



**SCHOOL DISTRICT  
OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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## MEMORANDUM

May 24, 2013

**TO:** School Board Members

**FROM:** E. Wayne Gent, Superintendent 

**SUBJECT: RELEASE OF FY2013 FCAT 2.0 WRITING RESULTS: ALL STUDENTS TESTED**

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has released the FY2013 FCAT 2.0 Writing results for all students tested.<sup>1</sup> In February of 2013, approximately 39,000 students took FCAT 2.0 Writing in the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC) at grades 4, 8, and 10.<sup>2</sup>

In FY2012, the FDOE made major changes to the FCAT Writing program that increased student performance expectations. These changes apply more stringent scoring methods, including an increased emphasis on the correct use of standard English conventions such as sentence structure, mechanics, usage, punctuation and spelling, and attention to the quality of details requiring use of relevant, logical, and plausible support. In addition, for FY2013, the proficiency standard for schools grades was raised from 3.0 to 3.5 out of 6.

For this reason, the analysis below is restricted to the FY2012 and FY2013 FCAT 2.0 Writing results as reported in Tables 1-4.<sup>3</sup> A preliminary analysis reveals the following:

- In FY2013, the SDPBC significantly outperformed Florida in the percentage of students scoring 3.0, 3.5, and 4.0 and above at all tested grades.
- From FY2012 to FY2013, the SDPBC significantly increased the percentage of students scoring 3.0, 3.5, and 4.0 and above at grades 4 and 10.
- In FY2013, of the five largest Florida school districts, the SDPBC had the highest percentage of students scoring 3.0, 3.5, and 4.0 and above at grades 4 and 10.

<sup>1</sup> This data is based on all students tested, and not on the group of students used in the calculation of school grades.

<sup>2</sup> Student scores range from 1 (lowest) to 6 (highest). There is no "passing" score for FCAT 2.0 Writing.

<sup>3</sup> Since the accountability measure for school grades has changed in recent years, this analysis reports the percentages of students scoring at 3.0 and higher, 3.5 and higher, and 4.0 and higher. In FY2012, the Florida school grading system used the percent of students scoring 3.0 and higher as a component of the school grades. In FY2013, the percent of students scoring 3.5 and higher will be used for this purpose.

**Table 1. FCAT 2.0 Writing – Percent of Students Scoring 3.0 or Above**

Year	Grade 4		Grade 8		Grade 10	
	SDPBC	Florida	SDPBC	Florida	SDPBC	Florida
FY2012	85 (N)	81(N)	84 (P)	78 (P)	89 (P)	84 (P)
FY2013	88 (N)	83 (N)	86 (P)	79 (P)	92 (E)	85 (E)

Note: (N) = narrative prompt; (E) = expository prompt; (P) = persuasive prompt

**Table 2. FCAT 2.0 Writing – Percent of Students Scoring 3.5 or Above**

Year	Grade 4		Grade 8		Grade 10	
	SDPBC	Florida	SDPBC	Florida	SDPBC	Florida
FY2012	55 (N)	48 (N)	61 (P)	52 (P)	72 (P)	60 (P)
FY2013	67 (N)	57 (N)	64 (P)	54 (P)	77 (E)	62 (E)

Note: (N) = narrative prompt; (E) = expository prompt; (P) = persuasive prompt

**Table 3. FCAT 2.0 Writing – Percent of Students Scoring 4.0 or Above**

Year	Grade 4		Grade 8		Grade 10	
	SDPBC	Florida	SDPBC	Florida	SDPBC	Florida
FY2012	32 (N)	27 (N)	40 (P)	33 (P)	49 (P)	38 (P)
FY2013	45 (N)	37 (N)	42 (P)	35 (P)	56 (E)	40 (E)

Note: (N) = narrative prompt; (E) = expository prompt; (P) = persuasive prompt

**Table 4. FY2013 FCAT 2.0 Writing Results by Grade Level for the Five Largest Florida Districts:  
 Percent of Students Scoring 3.0 or Above, 3.5 or Above, and 4.0 or Above**

	GRADE 4			GRADE 8			GRADE 10		
	3.0 or Above	3.5 or Above	4.0 or Above	3.0 or Above	3.5 or Above	4.0 or Above	3.0 or Above	3.5 or Above	4.0 or Above
Palm Beach	88	67	45	86	64	42	92	77	56
Broward	86	64	43	83	60	40	90	70	48
Hillsborough	87	65	45	83	66	48	88	67	44
Miami-Dade	84	58	37	77	49	29	88	66	43
Orange	82	55	36	78	50	31	79	54	33

Florida school districts exceeding 150,000 students

Results for individual SDPBC schools are available on the Department of Research, Evaluation and Assessment website at: <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/dre/FCAT.asp>

These results will be shared with appropriate staff to provide direction for improvement in curriculum and instructional practices. In addition, schools have received reports regarding their FCAT 2.0 Writing results and will use this information in the school improvement planning process.

Should you have questions about the FCAT 2.0 Writing results, please contact Mark Howard, Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, at 434-8781. If you have questions about instruction and FCAT Writing, please contact Keith Oswald, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Curriculum, at 357-1113. If you have questions about individual school efforts and FCAT Writing, please contact the appropriate area superintendent or school principal.

EWG/CA/FR/MH:bs

- c: Academic and Operating Chiefs
- Area/Assistant Superintendents
- Academic Executive Directors/Directors
- Principals