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Just Read, Florida!

March 22, 2004

To: School District Superintendents

From: Commissioner Jim Horne and Chancellor Jim Warford

Subject: School Letter Grades 2003-04

The Department of Education has been in the process of reviewing school district designation of school types for purposes of school grading. The purpose of this effort is to ensure that as many students as possible are included in the school accountability system. Students attending most stand alone, full time alternative schools should be eligible to be included in the school accountability system. However, more time is needed to work closely with school district personnel to develop a strong and consistent policy on this matter. Therefore, the Department will not issue a school letter grade this year, 2003-04, to schools that did not receive a school letter grade in previous years due to the school type designation.

Schools that were previously typed as "alternative education" schools or "other" schools that are now typed as elementary, middle, high, or combination schools for accountability purposes of will have school letter grade points calculated but will not have a school letter grade assigned. Beginning in the 2004-05 school year, these schools will be assigned a school letter grade. These schools will still receive an Adequate Yearly Progress designation in 2003-04.

The Department is now working with school districts to assign all schools serving grades 3-10 (excluding Department of Juvenile Justice facilities) a school type of elementary school, middle school, high school, or combination school for purposes of school grading.

We believe this policy will give us all the time needed to ensure schools are properly identified for purposes of reporting and for accountability. Please contact Christy Hovanetz in the Evaluation and Reporting Office with any questions at 850-245-0411.

cc: John Winn
Jeanine Blomberg
Christy Hovanetz
District Accountability Contacts
District Assessment Contacts