

# Sustaining Progress in Times of Fiscal Crisis

Report Prepared for the  
Florida State Board of Education  
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# Overview

1. A Record of Progress

- Improved achievement with fiscal responsibility

# Overview

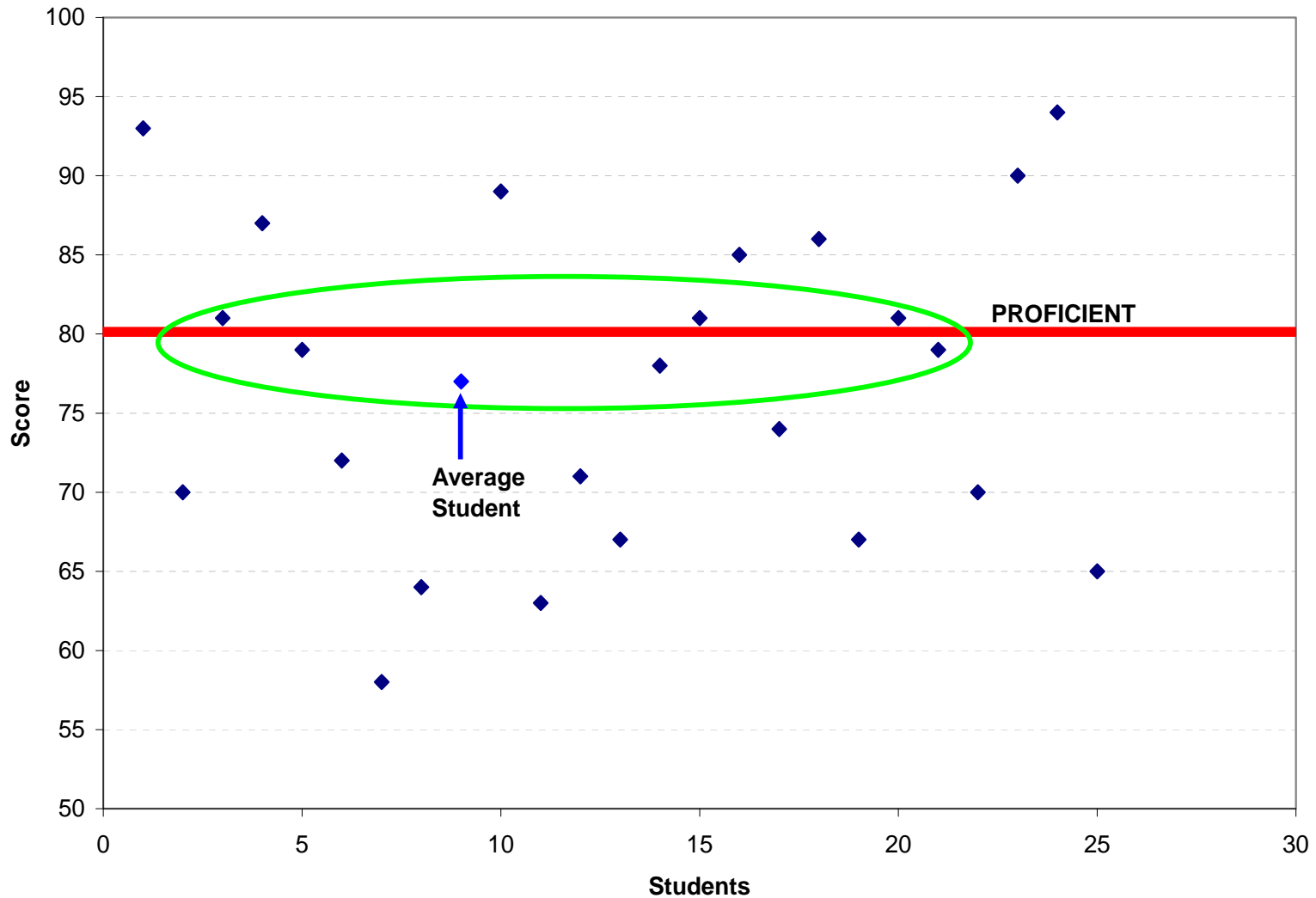
## 1. A Record of Progress

- Improved achievement and narrowing achievement gaps with fiscal responsibility

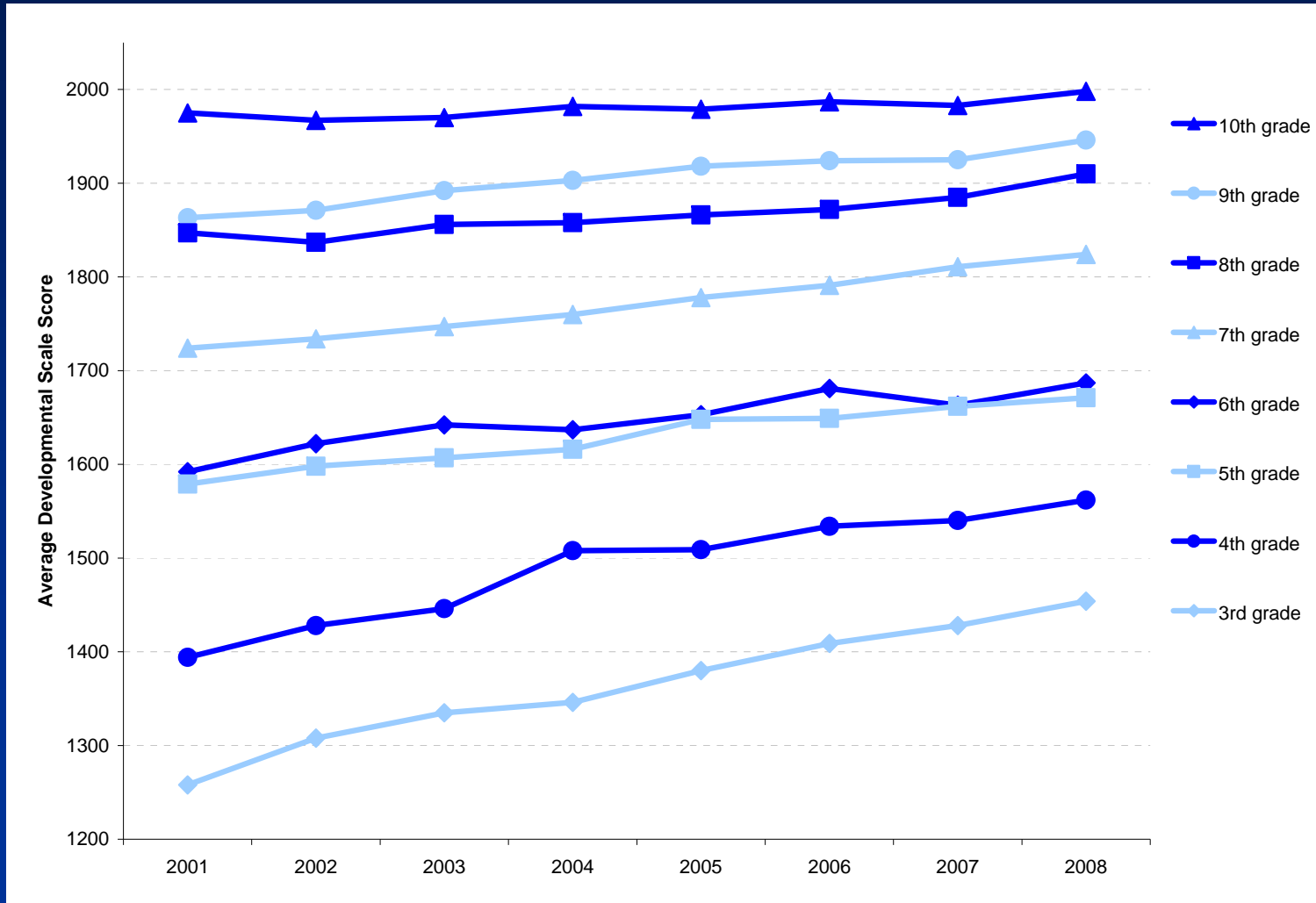
## 2. Key recommendations:

1. Protect and enhance accountability programs
2. Continue to invest in reading skills
3. Invest wisely in teacher quality
4. Reconsider class-size reduction
5. Maintain school choice options

