



## FCAT and NAEP: What's the Connection?

Florida students currently participate in two assessment programs designed to measure student achievement of higher-order cognitive skills: the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test<sup>®</sup> (FCAT) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often called the “Nation’s Report Card.”

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test<sup>®</sup> (FCAT) is a criterion-referenced test in reading, writing, mathematics, and science based on Florida’s Sunshine State Standards. Additional information about the FCAT is available at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/>.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) offers achievement information on nationally representative samples of students in Grades 4, 8, and 12 in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography; economics, and the arts; achievement level information on state-level samples of students in Grades 4 and 8 in reading, mathematics, science, and writing; Long-term Trend Assessment results in reading and mathematics at ages 9, 13, and 17; and Field Tests in reading, mathematics, science, and writing at Grades 4, 8, and 12. Additional information about NAEP is available at <http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>.

The purpose of this document is to summarize the roles of the FCAT and NAEP in Florida’s comprehensive assessment program.

	<b>Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT)</b>	<b>National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) State Assessment</b>
<i>Primary purposes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase student achievement by implementing higher standards</li> <li>• To improve classroom instruction</li> <li>• To serve as an accountability tool for assessing student achievement of the Sunshine State Standards (SSS)</li> <li>• To measure annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To serve as a benchmark based on national levels of proficiency</li> <li>• To assess student performance reflecting current educational and assessment practices</li> <li>• To report representative state-level results in selected subject areas</li> <li>• To enable states to measure change in student performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ over time compared to current year</li> <li>○ over time compared to the current year for the nation and other jurisdictions</li> <li>○ within subgroups over time compared to current year</li> <li>○ within subgroups over time compared to the current year for the nation and other jurisdictions</li> <li>○ between subgroups over time compared to the current year</li> <li>○ between subgroups over time compared to the current year for the nation and other jurisdictions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Type of assessment</i>	A criterion-referenced test (CRT) measuring student performance on selected benchmarks in mathematics, reading, science, and writing from the Sunshine State Standards (SSS)	A criterion-referenced test (CRT) that assesses student performance against nationally developed benchmarks. It reports only for groups of students in the nation, the states, and selected large urban districts.
<i>Subject areas tested</i>	Reading, mathematics, writing, science	Reading, mathematics, writing, science, U.S. history, civics, economics, world history, geography, the arts The National Assessment Governing Board establishes the schedule for the state and administrations of NAEP.
<i>Grade levels assessed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematics and reading are given at Grades 3-10, as well as retakes for Grades 11 and 12 and beyond</li> <li>• Writing is given at Grades 4, 8, and 10</li> <li>• Science is given at Grades 5, 8, and 11</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 4, 8, and 12 for Main NAEP</li> <li>• Grade 12 for High School Transcript Study (HSTS) (every four years)</li> </ul> Students ages 9, 13, and 17 for the Long-term Trend assessment (LTT) (every four years)

