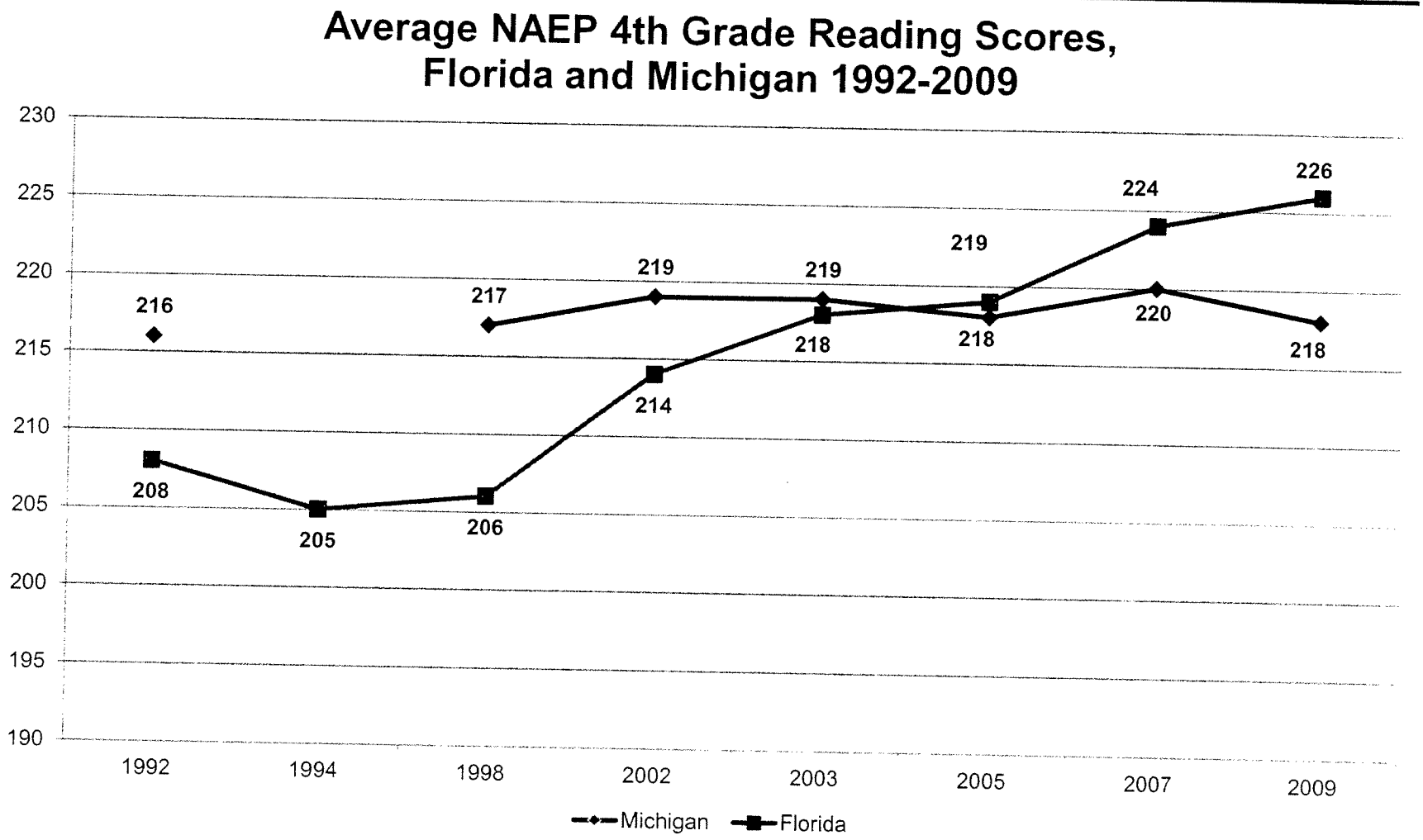
Florida Formula for Student Achievement:

Lessons for the Nation

Florida Student Population

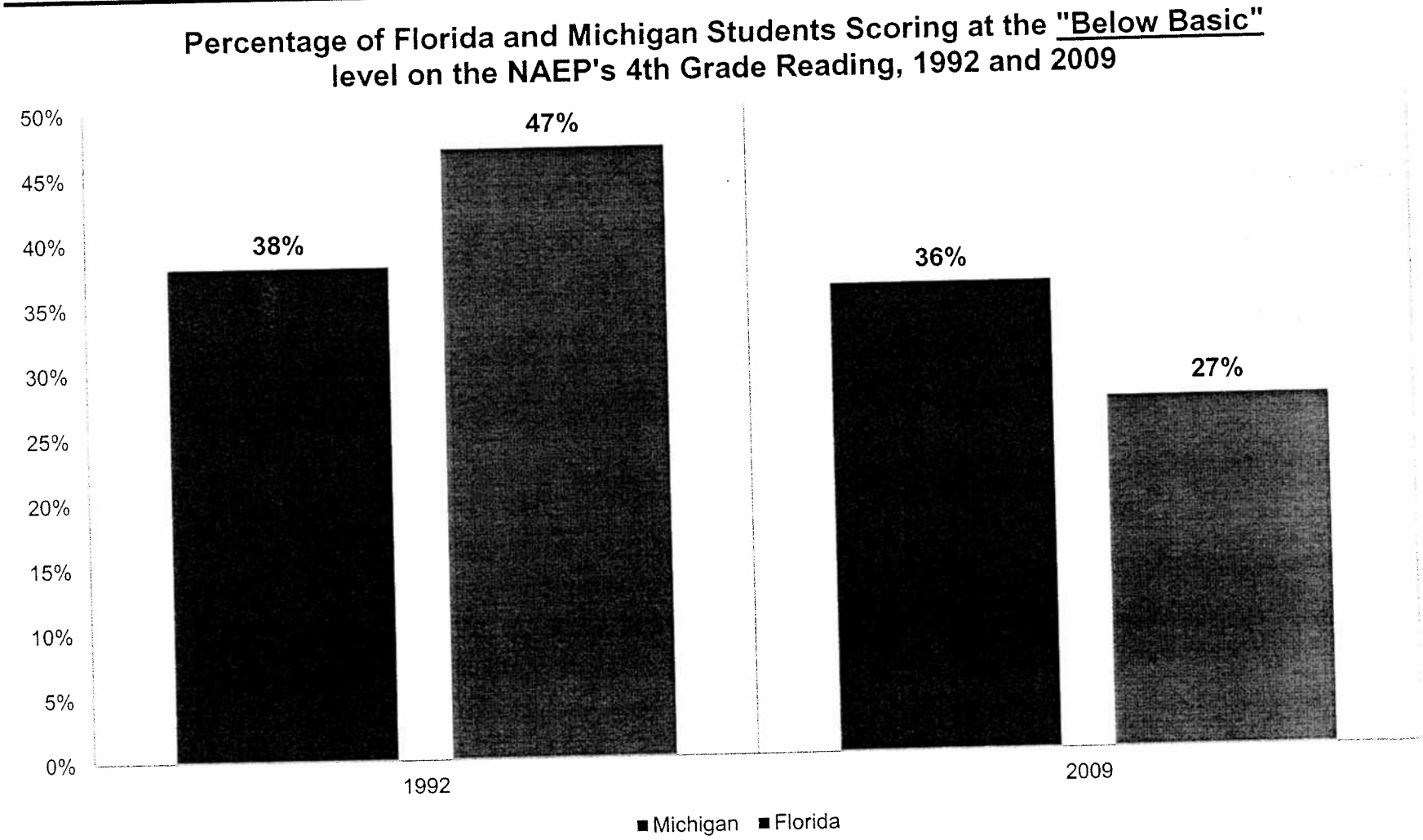
- 2.7 million students
- Majority minority student population
- Large population of students learning English as a second language
- About half of students are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch

NAEP



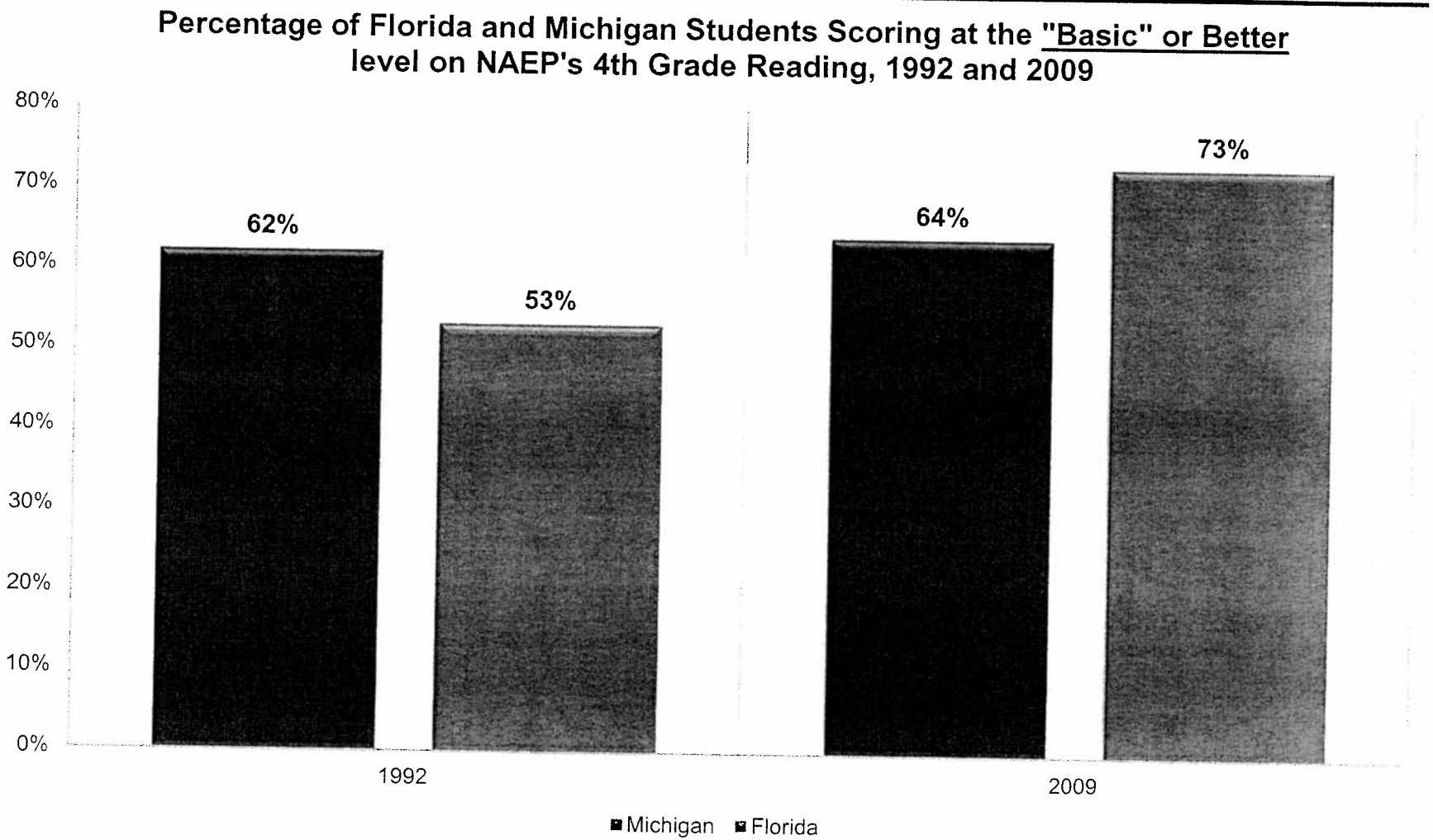
Foundation for Excellence in Education

NAEP



Foundation for Excellence in Education

NAEP



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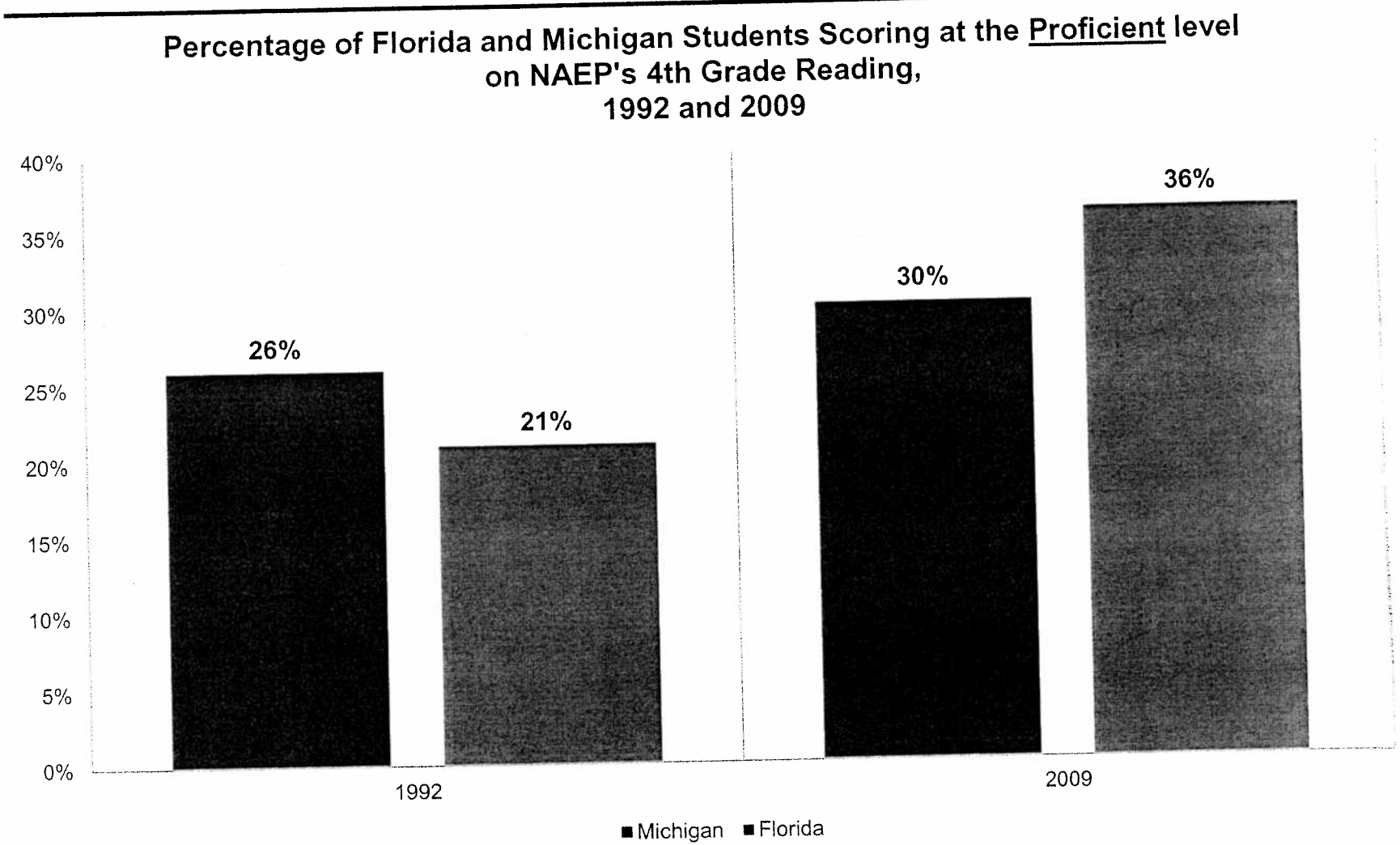

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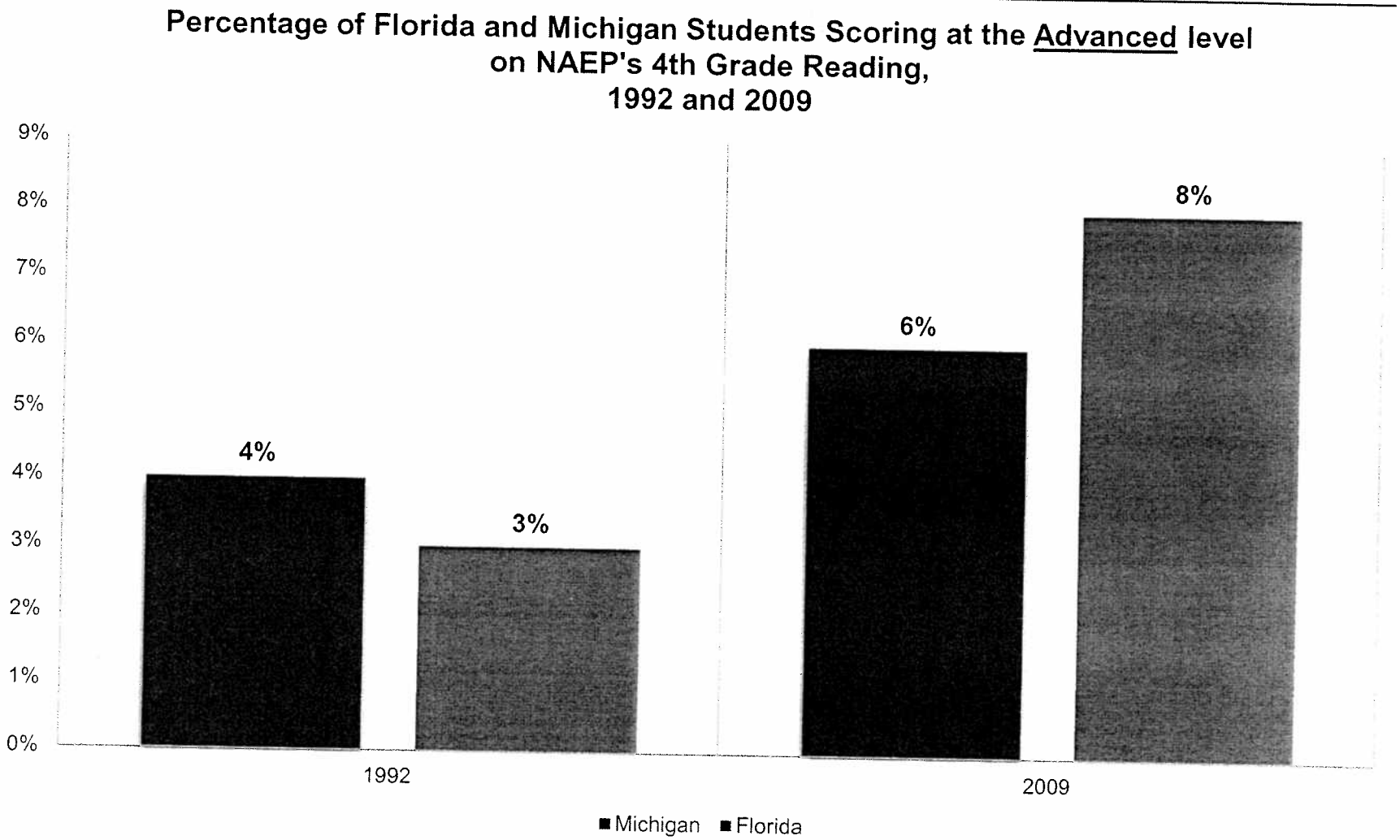

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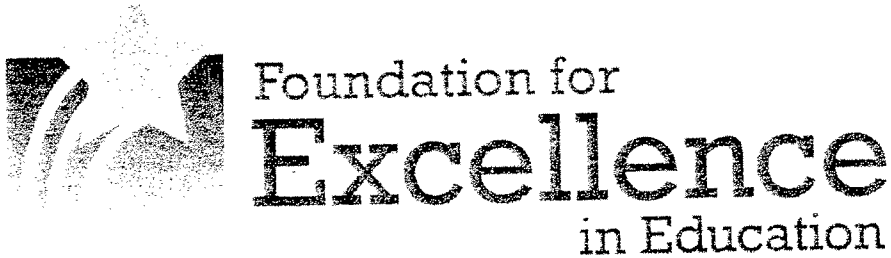

Florida: Before and After Education Reform

National Assessment of Educational Progress
Florida on the NAEP

1998

4th & 8th graders scored <u>at the bottom nationally</u> in reading and math

2009

4th & 8th graders scored <u>above national average</u> in reading

4th graders scored <u>above national average</u> in math

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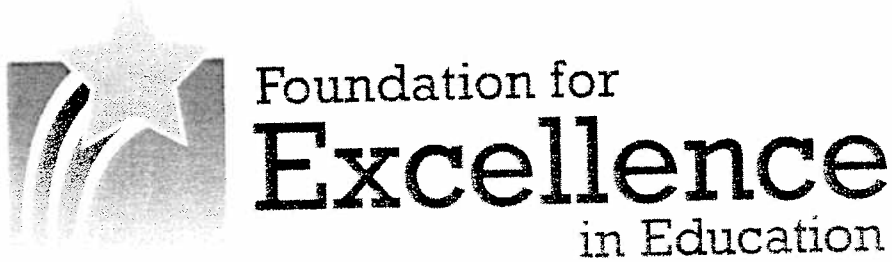

Florida Formula for Student Achievement:

A Roadmap of Reform for Michigan

Florida Reforms 1999-2011

- A – F School Grades
- Rewards for Results and Opting Out of Failure
- Promotion and Graduation Requirements
- Funding for Student Success
- Quality Educators
- Choices, Choices, Choices (charter, private, digital)

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A-F School Grades

"What gets measured, gets done."
– Jeb Bush

Measuring Student Learning

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

- Aligned with state academic standards
- Subjects: Reading, Math, Writing and Science

Testing expanded from 3 subjects in 3 grades to:

- In 2001, Reading and Math expanded to all grades 3 to 10
- In 2003, Science added to grades 5, 8 and 11
- Writing in grades 4, 8 and 10

Performance Levels

1	2	3	4	5
Below Grade	Below Grade	**Grade Level**	Above Grade	Above Grade

History of School Grades

1995: Florida began "grading" schools:

- High Performing
- Performing
- Low Performing
- Critically Low Performing

1998: Moved to Performance Levels: I, II, III, IV, V

1999: Adopted Letter Scale of A to F

School Grades: A - F

- **School Grade is based solely* on students' performance on the FCAT.**
- **Proficiency / Achievement**: 50% of the grade
  - Percent of all students performing on grade level
- **Progress / Learning Gains**: 50% of the grade
  - Percent of students learning a year's worth of knowledge, regardless of whether they are on grade level
  - Percent of lowest performing 25 percent students who are making a year's worth of progress

