

Public Schools
Assessment/Accountability



Education Council Sunshine State Standards

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What are the Sunshine State Standards?	The Sunshine State Standards identify what public school students should know and be able to do. The standards form the basis of public K-12 educational instruction expectations for student achievement in Florida public schools for grades Pre-K to 2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12. The tool for the evaluation and demonstration of the standards is the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). (Refer to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Fact Sheet.)
2. How were the Sunshine State Standards developed?	The DOE began developing the Sunshine State Standards in 1994 with the help of teachers, school administrators, business leaders, education experts, and representatives of professional organizations. Research was conducted on content, competencies, and instructional practices culminating in the Sunshine State Standards which the State Board of Education approved in 1996 to give parents, students, teachers, and school administrators a clear understanding of what skills and competencies Florida students should have in subject areas at specified stages of their school career.
3. What subject areas are covered in the Sunshine State Standards?	The Sunshine State Standards were originally developed for seven subject areas: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign languages. In the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, the standards have been expanded to include grade level expectations.
4. Why are the Sunshine State Standards necessary?	The Sunshine State Standards establish the baseline of information that students are expected to know at specified stages of their academic progression for purposes of measuring student performance and progress. With established standards, students can be monitored academically as they develop.
5. How will students know that they are meeting the standards?	State and local assessments are used to determine student progression. The FCAT, which is a combination of criterion-referenced and norm-referenced components, is designed and used to measure how well students in grades 3-10 are learning the skills and competencies outlined in the Sunshine State Standards. Assessments for each grade level must be capable of measuring each student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standards for that grade level and above, and must measure the annual progress of mastery of the Sunshine State Standards. (Refer to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Fact Sheet.)
6. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	Section 1000.21(7), F.S. -- Definition. Section 1001.03(1), F.S. -- Student performance standards.

Sunshine State Standards

	<p>Section 1003.41, F.S. -- Sunshine State Standards. Section 1008.22, F.S. -- Student assessment program.</p> <p>Rules 6A-1.09401, F.A.C. -- Minimum student performance standards</p>
7. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education K-12 Office of the Chancellor (850) 245-0416</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council
Florida Comprehensive
Assessment Test (FCAT)

Fact
Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. What is the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test?</p>	<p>The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is an integral part of Florida's overall plan to improve student achievement through higher standards. The FCAT is a series of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests designed to measure the Sunshine State Standards skills and competencies. The Sunshine State Standards outline the skills and competencies Florida students should have in seven subject areas at certain stages of their school career. (Refer to the Sunshine State Standards Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>2. In what grades is the FCAT administered?</p>	<p>The FCAT is administered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mathematics tests -- administered in grades 3 through 10, these tests are multiple choice and short-answer/long-answer performance tasks and include information related to other Sunshine State Standards content areas such as the arts, social studies, science, foreign language, and physical education.• Reading tests -- administered in grades 3 through 10, these tests are multiple-choice and short-answer/long-answer performance tasks that use various books and publications that students should be able to read at their grade level.• Writing tests -- administered in grades 4, 8, and 10, these tests require students to prepare original essays on various topics that are scored on a scale of 1 to 6. The 2006 administration will also include multiple choice questions with three and four answer options. These questions are designed to test student knowledge of sentence structure, organization and conventions.• Science tests – administered in grades 5, 8, and 11, these tests are multiple-choice and performance tasks that cover sciences in four categories: physical and chemical, earth and space, life and environment, and scientific thinking. <p>Students must earn a passing score on the reading and math components of the 10th grade FCAT or a concordant score on an alternative assessment in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma. (See High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheet.) However, certain disabled students may be exempted from this requirement (See Question 10).</p> <p>If a student does not participate in the FCAT, the school district is required to notify the student's parent and provide</p>

