



Comprehensive Middle Grades Reform Study



The Need to Reform Our Middle Schools

- NAEP and FCAT data show that overall student achievement rates flat-line or decline in grades 6-8
- Our focus on reading in the primary grades has improved our students' achievement levels in grades 3 and 4
- For students to achieve in high school, they must build up their elementary school achievement gains throughout middle school



Senate Bill 354: The Goal for Our Middle Schools

“Using reading as the foundation, all middle grade students should receive rigorous academic instruction through challenging curricula delivered by highly qualified teachers in schools with outstanding leadership, which schools are supported by engaged and informed parents. It is the intent of the Legislature that students promoted from the eighth grade will be ready for success in high school.”



Senate Bill 354: The Middle Grades Reform Act

- Requires the Comprehensive Reform Study
- Specifies areas to be reviewed
- Lists stakeholders that must be consulted
- Requires the Commissioner to make recommendations for improving middle schools based upon the results of the study to Legislative Leadership by December 1, 2004

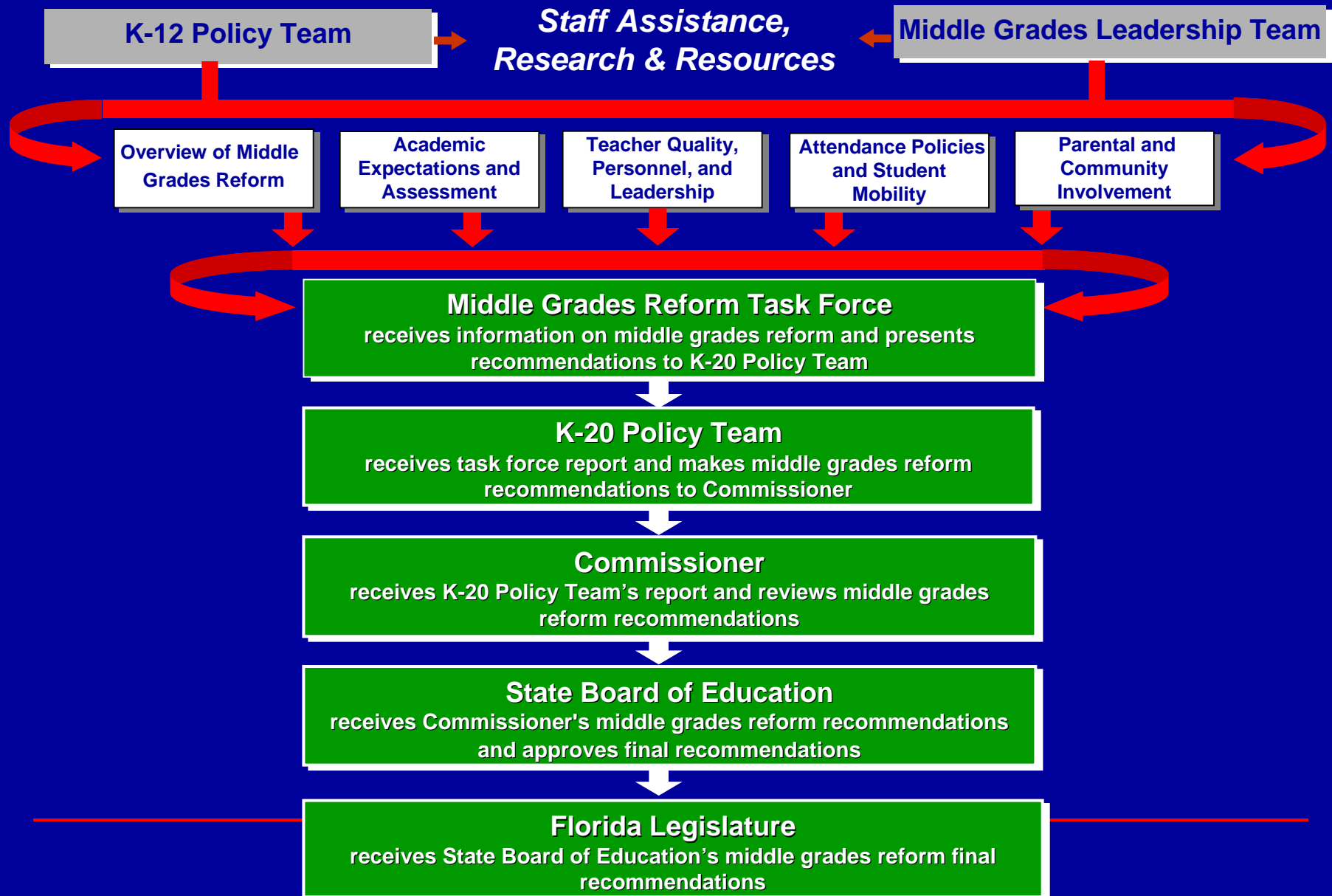
Senate Bill 354: Comprehensive Reform Study