*In 2010, high school grades began including graduation rates, at-risk student graduation rates, acceleration rates, college readiness rates

School Grades

Each category has 100 possible points (percent of students)

Reading	Math	Writing	Science
Proficiency	Proficiency	Proficiency	Proficiency
Progress (all students)	Progress (all students)		
Progress (lowest 25%)	Progress (lowest 25%)		

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Sunshine Middle School

Reading	Math	Writing	Science
Proficiency 63%	Proficiency 59%	Proficiency 90%	Proficiency 51%
Progress (all students) 66%	Progress (all students) 68%	508 points = B	
Progress (lowest 25%) 57%	Progress (lowest 25%) 54%		

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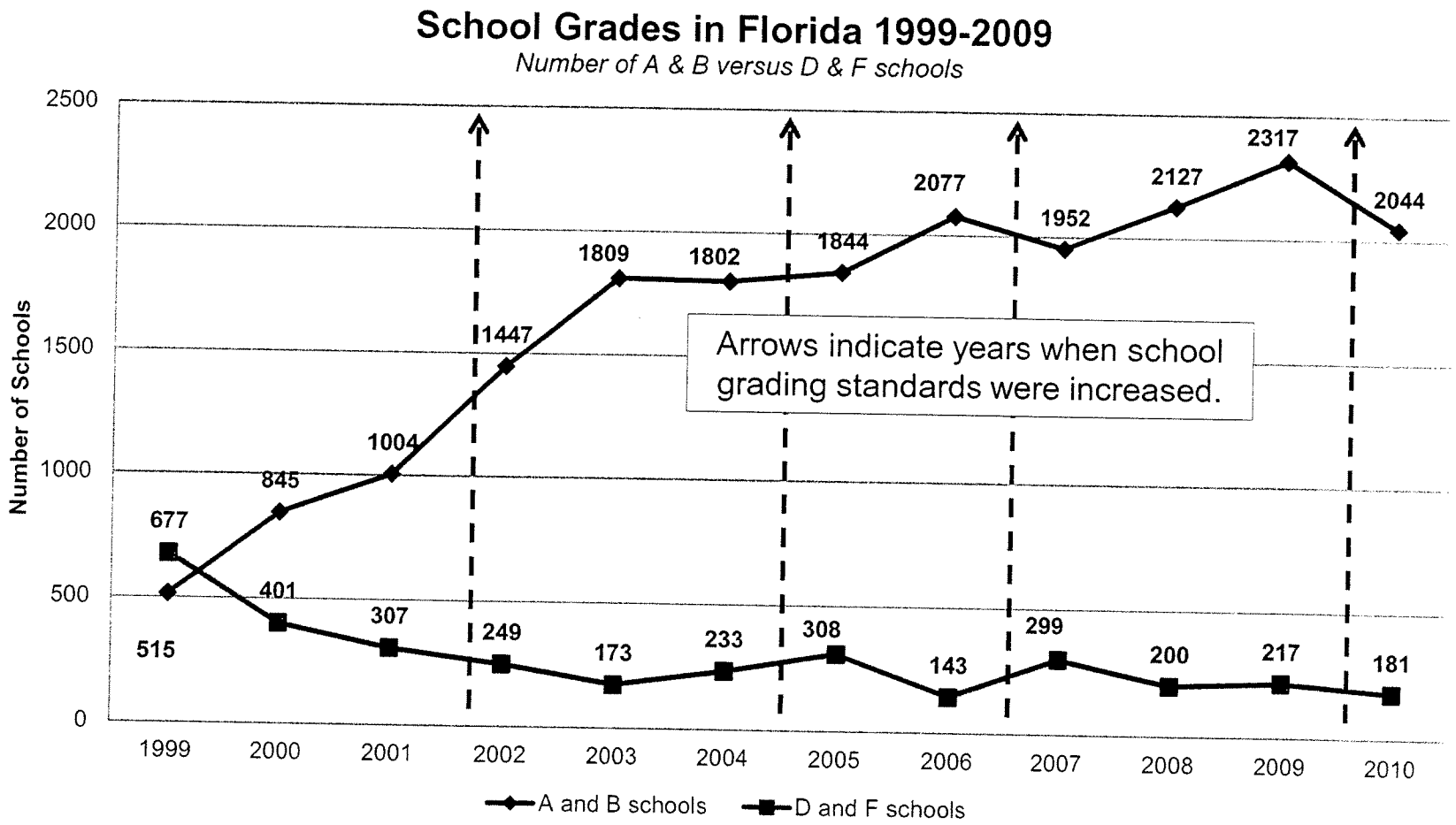
Grading Florida High Schools

Next Generation of Education Reform

Starting in 2010 school year, high school grades calculation also includes:

- Graduation rates for all students
- Graduation rates for at-risk students
  - Graduation rates for 8th grade students entering high school below grade level in reading and math
- Acceleration rates (both performance & participation)
  - Number of students taking and passing Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual credit or industry certification courses
- College readiness rates
  - Based upon SAT or ACT

Results of Florida A+ Plan



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Impact of an A – F School Grading System

- **Excellence v. Complacency**
  - School grading brought a **Command Focus on Learning**.
  - Administrators, educators and parents aren't satisfied with "C" grades, or even "B" grades. Everyone strives for **Excellence**.

- **Media & Public Attention**
  - Transparency in evaluating school performance attracts more attention to education, from extensive media coverage on the quality of education in individual schools to even realtors and realtor guides highlighting good school grades as a selling point on the housing market.

- **Statewide Competition to be the "Best of the Best"**
  - Based on their grades of their schools, each county district in Florida earns a single letter grade, creating added competition.

- **Community Support**
  - Low performing schools are easily identified and communities rally around them. Florida has witnessed countless stories of communities coming together to improve schools and raise student achievement.

- **School Pride**
  - Grading schools establishes public perception of both high performing and low performing schools, creating more ownership at the local level and added incentive to achieve or maintain excellence.

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Rewards and Consequences for Results

Rewards for Successful Schools

School Recognition Program

- Schools receive $100 ($70 for FY 11-12) per student for:
  - Improving a letter grade
  - Earning or maintaining an "A"
- Money goes directly to principals, teachers and parents (bypasses collective bargaining).
- Majority of funds – historically more than 85% - used for teacher and staff bonuses.
- We repurposed existing funds.

Options Out of a Failing School

Opportunity Scholarships (1999 – 2006):

- Eligibility: students in schools that earned an F for 2 out of 4 years
- Choices:
  - A higher performing public school within the district
  - A higher performing public school in an adjacent district, with space available
  - A participating private school
- Funding: scholarship equal to public school funding or private school tuition and fees, whichever is less.
- Status: Ruled unconstitutional by the Florida Supreme Court in 2006 – that year 753 students participated

Opportunity Scholarships (1999 – 2006):

Research concludes competition fuels achievement in public schools:

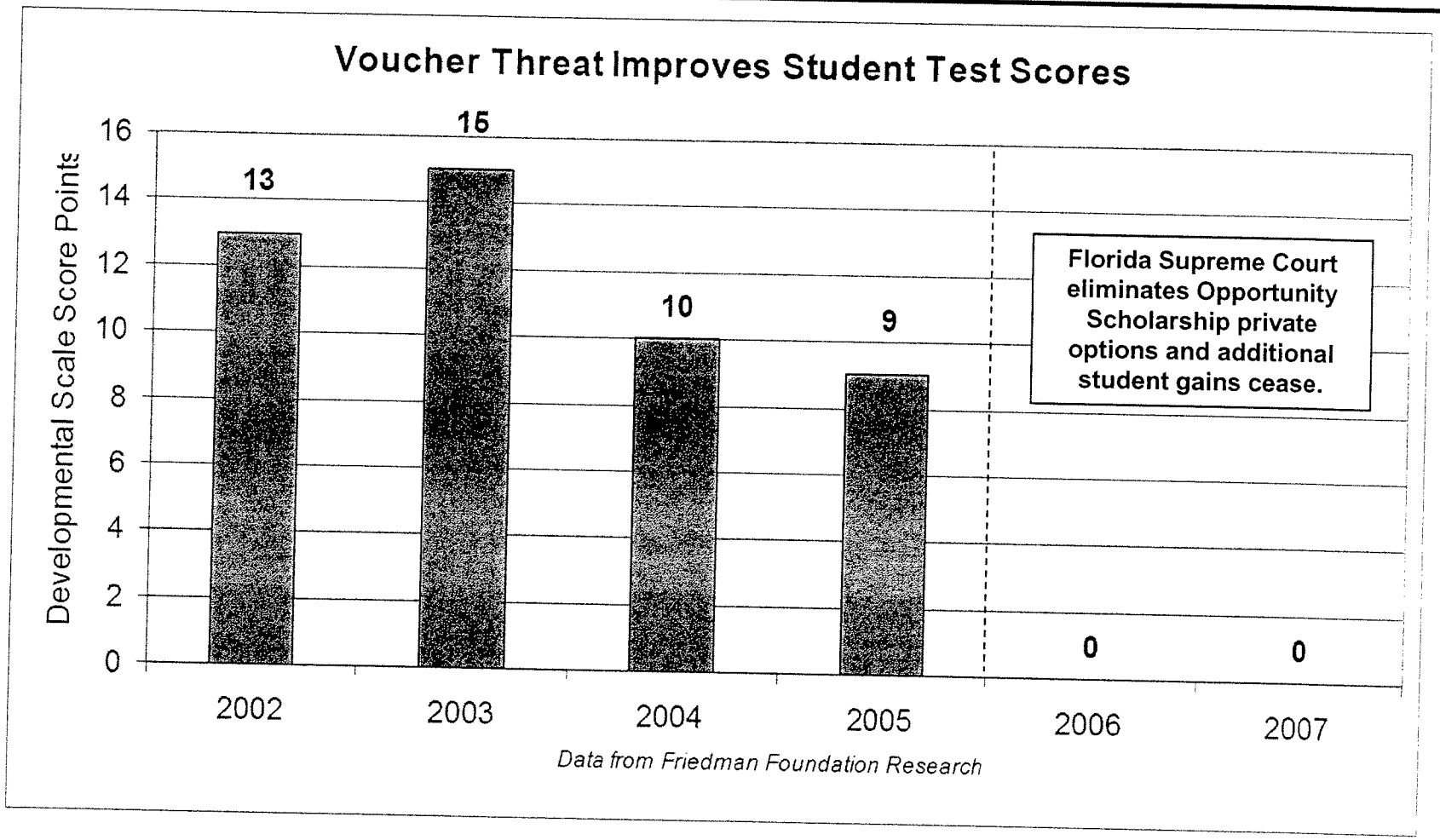
- **Manhattan Institute:** Threat of vouchers improved student performance.

  "Florida's low-performing schools are improving in direct proportion to the challenge they face from voucher competition. These improvements are real, not the result of test gaming, demographic shifts, or the statistical phenomenon of 'regression to the mean'."

- **Cornell University:** Failing schools respond to threat of vouchers by raising student achievement.