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

	the parent with information regarding the implication of such nonparticipation.
3. When is the FCAT administered?	<p>Current law requires the Commissioner of Education to establish a schedule for the administration of the FCAT that provides the latest possible administration and the earliest possible results.</p> <p>The FCAT test dates for the 2005-2006 academic year were set for the following dates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>September 26–30, 2005 or October 3-7, 2005:</i> FCAT reading and math tests for new students and students retaking one or both tests in the 11th and 12th grades. • <i>February 7-8, 2006:</i> FCAT writing test for students in the 4th, 8th, and 10th grades. • <i>February 26 - March 10, 2006:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- FCAT reading and math tests for all students in the 3rd thru 10th grades. -- FCAT science test for students in the 5th, 8th, and 11th grades. -- FCAT reading and math tests for new students and students retaking one or both tests in the 11th and 12th grades. • <i>June 19-23, 2006:</i> FCAT reading and math tests for new students and students retaking one or both tests and who are rising 12th grade students or above.
4. How was the FCAT developed?	The Florida Department of Education's (DOE) Assessment and School Performance Section developed the FCAT in conjunction with classroom teachers, curriculum experts, administrators, and citizens.
5. How is the FCAT scored?	Multiple-choice questions are machine scored. Trained evaluators hand score performance task short and long answer questions.
6. How are FCAT scores reported and what do the scores mean?	<p>The FCAT scores are reported two ways. First, the score is reported on a cut-score scale of 100 to 500. Cut-scores are linked to one of five achievement levels as established by rule, with level one being the lowest level and level five being the highest level. These scores reflect student achievement at a particular grade level.</p> <p>Second, a developmental score is reported on a scale of 0 to 3000. As students move from one grade level to the next, the developmental score should increase to reflect increased achievement. The developmental score is intended to allow parents and educators to monitor the year-to-year academic progress of students.</p>
7. How will a student's scores be used?	As a part of the Student Assessment Program, the FCAT data is used to assist in identifying student progress towards mastery of the Sunshine State Standards, assessing the learning gains of students, and determining school performance grade categories. (Refer to the School

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

	Grading System and the High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheets.)
<p>8. What are the passing scores on the 10th grade FCAT that students must achieve in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma?</p>	<p>In order to graduate with a standard high school diploma, graduates in the 2004-2005 school year had to achieve a cut-score of 300 in the reading portion and 300 in the mathematics portion of the FCAT or concordant standardized test scores on the ACT or SAT. Before a student is authorized to use a concordant score for purposes of high school graduation, the student must take the FCAT three times without earning the passing score unless he or she entered school in Florida as a senior.</p> <p>Dependent children of active members of the Armed Forces who transfer to a Florida public school during the student's last year of high school are allowed to use a concordant score to satisfy the FCAT requirement for graduation.</p> <p>If students do not achieve the required cut score when they initially take the FCAT and the cut-score is subsequently raised, students retaking the test must only earn the cut-score that was required at the time they initially took the FCAT. (Refer to the High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>9. What options are available for students who are unable to pass the grade 10 FCAT?</p>	<p>Students who have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the grade 10 FCAT or an alternate assessment by the end of grade 12 must be provided the following learning opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in an accelerated high school equivalency diploma preparation program during the summer. • upon receipt of a certificate of completion, be allowed to take the College Placement Test and be admitted to remedial or credit courses at a state community college, as appropriate. • participation in an adult general education program for such time as the student requires to master English, reading, mathematics, or any subject required for high school graduation. A student attending an adult general education program shall have the opportunity to take the grade 10 FCAT an unlimited number of times in order to receive a standard high school diploma.
<p>10. What options are available for students with disabilities to take or to be exempt from the FCAT?</p>	<p>The FCAT requirement may be waived for a student with a disability for the purpose of receiving a standard high school diploma under all of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student does not receive a passing grade on the FCAT after an opportunity to do so with appropriate accommodations and modifications once in grade 10 and once in grade 11. (Refer to FCAT Accommodations Fact Sheet.) • Student has completed all other required course work

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

	<p>for high school graduation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student’s individual educational plan (IEP) committee has determined that the FCAT cannot accurately measure the student’s abilities taking into consideration all allowable accommodations. (Refer to the Exceptional Student Education Fact Sheet.) <p>A student with a disability is not eligible for a standard high school diploma if the student’s IEP committee excludes the student from the FCAT and identifies an alternate assessment procedure under the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student’s demonstrated cognitive ability prevents the student from completing required course work and achieving Sunshine State Standards even with authorized course modifications; or • Student requires extensive direct instruction to accomplish the application and transfer of skills and competencies needed for domestic, community living, leisure, and vocational activities.
<p>11. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1001.02, F.S. -- General powers of the State Board of Education Section 1003.433(2), F.S. -- Out-of-state and out-of-country transfer students Section 1008.22, F.S. -- Student assessment program for public schools Section 1008.33, F.S. -- Authority to enforce school improvement Section 1008.345, F.S. -- Implementation of state system of school improvement and educational accountability</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C. -- Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C. -- Implementation of Florida’s System of School Improvement and Educational Accountability</p>
<p>12. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education (FDOE) K-12 Assessment and School Performance (850) 245-0513 www.fldoe.org</p> <p>12th Grade Options toll free line 1-800-315-0833 www.12thgradeoptions.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council
Florida Comprehensive
Assessment Test (FCAT)
Accommodations