# Tracking Changes in Student Achievement: Average Test Scores vs. Proficiency Rates

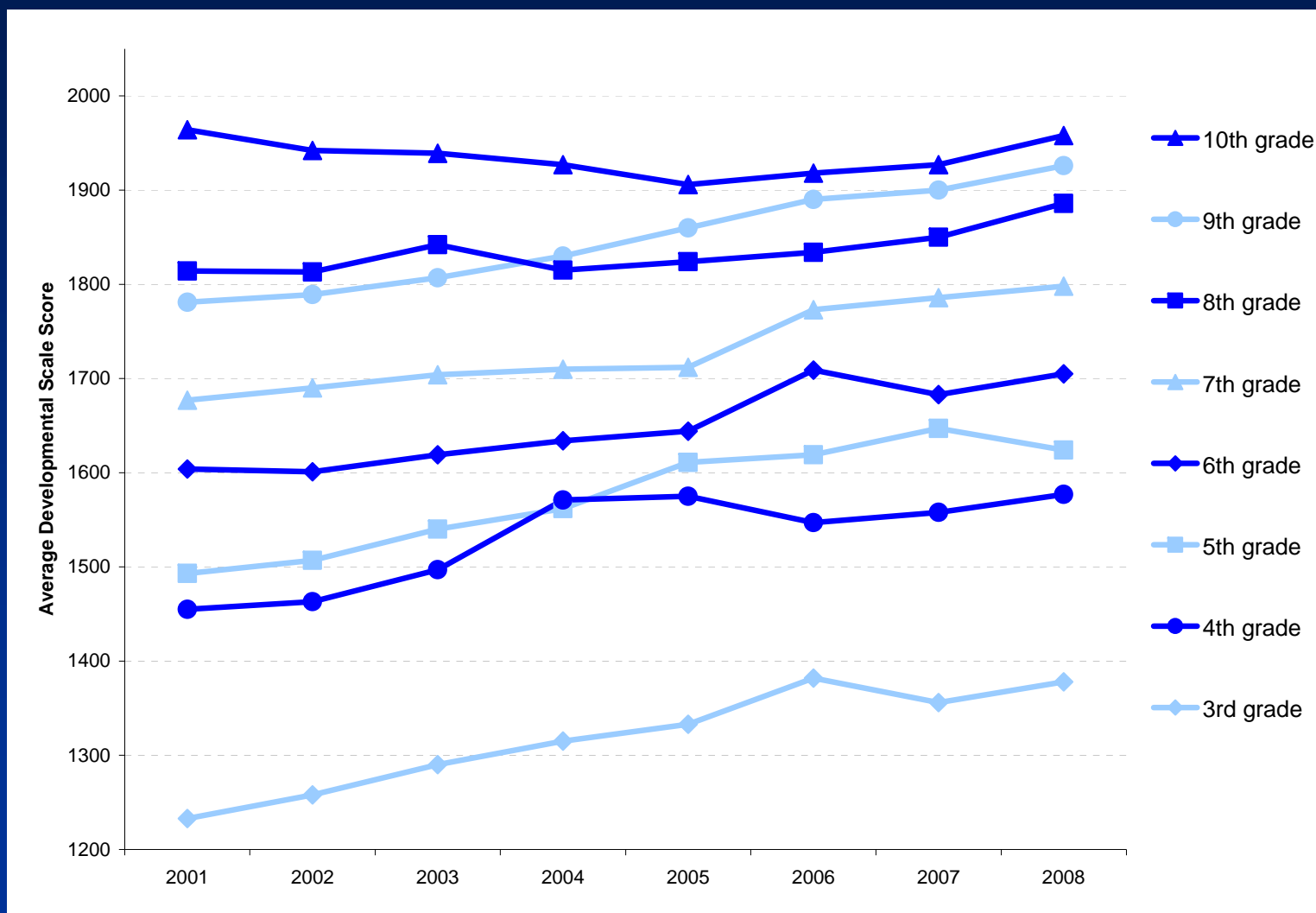


# Figure 1a. Average Student Scale Score on Math Portion of FCAT, Grades 3-10, 2001-08



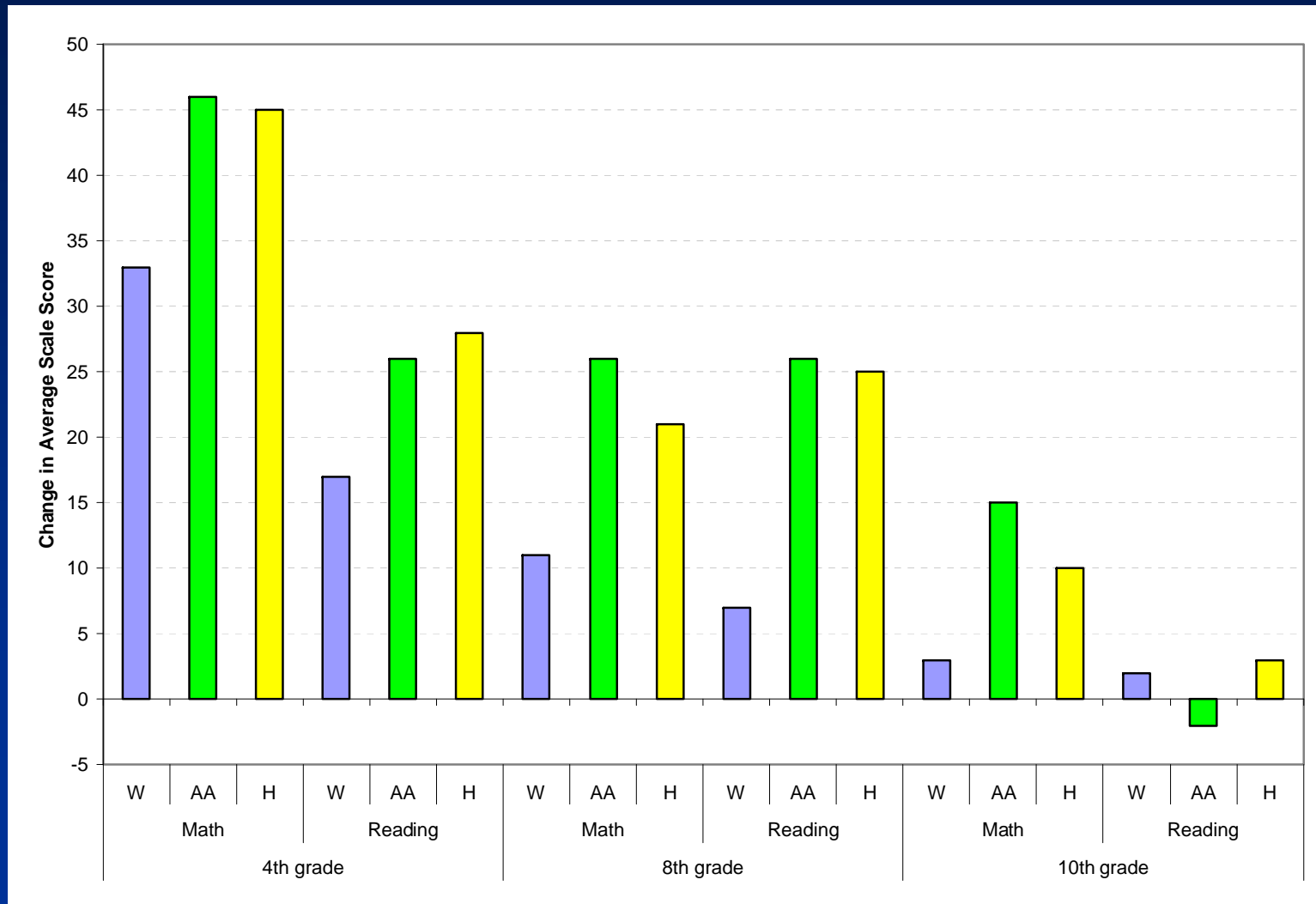
Source: Statewide Comparisons of Math FCAT Developmental Scores from the Florida Department of Education.

# Figure 1b. Average Student Scale Score on Reading Portion of FCAT, Grades 3-10, 2001-08



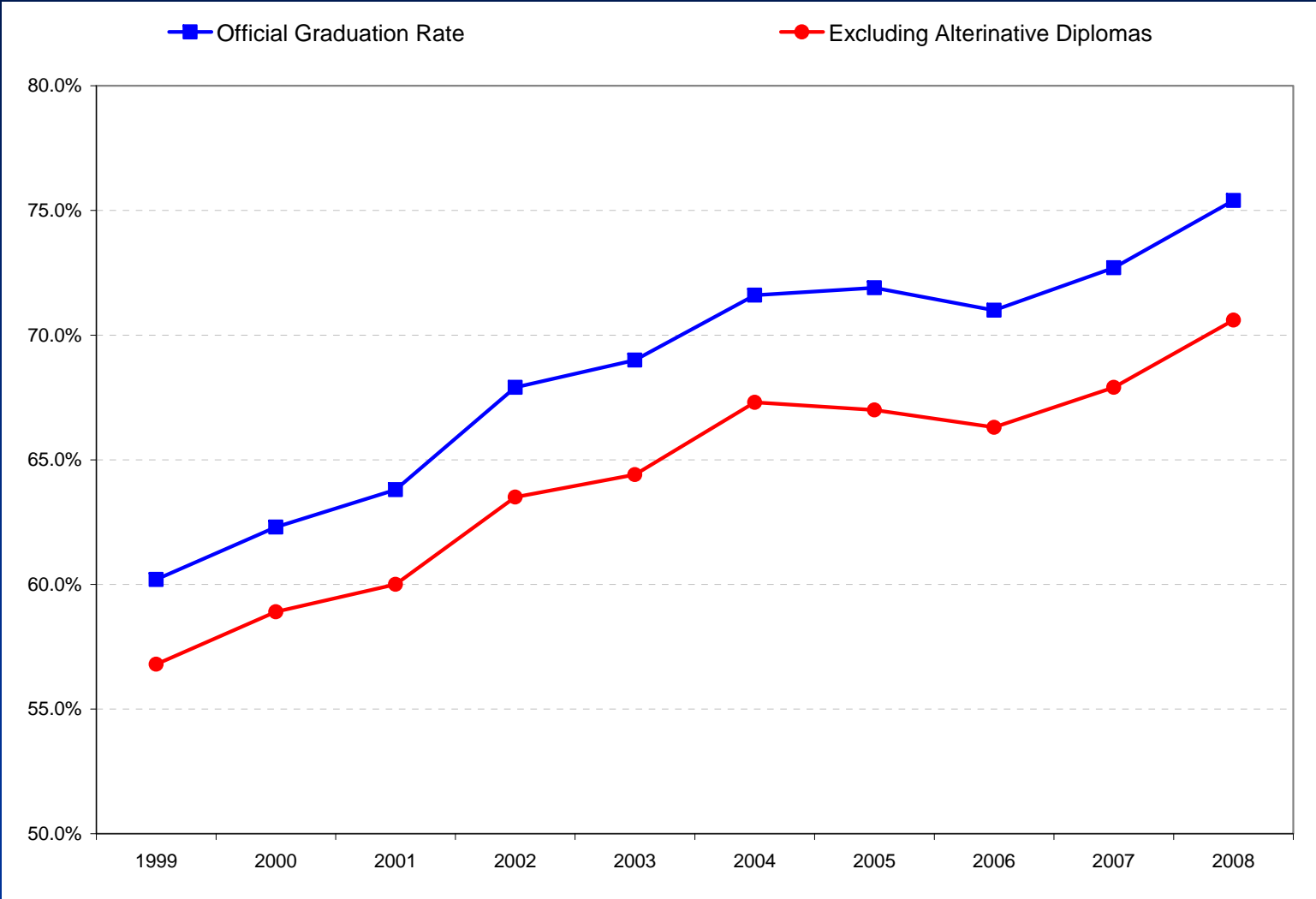
Source: Statewide Comparisons of Reading Developmental FCAT Scores from the Florida Department of Education.

Figure 2. Change in FCAT Scores between '01 and '08 for White, African American, and Hispanic Students, in Math and Reading, 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> Grades



Source: FCAT Student Performance Results, Demographic Report, 2001-2008.

# Figure 3. Florida High School Graduation Rates, 1999-2008



Source: Florida Department of Education

Figure 4a. Average performance of Florida and U.S. 4th grade students on reading and math portions of NAEP, '96 – '07

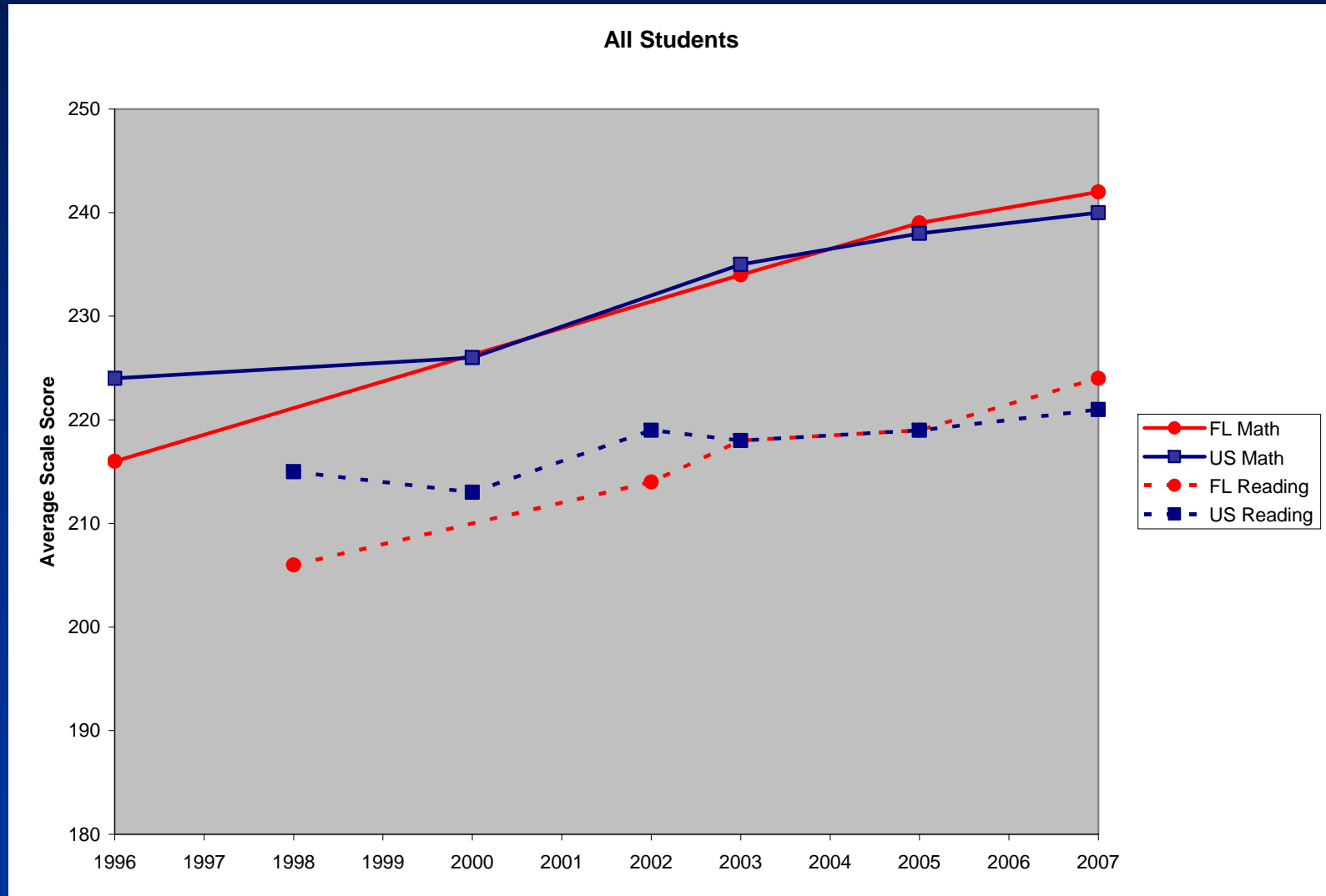


Figure 4b. Average performance of Florida and U.S. 4th grade African American students on reading and math portions of NAEP, '96 – '07

