

2009 Third Grade Reading and Mathematics FCAT Results Fact Sheet

General

- The FCAT was first administered to third-graders in 2001, and the results from that initial administration continue to serve as the benchmark for long-term comparisons of third grade academic progress with the Sunshine State Standards (SSS).
- FCAT Reading and Mathematics SSS results are reported in Achievement Levels, which are based on scale scores and developmental scale scores.
- Achievement Levels range from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) and represent the level of success a student has achieved in these subject areas.
- A student scoring at or above Achievement Level 3 is considered to be performing at grade level.
- Detailed descriptions of each Achievement Level can be found at <http://fcats.fldoe.org/pdf/fcAchievementLevels.pdf>.

Third Grade Reading and Mathematics Results

- The 2009 third grade FCAT results show a statewide increase in the percent of students who are performing at or above grade level in Mathematics and a slight decline in those performing at or above grade level in Reading.

Reading Results

- This year, 71 percent of third-graders are reading at or above grade level, a one percentage point decrease compared to last year (72 percent in 2008).
- The percent of third-graders who are reading at or above grade level has increased 14 percentage points since 2001 (57 percent) reflecting a positive nine-year data trend.
- The percent of third-graders scoring in the lowest Achievement Level (Level 1) in Reading increased one percentage point this year to 17 percent. This represents a 12 percentage point decrease since 2001 (29 percent).

Mathematics Results

- This year, 78 percent of third-graders are performing Mathematics at or above grade level, a two percentage point increase compared to last year (76 percent in 2008).
- The percent of third-graders who are performing Mathematics at or above grade level has increased 26 percentage points since 2001 (52 percent) reflecting a positive nine-year data trend.
- The percent of third-graders scoring in the lowest Achievement Level (Level 1) in Mathematics remains at 10 percent. This represents a 14 percentage point decrease since 2001 (24 percent).

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Closing the Achievement Gap

- This year, African-American and Hispanic third-graders narrowed the achievement gap with White students in Mathematics.
- The percent of African-American third-graders performing Mathematics at or above grade level increased two percentage points this year (63 percent from 61 percent) compared to a one percentage point increase for White students (87 percent from 86 percent).
 - This represents a one percentage point narrowing of the achievement gap for African-American third-graders in Mathematics.
- The percent of Hispanic third-graders performing Mathematics at or above grade level increased two percentage points this year (75 percent from 73 percent) compared to a one percentage point increase for White students (87 percent from 86 percent).
 - This represents a one percentage point narrowing of the achievement gap for Hispanic third-graders in Mathematics.

Third Grade Retention

- In 2002, the law was changed to require the retention of third-graders who failed to achieve a score of Achievement Level 2 or above on FCAT Reading.
- The FCAT is not the sole factor for determining a child's promotion to fourth grade. Parents of third graders in need of additional remediation may learn more at www.justreadflorida.com. The options available to help third-graders achieve their goals include:
 - Summer Reading Camps – Reading camps consist of six to eight weeks of intensive, remedial reading instruction.
 - Reading Mentors – Mentors work in coordination with the summer reading camps to give participating students additional opportunities to improve their reading ability.
 - Families Building Better Readers Workshops – The workshops provide parents simple ways to improve their child's literacy. The sessions also highlight strategies and methods to help their children through the remedial process.
- This year, 15,084 first-time third grade test takers who scored Achievement Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT are eligible for promotion to fourth grade because they met appropriate good cause exemptions.
- This year, 15,410 first-time third grade test takers who failed to reach Achievement Level 2 may be eligible for promotion to fourth grade through development of a student portfolio or appropriate score on an approved alternate assessment.