- **Harvard University:** Choice provisions of Florida's A+ Plan leveraged student achievement gains.

Impact of School Choice on Student Performance



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Promotion and Graduation Requirements

An End to Social Promotion

- Emphasis on reading as a gateway to learning.
  - 3rd grade: students are *learning to read*.
  - 4th grade: students are *reading to learn*.

- An end to social promotion in 3rd grade.
  - Students who score the **lowest level** (level 1 out of 5) in reading on the 3rd grade FCAT **must be retained** unless the student meets good cause exemptions.

1	2	3	4	5
Below Grade	Below Grade	**Grade Level**	Above Grade	Above Grade

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An End to Social Promotion

- Six Good Cause Exemptions:
  - Student with a disability who does not take FCAT
  - English Language Learners (ELL) who have had less than 2 years of English for Speaker's of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction
  - Student with a disability who takes FCAT and has previously been retained
  - Any student with a reading deficiency who has previously been retained twice
  - Student demonstrates proficiency on an **alternate assessment** (Stanford 9 or Stanford 10)
  - Student demonstrates proficiency through a **student portfolio**

State Reading Activities

- Test-based promotion policy
- Leveraged federal reading funds
- State-approved district reading plans
- Reading Coaches
- Florida Center for Reading Research
- Individual Student Intervention Plans
- Early Literacy screening in kindergarten – 2nd grade

A Command Focus on Reading

Year	Percent of 3rd graders level 1 on reading FCAT	Percent of 3rd graders retained
2000-01	29%	2.8%
2001-02	27%	3.1%
2002-03	23%	**13.2%**
2003-04	22%	10.2%
2004-05	20%	9.8%
2006-07	19%	8.1%
2007-08	16%	6.6%
2008-09	17%	**6.4%**
2009-10	16%	Data not yet available

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Retention Works

Manhattan Institute researcher Jay Greene did a study on Florida's third grade retention policy, after two years of the policy, and found:

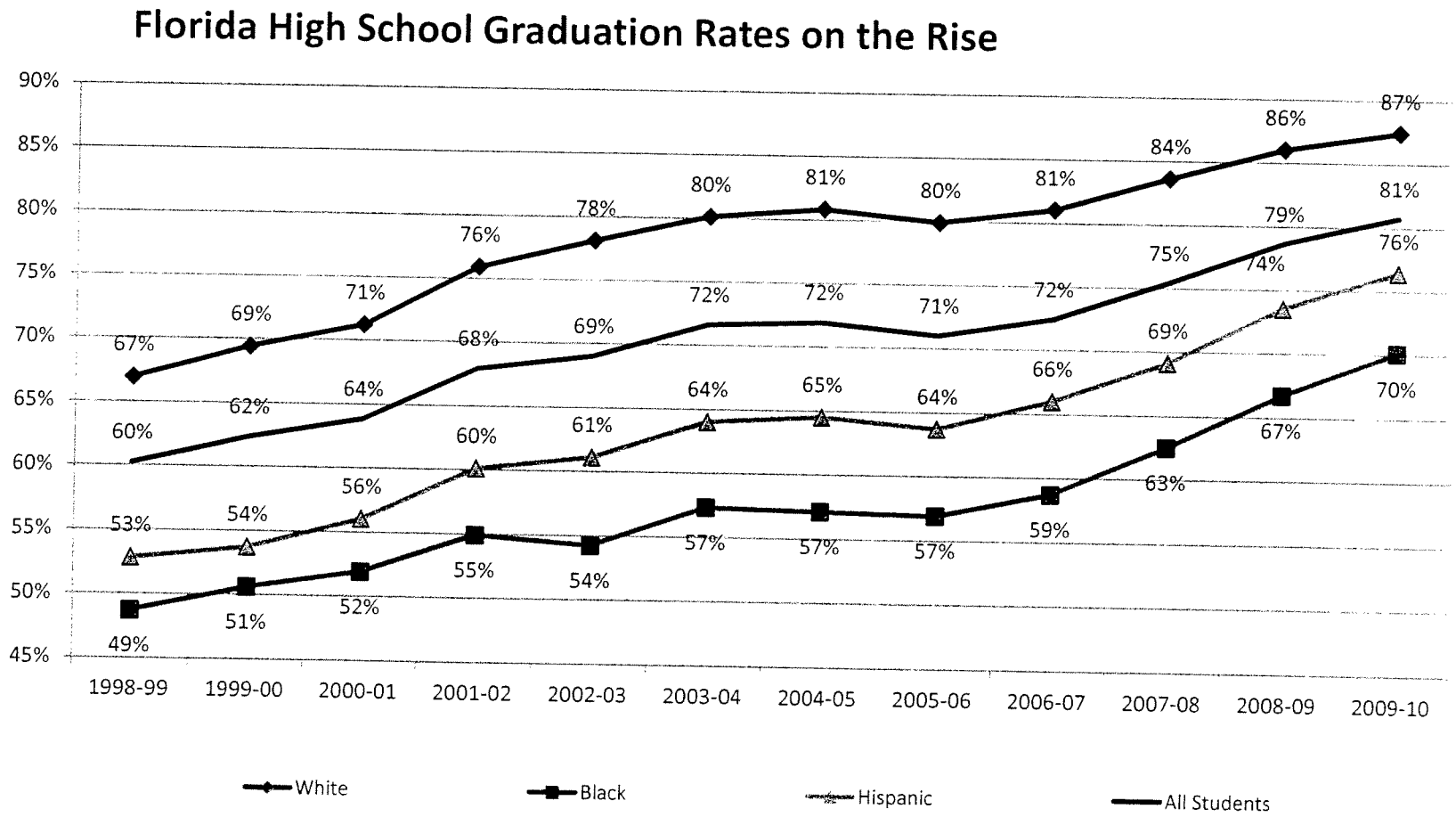
- Retained third graders made significant gains compared to socially promoted students.
- These gains actually grew substantially from the first to the second year after retention.
- Students who are socially promoted appear to fall farther behind over time, while retained third graders are able to catch up and succeed in later grades.
- Retention policies have had greatest impact on minority student learning.

Graduation Requirements

- Higher Expectations for a High School Diploma:
  - Florida has had an exit exam for a high school for more than 30 years.
  - In 2002, rigor of the test was raised from 8th grade level to 10th grade level.

- Results of Greater Rigor:
  - The percent of high school students not graduating solely because of the FCAT dropped from 10% to 8%.

High School Graduation Rate



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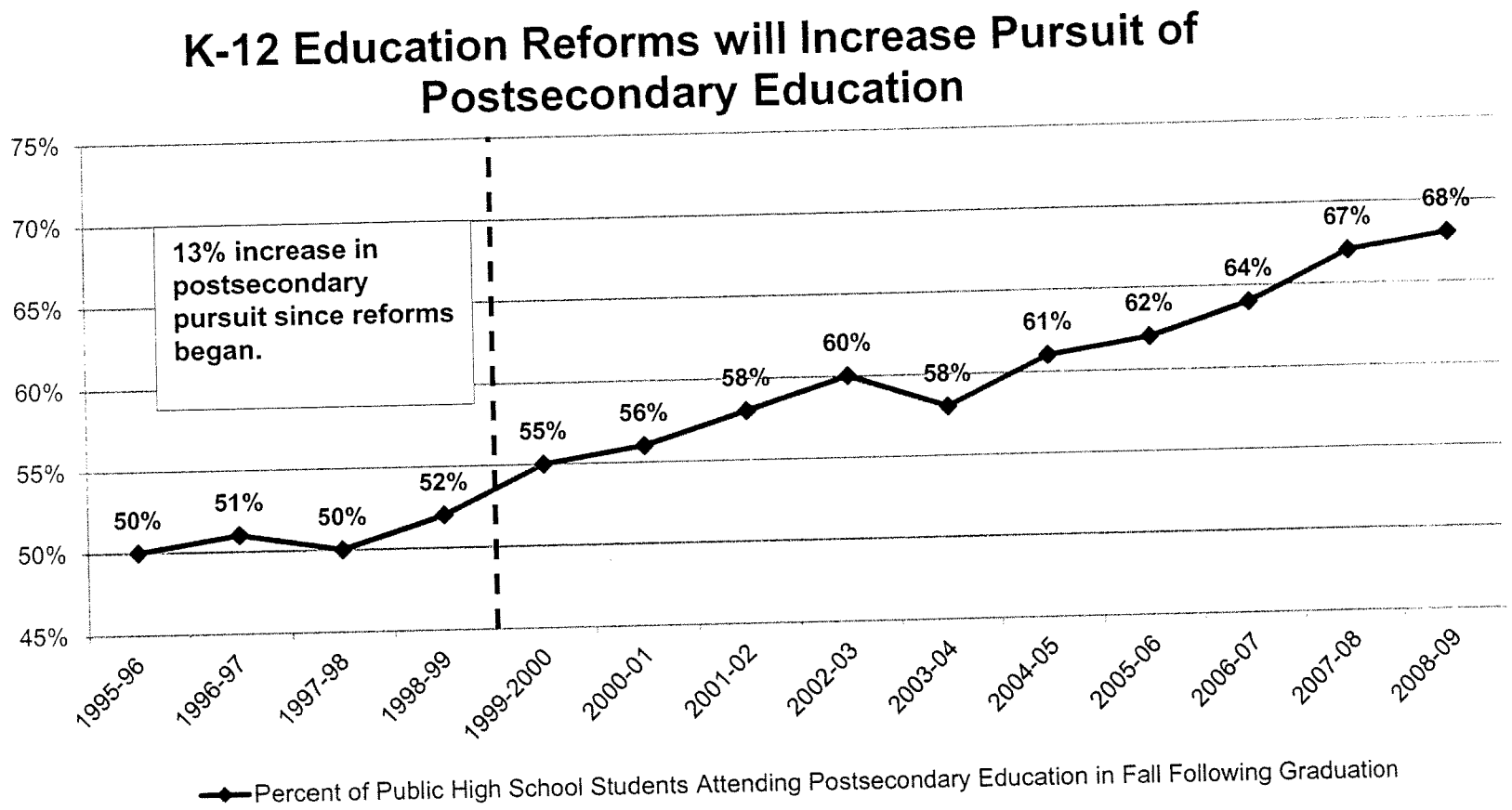
Postsecondary Education



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Funding for Student Success

Stop Funding Failure

Supplemental Academic Instruction Categorical:

- Provides flexibility in funding to improve student learning.
  - Summer School
  - Dropout Prevention

- Prioritizes more than $700 million per year for:
  - D and F schools
  - Students struggling in third grade
  - Students struggling to pass FCAT for graduation
  - Flexibility to use funds for any other purpose