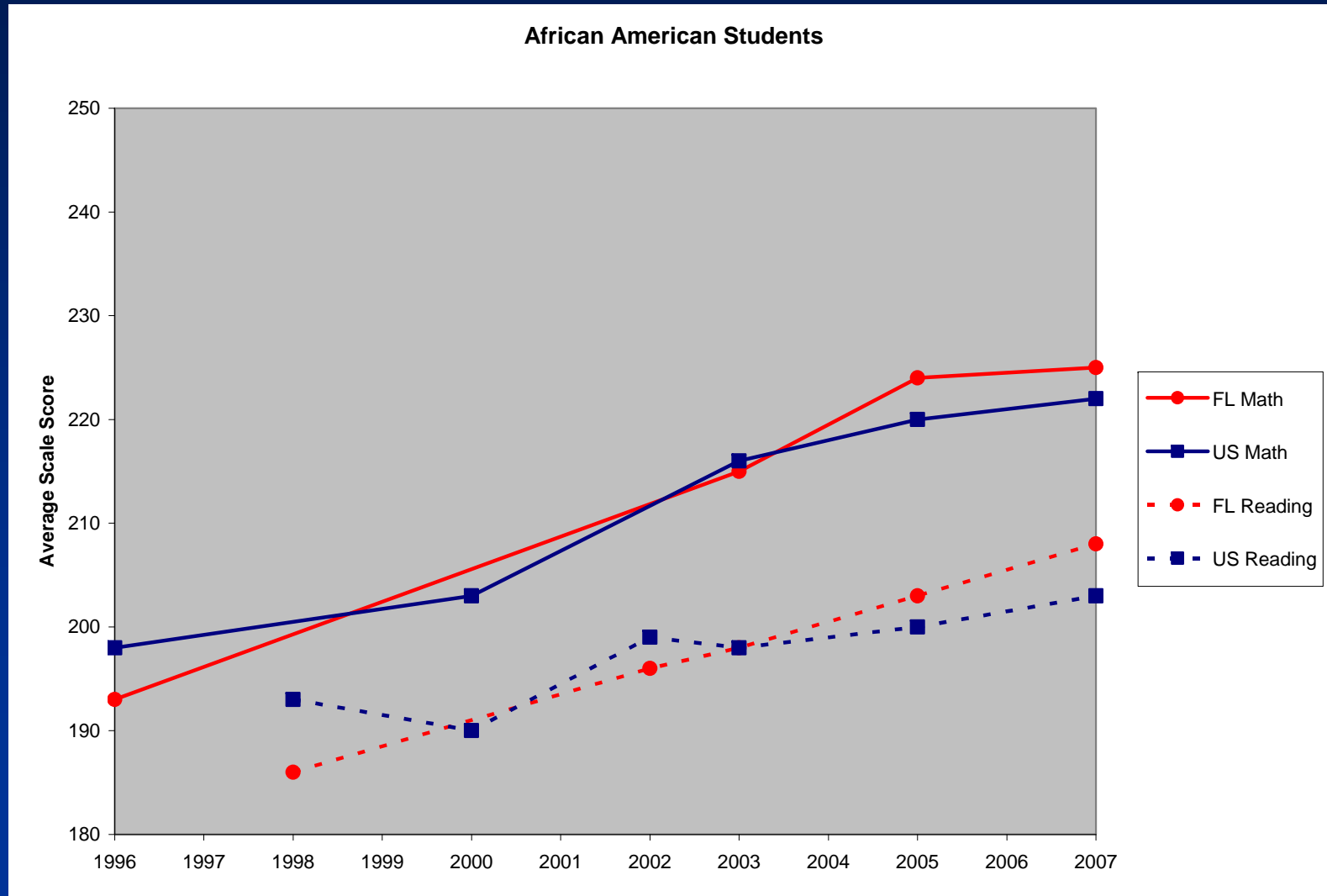


Figure 4c. Average performance of Florida and U.S. 4th grade Hispanic students on reading and math portions of NAEP, '96 – '07

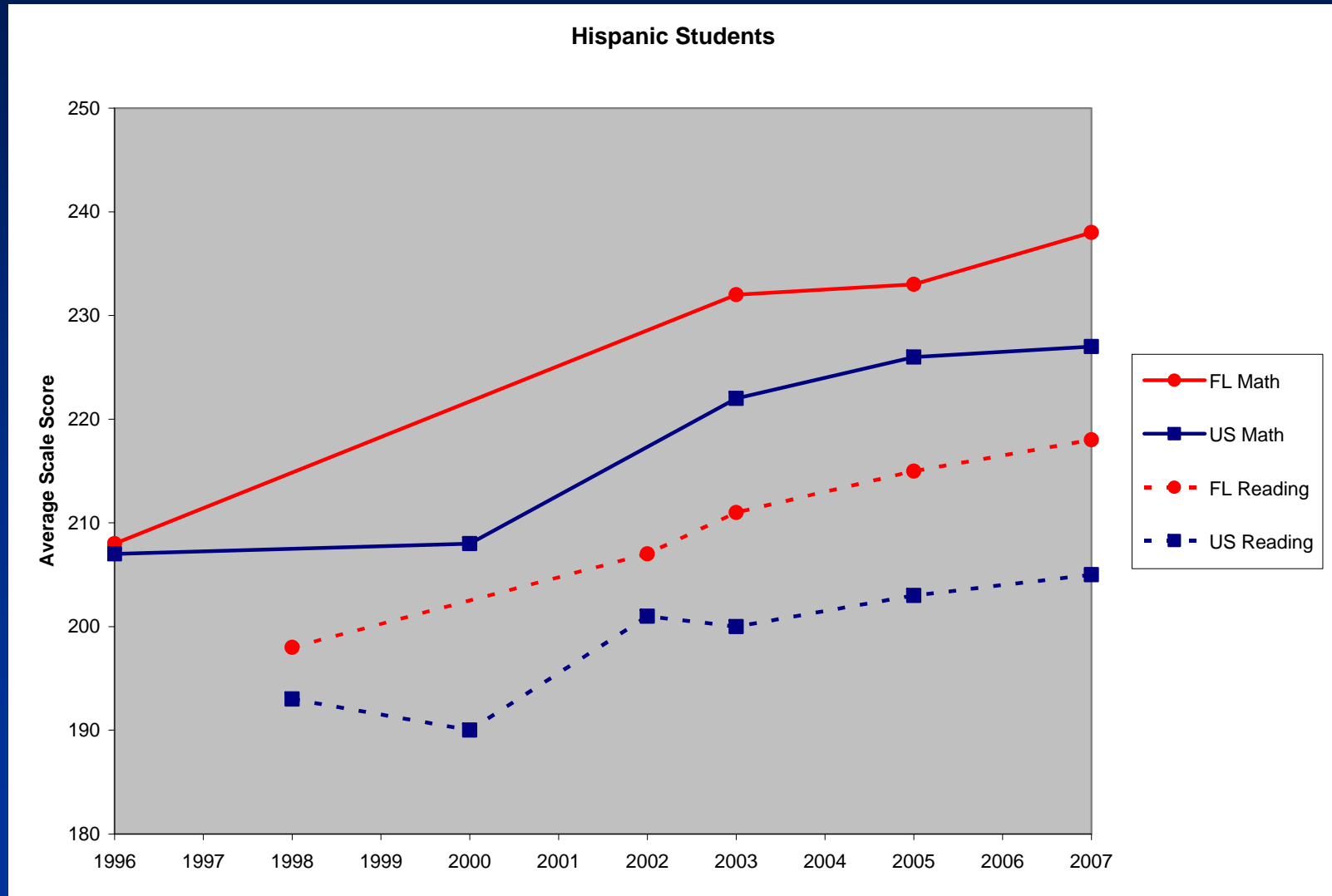


Figure 5a. Average performance of Florida and  
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on reading and math portions of NAEP, '96 – '07

