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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Frances Haithcock
Chancellor
Public Schools

Jay Pfeiffer
Deputy Commissioner
Accountability, Research, and Measurement

DATE: June 17, 2008

SUBJECT: Changes to the K-12 Statewide Assessment Program

During many of our recent meetings and conference calls together, we have discussed the impact of various pieces of legislation, including the passage of the 2008-09 budget. One topic of discussion has been the status of the FCAT NRT. This letter is for the purpose of providing official notice that the FCAT NRT will be discontinued, beginning with the 2008-09 school year.

Senate Bill 1908 removed the requirement that the statewide assessment program include a norm-referenced component. The removal of this requirement was a result of the Legislature's need to find ways to reduce the state's assessment expenses by eliminating programs and services that are not required by the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) nor crucial to our state's accountability system.

We realize that many school districts currently incorporate FCAT NRT results into student progression plans; therefore, we encourage you to consider other approaches in determining student readiness for the next grade. For assistance with your student progression plans, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Ramos at alan.ramos@fldoe.org. In relation to the requirements for promotion to Grade 3, we will work to revise the rule about Grade 3 promotions to eliminate references to the FCAT NRT. However, we intend to maintain the other good cause exemptions contained in the rule.

The FCAT SSS will continue to be administered in Grades 3-10 in reading and mathematics, as well as science in Grades 5, 8, and 11, and writing in Grades 4, 8, and 10, although the

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multiple-choice component for writing will be suspended beginning in 2008-09. The Department intends to field test a revised comprehensive writing assessment in 2011-12 and begin reporting results on this test in 2012-13. While the Department is considering the use of end-of-course exams in the near future, there will be no changes to the current program this coming school year, 2008-09. If you have any questions related to the FCAT program, please contact Ms. Victoria Ash at 245-0513 or Victoria.Ash@fldoe.org.

Thank you for all you do to meet the educational needs of Florida's students and improve our state for all its citizens.

JP/CSO/kee