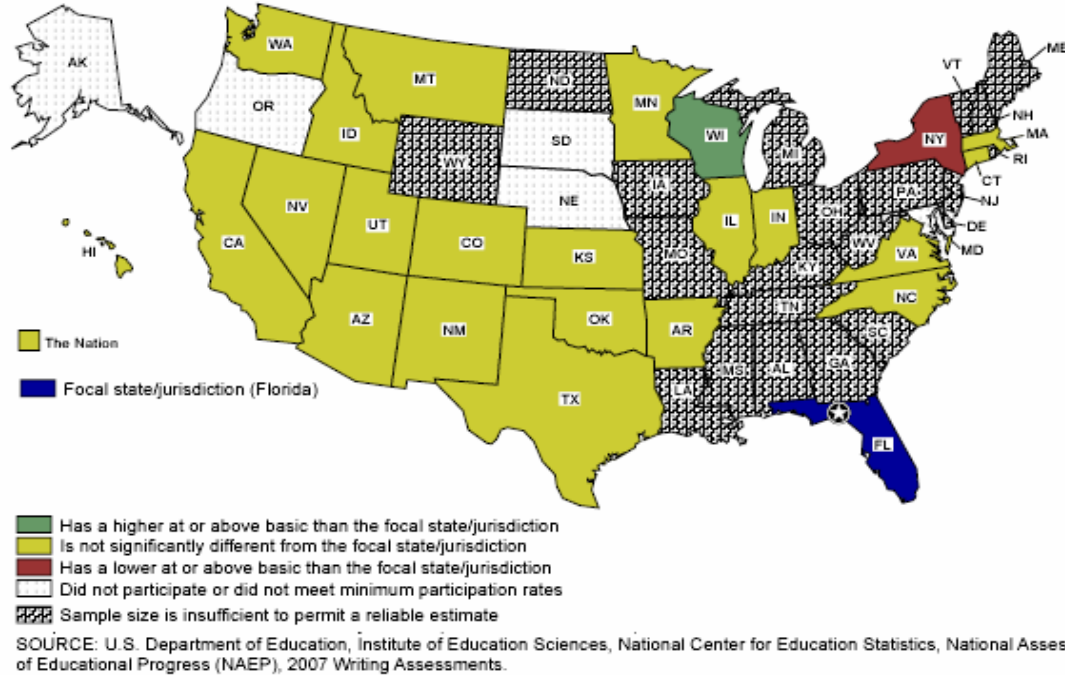
In 2007, Florida's percentage of Grade 8 English language learners who performed at or above *Proficient* (9 percent) was

- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 23 states:**  
 Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Indiana, Minnesota, Utah, Arkansas, Idaho, Virginia, *Florida*, Kansas, Montana, North Carolina, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Washington, Colorado, Connecticut, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, New York, and Texas.\*

The sample size in the following 21 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

**Figure 46**  
 Florida’s National Standing in 2007  
 Percentage at or above *Basic*  
*English Language Learners*



In 2007, Florida’s percentage of Grade 8 English language learners who performed at or above *Basic* (58 percent) was