- Required areas of middle grades education to be studied:
 - Academic expectations
 - Attendance policies and student mobility issues
 - Teacher quality
 - Identification and availability of diagnostic testing
 - Availability of personnel and scheduling issues
 - Middle school leadership and performance
 - Parental and community involvement

Middle Grades Reform Study: Stakeholder Input

- **Senate Bill 354 requires the following groups of stakeholders to be consulted**
 - **Florida Center for Reading Research (FSU)**
 - **Just Read, Florida!**
 - **District school board members**
 - **District school superintendents**
 - **Principals**
 - **Parents**
 - **Teachers**
 - **District supervisors of curriculum**
 - **Students**

Middle Grades Reform: Way of Work



Middle Grades Task Force: Proposed Meeting Plan

TASK FORCE 1

**Meeting
August 27
Miami**

DELIVERABLES

- Identify guiding principles
- Identify issues in Academic Expectations, Teacher Quality, Attendance and Mobility, and Assessment

TASK FORCE 2

**Meeting
September 24
Tampa**

DELIVERABLE

- Identify issues in Leadership and Performance, Family and Community Involvement, Diagnostic Testing, Availability of Personnel and Scheduling

TASK FORCE 3

**Meeting
October 11
Orlando**

DELIVERABLES

- Draft recommendations with expected outcomes
- Outline the final report

TASK FORCE 4

**Meeting
October 28
Pensacola**

DELIVERABLE

- Review and revise the draft report

Initial Task Force Meeting and Public Forum


- **Task Force Meeting 1: August 27, 2004**
 - 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
 - Wolfson Campus, Miami-Dade College
James Batten Conference Room, # 2106

- **Public Forum 1: August 26, 2004**
 - 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
 - Local Middle School - TBA

MIDDLE GRADES Reform
Division of Public Schools
Florida Department of Education

Florida Middle Grades Reform






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The "Middle Grades Reform Act " is created to provide added focus and rigor to academics in the middle grades. Using reading as the foundation, all middle grade students should receive rigorous academic instruction through challenging curricula, delivered by highly qualified teachers, in schools with outstanding leadership which are supported by engaged and informed parents. Florida has 477 middle/junior high schools. Approximately 37,517 teachers serve 613,029 students: 205,095 students in grade 6; 206,774 students in grade 7; and 201,160 students in grade 8.

Academic performance data from the last two years indicate that some improvement is being made in middle school student achievement. The percentage of 6th-, 7th-, and 8th- grade students scoring Level 1 on FCAT Reading and Math decreased slightly in 2003, while the percentage of 6th- and 8th- grade students scoring Level 3 or higher on FCAT Reading and Math increased slightly in 2003.

However, 2003 academic performance data indicate about half of our 6th-, 7th-, and 8th- graders do not read on grade level and score below acceptable levels in mathematics. Data also indicate greater improvement in 3rd- grade achievement results than in middle school results, reflecting a direct impact of Just Read, Florida! initiatives targeted at grades K-3. National (NAEP) data reinforce Florida's state assessment results. It is results like these that point to the need for Middle Grades Reform.

www.flmiddlegradesreform.com

"As a result of the dramatic improvement we have seen in Florida's elementary schools in reading, it is clear we must now extend our efforts into middle schools. More than one third of all middle grade students are not prepared for high school or their future. The middle grades reform effort focuses on adding rigor to curriculum and focuses on reading across all subject areas in grades 6-8. We believe this reform effort, in conjunction with our committed middle grades teachers and principals, will significantly improve student achievement for all Florida's middle grades students."

- Chancellor Jim Warford