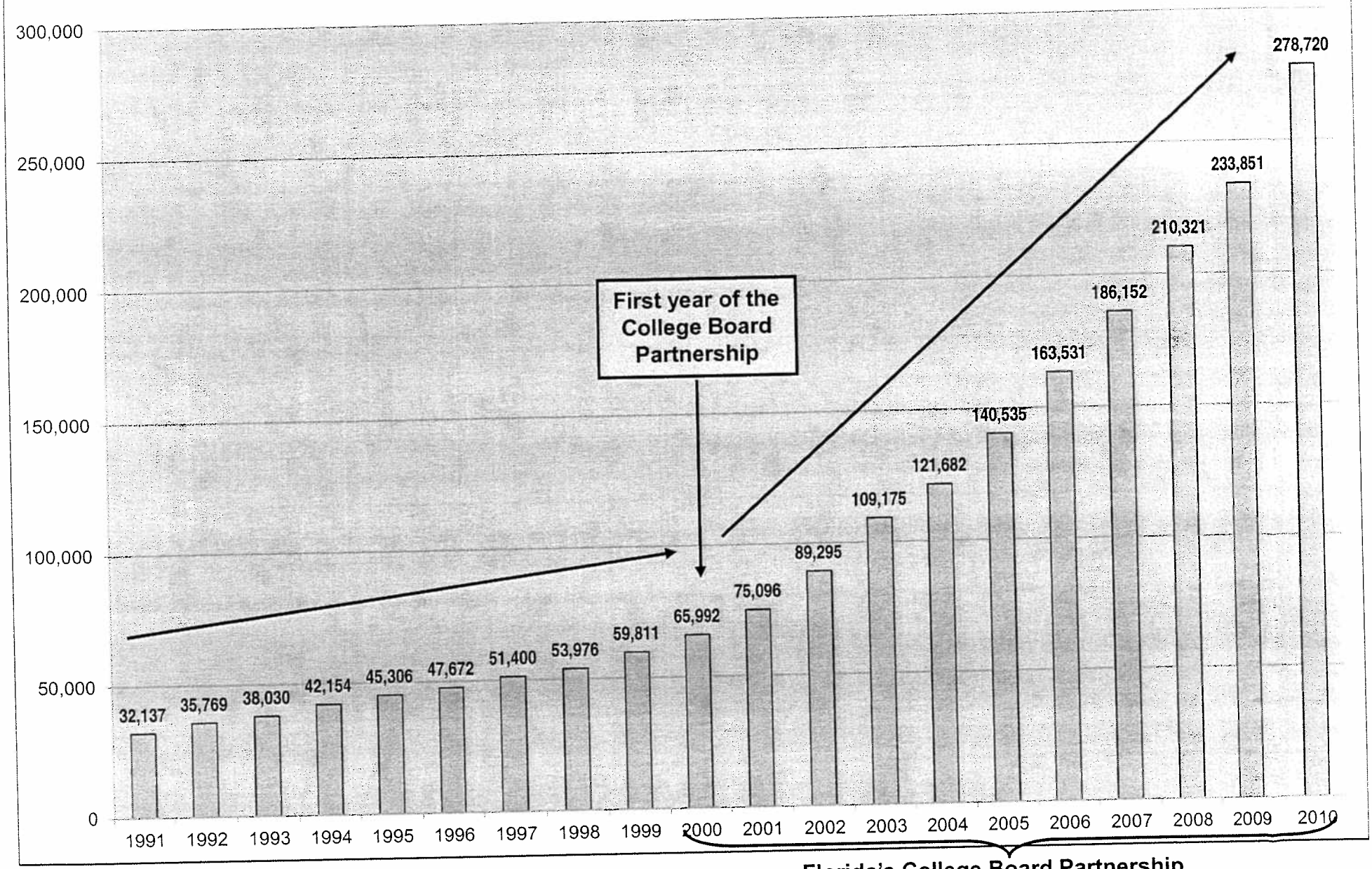
Incentivize Rigor

Florida Partnership for Minority & Underrepresented Students:

- Free PSATs for all 10th Graders
- Professional Development for teachers to teach AP
- School Bonus for AP passage: $700 (created in the early '90's)
- AP Teacher Bonus: $50 for every passing student score, up to $2,000
- AP Teacher Bonus: $500 for first passing score in D or F school, up to $2,000

AP Exams Taken

All of Florida's Students



Florida's College Board Partnership

(Free PSAT Tests, professional development and Teacher Bonus)

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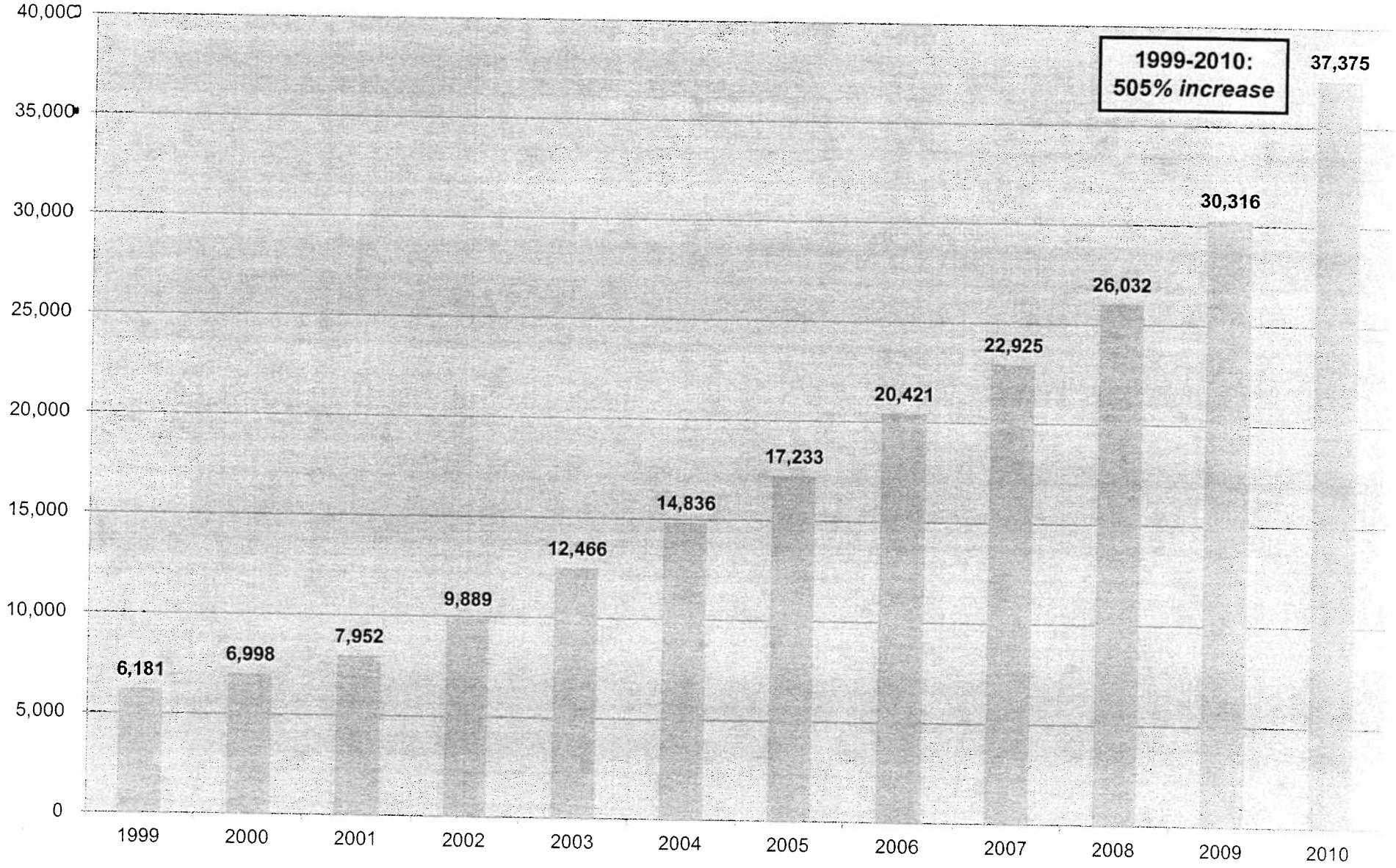
AP Exam Takers

Florida's Hispanic Students



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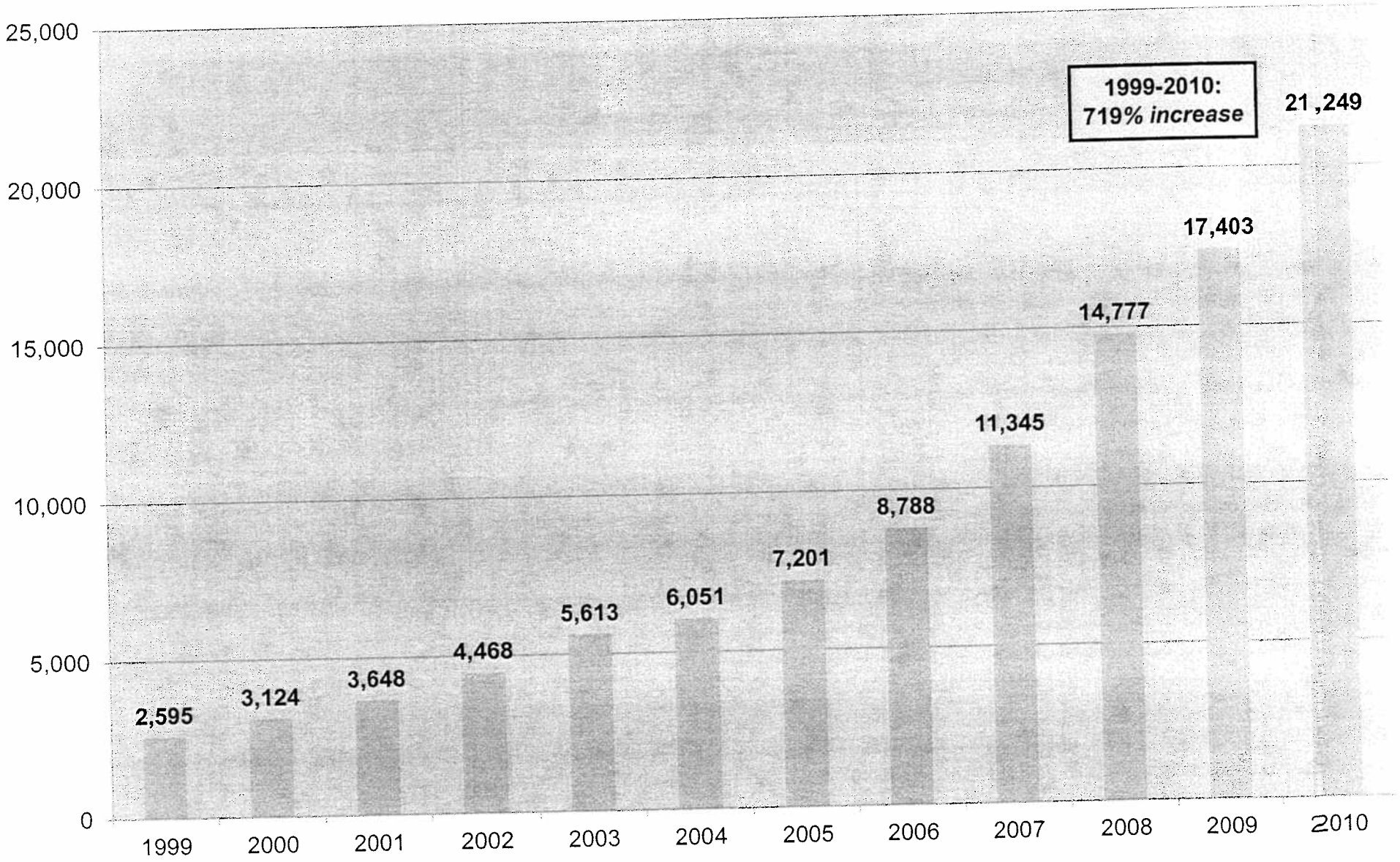
AP Exam Takers