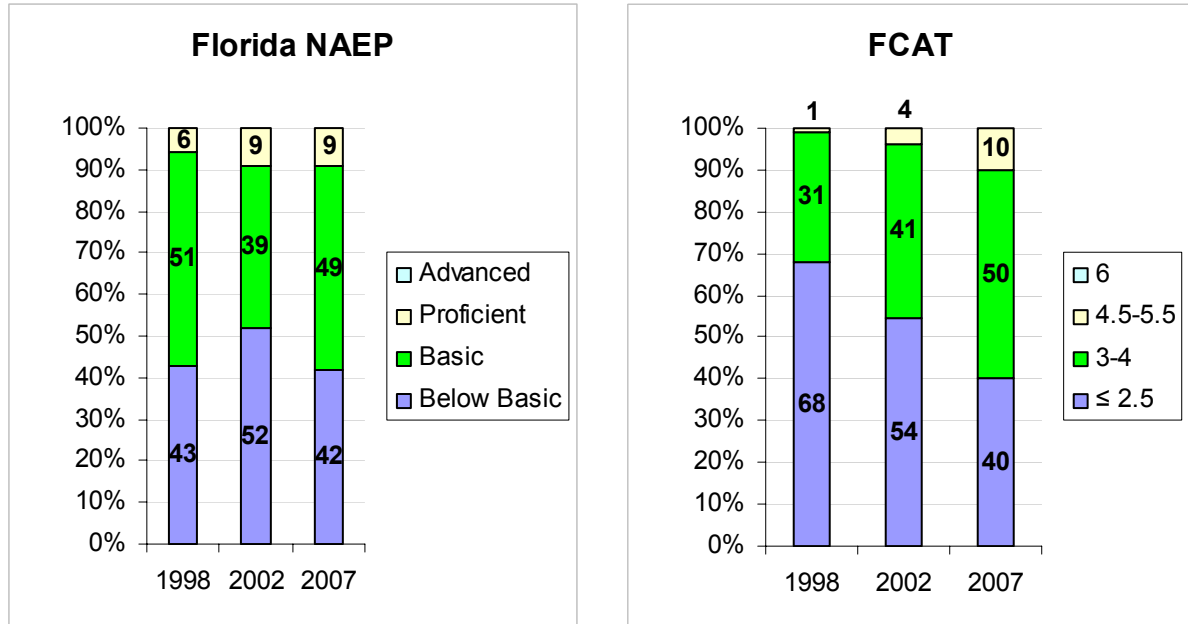
- **higher than the following 1 state:**  
 New York.
- **not significantly different from the nation and the following 21 states:**  
 Oklahoma, Minnesota, Virginia, Arkansas, Indiana, Idaho, Illinois, Utah, New Mexico, Kansas, Washington, California, *Florida*, Hawaii, Connecticut, Montana, North Carolina, Colorado, Arizona, Massachusetts, Nevada, and Texas.\*
- **lower than the following 1 state:**  
 Wisconsin.

The sample size in the following 21 states was not large enough to permit a reliable estimate: Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

\*Within each group, states are listed from highest to lowest performance.

### Comparison of FCAT and NAEP Proficiency Results 2002–2007

**Figure 47**  
*English Language Learners*



**Summary Figure 47**

The percentages of Florida’s English language learners performing at *Proficient* and at *Basic* on NAEP remained constant between 1998 and 2007. The percentage performing at Level 3 and above on the essay portion of the FCAT Writing assessment increased significantly during the same period, while the percentage of students with scores below Level 3 decreased significantly.

When comparing the FCAT with NAEP, it is important to remember that the two assessments differ in purpose and context of testing, content assessed and/or item characteristics, and the development of the scale scores and reporting metrics. It is also important to remember that the FCAT assesses all students, while NAEP only assesses a sample of the student population.

## APPENDIX A

### Comparing the FCAT with Florida NAEP

#### How does Florida NAEP compare with the FCAT?

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test<sup>®</sup> (FCAT) measures student performance on selected benchmarks, as defined by Florida's Sunshine State Standards (SSS). These standards identify what students are expected to know and be able to do for the 21st century and include both content and performance standards. The FCAT is designed to provide information needed to improve public schools and help parents understand the educational progress of their children. The assessment provides data that can be used to understand the "educational health" of students and to hold schools and districts accountable for making progress. The FCAT reports state, district, school, and individual student results.

In contrast, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports on the performance of groups of students at a given time and across time without specifying how a subject should be taught and without prescribing a particular curricular approach to teaching. NAEP's role is that of an assessment of overall achievement rather than an assessment measuring individual student progress.

Caution is advised when comparing student performance on the FCAT with student performance on NAEP, as the assessments sometimes encompass different grade-level expectations. What Florida requires students to know at a particular grade level in a particular subject area does not necessarily correspond with NAEP's expectations. One useful means of comparison is to examine the long-term performance of each subgroup. If there is similar improvement on both the FCAT and NAEP, then real growth in achievement over time is more certain.