Fact
Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. Who is eligible to receive accommodations when taking the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)?</p>	<p>Students with disabilities, students in exceptional education programs, and students who have limited English proficiency are eligible to receive test accommodations and modifications as necessary when taking the FCAT.</p> <p>A “student with a disability” means any student who is documented as having mental retardation; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a speech or language impairment; a visual impairment, including blindness; a serious brain injury; or a specific learning disability, including, but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculai, or developmental aphasia.</p>
<p>2. What is a test “accommodation”?</p>	<p>State Board of Education rule defines accommodations as adjustments to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the assessment questions;• Methods of recording the responses to the questions;• Schedule for the administration of the assessment;• Use of assistive devices to facilitate administration of the assessment.• Setting or room in which the test is administered. <p>The accommodations must demonstrate the student's abilities rather than reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual, speaking, or psychological process skills.</p>
<p>3. What types of accommodations can students with disabilities receive when taking the FCAT?</p>	<p>Pursuant to State Board of Education rule, authorized accommodations available to students with disabilities may include one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A regular print version of the test may be enlarged using mechanical or electronic means.• Large print versions of the test.• Braille versions of the test.• Signed or oral presentation may be provided for all directions and items except reading items.• Means to maintain or enhance visual attention to test items.• Written, signed, and verbal responses.• Use of mechanical and electronic devices to record responses.• Transcription of the student's responses by a test administrator.• Test administration during several brief sessions with frequent breaks or additional time.• Test administration individually or in a small group

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Accommodations

	<p>setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive or special furniture and special lighting or acoustics. • The use of a calculator when complex computations are required. • The use of an abacus. • The use of visual magnification and auditory amplification devices. • The use of technology without accessing spelling or grammar-checking applications for writing assignments and without accessing speech output programs for reading items. <p>State Board of Education Rule specifies that accommodations may be provided only if they do not alter the underlying content that is being measured by the test or negatively affect the test's reliability or validity.</p>
<p>4. What types of accommodations are not allowed during administration of the FCAT?</p>	<p>According to the DOE, the following are examples of accommodations that may be used in classrooms for instructional purposes, but are not allowable accommodations on all or portions of the FCAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of reading materials orally or on audiotape. • Provision of a "reading buddy" during the reading test. • Use of a calculator for grades 3-6. • Reduction in the total number of test questions. • Use of a thesaurus for writing assignments. • Provision of special word processing software that assists and anticipates what the student is trying to write. • Use of "memory cards".
<p>5. How does a parent of a student with a disability know if an accommodation the student receives during instruction is permissible during the administration of the FCAT?</p>	<p>School districts are required to inform the parents of a student with a disability of the implications associated with providing the student with accommodations during classroom instruction that are not allowable on the FCAT.</p> <p>The parent of a student with a disability must consent in writing for the student to receive accommodations during instruction that are not permitted on the FCAT and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations.</p>
<p>6. What options are available for students with disabilities who need unique accommodations that are not currently authorized?</p>	<p>Students with disabilities may request and the Commissioner of Education may approve additional unique accommodations not currently authorized. Students who are granted such unique accommodations are still eligible to receive a standard high school diploma.</p> <p>During the 2004-2005 academic year, 44 unique accommodation requests were made and 27 were granted by the commissioner.</p>

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Accommodations

7. What type of high school diploma are students with disabilities issued if they receive accommodations when taking the FCAT?	Pursuant to State Board of Education Rule, a student with disabilities who receives an authorized accommodation on the FCAT is eligible for a standard high school diploma as long as he or she complies with all other criteria for graduation with a standard high school diploma. (Refer to the FCAT and High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheets.)
8. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	Section 1002.23(2)(f), F.S. -- Family and School Partnership for Student Achievement Act. Section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S. -- Definitions. Section 1003.43(8) and (11), F.S. -- High School Graduation Requirements. Section 1007.02, F.S. -- Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act. Section 1008.22(3)(c), F.S. -- Student Assessment Program for Public Schools. Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C. -- Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities.
9. Where can I get additional information?	Florida Department of Education K-12 Assessment and School Performance (850) 245-0513 Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451



Education Council School Grading System

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What are the different school grade categories?	School performance grades are assigned to reflect the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “A” – schools making excellent progress.• “B” – schools making above average progress.• “C” – schools making satisfactory progress.• “D” – schools making less than satisfactory progress.• “F” – schools failing to make adequate progress.
2. What factors are used for determining a school’s performance grade?	A school’s performance grade is based on a combination of the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student achievement scores which indicate the percent of students who score at or above FCAT achievement level 3 in reading, and math, and a score of 3.5 in writing.• Annual student learning gains, as measured by annual FCAT assessments in grades 3rd through 10th.• Improvement in reading, as measured by the FCAT, by the school’s lowest 25th percentile of students, unless such students are performing above satisfactory performance. (Refer to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Fact Sheet.)
3. What is meant by a student’s annual “learning gain?”	A student’s annual “learning gain” refers to an increase in student learning over a one-year period. The annual learning gain of a particular student is determined by comparing the student’s current year performance to that student’s performance during the prior year. DOE currently uses 3 factors to indicate a gain in student learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved FCAT achievement level from one year to the next.• Maintained achievement levels within levels 3, 4, or 5 from one year to the next.• Maintained FCAT achievement levels 1 or 2 and demonstration of more than one year’s growth on the FCAT developmental scale, as determined by the DOE. Students whose FCAT Achievement Level declines from one year to the next shall not be deemed to have made annual learning gains.
4. Are all students’ test scores counted toward a school’s grade?	In accordance with s. 1008.34, F.S., all students must participate in the statewide assessment testing program, except as otherwise prescribed by the Commissioner. Students’ test scores used to calculate a school’s grade include students in a standard curriculum and those who are language impaired, speech impaired, gifted, hospital and homebound but have no other disabilities, and limited