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>School/Student participation</i>	Every student on a regular diploma track in each grade level must participate in the FCAT. Students on a special diploma track (some students with disabilities and English language learners with less than one year of English instruction) may participate in alternate assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A random sample of Grade 4, 8, and 12 students in fifty-two jurisdictions (the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity schools) and 18 Trial Urban Districts participate in NAEP.</li> <li>• Each participating student takes only a small portion of the overall assessment</li> <li>• In a combined national and state sample, approximately 4,500 Florida students from approximately 500 schools are selected to participate.</li> <li>• Parents/guardians must be notified and student participation is voluntary.</li> </ul>
<i>Item types or formats</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Multiple choice, short-response, and extended-response items are used in Grades 4, 8, and 10</li> <li>○ Only multiple-choice items are used in Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Multiple-choice, gridded-response, short-response, and extended-response items are used in Grades 5, 8, and 10</li> <li>○ Multiple-choice and gridded-response items are used in Grades 4, 6, 7, and 9</li> <li>○ Only multiple-choice questions are used in Grade 3.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prompt is provided in Grades 4, 8, and 10</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Only multiple-choice items are used in Grade 5.</li> <li>○ Multiple-choice and gridded-response items are used in Grades 8 and 11.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Multiple choice, short-response, and extended-response items are used in Grades 4, 8, and 12</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Multiple choice, short-response, and extended-response items are used in Grades 4, 8, and 12</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Writing* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prompt is provided in Grades 4, 8, and 12</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Science* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Multiple-choice, short-response, and extended-response items are used in Grades 4, 8, and 12</li> <li>○ A hands-on experiment is added for half of the participating students.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>* Computer-based assessments are being administered on a trial basis.</p>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>How is assessment administered?</i>	<p>All students take the entire assessment. Assessment items and the length of the assessment vary with grade and subject.</p> <p><b>Grade 4 Mathematics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment booklets contain multiple-choice and gridded response items.</li> <li>○ Assessment is administered in two 60-minute sessions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grade 8 Mathematics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment booklets contain multiple-choice, gridded response items, and short- and extended-response items.</li> <li>○ Assessment is administered in two 80-minute sessions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grade 4 Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment booklets contain multiple-choice and short- and extended-response items.</li> <li>○ Assessment is administered in two 80-minute sessions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grade 8 Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment booklets contain multiple-choice and short- and extended-response items.</li> <li>○ Assessment is administered in two 80-minute sessions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students are given assessment booklets containing three types of items: multiple-choice, short constructed-response, and extended constructed response</li> <li>● Approximately half of a student’s testing time will be allotted to multiple-choice items, with the remaining half devoted to constructed-response items of both types.</li> <li>● Each student responds to two separately timed blocks of items, each 25 minutes in length</li> <li>● Each student only takes a small portion of the overall assessment</li> </ul>
<i>Frequency of test administration</i>	Annually in the Spring; Grade 10 reading and mathematics retake tests administered in the Fall and Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Biennial reading and mathematics in odd-numbered years; every four years for science and writing</li> <li>● U.S. history, civics, geography, the arts, world history, and the Long-term Trend are national assessments administered during even-numbered years on a schedule determined by NAGB.</li> </ul>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>Administration dates</i>	February (writing), March (reading, mathematics, and science), and October (Fall retakes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main NAEP is administered between late January through early March</li> <li>• Long-term Trend NAEP is administered to 13-year-old students in the fall, 9-year-old students in the winter, and 17-year-old students in the spring every four years.</li> </ul>
<i>Administration time</i>	Varies by grade and by subject	Two 25-minute test sessions or one 50-minute session; 10 minutes for background questions; and 30 minutes for administrative details, for a total of 90 minutes
<i>Release of test results</i>	May/June	Six to 18 months after the assessment, depending upon subject area and grade
<i>Levels of reports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State, district, school, individual students</li> <li>• Populations of students (e.g., fourth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students) by school, district, and state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National, state, and 18 large urban districts that participate in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA)</li> <li>• Populations of students (e.g., fourth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students or Hispanic students)</li> <li>• No individual, school, or district results are available, except for the 18 TUDA districts (Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Fresno [CA], Houston, Los Angeles, Louisville [KY]), Miami [FL], Milwaukee, New York City, Philadelphia, and San Diego).</li> </ul>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>Types of scores reported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Student Reports               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading and Mathematics—scale scores<sup>1</sup>, developmental scale scores<sup>2</sup>, achievement levels, and raw scores in content subcategories</li> <li>○ Science—scale scores<sup>1</sup>, achievement levels, and raw scores in content subcategories</li> <li>○ Writing—essay is reported as a prompt score between 6 and 1</li> </ul> </li> <li>• School Reports               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading, mathematics, and science school reports contain the same information as the Individual School Reports</li> <li>○ Essays are reported as prompt scores between 6 and 1</li> </ul> </li> <li>• District Reports               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading and Mathematics—mean scale scores, mean developmental scale scores, percent at each achievement level, mean points earned by content subcategories</li> <li>○ Science—mean scale scores, percent at each achievement level, mean points earned by content subcategories</li> <li>○ Writing—mean essay scores, percent at each score point</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No individual student, school, or district reports (except for the 18 TUDA districts)</li> <li>• National, state, and 18 TUDA districts report results by scale scores and achievement levels</li> <li>• Scale scores summarize the overall level of performance attained by a group of students. They indicate how much students <i>know and can do</i> in a particular subject</li> <li>• Achievement level percentages reflect the percentage of students within the total population, or in a particular group, who meet or exceed expectations of what <i>students should know and be able to do</i> in a particular subject. Student achievement is categorized as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Advanced</i></li> <li>○ <i>Proficient</i></li> <li>○ <i>Basic</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Below <i>Basic</i> is reported, but is not considered to be an achievement level.</p>

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Scale scores are used to report test results on the entire test.

