

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Pam Stewart

**DATE:** March 22, 2013

**SUBJECT: Public Review of Draft U.S. History End-of-Course Assessment Achievement Level Descriptions**

### Contact Information

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**DPS: 2013-33**

The department is in the process of taking the necessary steps to establish achievement levels for the U.S. History End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment. Part of this process is developing achievement-level descriptions that define the knowledge and skills students need to achieve at each level. Due to the importance of the achievement-level descriptions in the standard-setting process, the department has posted the draft achievement-level descriptions at <http://app2.fldoe.org/Assessment/fcatEOC/> for public review and comment. The 30-day public-review period will end on **April 22, 2013**. I encourage you, your staff members, and other interested stakeholders to review the draft achievement-level descriptions and provide input to help ensure that they are as precise, accurate, and comprehensive as possible.

The standard-setting process includes several steps that must occur prior to the standard-setting meetings that will take place in August 2013. The basic steps for setting standards are as follows:

1. Develop a policy definition describing the meaning of each achievement level.
2. Develop achievement-level descriptions.
3. Convene a standard-setting panel composed of educators.
4. Conduct the standard-setting process to propose cut scores for the achievement levels.
5. Convene a business- and policy-leader reactor panel to review the proposed cut scores.
6. Obtain State Board of Education approval of cut scores with public input.

PAM STEWART  
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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 table below provides the established policy definitions for all Florida EOC assessment subject areas.

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

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

The department convened a group of Florida educators last August to draft the new achievement-level descriptions for the U.S. History EOC Assessment. The process for producing these drafts included a thorough review of the assessed *Next Generation Sunshine State Standards* and the test item specifications for this subject area. The committee then developed descriptions of the knowledge and skills of students at each achievement level, aligned to the policy definitions, and worked to show progression across levels within the subject area. Their draft was then compiled by the department and revised for consistency in format.

After the public-review period closes on April 22, 2013, all public feedback will be considered as the department finalizes the achievement-level descriptions for use in the August 2013 standard-setting meetings. During these meetings, the committees will use the policy definitions and achievement-level descriptions along with other information to recommend cut scores on the reporting scale for the new U.S. History EOC Assessment achievement levels.

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

PS/JF

cc: Assistant Superintendents for Instruction  
District Assessment and Accountability Coordinators