School Grading System

	<p>English proficient (LEP) students who have been in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for more than two years.</p> <p>The only prescribed exceptions to the testing requirements have been for severely disabled students classified in Support Levels III through V of the Exceptional Student Education categories, LEP students who have been in ESOL programs for less than two years, and students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) commitment facilities. Beginning in 2004-2005, test results of all students, regardless of disability or limited English proficiency, were included in the calculation of the percent of students being tested and the percent of students displaying learning gains. (Refer to the English for Speakers of Other Languages and the Exceptional Student Education Fact Sheets.)</p>
<p>5. Are all schools graded?</p>	<p>Generally, all public schools, including charter schools with students in grades tested by the FCAT, receive a school grade. Schools that do not have a statistically significant testing population are not graded. DJJ facilities and other schools that provide short-term alternative education programs are also not graded.</p>
<p>6. Can a school receive a high grade by concentrating on its highest achieving students at the expense of others?</p>	<p>No. According to s. 1008.34(3)(b), F.S., a school's grade must not only include the scores of all eligible students who have been assessed on the FCAT, but also the scores of all eligible students who have an FCAT reading score at or in the lowest 25th percentile of students in the school unless these students are performing above satisfactory performance. Thus, each school should also concentrate on improving the scores of its lowest performers.</p>
<p>7. What are school improvement ratings?</p>	<p>School improvement ratings are indicators of whether a school's performance has improved, remained the same, or declined from one year to the next. The ratings are based on a comparison of the current year's and previous year's student and school performance data.</p>
<p>8. Are there rewards for schools that make certain grades?</p>	<p>Yes. Schools which receive an "A," making excellent progress, are rewarded in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility for school recognition awards of up to \$100/student. • Receipt of deregulated status, if requested. • Greater authority over allocation of the school's budget <p>Schools that improve at least one grade are also eligible for school recognition awards. (Refer to the Deregulation of Public Schools and the School Recognition Program Fact Sheets.)</p>
<p>9. What assistance is available to schools with low performance grades?</p>	<p>Schools that receive performance grades of "D" or "F" may receive priority for training, technical assistance, and other services designed to improve school performance. Specific</p>

School Grading System

	<p>services offered by the State Board of Education through the Assistance Plus program to districts with failing schools during 2005-2006 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide full-time school improvement facilitators • Provide site-based mathematics and reading coaches • Assign regional technology support staff to assist with effective integration of technology into instruction • Partner with the College Board to provide teacher training and student mentors • Establish and implement Community Oversight Boards • Provide professional development • Schedule information sharing activities with principals and faculty of similar schools with higher performance • Establish in district budgets a special category to support school improvement efforts at “F” schools <p>Students assigned to attend schools that have received a performance grade “F,” failing to make adequate progress, for 2 school years in a 4-year period are eligible to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program. (Refer to the Opportunity Scholarships Fact Sheet.)</p>																																																
<p>10. How do parents find out about a school’s grade?</p>	<p>The DOE and the school districts are required to annually publish school grades and school improvement ratings. Parents are entitled by law to an easy-to-read report card which gives information on both the school grade and rating of the school in which their child is enrolled.</p>																																																
<p>11. What are the school grades in the state?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>A</u></th> <th><u>B</u></th> <th><u>C</u></th> <th><u>D</u></th> <th><u>F</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1998-1999</td> <td>202</td> <td>313</td> <td>1230</td> <td>601</td> <td>76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1999-2000</td> <td>579</td> <td>266</td> <td>1165</td> <td>397</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-2001</td> <td>592</td> <td>412</td> <td>1122</td> <td>307</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2001-2002</td> <td>894</td> <td>553</td> <td>725</td> <td>185</td> <td>64</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2002-2003</td> <td>1230</td> <td>569</td> <td>527</td> <td>141</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2003-2004</td> <td>1262</td> <td>540</td> <td>615</td> <td>184</td> <td>49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004-2005</td> <td>1255</td> <td>588</td> <td>619</td> <td>230</td> <td>78</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>F</u>	1998-1999	202	313	1230	601	76	1999-2000	579	266	1165	397	4	2000-2001	592	412	1122	307	0	2001-2002	894	553	725	185	64	2002-2003	1230	569	527	141	35	2003-2004	1262	540	615	184	49	2004-2005	1255	588	619	230	78
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<p>12. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1008.33, F.S. -- Authority to Enforce Public School Improvement. Section 1008.34(2), F.S. -- School Performance Grade Categories. Section 1008.34(4), F.S. -- School Improvement Ratings. Section 1008.34(5), F.S. -- School Grade and Improvement Rating Reports. Section 1008.345, F.S. -- School Improvement and Education Accountability. Section 1008.36, F.S. -- Florida School Recognition Program. Section 1011.62(1)(f), F.S. -- Supplemental Academic Instruction.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C. -- FCAT Requirements Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C. -- Implementation of Florida’s</p>																																																

