

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 15, 2004

**SUBJECT: School Grades Accountability**

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### **PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

For districts that have a significant percentage of students withdrawn and transferred to another school within the same district during specified time periods, the Department shall:

- request from the district superintendent specific information and data related to the identified student transfers
- review the submitted data to determine the reasonableness of such transfers
- require the district to complete appropriate follow-up activities
- recommend to the State Board of Education sanctions, if appropriate

### **AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION**

Section 1008.32, Florida Statutes, *State Board of Education oversight enforcement authority.*

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

School performance grades, and their subsequent rewards and sanctions, have been the cornerstone of the state's system of school improvement and accountability since the passage of the Governor's A+ Plan in 1999. From 1999 - 2003, the percentage of schools graded A or B has increased and the percentage of schools graded D or F has decreased. Students who are not enrolled in the same school for both the October and February FTE survey periods are not included in the calculation of school grades. However, it is the Department's intent to ensure that as many students as possible are included in the school accountability system.

In March 2004, Commissioner Horne and Chancellor Warford notified school district superintendents of the Department's review of school district designations of school types for the purpose of school grading. Based on the Department's review, districts were notified that school grades will not be issued in 2003-04 to schools that did not receive a school letter grade in the prior year. Schools typed "alternative education" schools or "other schools" that are now classified as elementary, middle, high, or combination schools will have school letter grade points calculated but will not have a school letter grade assigned. However, beginning in 2004-05, these schools will be assigned a grade.

The Department is continuing to work with districts to assign all schools serving grades 3-10 (excluding Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities) a school type of

elementary, middle, high, or combination schools for the purpose of school grading.

Section 1008.32, Florida Statutes, provides the State Board of Education with the authority to oversee the performance of districts school boards' implementation of all laws and rules. This law also provides the State Board of Education with, "...the authority to request and receive information, data, and reports from school districts.... Additionally, district school superintendents are responsible for the accuracy of the information and data reported to the State Board (see s. 1008.32(1), F.S.)

### **Current Actions**

The Department is reviewing, by district:

- the number and percent of students withdrawn to another school within the same district after the February 2004 FTE survey and prior to the administration of FCAT (March 1-12, 2004)
- the number and percent of students withdrawn to another school within the same district between October 2003 and February 2004 FTE survey periods

### **Preliminary Data**

The analysis of data regarding student transfers to another school with the same district after February 2004 and prior to the administration of FCAT (a 19-day window), indicate:

- 64 (or 40%) of the 159 schools in 30 districts with five percent (5%) or more of their students transferring to another district school were in one school district, Polk County.

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### **Supporting Documentation Included:**

- s. 1008.32, Florida Statutes, *State Board of Education oversight enforcement authority*
- March 22, 2004 Commissioner Horne and Chancellor Warford Memorandum to School District Superintendents

### **Facilitators/Presenters:**

Jim Warford, K-12 Chancellor