Florida's African American Students



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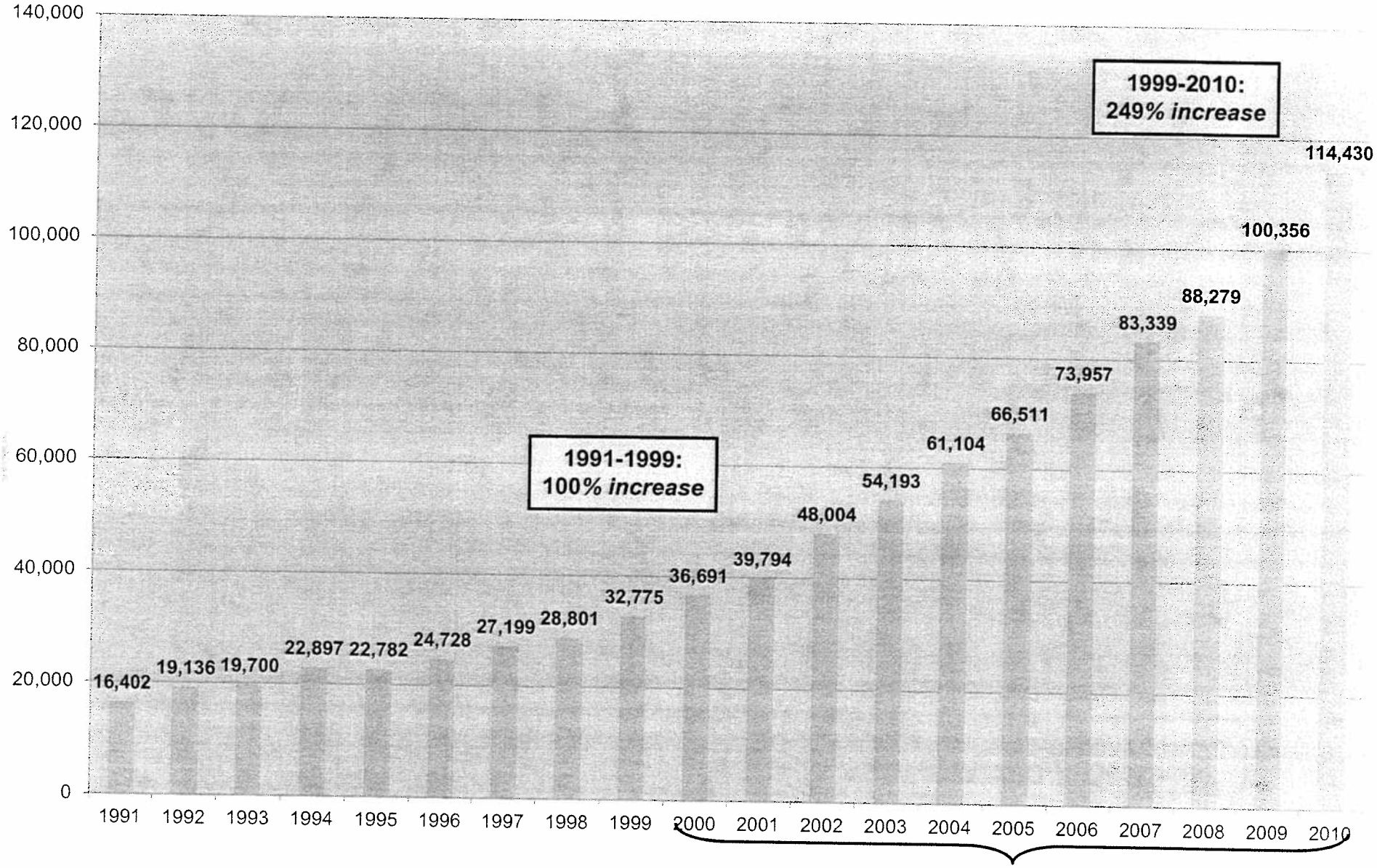
AP Passing Scores

All of Florida's Students



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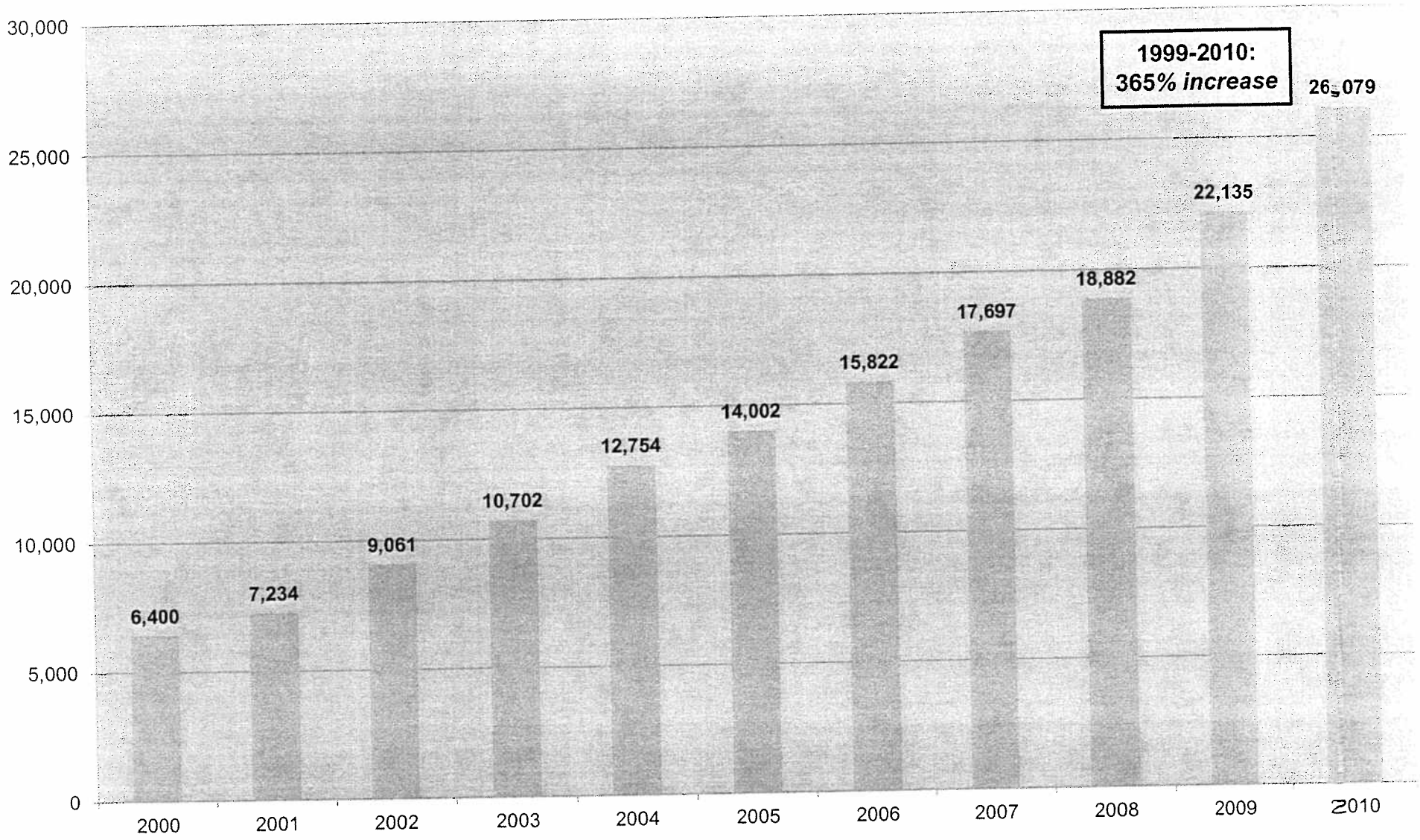
AP Passing Scores

Florida's Hispanic Students



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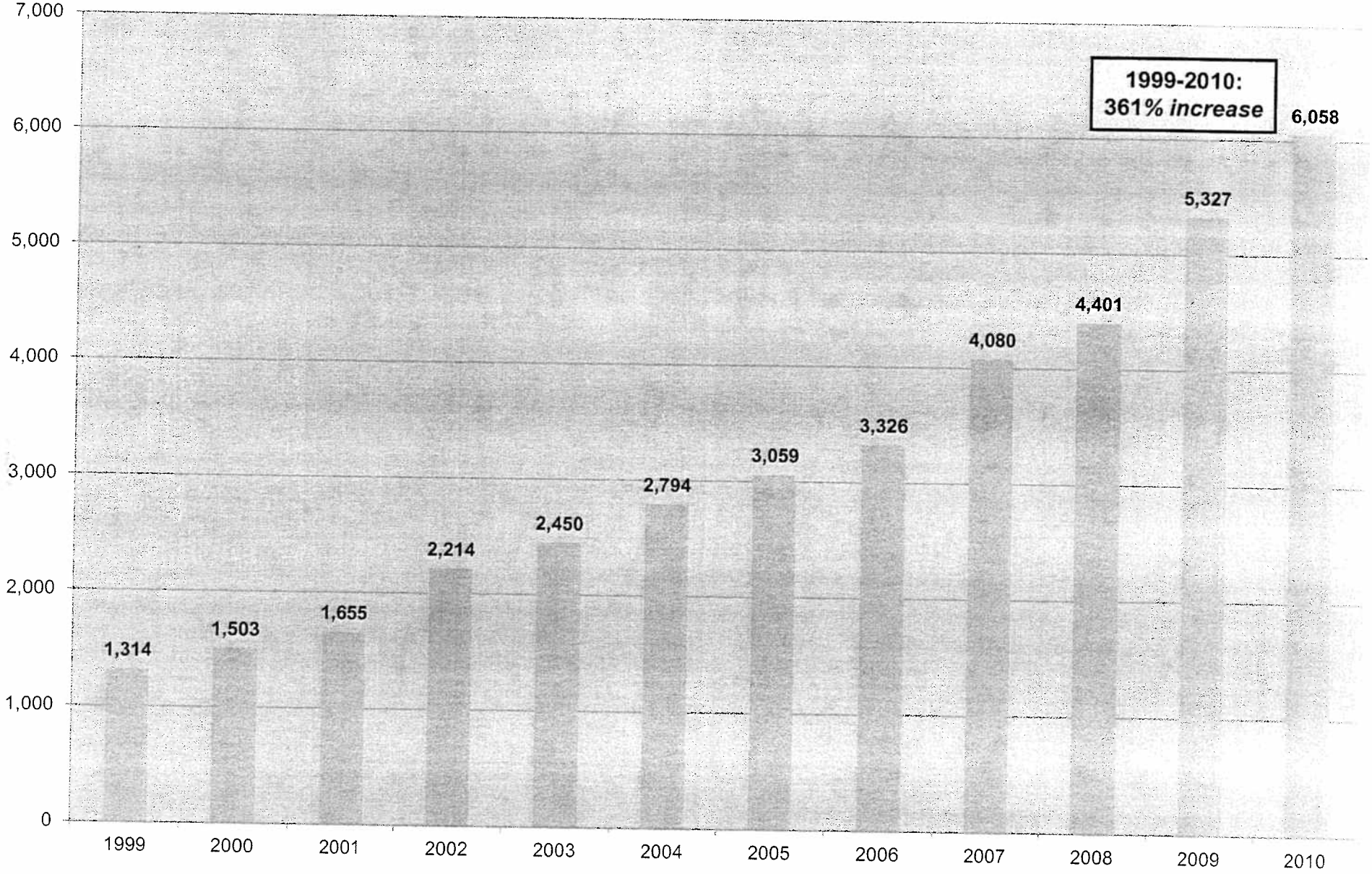
AP Passing Scores

Florida's African American Students



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Quality Educators

Opportunities to Teach

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification:

- Prior to 2002, Florida state teacher certification was only available to individuals who graduated from approved colleges of education or subject area majors who took 20 credit hours of pedagogy.

