



Commissioner's Secondary Reading Advisory Panel

Just Read, Florida! is Governor Jeb Bush's statewide reading initiative that prioritizes reading in Florida's public schools and among all the community groups and volunteer organizations that support them. Just Read, Florida! is based on the latest reading research as promoted by the National Reading Panel, and supported through the No Child Left Behind legislation, particularly the *Reading First* program.

Charged with establishing reading as a core value in this state, Just Read, Florida! was launched in 2001 with the unequivocal goal of every child being able to read at or above grade level by the year 2012. With that goal in mind, Just Read, Florida! focuses on three main components:

- Educator Training
- Parental Involvement
- Community and Corporate Engagement

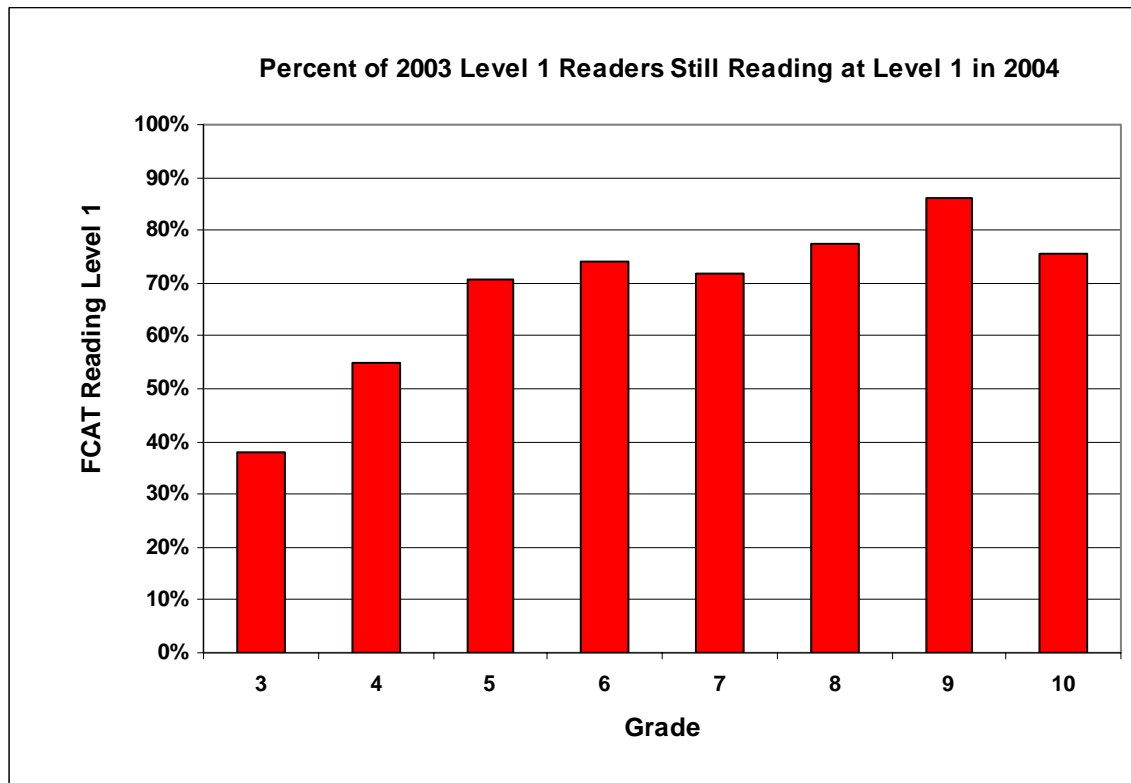
Just Read, Florida! received national attention last year when the results of the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the "Nation's Report Card" proved Florida to be the only state in the nation to show significant improvement in 4th grade reading. Also, the recently released Education Trust report shows Florida's 15 point gain in reading at 4th grade is more than twice that of the closest state.

Since 2002, Just Read, Florida! has accomplished the following:

- Along with Alabama and Colorado, Florida was the first in the nation to receive a federal *Reading First* grant, which will mean \$300 million dollars for K-3 reading instruction in our state
- Florida was invited to send a team to Harvard Graduate School of Education in August of 2002 to share Just Read, Florida! with five other states
- Over 16,000 K-3 teachers trained in research-based reading instruction
- Over 1600 Elementary and Middle School Principals trained in research-based reading instruction, and in how to make reading the priority at school
- Over 1500 K-12 Reading Coaches trained in research based reading instruction
- Over \$58 million dollars to fund and train reading coaches for schools
- Over 5000 parents of K-3 parents trained in how to support reading instruction at home
- More children reading on grade level than ever before.

However, Florida's middle and high school students are not showing sufficient progress. As the following charts show, the majority of students in middle and high school are reading below grade level. Some are so far behind that catching up will be a true challenge. The situation in 9th and 10th grade is particularly sobering.

