



# Miami-Dade County Public Schools

*giving our students the world*

**Superintendent of Schools**  
Alberto M. Carvalho

**Miami-Dade County School Board**  
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Dear Parents and Community Members:

The overriding commitment of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is to provide the District's children with a world-class education in order to ensure their success while in kindergarten through grade 12 and beyond. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with important information about changes to your child's classes, the tests they will be required to take, and their high school graduation requirements. All these changes have come about through recent legislation in Florida.

The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) has adopted the *Next Generation Sunshine State Standards* (NGSSS) which provide a framework for what teachers should teach and students should learn at each grade level and for each course that is offered in every Florida school. These rigorous standards have taken the place of the original Sunshine State Standards and are being fully implemented in all M-DCPS schools. Parents may get additional information on the expectations for their child using an interactive tool, Success Measures, available on the FLDOE website at <https://app1.fldoe.org/SuccessMeasures>.

Because the expectations for your child are changing, the tests they are required to take must also change. Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, the state's assessment system, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), began transitioning to the FCAT 2.0 to align with the new course content. In 2011-2012, the FCAT 2.0 will be given to students in grades 3 through 10 in Reading, in grades 3 through 8 in Mathematics, and in grades 5 and 8 in Science. FCAT 2.0 Reading test scores are used in promotion decisions for students in grade 3 and as a high school graduation test requirement for students in grade 10. In addition to traditional paper/pencil tests, FCAT 2.0 features computer-based testing. In 2011-2012, the FCAT 2.0 Reading test will be administered on computers to students in grades 6 and 10. More information about the FCAT 2.0 testing program is available at <http://fcats.fldoe.org/fcats/>, answers to commonly asked questions may be accessed at <http://www.fldoe.org/faq/Default.asp?Dept=179&Cat=123>, and FCAT 2.0 sample materials and computer-based practice tests (ePat) may be found at <http://fcats.fldoe.org/fcatsmpl.asp>.

In addition to the FCAT 2.0 program described above, the FLDOE is rolling out End of Course (EOC) exams for specific senior high courses that will replace comprehensive FCAT Mathematics and Science tests in grades 9 through 12. Beginning with students enrolled in Algebra 1 in 2011-2012, students will be required to pass the EOC exam in order to earn credit in the course. In coming years, this same requirement will apply to EOC exams in Geometry and Biology 1. All EOC exams are taken on a computer. The FLDOE's scheduled Transition to Next Generation and Computer-Based Tests in Florida may be found at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/k12memo/pdf/tngcbtf.pdf>.

Finally, the Florida legislature enacted increased graduation requirements, which are being phased in gradually, beginning in 2010-2011. M-DCPS high school students and their parents will receive guidance from their schools to ensure that they be on target to meet the increasing graduation requirements. For most students this includes:

- Passing the FCAT or FCAT 2.0 Reading test;
- Passing the Algebra 1 EOC exam to earn course credit (beginning with current 9<sup>th</sup> grade students);
- Earning course credit in at least one course through online learning (beginning with current 9<sup>th</sup> grade students);
- Earning course credit in Geometry and Biology 1, including taking the EOC exams (beginning with current 9<sup>th</sup> grade students); and
- Passing the FCAT Mathematics test (only students currently in grades 11 or 12).

We stand ready to assist you and to provide your child with the education required for success today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Alberto M. Carvalho  
Superintendent of Schools

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