School Grading System

13. Where can I get additional information?	System of School Improvement and Accountability. Florida Department of Education Evaluation & Reporting (850)245-0513 www.fldoe.org Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451
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Education Council
School Recognition Program

Fact Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. What is the School Recognition Program?</p>	<p>The School Recognition Program is a performance-based incentive program for schools. Created in 1999, it was designed to provide increased autonomy and financial awards to schools that have either sustained high student performance or demonstrated substantial improvement in student performance.</p>
<p>2. Which schools are eligible for recognition under this program?</p>	<p>Schools that either receive a performance grade "A" or improve at least one performance grade from the previous year are eligible for recognition and financial awards. (Refer to the School Grading System Fact Sheet.) Schools that either receive an "A" or improve at least two performance grades are eligible for deregulated status as provided in s. 1008.345, F.S.</p>
<p>3. What is meant by "deregulated status"?</p>	<p>Schools eligible for deregulated status as outlined in s. 1003.63 (5), (7) – (10), F.S., are exempt from all statutes of the Florida K-20 Education Code, except those pertaining to civil rights and student health, safety, and welfare. In addition, they have greater authority over the school's total budget, including, but not limited to, allocation of instructional staff and the acquisition of instructional materials, equipment, and technology.</p>
<p>4. Are schools that do not receive a performance grade eligible for school recognition?</p>	<p>No. Section 1008.36, F.S., specifies that the School Recognition Program uses school grades to determine eligibility. In addition, the rules of the Department of Education (DOE) also require schools to have a performance grade to participate in the program.</p>
<p>5. How many schools are eligible for school recognition this year?</p>	<p>The DOE reports that the 2005 school recognition list includes 1,503 schools eligible for \$134,337,490 in financial awards.</p>
<p>6. Do schools have to apply to receive the award?</p>	<p>No. A school's eligibility for an award is based solely on the specified performance criteria (See Question 2). Award schools will be asked to provide information on successful programs and practices to share with other schools.</p>
<p>7. What is the amount of the financial award for each school?</p>	<p>Award amounts are equivalent to \$100 per student based on the school's prior year enrollment.</p>
<p>8. How may the funds from this program be used?</p>	<p>The funds may be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonrecurring bonuses to the faculty and staff, • nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials, or • temporary personnel to assist the school in maintaining or improving student performance.
<p>9. Who decides how the award will be used?</p>	<p>The school's staff and the school advisory council (SAC) jointly decide the use of the funds within the above stated</p>

School Recognition Program

	<p>purposes. Local schools may develop their own processes for reaching a decision; however the planned use of funds is subject to the approval of the school staff and the SAC. The decision at the school level must not conflict with any state policies on expenditures of these funds. If no decision is made by November 1, the award money is evenly distributed to the classroom teachers who currently teach at the award school.</p>
<p>10. May schools share their award with other school(s)?</p>	<p>Yes. Schools may decide to share their awards with feeder schools (i.e., schools of a lower grade which “feed” students to the award school), low performing schools, and new schools receiving faculty and students from the award school. The school staff and the SAC must approve the decision. Shared funds must still be expended for the purposes outlined in law.</p>
<p>11. May faculty and staff who were at the school during the year the award was earned, but who are no longer there, receive a bonus?</p>	<p>Yes, but only if the staff and SAC currently at the awarded school decide, prior to November 1, to do so.</p>
<p>12. Are these funds subject to collective bargaining?</p>	<p>No. According to s. 1008.36(5), F.S., "Notwithstanding statutory provisions to the contrary, incentive awards are not subject to collective bargaining."</p>
<p>13. Must all the funds be spent in the same fiscal year?</p>	<p>There is no time limit for the expenditure of funds. To maximize their benefits, it is good practice to spend performance awards in the same year they are received.</p>
<p>14. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1008.345(7), F.S. -- Implementation of State System of School Improvement and Accountability</p> <p>Section 1008.36, F.S. -- Florida School Recognition Program</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.09981(10), F.A.C. -- Rewards and recognition</p>
<p>15. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education Evaluation and Reporting (850) 245-0411</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council **School Advisory Councils (SACs)**