A majority of Level 1 Readers will continue to reading at Level 1 the following year and it is increasing more likely the student will remain in level 1 in the middle and high school grades.



Further data show that:

- 17.03% of Florida students have consistently scored Level 1 on FCAT Reading for the past three years
- 26.43% of Florida students have scored Level 1 on FCAT Reading two out of the past three years.
- 47.59% of Florida students have scored Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Reading two out of the past three years.
- This analysis only focuses on the last three years because Florida only tested grades 3-10
- Only students with three years of test scores are included in the analysis.

Action

To that end, Governor Bush and Commissioner Winn are inviting the nation's top reading researchers to serve on an advisory panel to help Florida set the course for success in middle and high school. The panel will convene for a total of two days. The first meeting will take place January 24, 2005 in Tallahassee, and the follow –up meeting will be in late spring.

The purpose of the first meeting is discuss Florida's efforts to date, including educator training, state infrastructure, systems of assessment, instructional materials, and intervention programs, (panel members will be sent an extensive briefing book before the meeting) and to help guide Florida in a way that will replicate the successes we've seen in elementary school. *No other state has seen the growth in reading achievement that Florida has in the past two years; no other state is poised as well as Florida is to move that growth into middle and secondary.* Each member will leave with the assignment of preparing, in their area of expertise, a recommendation for short and long term actions. At the second meeting, the panel will present their findings and come to consensus on what Florida's next steps should be. The intent is for the panel to produce tangible ideas for implementation and fundable research projects. The panel will be sponsored by the Florida Education Foundation.

Panel Members

MARIA ELENA ARGUELLES, PhD

A Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at the University of Miami, Dr. Arguelles taught reading (largely to students of Hispanic origin) in the Miami-Dade County Public School System. She has conducted research on reading instruction for students with learning disabilities at the middle school level, on the sustainability of school-wide reading programs, and is currently working on a federally funded grant investigating the types of reading instruction required to meet the needs of students performing at various levels.

DOUGLAS CARNINE, PhD – will attend second meeting only

As Director of the National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators or NCITE, Dr. Carnine is awaiting Senate confirmation to serve on National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board. His area of expertise is moving research into practice.

DON DESHLER, PhD

Director, Center for Research and Learning, University of Kansas. His areas of expertise are at-risk adolescents, adolescent literacy, secondary school reform, and bringing interventions to scale. He is currently advising President Bush on adolescent literacy.

DAVID FRANCIS, PhD – will attend second meeting only

David Francis is a professor of Quantitative Methods in the Department of Psychology at the University of Houston. Dr. Francis has collaborated in research on reading and reading disabilities and attention problems. He is considered an expert in assessment.

NORMA GARZA

Garza is founder and chair of the Brownsville, Texas, Reads Task Force. She served on former Gov. George Bush's Focus on Reading Task Force and the Governor's Special Education Advisory Committee. She is also a member of the National Reading Panel. President George W. Bush named her to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. She works as a Certified Public Accountant.

ED KAMENUI, PhD – will attend second meeting only

Dr. Ed Kamenui, a professor in the College of Education at the University of Oregon and director of the Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement in the College of Education—and a member of the National Academy of Sciences committee that investigated reading instruction.

REID LYON, PhD

Chief, Child Development and Behavior Branch, National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development. His areas of expertise are: prevention, early intervention, and remediation of learning disabilities and disorders; research training; reading disorders; and normal reading development.

SALLY SHAYWITZ, MD

Professor at Yale Medical School, Dr. Shaywitz's research focuses on disorders of higher cognitive function in children, adolescents and young adults; of particular interest is the investigation of dyslexia.

CATHERINE SNOW, PhD – will attend second meeting only

Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education. Current research includes a longitudinal study of language and literacy skills among low-income children; vocabulary development of first and second-language learners. She is currently working with Boston Public Schools to improve middle school literacy outcomes.

JOSEPH TORGESEN, PhD

Director of Florida Center for Reading Research, his areas of expertise include prevention and intervention of reading difficulties and assessment. Dr. Torgesen has been instrumental in the crafting and implementation of Just Read, Florida!

SHARON VAUGHN, PhD – will attend second meeting only
Director of the Texas Center for Language Arts and Reading, Dr. Vaughn's topics are related to enhancing outcomes for students with disabilities in the areas of reading and social development through the development, identification, implementation, and evaluation of effective interventions that are sustainable by teachers. Her work also focuses on limited English proficient students.

Charles García, JD

Past member of the Florida State Board of Education, and a member of President George W. Bush's Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, Charlie Garcia will serve as the convener for this group.

Andrés Henriquez

A program officer in the Education Division of Carnegie Corporation of New York, where he leads the Corporation's Advancing Literacy: Reading to Learn Initiative. He is also a certified teacher and taught for five years at a public elementary school in East Harlem.