

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Members

DR. AKSHAY DESAI

MARK KAPLAN

ROBERTO MARTÍNEZ

JOHN R. PADGET

KATHLEEN SHANAHAN

Dr. Eric J. Smith
Commissioner of Education



Contact Information:

Judy Kent

(850) 245-0513

Assessment@fldoe.org

DPS: 2011-41

MEMORANDUM

TO: District School Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Frances Haithcock

DATE: March 25, 2011

SUBJECT: Public Review of Draft FCAT 2.0 and Algebra 1 End-of-Course Assessment Achievement Level Descriptions

Last September, I sent to you the Department's standard-setting plan for establishing the new Achievement Levels for the FCAT 2.0 and Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments. As you may recall, this plan includes several steps that must occur prior to the standard-setting meetings in September 2011, including the development of policy definitions for each Achievement Level as well as Achievement Level Descriptions (ALDs).

Policy definitions provide a general statement of the policy goals for each Achievement Level and are aligned with the purpose of the assessment and the statutory requirements related to Achievement Levels. Rather than detailing content-specific information about what a student should know, policy definitions encompass student performance goals at each Achievement Level for all grade levels and subject areas. The current FCAT Achievement Levels serve as the policy definitions for the FCAT program. For FCAT 2.0 and the Florida EOC Assessments, the FCAT policy definitions have been revised to incorporate the *Next Generation Sunshine State Standards* (NGSSS) and the statutory requirement that Level 3 indicates satisfactory performance, as shown in Table 1.

The next step in the process is to develop the ALDs. Because policy definitions are very general statements that do not include information about subject-area content, the creation of ALDs enables the translation of policy definitions into detailed descriptions of the knowledge and skills that a student needs to be able to achieve at each level. Whereas the policy definitions apply to all grade levels and subject areas, the ALDs are grade-level and subject-matter specific.

DR. FRANCES HAITHCOCK
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Table 1: FCAT 2.0 and Florida EOC Assessment Policy Definitions

FCAT 2.0 and Florida End-of-Course Assessments Achievement Level Policy Definitions	
Level 5	Students at this level demonstrate mastery of the most challenging content of the <i>Next Generation Sunshine State Standards</i> .
Level 4	Students at this level demonstrate an above satisfactory level of success with the challenging content of the <i>Next Generation Sunshine State Standards</i> .
Level 3	Students at this level demonstrate a satisfactory level of success with the challenging content of the <i>Next Generation Sunshine State Standards</i> .
Level 2	Students at this level demonstrate a below satisfactory level of success with the challenging content of the <i>Next Generation Sunshine State Standards</i> .
Level 1	Students at this level demonstrate an inadequate level of success with the challenging content of the <i>Next Generation Sunshine State Standards</i> .

The Department convened groups of Florida educators last September to draft the new ALDs. The process for producing these drafts included a thorough review of the assessed NGSSS and the test item specifications for each grade level and subject area. The committees then developed descriptions of the knowledge and skills of students at each Achievement Level, aligned to the policy definitions, and worked to show progressions across levels within each grade and across grades within each level. Their drafts were then compiled by the Department and revised for consistency in format across subjects.

Given the extremely critical role that ALDs will serve in the standard-setting process, the Department has posted the draft ALDs at <https://app2.fldoe.org/Assessment/fcatEOC/> for public review and comment. I encourage you, your staff members, and other interested stakeholders to review the draft ALDs and provide input to help ensure that the best possible set of ALDs is produced. The 30-day public review period will end on April 25, 2011.

Once the public review period is over, all public feedback will be considered as the Department finalizes the ALDs for use in the September 2011 standard-setting meetings. During these meetings, the committees will use the policy definitions and ALDs along with other information to recommend cut scores on the reporting scale for the new Achievement Levels.

We appreciate the district nominations that we have received for the standard-setting committees and thank you in advance for your valuable input during this next crucial step in the standard-setting process.

FH/KE/sk

cc: Assistant Superintendants for Instruction
District Assessment Coordinators
District Accountability Coordinators