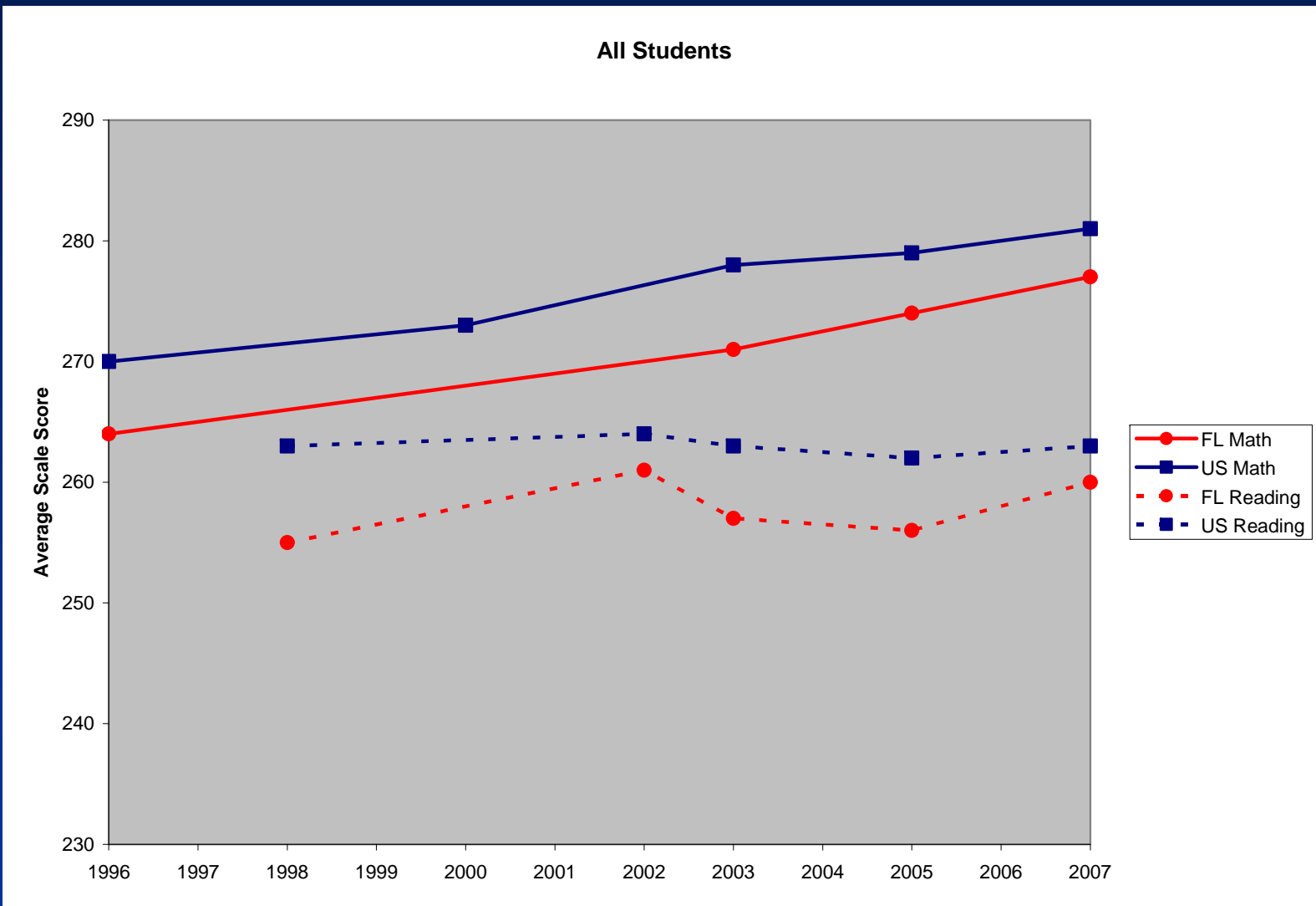


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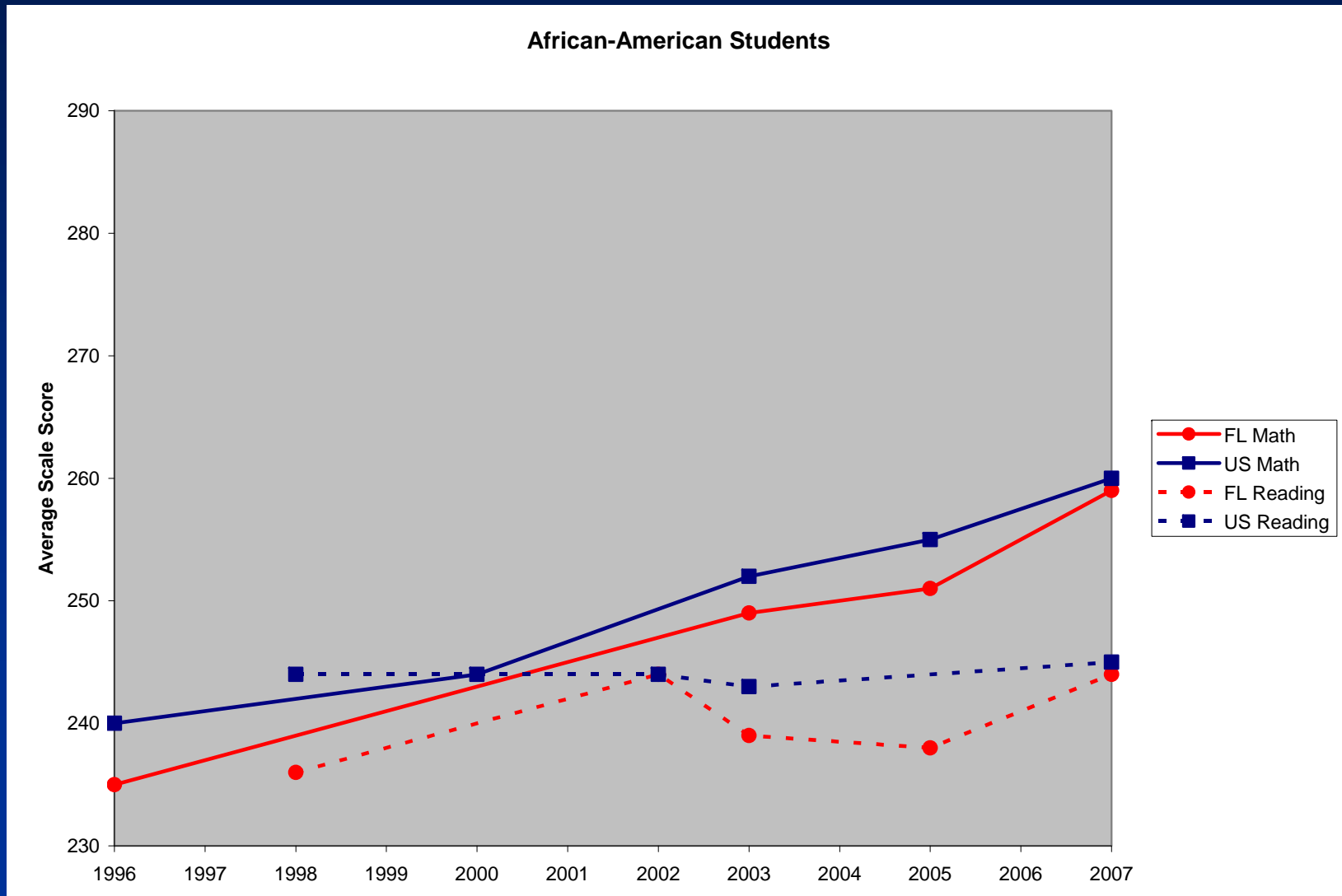


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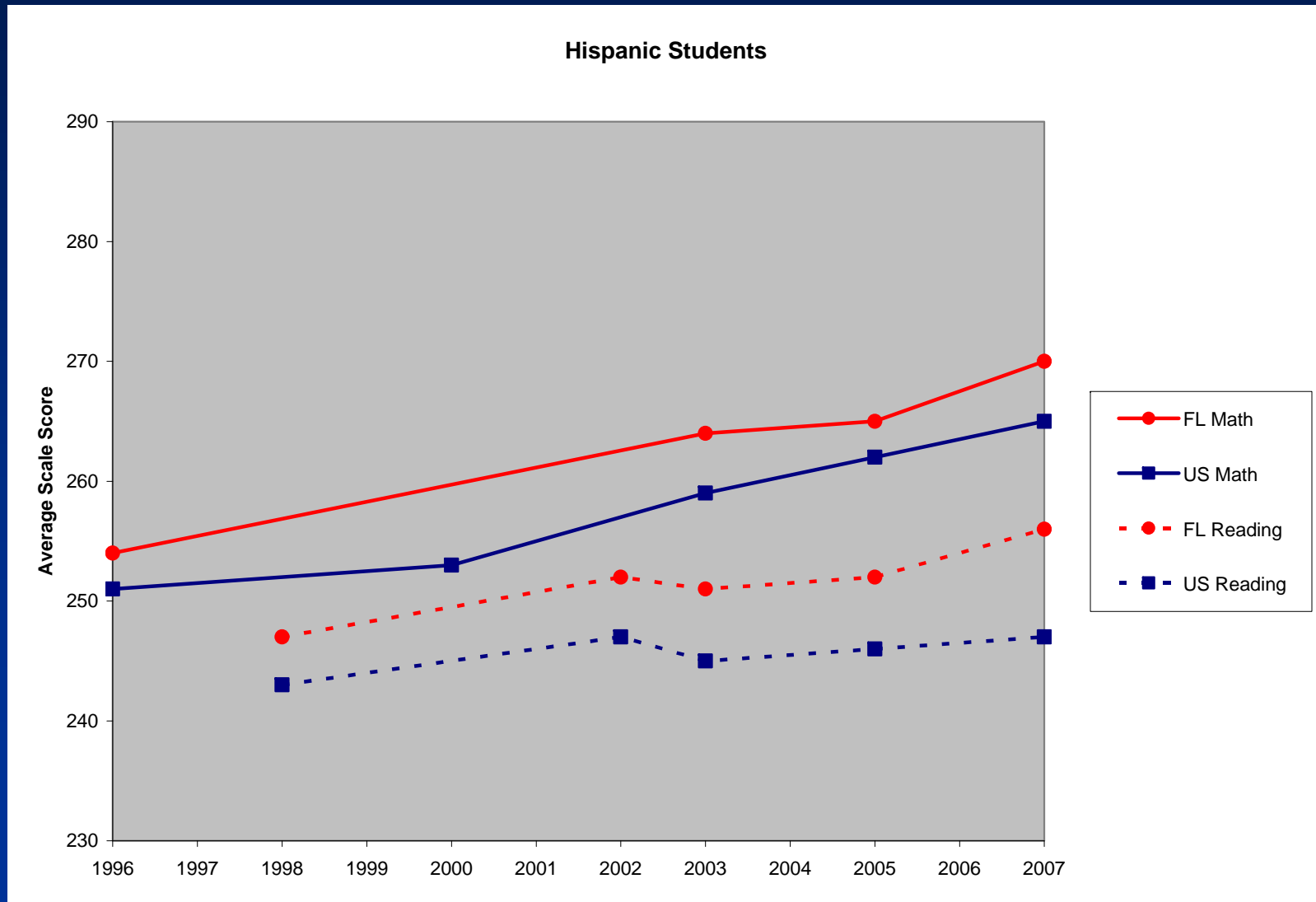


Figure 6a. Average performance of Florida and California 4th grade students on reading and math portions of NAEP, '96 – '07