- The FCAT defines achievement Level 3 as the level attained by a student who "has partial success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards but is generally less successful with questions that are the most challenging."
- NAEP defines *Basic* as "Partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade."
- NAEP defines *Proficient* as "Solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competence over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter."
- The difference between "Proficient" and "proficiency" is that Proficient is a defined level of performance, such as *Advanced* and *Basic*, while proficiency is a measure of ability. *Proficient* is a description or label and proficiency is something we are trying to measure.

When reviewing the descriptions of the FCAT Level 3, NAEP *Basic*, and NAEP *Proficient* achievement levels, the similarity between FCAT's Level 3 and above and NAEP's at *Basic* and above would appear to be a better fit than comparing FCAT's Level 3 and above to NAEP's *Proficient* and above.

## APPENDIX B

### Scoring Guide and Item Mapping

#### Item Mapping Procedures

Item maps help to illustrate what students *know* and *can do* in NAEP subject areas by positioning descriptions of individual assessment items along the NAEP scale at each grade level. An item is placed at the point on the scale where students are more likely to give successful responses to it. The descriptors used in NAEP item maps focus on the knowledge and skills needed to respond successfully to the assessment item. For multiple choice items, the description indicates the knowledge or skill demonstrated by selection of the correct option. For constructed-response items, the description takes into account the knowledge or skill specified by the different levels of scoring criteria for that item.

#### Reading the Map

The map location for each question represents the probability that, at any given score point, 65 percent of the students (for a constructed-response question), 74 percent of the students (for a four-option multiple-choice question), or 72 percent of the students (for a five-option multiple-choice question) answered that question successfully. For constructed-response questions, responses could be completely or partially correct, and, therefore, a question can map to several points on the scale.

For example, in the case of a four-option multiple-choice question in the 2005 NAEP mathematics assessment that maps at 276 on the scale, Grade 4 students with a score of 276 have a 74 percent chance of answering this question correctly. In other words, out of a sample of 100 students who scored 276, seventy-four percent would be expected to have answered this question correctly.

#### Score Levels

After each constructed-response item descriptor, there is a notation (e.g., “Superior,” “Acceptable”) that applies to the scoring guide used to score each item. (For constructed-response questions, responses could be completely or partially correct, and, therefore, a question can map to several points on the scale.)

#### Content Classification

Before each item descriptor is a symbol that identifies the content classification of the item. Descriptions of each classification are available in the framework for the subject.

**NAEP Scoring Guide: Writing, Grade 8, 2007**

NAEP staff uses standardized scoring guides to govern the scoring of constructed-response items. The scoring guides are designed to ensure that scorers follow a single standard and that scores are assigned consistently and fairly. General score level categories are defined in the assessment framework for each subject, and specific criteria required at each score level are defined in the scoring guide for each constructed-response item. The test developers who write the items develop the initial scoring guides, which are then revised as the items are refined during the item review process.

**NAEP Item Map: Writing, Grade 8, 2007**

The item map below contains selected item descriptions mapped to the 2007 NAEP writing scale. The map helps to illustrate the knowledge and skills demonstrated by students performing at different scale scores on the 2007 assessment. Items that have been released to the public are underlined and linked to the NAEP Questions Tool where the item, scoring guide, key, student responses, and performance data can be viewed. The item map also includes:

- a symbol next to each item descriptor that indicates the item’s content classification (see legend at the top and bottom of item map);
- an item type (multiple-choice [MC] or constructed-response [CR]);
- a notation after each constructed-response item descriptor that identifies the score level of the item (e.g., Excellent, Skillful, Sufficient, Uneven, Insufficient); and
- links to achievement-level descriptors (*Advanced*, *Proficient*, and *Basic*).

