



FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICT SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 1, 2015

FLORIDA SUPERINTENDENTS STILL HAVE SERIOUS CONCERNS REGARDING VALIDITY OF FLORIDA STANDARDS ASSESSMENT

Tallahassee, FL – While recognizing that sufficient time has not been provided to thoroughly review the 186-page report, superintendents stand firm behind their initial position that the results of the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) cannot fairly be used in teacher evaluations or to calculate A-F grades for public schools. The report itself highlights and underscores the concerns of superintendents.

“The precise magnitude of the problem is difficult to gauge with 100% accuracy, but the evaluation team can reasonably state that the spring 2015 administration of the FSA did not meet the normal rigor and standardization expected with a high-stakes assessment program like the FSA.”

[Independent Verification of the Psychometric Validity for the Florida Standards Assessment Executive Summary, Findings, page 11.]

Three major concerns that arise from the validity report:

1. Evaluation of Test Items

The report confirmed that the FSA failed to provide close to 100% match with questions. [Independent Verification of the Psychometric Validity for the Florida Standards Assessment, Florida Standards Comparisons, page 36.] The table on page 36 clearly shows that in ELA Grade 3 and Grade 10 – both of which have retention/promotion consequences – only 65% of the items matched Florida Standards. In any gradebook in Florida, 65% = D.

The test items were originally written to measure the Utah standards – which is also where the assessment was field tested – rather than the Florida Standards. This anomaly alone is grounds to suspect the validity of this high-stakes test. Student scores from this year’s FSA should be viewed as a “baseline” mark from which we all move forward.

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2. Evaluation of Test Administration

*“The spring 2015 FSA administration was problematic. Problems were encountered on just about every aspect of administration, from the initial training and preparation to the delivery of the tests themselves. ... **the 2015 spring administration clearly did not meet the normal rigor and standardization expected with a high-stakes assessment program like FSA.**”*

[Independent Verification of the Psychometric Validity for the Florida Standards Assessment Executive Summary, Findings, page 11].

3. Student Level Decisions

*“With respect to student level decisions, the evidence for the paper and pencil delivered exams support the use of the FSA at the student level. **For the CBT FSA, the FSA scores for some students will be suspect. Although the percentage of students in the aggregate may appear small, it still represents a significant number of students for whom critical decisions need to be made. Therefore, test scores should not be used as a sole determinant in decisions such as the prevention of advancement to the next grade, graduation eligibility, or placement into a remedial course.....** This conclusion is primarily based on observations of the difficulties involved with the administration of the FSA.”* [Independent Verification of the Psychometric Validity for the Florida Standards Assessment Executive Summary, Conclusion #7, Use of FSA Scores for Student-Level Decisions, page 17].

While the report is extensive and thorough, many of the results further confirm Florida superintendents’ valid concerns regarding the validity of the FSA for use in teacher evaluations and school grade calculations. Superintendents firmly believe that the 2015 FSA results should be used as baseline data only.

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