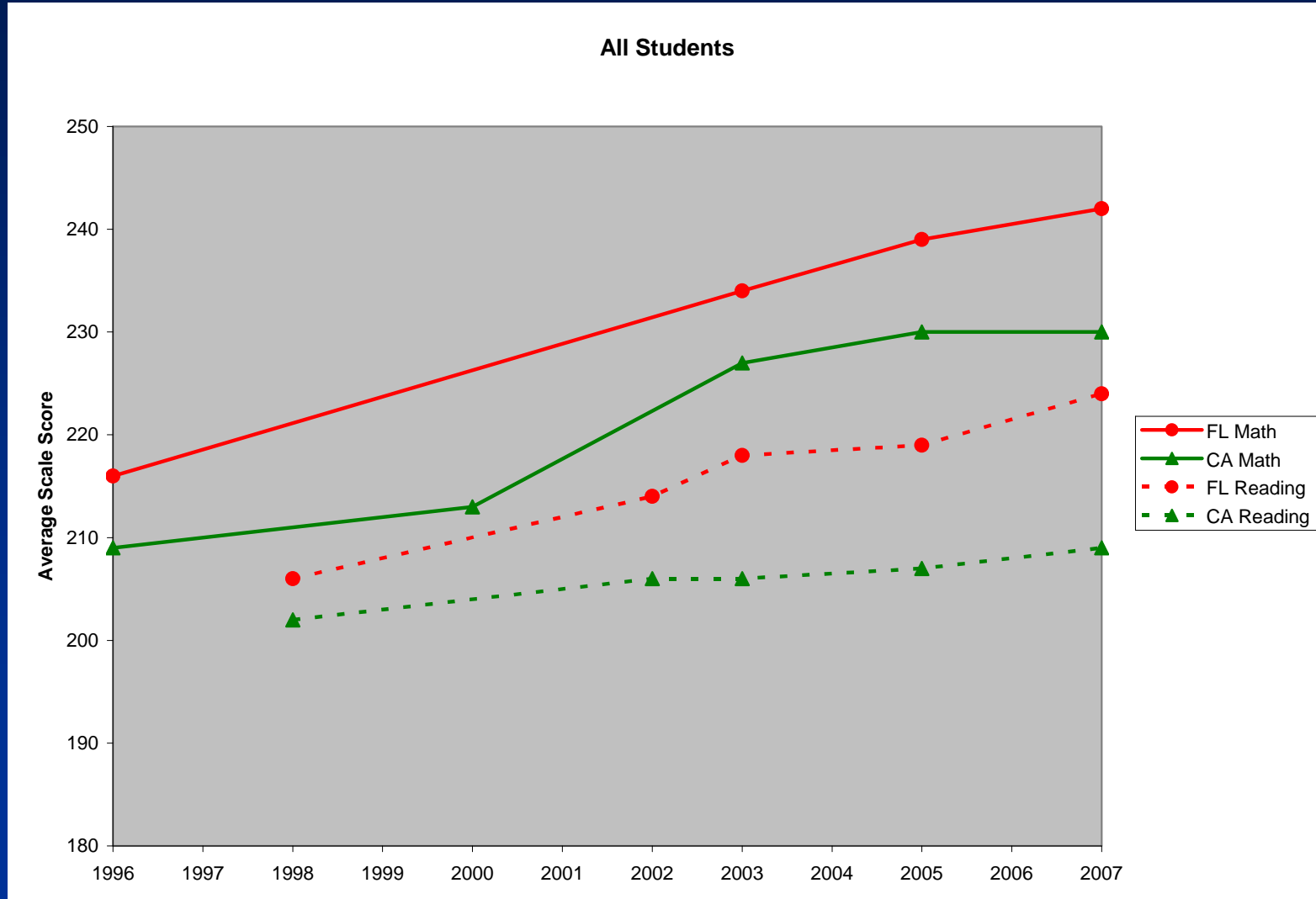


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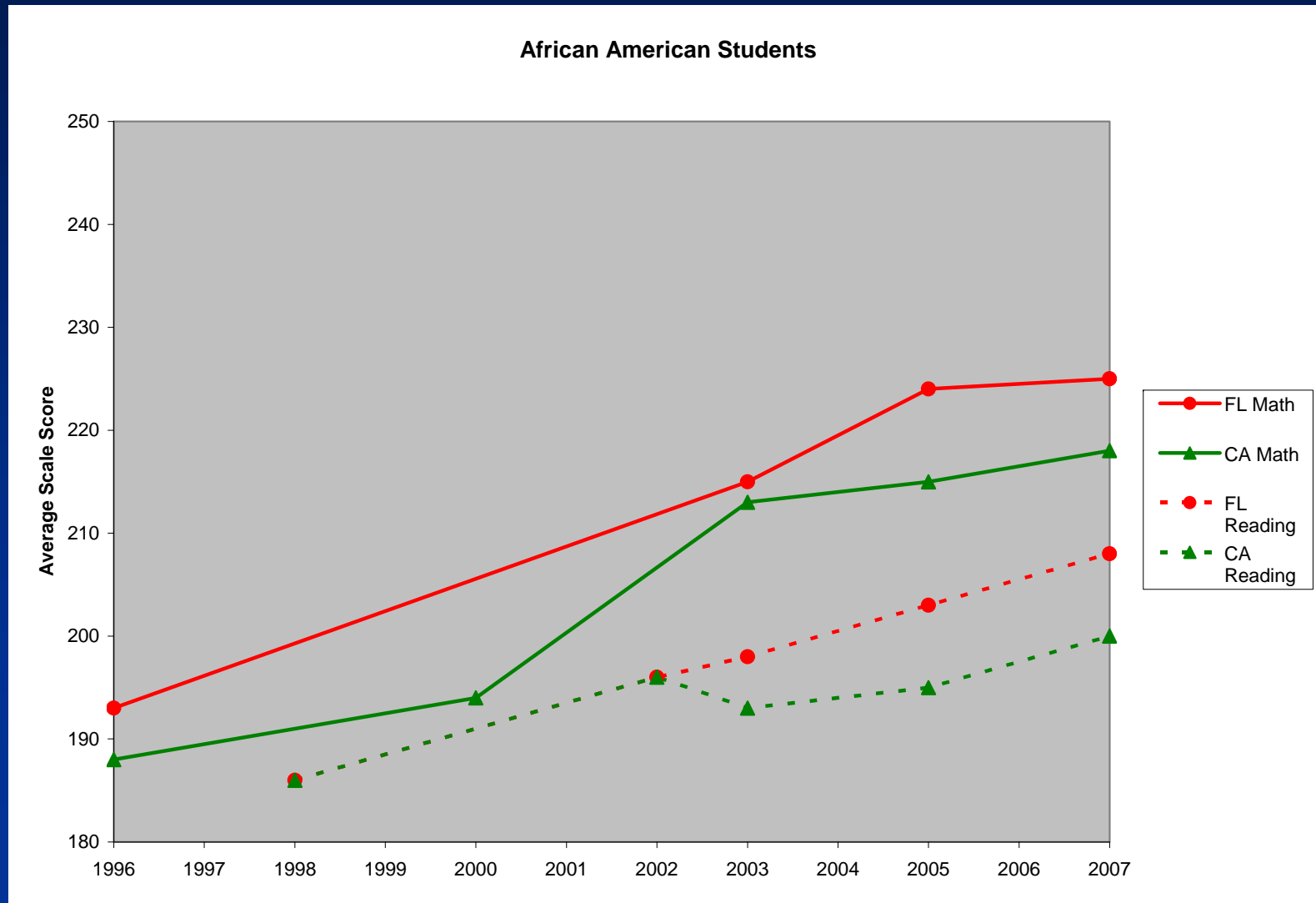
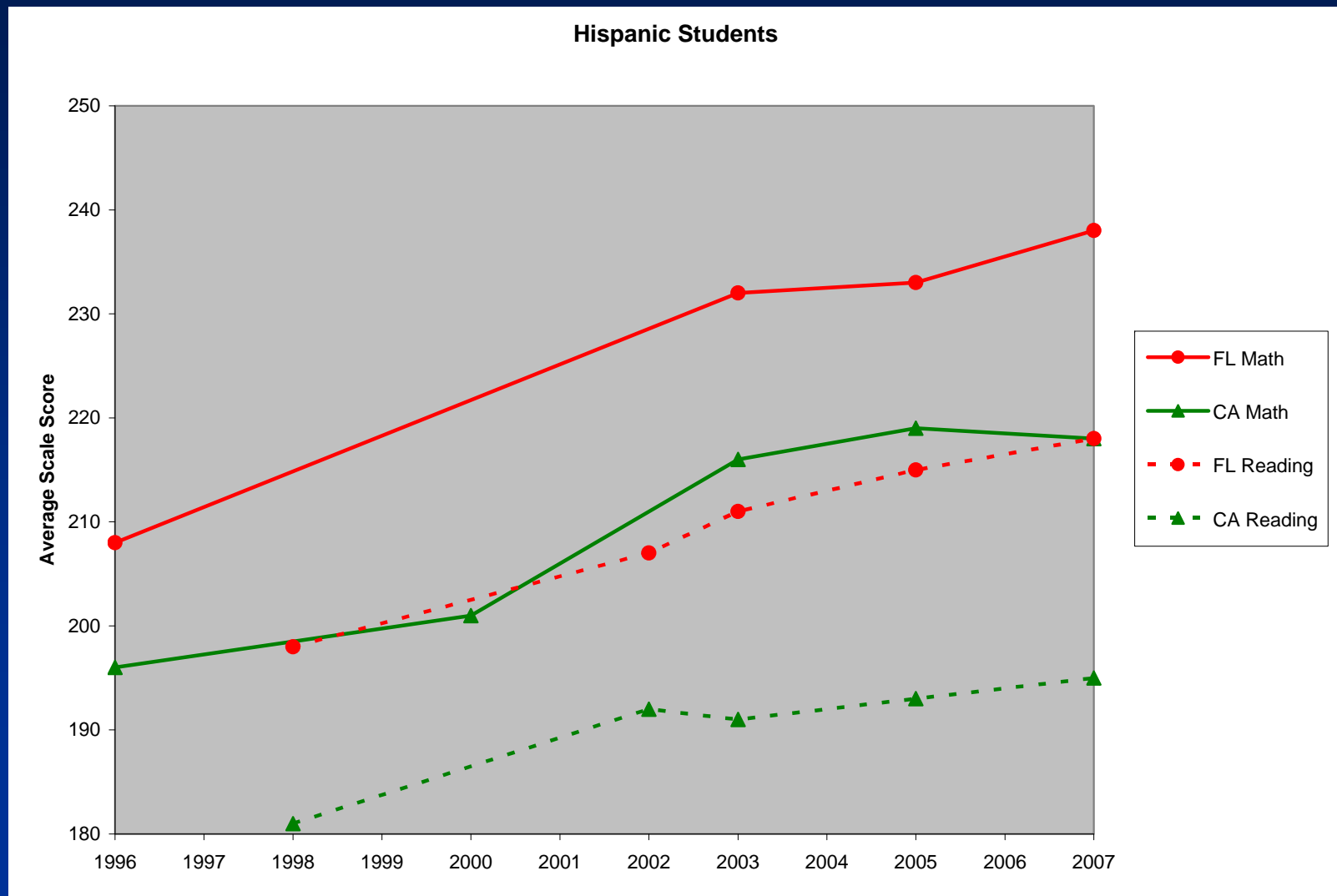
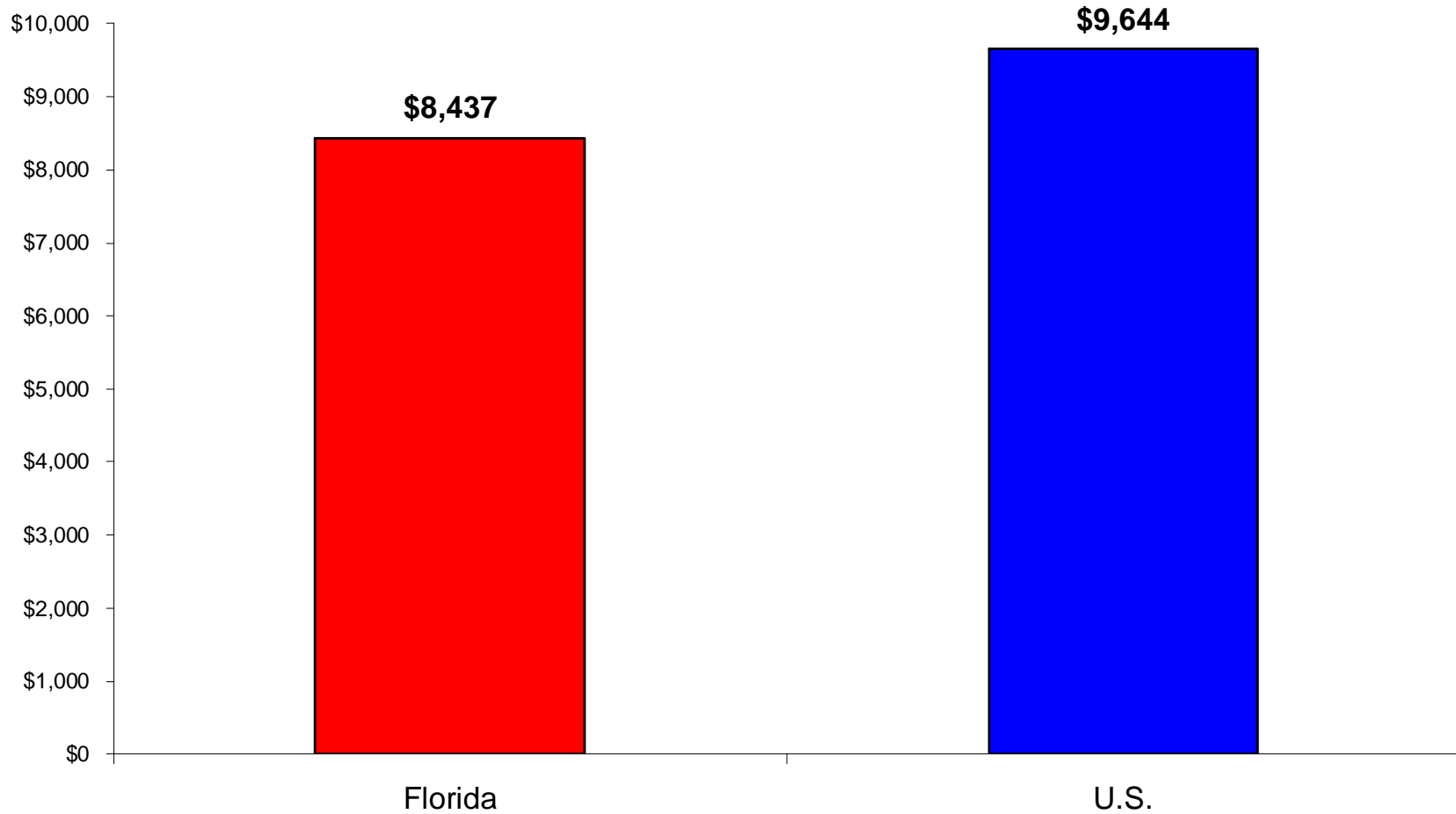