- After 2002, Florida opened up multiple routes to teacher certification:
  - Full reciprocity with other state certificates
  - Approval of NBPTS and ABCTE certificates
  - Educator Preparation Institutes (at state community colleges for career changers)
  - Local district alternative certification programs (on-the-job training)
  - 2 years of teaching experience in post-secondary education
  - Education minors
  - Recognize Teach for America graduates for teacher certification (passed in 2011)
  - Adjunct Certification – district-issued certificate for part-time educators

Teacher Quality Reforms

Passed in 2011

- Teacher Evaluations – Beginning in 2013-2014, 50% of a teacher or principal's evaluation will be based upon student progress.
  - The progress for a teacher would be based upon 3-years of data on student progress on state or district-created tests.
  - The progress for a principal would be based upon the overall student learning gains of the students in the school on the state test.

- Teacher Pay – Beginning in 2013-2014, school districts will have to adopt salary schedules that:
  - Provide raises for teachers who are rated effective or highly effective based upon the new student-centered evaluations
  - Provide additional pay for teachers who teach in low-income or low-performing schools or who teach in a high need subject area (i.e., math, science, teacher students with disabilities)

Teacher Quality Reforms

Passed in 2011

- Teacher staffing
  - Eliminated LIFO (last in, first out) policies. When a district makes a decision on reductions in staffing, they must look at performance, not seniority.
  - Principals have the authority to not accept the placement of any teacher in their school who is not rated effective or highly effective.
  - Parental notification: Parents who are placed in classrooms with teachers who are evaluated as ineffective or needs improvement must be notified of this designation.

- Teacher Tenure Reform:
  - Any new teacher hired after July 1, 2011 is on an annual contract.
  - Existing tenured teachers retain their tenure; however, there is an expedited process for removing a tenured teacher if the teacher is evaluated as unsatisfactory or needs improvement.

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Choices

(Lots and Lots of Choices)

School Choice

- McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities
- Corporate Tax Credit Scholarships
- Charter Schools
- Virtual Schools
- Vouchers for Pre-Kindergarten

McKay Scholarships

Participation: 21,000 students annually

Eligibility: Students with disabilities who have an active Individual Education Plan

Choices:

- Another public school within the district
- A public school in an adjacent district with services
- A participating private school

Funding: Scholarships are equal to per pupil funding for public school or the private school tuition, whichever is less

Florida Tax Credit Scholarships

Participation: 32,000 students

Eligibility: Students eligible for free or reduced priced lunch

Choices:

- $4,106 scholarship in 2010-11 to a participating school. Starting last year, the scholarship amount increases automatically by 4% per year until it reaches 80% of per pupil funding for public school students.
- $500 for transportation to a public school in an adjacent district

Funding:

- Program capped at $140 million in 2010-11. Starting in 2010, the cap will increase automatically by 25% if corporate contributions exceed 90% of cap during the prior year

Charter Schools

Participation: 137,000+ students, 410 schools

Reforms:

- Removed the district cap on charter schools
- Began providing capital outlay funding for charter schools
- Allowed public schools to convert to charter schools
- Allowed municipalities/cities to apply for charter schools
- Allowed community colleges to create charter schools
- Allowed corporations to establish a charter school and give preference to their employees in enrollment – "corporate charter schools"
- Created an appeals process for charters denied by districts
- Created an alternate authorizer – stricken by court in 2008.

Charter Schools

Participation: 137,000+ students

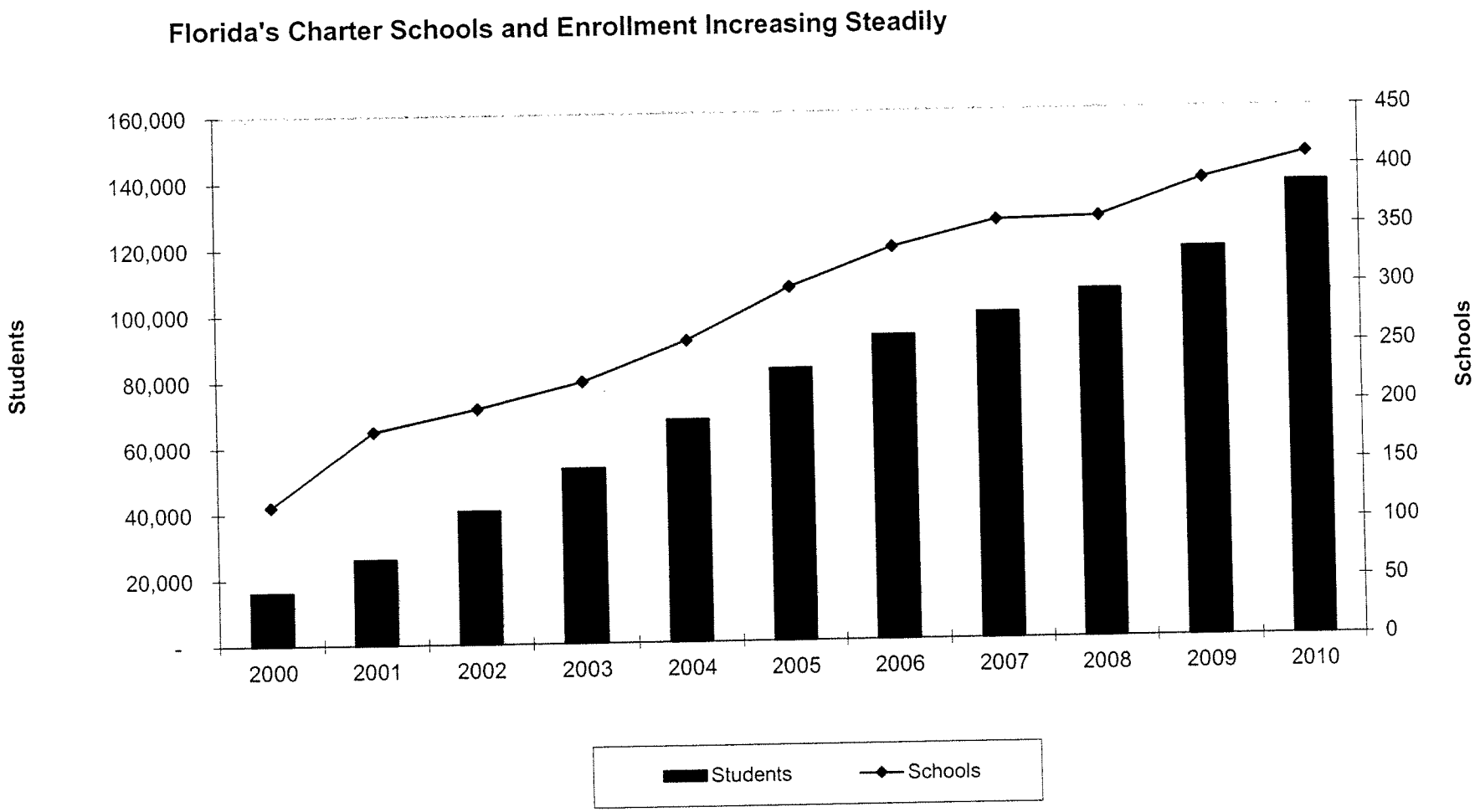
Reforms:

- Created "high performing" charters and charter systems that have additional benefits for growth and expansion.
  - Grow enrollment
  - Add grade levels
  - Have a presumption of approval (i.e., fast pass) to open new charters in new school districts)

- Authorized blended learning charter schools: those that mix traditional and online instruction

- Authorized full-time virtual charter schools

Charter Schools



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Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten

- All 4 years olds in Florida are eligible to participate
- Parents receive approximately $2,600 to send their child to a public or private early-literacy program.
  - 85% of parents select private schools.
  - 22% of the providers are faith-based.
- All students are measured based upon developmental and early literacy readiness within the first 30 days of entering kindergarten.
- The students "readiness rates" are tracked back to the pre-k providers and the providers are "rated" in order to assist parents in the selection of their child's pre-k program.
- The bottom performing 15 percent of providers must improve or lose their eligibility to participate in the program.

Virtual Education

Florida Virtual School

- **Participation:** 134,000 course enrollments
- **Eligibility:** Any Florida student – public, private, or home education – in kindergarten through 12th Grade
- **Funding:** No cost to students, State pays only for completed courses

District Virtual Instruction Programs (passed in 2011)

- Every school district must offer at least 3 options for full-time virtual programs in grades k-12 and part-time virtual programs in grades 9-12.
- **Eligibility:** Any Florida student who previously attended traditional public school, siblings or entering kindergarten and 1st graders
- **Funding:** Funding based upon completion of the course/grade

Virtual Education

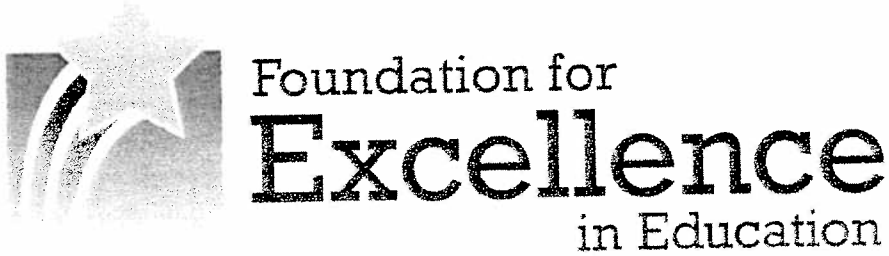
Public School Choice – at the course level (passed in 2011)

- Florida students are allowed to take any online course offered by any school district within the state, as long as the course is not also offered in the student's home districts.

- The district that offers the course/provides the instruction receives the funding.

High School Graduation

- Beginning with freshman students in 2011-2012 school year, students will have to take an online course to meeting requirements for high school graduation.