<sup>2</sup> Developmental scale scores are a type of scale score used to determine a student’s annual progress from grade to grade.

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>How results are reported to the public</i>	<p>The Florida Department of Education has developed multiple ways for electronically communicating FCAT results for the state, district, and school levels. Results are not published in a hard copy format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FCAT data are provided to the public via the following online resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FCAT results interactive search by state, district, and school</li> <li>○ FCAT demographic results interactive search by state, district, and school</li> <li>○ State- and district-level Excel spreadsheets; school-level Excel spreadsheets</li> <li>○ Annual media packets</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>NAEP has developed a number of publications and web-based tools that provide direct access to assessment results at the state and national level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written publications include a national results report and state profiles presenting state-level results. Both are also available online.</li> <li>• Web-based tools include the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NAEP Data Explorer</li> <li>○ NAEP State Comparison Tool</li> <li>○ NAEP Questions Tool</li> <li>○ NAEP Item Maps</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Achievement levels reported for reading and mathematics</i>	<p><b>Level 5:</b> Student has success with the most challenging content of the SSS and answers most of the test questions correctly.</p> <p><b>Level 4:</b> Student has success with the challenging content of the SSS but only partial success with the most challenging questions.</p> <p><b>Level 3:</b> Student has partial success with the challenging content of the SSS but is generally less successful with questions that are the most challenging.</p> <p><b>Level 2:</b> Student has limited success with challenging content of the SSS.</p> <p><b>Level 1:</b> Student has little success with the challenging content of the SSS.</p>	<p><b>Advanced:</b> Superior performance.</p> <p><b>Proficient:</b> Solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competence over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.</p> <p><b>Basic:</b> Partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that is fundamental for proficient work at each grade.</p> <p>Below <i>Basic</i> is reported, but is not considered to be an achievement level.</p>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>Students with disabilities (SD)</i>	Students with disabilities (SD) on the regular diploma track take the same FCAT as other students but may use allowable accommodations as specified in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.	Students with disabilities (SD) who participate in the FCAT in the subject being assessed are required to participate in NAEP, unless NAEP does not allow accommodations specified in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.
<i>English language learners (ELL) assessment accommodations</i>	Districts are required to offer accommodations to ELLs who are currently receiving services in a program operated in accordance with an approved district ELL plan. ELLs with less than one year of English instruction may participate in an alternate assessment for reading and writing only.	An ELL is tested if the student has been receiving reading or mathematics instruction in English for more than 3 school years and the student can demonstrate his or her knowledge of reading or mathematics in English with or without allowed accommodations.
<i>History of assessment program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 1992, Grade 4 students participated in the Florida Writing Assessment Program.</li> <li>• In 1993, Grade 8, and in 1994, Grade 10, were added to the Writing Assessment Program.</li> <li>• In 1998, students in Grades 4, 8, and 10 took the FCAT reading; students in Grades 5, 8, and 10 took the FCAT mathematics; and the Writing Assessment Program became FCAT Writing.</li> <li>• 1999, the Florida Legislature approved the A+ Plan for Education, which expanded Florida’s assessment program to include annual assessment of reading and mathematics in Grades 3–10, a science assessment, and a system for calculating academic growth of each student over time.</li> <li>• In 2001, all students in Grades 3–10 participated in the FCAT reading and mathematics.</li> <li>• In 2003, the FCAT Science was added in Grades 5, 8, 10.</li> <li>• In 2005, FCAT Science was moved from Grade 10 to Grade 11.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NAEP began with a national science assessment in 1969 for 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students.</li> <li>• State-by-state assessments began in 1990 for Grade 8 mathematics, in 1992 for Grade 4 reading, in 1996 for Grade 8 science, and in 1998 for Grade 8 writing.</li> <li>• NAEP began offering accommodations for SD and ELL in 1998.</li> <li>• The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires states to participate in NAEP. If a school receives Title I funding and is selected for NAEP, it is required to participate.</li> <li>• In 1999, 2004, and 2008, the Long-term Trend assessment was administered to 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students.</li> </ul>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>Assessment development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Florida Department of Education, with the support of assessment contractors, develops the FCAT.</li> <li>• Test items are reviewed for statistical and technical quality.</li> <li>• Florida educators review items for content characteristics and potential bias (gender, racial/ethnic, linguistic, religious, geographic, socio-economic).</li> <li>• Florida citizens associated with a variety of organizations and institutions review all items for issues of potential concern to members of the community at large.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) is responsible for formulating policy for NAEP including the development of subject-area frameworks.</li> <li>• Framework development uses the latest advances in assessment methodology, the standards developed within the field, and a consensus process involving educators, subject-matter experts, and other interested citizens.</li> <li>• For each subject area, a framework provides recommendations on the content to be assessed, the types of assessment questions, and the administration of the assessment.</li> <li>• Content experts review items for technical/statistical quality, content quality, bias, and sensitivity.</li> </ul>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>Assessment items released</i>	<p>2005—Reading and Mathematics tests, Grades 4, 8, and 10</p> <p>2006—Reading and Mathematics tests, Grades 3, 7, 9, and 10</p> <p>2007—Reading and Mathematics tests, Grades 5 and 6 Science test, Grade 8</p> <p>Previously used test items are also released in FCAT materials such as the Sample Test Materials, the <i>FCAT Test Item Specifications</i>, and the <i>Lessons Learned</i> publications.</p>	<p>1996—Mathematics items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>1998—Civics, reading, and writing items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>2000—Science items, Grades 4, 8, and 12; reading items, Grade 4</p> <p>2001—Geography and history items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>2002—Reading and writing items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>2003—Mathematics and reading items, Grades 4 and 8</p> <p>2004—Reading and mathematics items, ages 9, 13, and 17</p> <p>2005—Mathematics, reading, and science items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>2006—Economics items, Grade 12; civics and U.S. history and civics items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>2007—Mathematics, reading, and writing items, Grades 4, 8, and 12</p> <p>2008—Reading and mathematics items, ages 9, 13, and 17</p> <p>2009—Mathematics items, Grades 4, 8, and 12 (October 2009)</p>