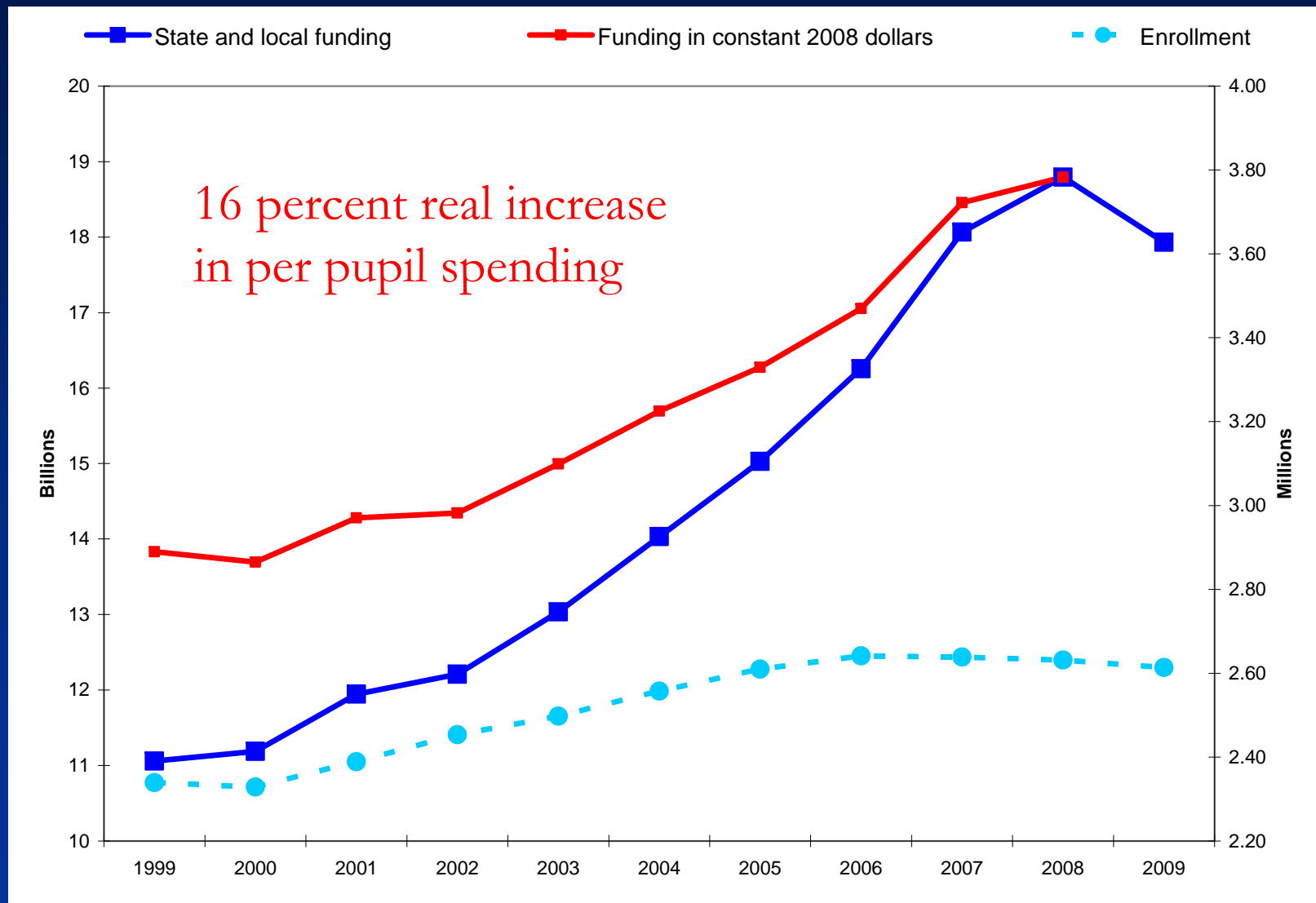
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## Per Pupil Spending, 2006 (adjusted for regional cost differences)



# Figure 8. K-12 State and Local Funding and Enrollment, 1999-2009



Source: Florida Education Finance Program Calculations from the Office of Funding and Financial Reporting of the Florida Department of Education.

# School and Student Accountability

- The engine for improved achievement
  - School accountability
    - 1999 A+ Accountability Plan
    - 2002 revisions: levels *and* growth in student achievement
    - NCLB complicates the situation
  - Student accountability
    - Enhanced high school graduation requirements
    - Ending social promotion

# Making Reading a Priority

- “Just Read, Florida!” program launched at elementary school level in 2002
  - Diagnostic assessments
  - Reading coaches
  - Training for principals
  - Training for parents
- Later expanded to include middle and high schools

# An ongoing process

1. Next Generation Standards
2. Differentiated Accountability program
3. Increased expectations in high school grading system

# Recommendation (1)

- Even if the fiscal situation deteriorates further, Florida should protect the main features of its accountability system. The costs of testing students and calculating results are very small relative to the benefits of doing so.

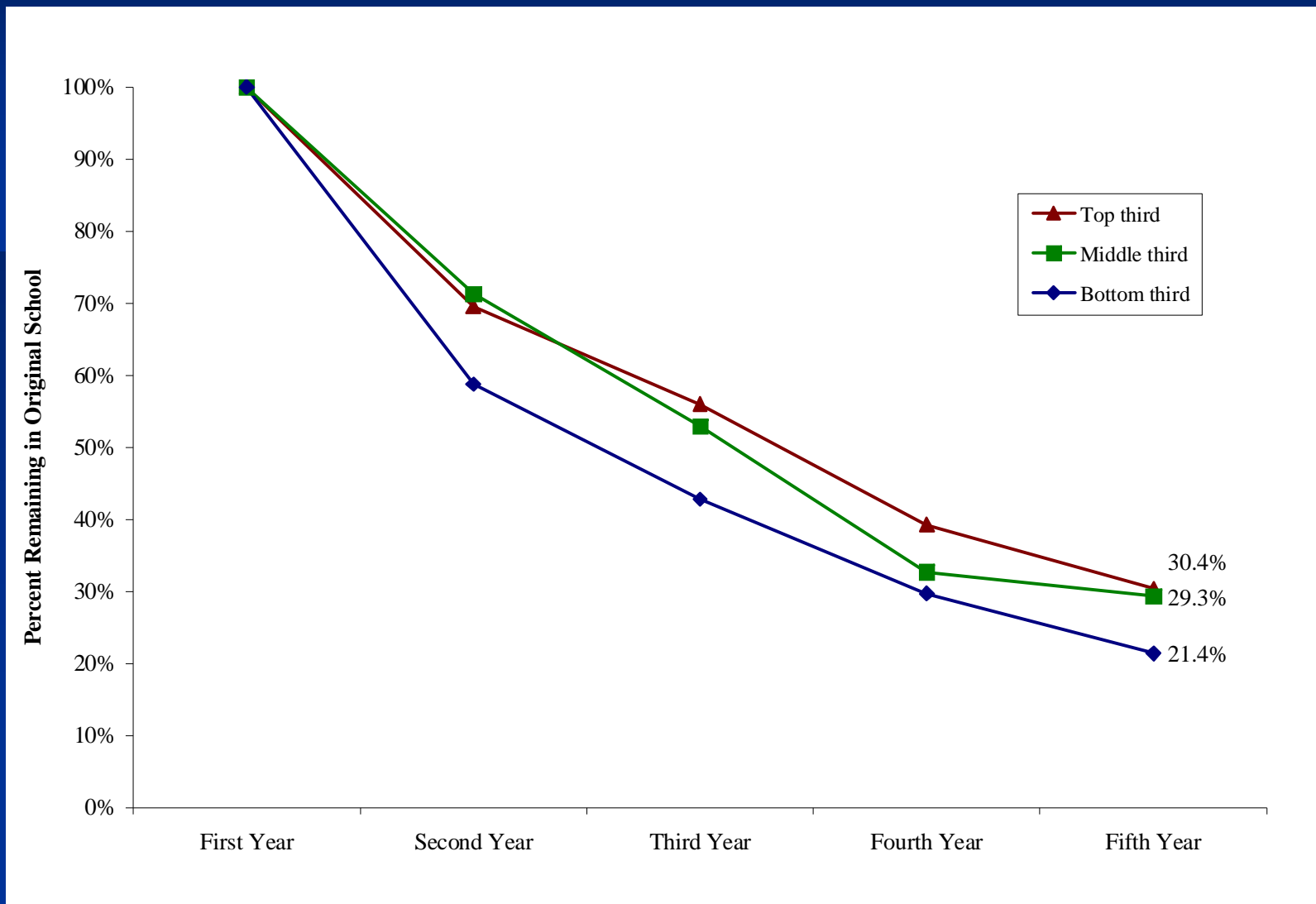
Specifically...