## NAEP 2007 Writing Scoring Guide

Score & Description
<p><b>Excellent Response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops and shapes information with well-chosen details across the response;</li> <li>• Is well organized with strong transitions;</li> <li>• Sustains variety in sentence structure and exhibits good word choice; and</li> <li>• Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation are few and do not interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skillful Response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops and shapes information with details in parts of the response;</li> <li>• Is clearly organized, but may lack some transitions and/or have occasional lapses in continuity;</li> <li>• Exhibits some variety in sentence structure and some good word choices; and</li> <li>• Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sufficient Response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops information with some details;</li> <li>• Organized with ideas that are generally related, but has few or no transitions;</li> <li>• Exhibits control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure, but sentences and word choice may be simple and unvaried; and</li> <li>• Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Uneven Response</b></p> <p>May be characterized by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents some clear information, but is list-like, undeveloped, or repetitive OR offers no more than a well-written beginning;</li> <li>• Is unevenly organized; the response may be disjointed;</li> <li>• Exhibits uneven control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; may have some inaccurate word choices; and</li> <li>• Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation sometimes interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Insufficient Response</b></p> <p>May be characterized by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents fragmented information OR may be very repetitive OR may be very undeveloped;</li> <li>• Is very disorganized; thoughts are tenuously connected OR the response is too brief to detect organization;</li> <li>• Minimal control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; word choice may often be inaccurate; and</li> <li>• Errors in grammar or usage (such as missing words or incorrect word use or word order), spelling, and punctuation interfere with understanding in much of the response.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unsatisfactory Response</b></p> <p>May be characterized by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempts to respond to prompt, but provides little or no coherent information; may only paraphrase the prompt;</li> <li>• Has no apparent organization OR consists of a single statement;</li> <li>• Minimal or no control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; word choice may be inaccurate in much or all of the response; and</li> <li>• A multiplicity of errors in grammar or usage (such as missing words or incorrect word use or word order), spelling, and punctuation severely impedes understanding across the response.</li> </ul>



Item Map for 2007 NAEP Grade 8 Writing

2007 Grade 8

NAEP Writing Scale

Content Classifications:

● Narrative

■ Informative

▲ Persuasive

300

⚡  
260

■ 254 [Essay about a backpack](#)—Excellent (CR)

▲ 253 [Essay convincing a friend to try something new](#)—Excellent (CR)

250

● 243 [Story based on a William Carlos Williams poem](#)—Excellent (CR)

240

230

**224** *Advanced*

220

■ 213 [Essay about a backpack](#)—Skillful (CR)

210

▲ 206 [Essay convincing a friend to try something new](#)—Skillful (CR)

● 203 [Story based on a William Carlos Williams poem](#)—Skillful (CR)

200

190

180

**173** *Proficient*

170

● 165 [Story based on a William Carlos Williams poem](#)—Sufficient (CR)

160

▲ 153 [Essay convincing a friend to try something new](#)—Sufficient (CR)

150

■ 147 [Essay about a backpack](#)—Sufficient (CR)

140

130

● 121 [Story based on a William Carlos Williams poem](#)—Uneven (CR)

120

**114** *Basic*

110

▲ 107 [Essay convincing a friend to try something new](#)—Uneven (CR)

■ 106 [Essay about a backpack](#)—Uneven (CR)

100

90

80

■ 77 [Essay about a backpack](#)—Insufficient (CR)

● 72 [Story based on a William Carlos Williams poem](#)—Insufficient (CR)

70

60

▲ 56 [Essay convincing a friend to try something new](#)—Insufficient (CR)

50

⚡

0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Writing Assessment.

