

GRADING FLORIDA PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2005-2006

Schools are assigned a grade based primarily upon student achievement data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). School grades communicate to the public how well a school is performing relative to state standards. School grades are calculated based on annual learning gains of each student toward achievement of Sunshine State Standards, the progress of the lowest quartile of students, and the meeting of proficiency standards.

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

School Grades

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 410 points or more • Meet adequate progress of lowest students in reading • Test at least 95% of eligible students
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 380 points or more • Meet adequate progress of lowest students in reading within two years • Test at least 90% of eligible students
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 320 points or more • Meet adequate progress of lowest students in reading within two years • Test at least 90% of eligible students
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 280 points or more • Test at least 90% of eligible students
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer than 280 points or • Less than 90% of eligible students tested
P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points only — alternative schools had the option to earn a points-only grade rather than a traditional school grade • The points-only calculation is the same as the traditional school grade calculation; however, no “A” – “F” grade is assigned

Scoring High on the FCAT

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

- Schools earn one point for each percent of students who score in achievement levels 3, 4, or 5 in **reading** and one point for each percent of students who score 3, 4, or 5 in **math**.
- The **writing** exam is scored by at least two readers on a scale of 1 to 6. Schools earn one point for each percent of students scoring 3.5 or above. If a school does not have writing scores, the district average for all students in writing will be used.

Making Annual Learning Gains

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

- Schools earn one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in reading and one point for each percent of students who make learning gains in math. Students can demonstrate learning gains in any one of three ways:
 - (1) Improve achievement levels from 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, or 4-5; **or**
 - (2) Maintain within the relatively high levels of 3, 4, or 5; **or**
 - (3) Demonstrate more than one year's growth within achievement levels 1 or 2 (does not include retained students).

Special attention is given to the reading gains of students in the lowest 25%¹ in levels 1, 2, or 3 in each school. Schools earn one point for each percent of the lowest performing readers who make learning gains from the previous year. It takes at least 50% to make "adequate progress" for this group.

Which students are included in school grade calculations?

As in previous years, only standard curriculum students (including Speech impaired, gifted, hospital/homebound, and limited English proficient students (LEP) with more than two years in an ESOL program) enrolled in the same school in both October and February are included in the components for scoring high on the FCAT. All students, including students with disabilities (SWD) and LEP students, are included in the learning gains component of the school grade calculation.

What happens if the lowest performing students in the school do not make "adequate progress" in reading?

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

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