- a. Continue to develop the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards
  - b. Maintain the School Recognition Program
  - c. Implement “Differentiated Accountability”
  - d. Implement new high school grading system
- Recommendation (2): Keep reading a priority

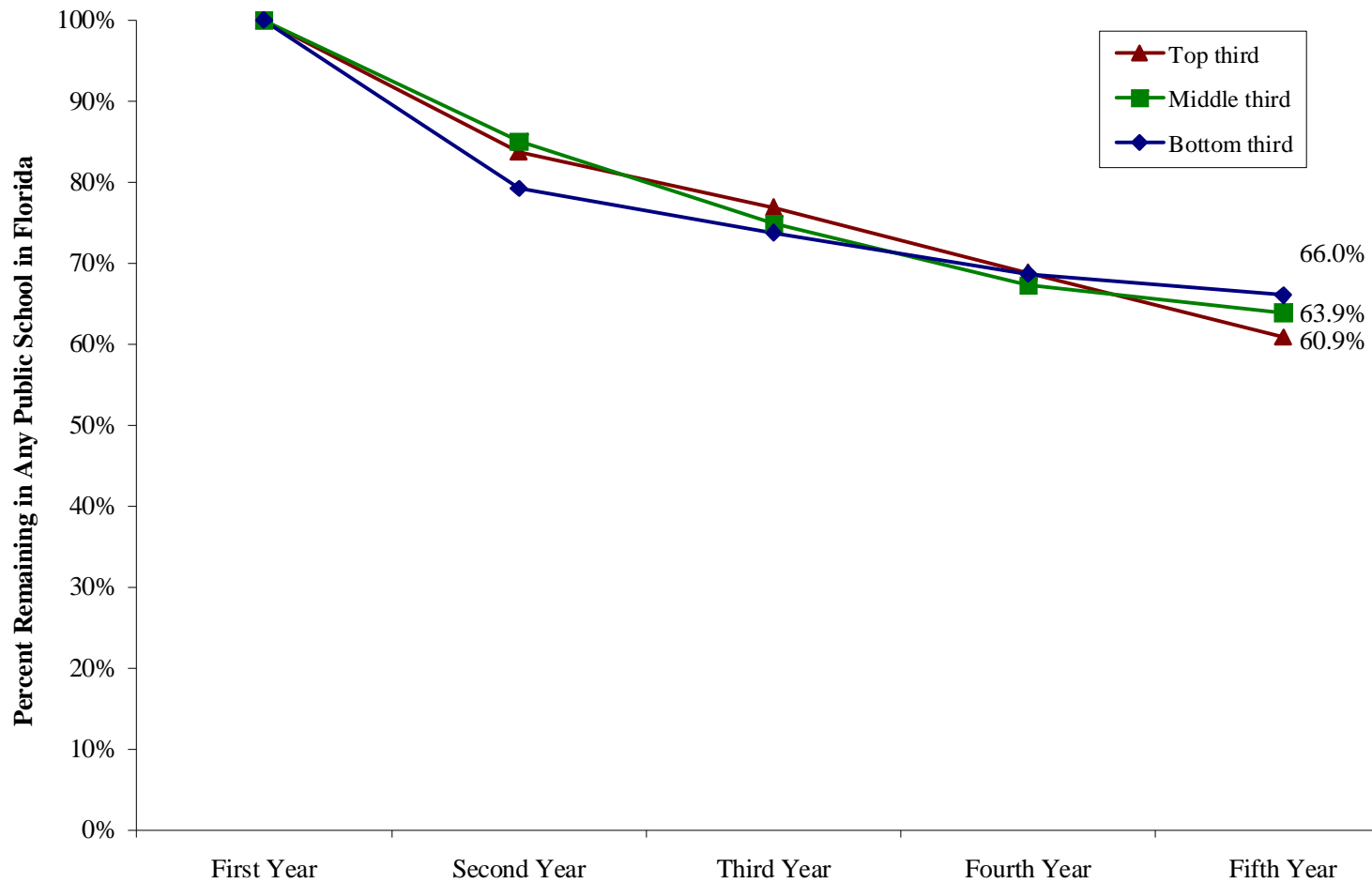
# Raising teacher quality

- National consensus that teacher quality is key
  - Teacher effectiveness, as measured by student achievement gains, varies widely both between and within schools
- The same patterns are evident in Florida
  - Having a top-third rather than a bottom-third teacher in grades 3-5...
    - increases FCAT math achievement by 0.4 standard deviations
    - increases FCAT reading achievement by 0.2 standard deviations
- Are schools and districts responsive to these differences?

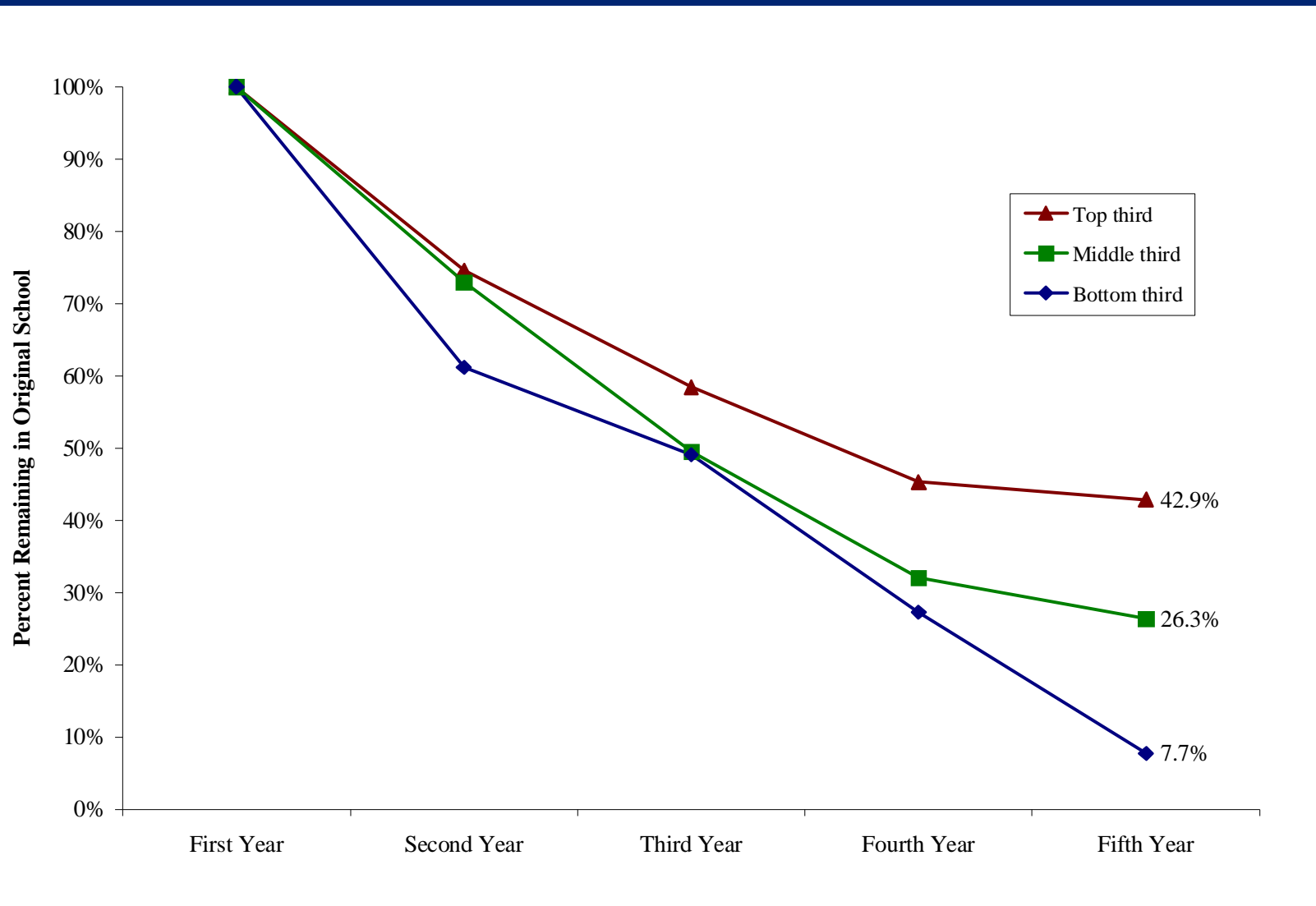
# New Teacher Retention **in Same School,** by Effectiveness



# New Teacher Retention **in Profession,** by Effectiveness



# New Teacher Retention in **Same School**, by Effectiveness: **High-Scoring Schools**



# Teacher Performance Pay

- Ongoing efforts in Florida to develop performance pay systems for teachers
  - Legal requirement for districts since 2002
  - STAR (2006)
  - Merit Award Program (2007)
- Only 5 out of 67 districts have MAP-compliant plans as of February 2009...
  - ...but 218 of 358 charter schools are participating

- Recommendation (3): The state should continue to fund a performance pay program and should consider a statewide mandate that would ensure district participation. But the state should allow districts the flexibility to develop alternative plans subject to department approval.
- Recommendation (4): As Florida continues to develop performance pay systems for teachers, it should pursue a similar policy for principals and other school-level administrators.

# Alternative Certification

- Until very recently, Florida's challenge was to improve the quality of its teacher workforce while also raising its quantity
  - Shortages in key subject areas (math, science, special education, and ESOL) remain
- Alternative Certification Programs
  - District-based programs
  - Educator Preparation Institutes

## Recommendation (5)

- Maintain alternative certification programs, which provide a promising pool of candidates during times of fiscal stress. But eliminate required coursework not based on evidence of association with higher student achievement.

# Investing wisely in teacher quality

- Reward effectiveness instead of characteristics known not to be associated with effectiveness
- MA degree: no evidence either nationally or in Florida that teachers with an advanced degree are more effective in the classroom
- Average MA premium in 14 largest Florida districts: \$3,000
- Recommendation (6): the state should reward districts that eliminate salary premiums for obtaining an advanced degree → estimated savings: \$180 million annually

# Handling Reductions in Force

- Current policies: “last-in, first-out”
  - National data suggest that this means 15 3<sup>rd</sup>-year teachers will be laid off for every 10 teachers with 20 years of experience
  - But no evidence that experience matters after the first 1-3 years of teaching
- Recommendation (7): consider using stimulus funds to incentivize early retirements

# Class-size reduction

- Florida Constitution sets maximum (by 2011) class-sizes of...
  - 18 students in grades K-3
  - 22 students in grades 4-8
  - 25 students in grades 9-12
- Average class sizes have declined by...
  - 29 percent (from 23 to 16 students) in grades K-3
  - 22 percent (from 24 to 19 students) in grades 4-8
  - 11 percent (from 24 to 21 students) in grades 9-12

## State Appropriations for Class-size Reduction, 2004-2009 (millions)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Operating Funds</b>	<b>Facilities Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
2003-04	\$ 468	\$ 600	\$ 1,068
2004-05	972	100	1,072
2005-06	1,507	83	1,591
2006-07	2,109	1,100	3,209
2007-08	2,641	650	3,291
2008-09	2,729	-	2,729
<b>Total</b>	\$ 10,426	\$ 2,533	\$ 12,960

Source: Florida Department of Education, "House Council on Education and Economic Development PK-12 Appropriations Committee Update on the Class Size Amendment, February 11, 2009."

# Recommendation (8)

- Limit the fiscal and managerial consequences of the class-size reduction amendment.
  - a. Delay through 2009-10 the shift to enforcing the class-size reduction amendment at the classroom level.
  - b. Ask voters to approve modifications to the state constitution that would i) apply the clause only to school- or district-wide averages, ii) raise the caps; or iii) apply them to grades K-4 only.
  - c. Accept the recent administrative court ruling exempting charter schools from enforcement of the class-size amendment.

# School Choice Programs in 2008

- Charter schools
  - 358 schools serving 104,319 students
- Florida Virtual School
  - 100,000+ course enrollments
- McKay Scholarship Program
  - ~20,000 special education students
- Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program
  - ~21,000 low-income students

# Recommendation (9)

- There is no fiscal reason to eliminate any school choice options currently available to students and families. On the contrary, an expansion of those options would very likely yield savings to state and local taxpayers.

# Recommendation (10)

- The K-20 Education Data Warehouse and associated analytical capacity should continue to be expanded in order to facilitate the integration of data-based decision making throughout the Florida education system.

