



FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICT SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 9, 2011

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SUPERINTENDENTS STAND FIRM ON THEIR CUT SCORE RECOMMENDATION – ACKNOWLEDGE INCLUSIVE FCAT CUT SCORE PROCESS

Tallahassee, FL – Florida Superintendents have always supported increased rigor and academic standards that are data-driven. Once again, superintendents will provide the leadership to rise to the challenge of implementing the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) as they have always done, with the ultimate goal of increasing student achievement and individual success.

The implementation of a new FCAT (commonly referred to as FCAT 2.0) brought about the need for new cut scores, which are used to determine student achievement levels. FCAT 2.0 alone significantly increases rigor and challenges students to rise to the next generation of academic standards, which is something Florida superintendents and other educators have consistently supported.

To that end, the **Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS) stands firm behind the Level 3 cut score of 238 in ninth grade and 243 in tenth grade as recommended by a majority of the DOE-appointed Reactor Panel #1 (which included superintendents, educators, Florida Chamber of Commerce, Florida Council of 100, Foundation for Florida’s Future, Florida PTA and other education entities); and was reaffirmed by Reactor Panel #2 which was primarily comprised of university and community college representatives.**

Commissioner Robinson has proposed 240 for ninth grade and 245 for tenth which is two points higher than the two Reactor Panels supported. **Regardless of the differing opinions it is important to note that the DOE-proposed cut scores ultimately achieve the goal of all entities involved in the process: to increase rigor and raise academic standards at all grade levels.**

“As superintendents, we are realistic in terms of the real-life implications these increased standards will have in terms of students needing remediation and/or not passing the FCAT on the first attempt; however the increased standards and high expectations will ultimately serve our students well as we all work together to ensure that they are academically prepared for a 21st century economy,” states Reactor Panel #1 member and Okaloosa County Schools Superintendent Alexis Tibbetts.

Despite the difference of opinion regarding high school cut scores, FADSS commends Florida Department of Education (DOE) Commissioner Gerard Robinson on implementing an inclusive, methodical process in regard to setting the new FCAT cut scores. Although Commissioner Robinson’s FCAT cut score recommendation for ninth and tenth grade is two points higher than the cut score supported by Florida superintendents, the process itself sends a clear signal that Florida is moving in the right direction by including all stakeholders in setting public education standards.

“Even though Commissioner Robinson’s recommendation is higher than the cut score supported by Reactor Panel #1 on which I served; that disappointment is balanced with the encouragement experienced from such an inclusive and strategic process,” states FADSS President and Orange County Superintendent Ronald Blocker. “I have had the privilege of serving as a superintendent for 12 years, and we’ve rarely had meaningful involvement where superintendents felt that their opinions were being seriously considered,” adds Blocker.

As Governor Rick Scott has recently stated: “Education and jobs...those two things are inseparable. Making sure students get a high-quality relevant education so they have the skills and training they need to succeed is key to Florida’s future.”

THE BOTTOM LINE: With the increased rigor of FCAT 2.0 and increased cut score achievement standards across all grade levels, reinvesting in Florida’s public school students is crucial to Florida’s economic future.

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The mission of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents is to assist and support superintendents in providing leadership to ensure that every student in Florida acquires the skills, knowledge and attitude to be contributing members of our democratic society through leadership development programs focused on student achievement, building relationships with business and governmental leaders, and communication and networking services.

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