## APPENDIX C

### Chronology of NAEP

<b>1963</b>	Francis Keppel, the U.S. Commissioner of Education from 1962 to 1965, was concerned about the lack of information regarding the academic achievement of American students. He hired Ralph W. Tyler, a psychologist and the nation's most prominent education evaluator, to form a committee to make recommendations on how to obtain the information. Tyler proposed periodically assessing a small sample of different students rather than trying to test all students on the national level; however, several influential educational associations were opposed to any student assessment data being collected and released at the state level because they feared that the results would be used to make improper and harmful comparisons.
<b>1969</b>	The first National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) was administered. The assessment content area was science.
<b>1970–1988</b>	Additional content areas were assessed by NAEP at the national level. In the early 1980's, NAEP was redesigned to assess four major subject areas (reading, mathematics, writing, and science) on a more regular basis. In addition to the traditional assessment of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds, children in Grades 3, 7, and 11 were assessed.
<b>1986</b>	Eight southern states, including Florida, began a three-year test of a sample of their students using NAEP reading and/or writing achievement tests. This assessment was guided by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).
<b>1986–1987</b>	A NAEP study group headed by Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander and H. Thomas James recommended that the U.S. Department of Education change grade-level sampling from Grades 3, 7, and 11 to the more important “transition” Grades of 4, 8, and 12. They also recommended adding a state-level NAEP to the assessment program.
<b>1988</b>	The Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvements Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) further expanded the NAEP program by increasing the number of educational subjects assessed and authorizing state assessments on a trial basis in reading and mathematics. This legislation also authorized NAEP to report achievement level data on a basis that ensures valid, reliable trend reporting and information on special groups. The 25-member National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) was created as the independent overseer of NAEP (P.L. 100-297). NAGB is specifically charged with developing assessment objectives and test specifications.
<b>1990</b>	Florida State Statute 229.57(2), now 1008.22(2), was adopted, directing the Commissioner of Education “to provide for school districts to participate in the administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or a similar national assessment program, both for the national sample and for any state-by-state comparison programs which may be initiated.” NAGB identified appropriate achievement levels and performance standards for each age and grade in each subject area assessed by NAEP.
<b>1990–1992</b>	As part of the NAEP Trial State Assessments (TSAs), Grade 8 students were assessed in mathematics in 1990. In 1992, both Grade 4 and 8 students were assessed in mathematics and Grade 4 students were assessed in reading.

<b>1994</b>	The Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 introduced design changes that expanded the data that NAEP gathered to include mathematics and reading assessments for students in Grades 4, 8, and 12. Due to budget issues, only the Grade 4 reading assessment was funded.
<b>1996</b>	State NAEP for Grades 4 and 8 mathematics and Grade 8 science were administered. NAEP began offering accommodations on a trial basis for Students with Disabilities (SD) and English language learners (ELL).
<b>1997</b>	NAGB adopted a schedule for national and state NAEP through the year 2010. Every other year, state NAEP was scheduled for Grades 4 and 8, alternating between reading/writing and mathematics/science (beginning with reading/writing in 1998).
<b>1998</b>	NAEP first offered accommodations to Students with Disabilities (SD) and English language learners (ELL). Results were reported in two ways: accommodations not permitted and accommodations permitted.
<b>1999</b>	Long-term trend NAEP was administered to 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students.
<b>2000</b>	Florida did not participate in state NAEP because of the expansion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT). The Florida Department of Education decided not to participate in state NAEP to lessen the burden on the schools as Florida's own assessment program substantially expanded.
<b>2001</b>	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was passed, requiring states/districts who receive Title 1 funding to participate in biennial State NAEP in reading and mathematics at Grades 4 and 8, beginning with the 2002-2003 academic year. The Act also specified that NAEP science and writing were to be administered alternately, every four years.
<b>2002</b>	State and National NAEP were given in Grades 4 and 8 in reading and writing. This NAEP administration was the first time school personnel were not required to administer the assessment. Beginning with the 2002 administration, contractors were hired to administer NAEP.
<b>2003</b>	State and National NAEP were given in Grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics. Florida was the only state to have a significant increase in Grade 4 reading between 2002 and 2003. The position of NAEP State Coordinator (NSC) was created by the National Council on Education Statistics (NCES) to enhance the profile of NAEP and to help administer a much-expanded assessment program than what was implemented prior to NCLB.
<b>2004</b>	Long-term trend NAEP was administered to 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students.
<b>2005</b>	State and National NAEP were administered in Grades 4 and 8 in reading, mathematics, and science. Results for reading and mathematics were published in October 2005, and the results for science were released in April 2006.
<b>2006</b>	National NAEP was administered in U.S. history, civics, and economics (Grade 12 only).
<b>2007</b>	State and National NAEP were administered in Grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics. Grade 8 students were also assessed in writing. Grade 12 students participated in reading and writing assessments at the national level.
<b>2008</b>	National NAEP was administered in Grades 4, 8, and 12 in reading, mathematics, and science, in Grade 8 in the Arts, and the Long-term Trend to 9-, 13- and 17-year old students.
<b>2009</b>	State and National NAEP were administered in Grades 4 and 8 in reading, mathematics, and science. Grade 12 students participated in the same three subjects at the national level.