# Conclusion

- Current fiscal situation is both a challenge and an opportunity
  
- U.S. Department of Education's priorities for federal stimulus funds:
  1. Improved standards and assessments
  2. State data systems
  3. Teacher quality and distribution
  4. Interventions in low-performing schools

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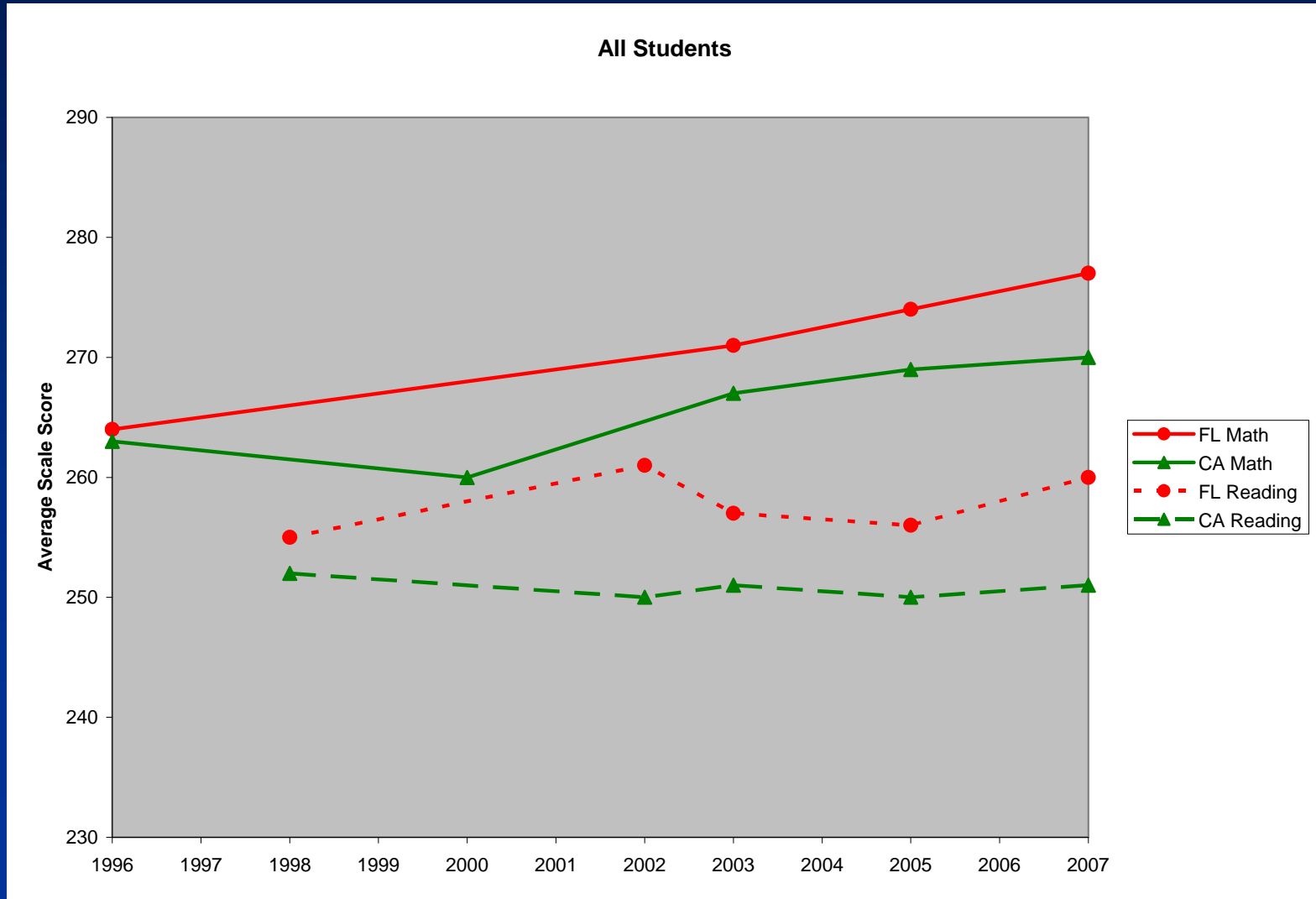


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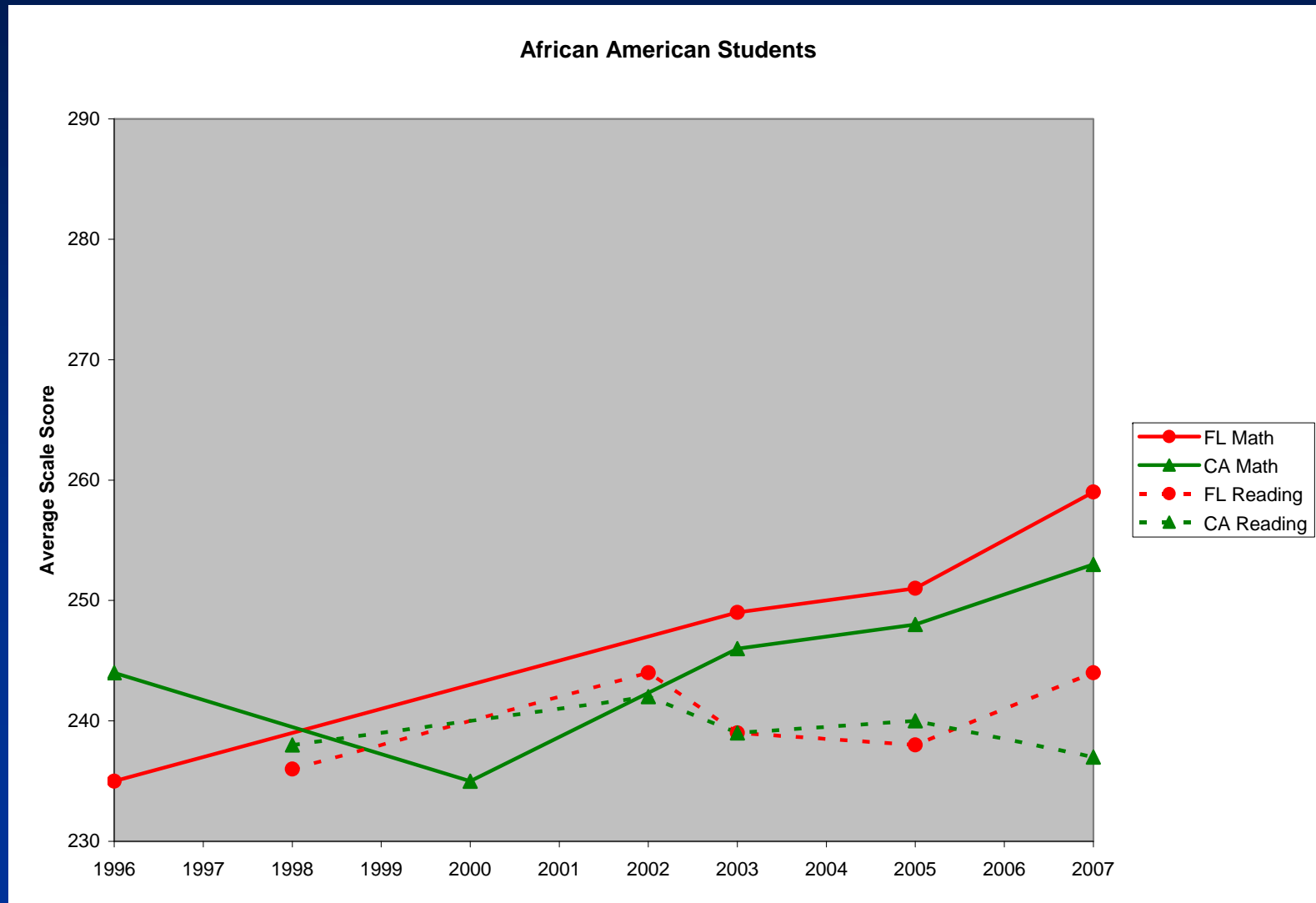
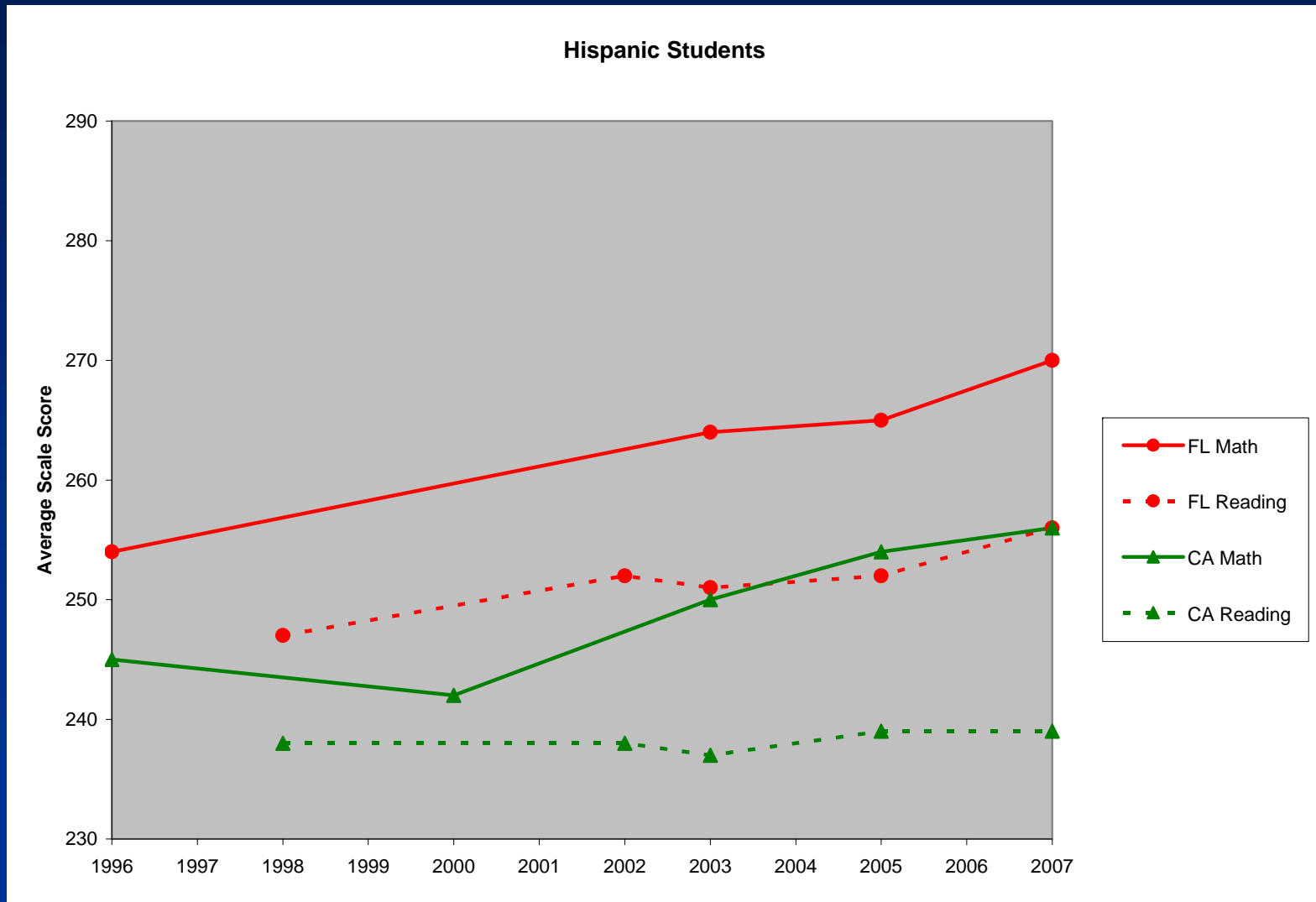


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# Recommendation 6

- As Florida continues to develop performance pay systems for teachers, it should pursue a similar policy for principals and other school-level administrators.