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What are School Advisory Councils?	School advisory councils are a component of Florida's system of school improvement and accountability. Each district school board is required to establish a School Advisory Council (SAC) for each school in the district, or a district advisory council if the district has fewer than 10,000 students. A SAC assists in preparing and evaluating the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and provides assistance in the preparation of the school's annual budget. SIPs are locally developed "blueprints" for achieving the state education goals and student performance standards.
2. Who is eligible to be a member of a SAC?	The SAC is composed of the school principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community members who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. A majority of the members must be persons who are not employed by the school. Council members must be elected by their respective peer groups at the school; the district school board establishes procedures to select business and community members and must review the membership composition of each SAC. If needed, the district school board must appoint additional members to achieve proper representation. Technical centers and high school advisory councils must include students; middle and junior high school advisory councils may include students. SACs of technical and adult education centers are not required to include parents as members. Funds from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund (lottery dollars) may not be released to a district that does not comply with SAC membership composition requirements.
3. How has the membership requirement for SACs evolved?	<p>Before 1991, district school boards were not required to establish SACs. Any SACs which were established were required to have membership which was "broadly representative of the community served by the school." The 1991 Legislature replaced the "broadly representative..." language with the present language of, "(members) who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school..."</p> <p>Since 1991, that language has been altered eight times. Most of these changes have dealt with increasing the responsibility of SACs, but several of these changes have dealt with specific issues concerning the membership composition of the SAC. The 1997 Legislature required SACs to draw a majority of membership from individuals</p>

School Advisory Councils (SACs)

	<p>who are not school board employees.</p> <p>To further strengthen community participation and input, the 2002 Legislature required SACs to have bylaws. The bylaws must include the following provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three days written notice to all SAC members when a matter comes before the council that requires a vote. • A quorum present to vote on any matter. (A quorum is defined as a majority of the membership of the council.) • Meetings scheduled at times when all members can attend. • Members with two unexcused consecutive absences from a properly noticed meeting replaced. • Minutes of the meeting recorded. <p>District school boards may review each set of bylaws, but they are not required to approve them. The district school board must also maintain a record of the minutes of council meetings for each of their schools.</p>
<p>4. Have reviews been conducted regarding the membership requirements of SACs?</p>	<p>Yes. A 1993-1994 performance review by the Office of the Auditor General, and a 1995-1996 report by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) found persistent problems in SAC membership in the 14 school districts reviewed. In one-third of the SACs reviewed, 50% of the SAC membership was new to the council. Nearly half of the SACs reviewed did not include all statutorily required membership groups, such as business/community members and education support employees. Nearly one third did not reflect the school community's racial and ethnic diversity. School employees dominated 63% of the SACs, and school board employees dominated 78% of the SACs.</p> <p>Additionally, OPPAGA reviews SAC membership composition through the Best Financial Management Practice Reviews and similar problems have been reported.</p> <p>The Auditor General also reviews SAC membership composition in their annual audits of school districts and reports similar problems.</p>
<p>5. Is it difficult for a district to meet the membership composition requirements?</p>	<p>Districts and schools frequently report that securing parental involvement at the schools and on the SACs is challenging due to difficulty in finding participants who represent the lower economic groups served by the school, and who have the desire and time to serve on the SAC. This problem is magnified in schools with a high number of low income students.</p> <p>Additionally, it can be intrusive and impractical for schools</p>

School Advisory Councils (SACs)

	to determine which ethnic, racial, or economic group an individual represents.
6. Does a SAC have money to spend and how can they spend it?	<p>A portion of the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund is distributed to each school (through the districts) for the SAC to use for programs and projects to enhance school performance through the implementation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Neither school district staff nor a principal may override the recommendations of the school advisory council for the use of the money. The money may not be used for capital improvements or for projects or programs with duration of more than one year.</p> <p>Additionally, the SAC determines jointly with the school's staff the use of any funds awarded to the school through the School Recognition Program. However, if the school staff and the school advisory council cannot reach agreement by November 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school. (Refer to the School Recognition Program Fact Sheet.)</p>
7. How much money is appropriated?	The earmarked amount in the General Appropriations Act each year from 1997 through 2006 for discretionary use by SACs was \$10 per unweighted FTE student.
8. Are SAC meetings subject to the Sunshine Law?	Yes. SAC meetings are public meetings and subject to the Sunshine Law.
9. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 24.121, F.S. -- Lottery money. Section 286.011(1), F.S. -- Sunshine Law. Section 1001.42(16), F.S. -- School improvement plans. Section 1001.452, F.S. -- District and School Advisory Councils. Section 1008.36, F.S. -- School Recognition Program.</p> <p>2005-2006 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 6</p> <p>Attorney General's Informal Opinion letter, March 14, 1994.</p>
10. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education Bureau of School Improvement (850) 245-0423 http://www.bsi.fsu.edu</p> <p>Department of Education General Counsel Opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 00-01 Florida School Recognition Program, Section 231.2905, Florida Statutes – Definition of the terms “faculty” and “staff” • 00-03 Bonuses for School Advisory Council Members