## APPENDIX D

### Glossary of NAEP Terms

**achievement gap** – the difference between a referent group’s average score and a group of interest’s average score.

**achievement levels** – performance standards set by the [National Assessment Governing Board](#) (NAGB) that provide a context for interpreting student performance on NAEP, based on recommendations from panels of educators and members of the public. The levels, [Basic](#), [Proficient](#), and [Advanced](#), measure what students should know and be able to do at each grade assessed.

**achievement-level percentages** – the percentage of students within the total population, or in a particular student group, who meet or exceed expectations of what students should know and be able to do. Specifically, it is the weighted percentage of students with NAEP composite scores that are equal to, or exceed, the achievement-level cut scores specified by the [National Assessment Governing Board \(NAGB\)](#).

**Advanced** – one of the three NAEP [achievement levels](#), denoting superior performance at each grade assessed. See each NAEP subject for a detailed description of what students should know and be able to do at Grade 4, 8, or 12 at the *Advanced* level. The cut scores determining each level are available with these descriptions.

**average scaled score** – arithmetic mean of the scaled scores for a given group.

**Basic** – one of the three NAEP [achievement levels](#), denoting partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade assessed. NAEP also reports the proportion of students whose scores place them below the *Basic* achievement level. See each NAEP subject for a detailed description of what students should know and be able to do at Grade 4, 8, or 12 at the *Basic* level. The cut scores determining each level are available with these descriptions.

**below Basic** – scale scores that fall below the cut point for *Basic*.

**central city** – geographical term meaning the largest city of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Central city is not synonymous with “inner city.”

**English Language Learner (ELL)** – a term used to describe a student who is in the process of acquiring English language skills and knowledge. Some schools refer to these students using the term [limited English proficient \(LEP\)](#).

**gender** – gender classification (male or female) is obtained from school records.

**item** – the basic scoreable part of an assessment; a test question.

**National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** - a federally assisted meal program that provides low-cost or free lunches to eligible students. It is sometimes referred to as the Free/Reduced-Price Lunch program. Free lunches are offered to those students whose family incomes are at or below 130 percent of the poverty level; reduced-price lunches are offered to those students whose family incomes are between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level. Based on available school records, students are classified as either currently eligible or not currently eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch component of the Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program. The classification refers only to the school year in which the assessment was administered and is not based on eligibility in previous years. If school records are not available, the student is classified as "Information not available." If the school does not participate in the program, all students in that school are classified as "Information not available."

**NAEP** – the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students in the United States know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, economics, world history, the arts, and other subjects.

**national average** – obtained by aggregating the averages from each state. Thus, the national average is inclusive of the student information gathered at the state level.

**national sample** – at Grades 4 and 8, the national sample is a subset of the combined sample of students assessed in each participating state. At Grade 12, the sample is chosen using a stratified two-stage design that involves sampling students from selected schools across the country.

**No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)** – legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (Public Law 107-110 Title I Part A, section 1111). NCLB requires NAEP to conduct national and state assessments at least once every two years in reading and mathematics at Grades 4 and 8. NAEP may conduct a state assessment in reading and mathematics in Grade 12 at regularly scheduled intervals. To the extent that time and money allow, NAEP will be conducted in Grades 4, 8, and 12 at regularly scheduled intervals in additional subjects including writing, science, history, geography, civics, economics, foreign language, and arts. Any state that wishes to receive a Title 1 grant must include in the state plan it submits to the Secretary of Education an assurance that beginning in the 2002 – 2003 school year the state will participate in the biennial state-level National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

**oversampling** – deliberately sampling a portion of the population at a higher rate than the remainder of the population.