	<b>FCAT</b>	<b>NAEP</b>
<i>Setting student performance standards</i>	<p><b>Bookmark Method</b>            Panelists, chosen to represent various stakeholders, receive Ordered Item Books (items are ordered by difficulty). Panelists are separated into several tables and, usually, three rounds of bookmarking occur. Panelists are asked to find the location in the booklet where the minimally proficient student would have a two-thirds probability of getting the items correct. This same procedure is applied for each of the five achievement levels. During the first round, panelists place their bookmarks, discuss their bookmarks as a group, and then average their marks. During round two, panelists place their bookmarks, average and report their marks by table, and then the tables discuss their marks with the group. After round two, impact data is given to panelists. Based on previous years' data, panelists find out how many/what percent of students would have been in various categories if the bookmarks are kept where they are and these levels have been used. Round three occurs and final placements are made.</p> <p><b>Body of Work</b>            Panelists are presented with individual student work across all the items in an assessment—constructed-response and multiple-choice. A large set of student work is brought together, varying widely in performance. Panelists seek to place the work in regard to proficiency levels being worked on. Usually, exemplars of work are presented to the panelists to assist them with the determination of proficiency. From there, scores can be derived from the work and examined by all of the panelists.</p>	<p><b>Modified Angoff Method</b>            A group of panelists think of a student who is minimally proficient in the content area being assessed. They then look through all of the items in the assessment and make a judgment of whether this student would get the item correct or not. Panelists rate each item and then, aggregating across all the items, a cut score is established for that level. Once that level is set, the panelists determine how many the minimally advanced and how many the minimally basic student would get correct and set those cut levels accordingly.</p>