School Advisory Councils (SACs)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 98-04 Composition of school board advisory councils• 94-022 Role of school advisory councils in preparation SIP• 94-019 SAC role in preparation of the SIP <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>
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Education Council

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

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<p>1. What is the No Child Left Behind Act?</p>	<p>The <i>No Child Left Behind Act</i> (NCLB) of 2001 is a federal law which redefines the K-12 structure of education, with its goal to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. The NCLB embodies four principles for education reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stronger accountability for results,• expanded flexibility and local control,• expanded options for parents, and• emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work.
<p>2. How does NCLB increase accountability and how has Florida implemented this principle?</p>	<p>NCLB strengthens accountability by requiring states to implement statewide accountability systems covering all public schools and students. These systems must be based on challenging state standards in reading and mathematics, annual testing for all students in grades 3-8 and in high school, and annual statewide progress objectives ensuring that <i>all subgroups</i> of students reach proficiency by 2013-14. Assessment results must be broken out by poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency to ensure that no child is left behind. Schools must meet annual targets for the percent of students who perform at or above the proficient level on state tests, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) level 3, in reading and math in order to make “<i>Adequate Yearly Progress</i>” (AYP). School districts and schools that do not make AYP toward statewide proficiency goals will, over time, be subject to improvement, corrective action, and restructuring measures aimed at getting them back on course to meet state standards (See Question 4).</p> <p>In 1996 Florida adopted the <i>Sunshine State Standards</i> to give parents, students, teachers, and school administrators a clear understanding of what skills and competencies Florida students should have in seven subject areas at certain stages of their school career: reading, math, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign languages. The Department of Education is currently conducting a review cycle to update the standards. (Refer to the Sunshine State Standards Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>3. How does NCLB expand flexibility and local control?</p>	<p>The NCLB gives states and school districts flexibility in the use of federal education funds in exchange for strong accountability for results. New flexibility provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authority for states and local educational agencies (LEA) to transfer up to 50 percent of the funding they receive under four major state grant programs to any one of the programs, or to Title I. Covered programs include Teacher Quality

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

	<p>State Grants, Educational Technology, Innovative Programs, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive State Flexibility Demonstration Program that permits up to seven states to consolidate the state share of nearly all federal state grant programs while providing additional flexibility in their use of Title V Innovation funds.
<p>4. How does NCLB expand options for parents and students?</p>	<p>The NCLB increases the choices available to the parents of students attending Title I schools that fail to meet state standards. Parents of students in schools that have been identified for school improvement (a school that fails for two or more consecutive years to meet achievement goals), have the option of transferring their children to another public school in their district. The district is required to pay for transportation.</p> <p>Parents of students that are eligible for free/reduced-price lunch attending a Title I school that fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for three or more consecutive years have the option of receiving supplemental services, such as tutoring, after-school help, or summer classes, from an State approved provider of their choice.</p> <p>Title I schools that continue to fail (those that have failed to meet State standards for at least 4 consecutive years) must be provided technical assistance from the school district and the district must implement a corrective action plan.</p> <p>Title I schools that continue to fail to make AYP for 5 consecutive years, even after receiving assistance, must be restructured under an alternative governance arrangement.</p> <p>Additionally, states must allow students who attend a persistently dangerous school, or who are victims of violent crime at school, to transfer to a safe school. States also must report school safety statistics to the public on a school-by-school basis.</p>
<p>5. How does NCLB promote the reading teaching methods that are proven to work?</p>	<p>The NCLB has developed a comprehensive effort called <i>Reading First</i>. This \$300 million state grant program promotes the use of scientifically based research to provide high-quality reading instruction for grades kindergarten through grade three to ensure that all children read well by the end of grade three. State education agencies submitted applications to receive <i>Reading First</i> grants.</p>
<p>6. How has Florida implemented a similar reading program?</p>	<p>In an effort to ensure that Florida's school children are able to read on grade level, the Florida Legislature has taken steps to end social promotion of students who are not able to read. Students who demonstrate a reading deficiency in kindergarten through grade three are required to be given extensive remedial instruction. If, at the end of grade three, the student's reading deficiency has not been remedied, the student must be retained. (Refer to the Reading Instruction Fact Sheet.)</p>