**percent correct** – the percent of a target population that would answer a particular item correctly.

**performance data** – any data coming from the assessment.

**Proficient** – one of the three NAEP [achievement levels](#), representing solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter. See each NAEP subject for a detailed description of what students should know and be able to do at Grade 4, 8, or 12 at the *Proficient* level. The cut scores determining each level are available with the descriptions.

**racial/ethnic minority groups** – two sources of race/ethnicity data are provided: one taken from school records and one based on students' self-identification. Race/ethnicity is presented for five mutually exclusive categories: White, African American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaskan Native (and, since 2003, “More Than One”).

**reportable population** – a group that has met the reporting requirements so that an estimate can be given for that group.

**rural/small town** – rural includes all places and areas with a population of less than 2,500 that are classified as rural by the Bureau of the Census. A small town is defined as places outside MSAs with a population of less than 25,000 but greater than or equal to 2,500.

**sample** – a subset of a population whose characteristics are studied to gain information about the entire population. NAEP assesses a representative sample of students each year, rather than the entire population of students.

**scale score** – a score, derived from student responses to NAEP assessment items that summarize the overall level of performance attained by a group of students. NAEP does not produce scale scores for individual students. When used in conjunction with interpretive aids, such as item maps, scale scores provide information about what a particular aggregate of students in the population knows and can do.

**score scale** – a scale used to describe what students know and can do. NAEP subject area scales typically range from 0–500 (reading, mathematics, history, and geography) or from 0–300 (science, writing, and civics).

**significantly different, statistically significant** – statistical tests are conducted to determine whether the changes or differences between two result numbers are statistically significant. The term “significant” does not imply a judgment about the absolute magnitude or educational relevance of changes in student performance. Rather, it is used to indicate that the observed changes are not likely to be associated with sampling and measurement error, but are statistically dependable population differences. NAEP uses widely accepted statistical standards in analyzing data. For instance, the Nation’s Report Card website discusses only findings that are statistically significant at the 0.05 level; however, some differences that are statistically significant appear small, particularly in recent assessment years, when the sample sizes have been larger.

**student group** – groups of the student population identified in terms of specific demographic or background characteristics. Some of the major student groups used for reporting NAEP results are those defined by students' gender, race or ethnicity, highest level of parental education, and type of school (public or nonpublic). Information gathered from NAEP background questionnaires also makes it possible to report results based on variables such as course-taking, home discussions of schoolwork, and television-viewing habits.

**students with disabilities (SD)** – a student with a disability may need specially designed instruction to meet his or her learning goals. A student with a disability will usually have an Individualized Education Program (IEP), which guides his or her special education instruction. The goal of NAEP is that students who are capable of participating meaningfully in the assessment are assessed, but some students with disabilities selected by NAEP may not be able to participate, even with accommodations.

**Title I** – a federally funded assistance program for economically and educationally disadvantaged students. Title I refers to a section of Public Law 107-110 (and predecessor, P. L. 103-382), "Improving The Academic Achievement Of The Disadvantaged." The Title I status of each participating student is indicated on the NAEP Assessment Administration form. In the Data Explorer, NAEP began reporting Title I by aggregated student participation with the 2000 assessments. The data were collected before then (for Chapter 1 and its successor, Title I) but are reported in a non-comparable statistic due to changing criteria for qualification as a Title I school. Currently, students classified as Title I include those in schools offering targeted assistance to low-income children and also schools with high rates of low-income children that use Title I funds to support school wide programs.

**trend line** – provides results on performance and how it has changed over time. Usually requires at least three assessment points.

**urban fringe/large town** – an urban fringe includes all densely settled places and areas within Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) that are classified as urban by the Bureau of the Census. A large town is defined as places outside MSAs with a population greater than or equal to 25,000.