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

	<p><i>Just Read, Florida!</i> is a comprehensive coordinated reading initiative implemented in 2001 by executive order of Governor Jeb Bush aimed at helping every student become a successful, independent reader. Scientifically based reading research provides the foundation of this program. (Refer to the Reading Instruction Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>7. How does the NCLB strengthen teacher quality?</p>	<p>The NCLB authorizes \$3.2 billion in federal funds to improve teacher quality throughout the country. All states must put a “highly-qualified teacher” in every public school classroom by June 30, 2006 (See Question 8).</p> <p>The NCLB also makes it easier for local schools to recruit and retain excellent teachers. The NCLB gives states the flexibility to develop innovative programs for improving teacher quality including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative ways of becoming a teacher, so experienced professionals can become teachers faster; • Merit pay authorization enabling states and districts to reward good teachers and encourage them to stay in the profession; • Authorization to states and districts to give bonuses to teachers in high-need subjects, such as math and science; • A boost in the “Troops to Teachers” program to encourage women and men in the military, many of whom have much needed math and science experience, to become teachers; and • An increase in the “Transition to Teaching” program, which is a program to recruit high-quality professionals to become teachers.
<p>8. What is a highly-qualified teacher?</p>	<p>Requirements to be considered a “highly-qualified teacher” under NCLB are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers must be fully licensed or certified by the respective state. • <u>New elementary</u> teachers must have a bachelor’s degree and pass a state test demonstrating subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, math and other areas of basic elementary school curriculum. • <u>New middle or secondary</u> school teachers must have at least a bachelor’s degree and demonstrate competency in each academic subject taught, or complete an academic major, a graduate degree or advanced certification. • <u>Existing teachers</u> must have at least a bachelor’s degree and meet the requirements above, or demonstrate competency in all subjects taught. A state evaluation standard is to be used to judge competency. The evaluation standard must provide objective information about the teacher’s knowledge in the subject taught and can consider, but not use as a primary criterion, time spent teaching the subject. <p>(Refer to the Teacher Certification Fact Sheet.)</p>

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

<p>9. How does NCLB promote English proficiency?</p>	<p>The NCLB act simplifies federal support for English language instruction by combining categorical bilingual and immigrant education grants that benefited a small percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) in relatively few schools into a state formula program. The new formula program will facilitate the comprehensive planning by states and school districts needed to ensure implementation of programs that benefit all ELLs by helping them learn English and meet the same high academic standards as other students. In addition, Title III, NCLB requires that all ELLs be assessed annually to determine the progress towards proficiency in English. States are required to establish annual measurable achievement objectives to determine progress made by each district in meeting the state goals. (Refer to the English for Speakers of Other Languages [ESOL] Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>10. How do Florida's A+ Plan and the NCLB Act compare?</p>	<p>While Florida's A+ Plan and the NCLB share the same goal of high achievement for all students, the rules by which the two laws measure progress toward the goal are slightly different. The A+ Plan evaluates schools by taking a moving picture of student achievement, using a combination of current student achievement along with improvement in learning from one year to the next providing a complete picture of student achievement and school performance. NCLB uses a one-time snapshot of student achievement during one year rather than over the years for the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculation. In addition, AYP analyzes schools based on nine different student subgroups and on several criteria. If a single subgroup does not meet any one of the criterion, the school will not make AYP.</p> <p>NCLB points out specific sub-groups that need improvement. In addition to reporting aggregate data for all students, NCLB requires achievement data to be reported separately for economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and each major racial and ethnic group (Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian). NCLB requires schools to test at least 95 percent of the students in the school and in each subgroup. Florida's A+ Plan gauges the overall quality of a school's effort in improving student achievement. These basic differences may result in a number of the A, B, or C-graded schools under the A+ Plan, not meeting AYP and being labeled as "in need of improvement" under the NCLB. Schools and the public should interpret the new "in need of improvement" label not as a failure on the part of any of the state's schools, as much as an additional piece of information representing a different perspective on how to use FCAT scores to hold schools accountable. NCLB introduces new ratings and labels that can be used to complement, supplement, and enhance the more established and comprehensive A+ Plan.</p>

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

11. What are the applicable statutes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ PL 107-110, <i>The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001</i>▪ Section 1008.22, F.S. -- Student assessment program for public schools.▪ Section 1008.345, F.S. -- Implementation of state system of school improvement and educational accountability.
12. Where can I find additional information?	<p><i>No Child Left Behind</i> U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave., SW Washington, D.C. 20202 (800) USA-LEARN http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/</p> <p>Florida Department of Education No Child Left Behind (850) 245-0411</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>