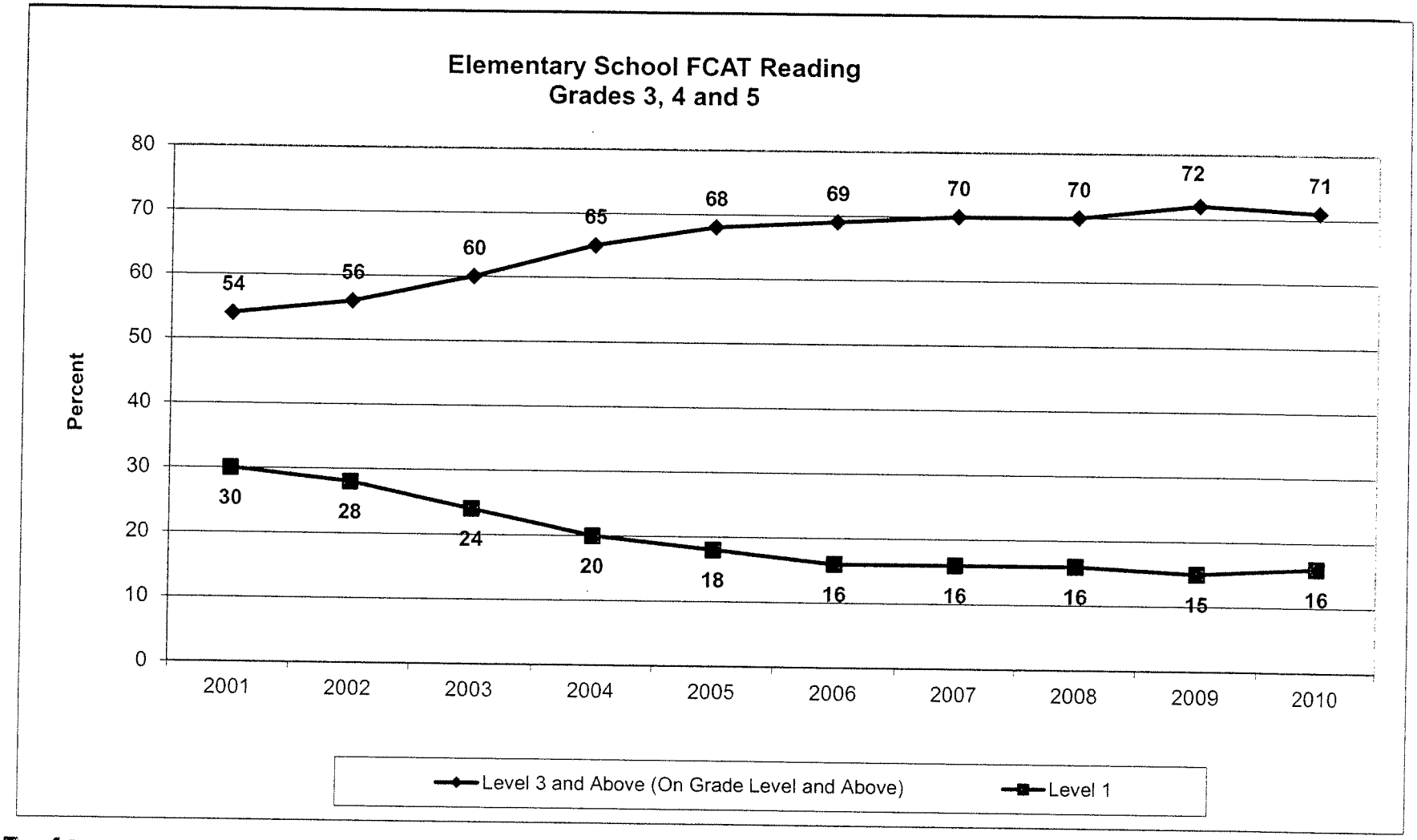


Florida Formula for Student Achievement: *Results*

As the bar keeps rising on the FCAT, students and educators have met the challenge.

Miami Herald, July 29, 2009

Florida Elementary Students



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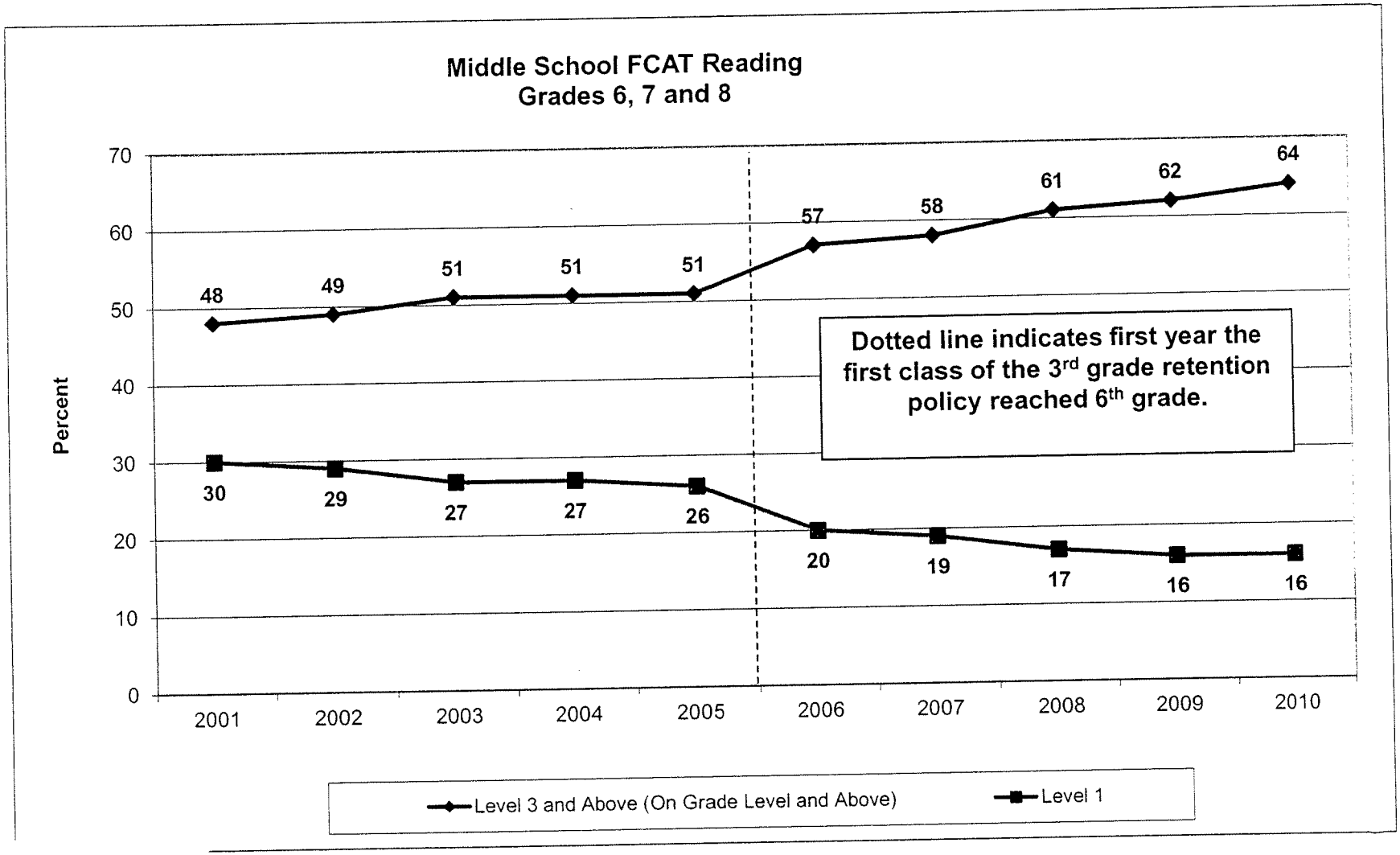
Florida Middle School Students



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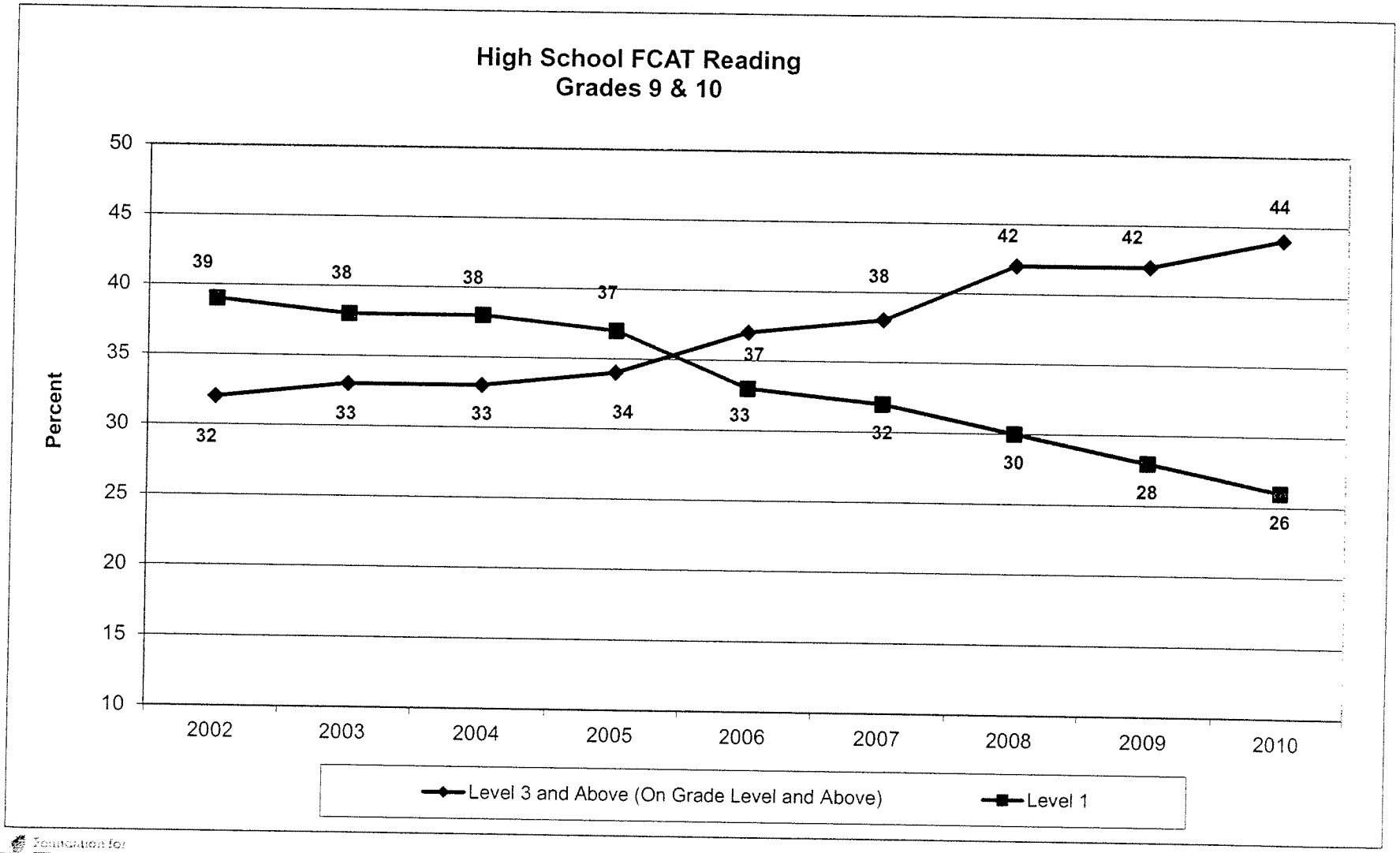
Florida High School Students



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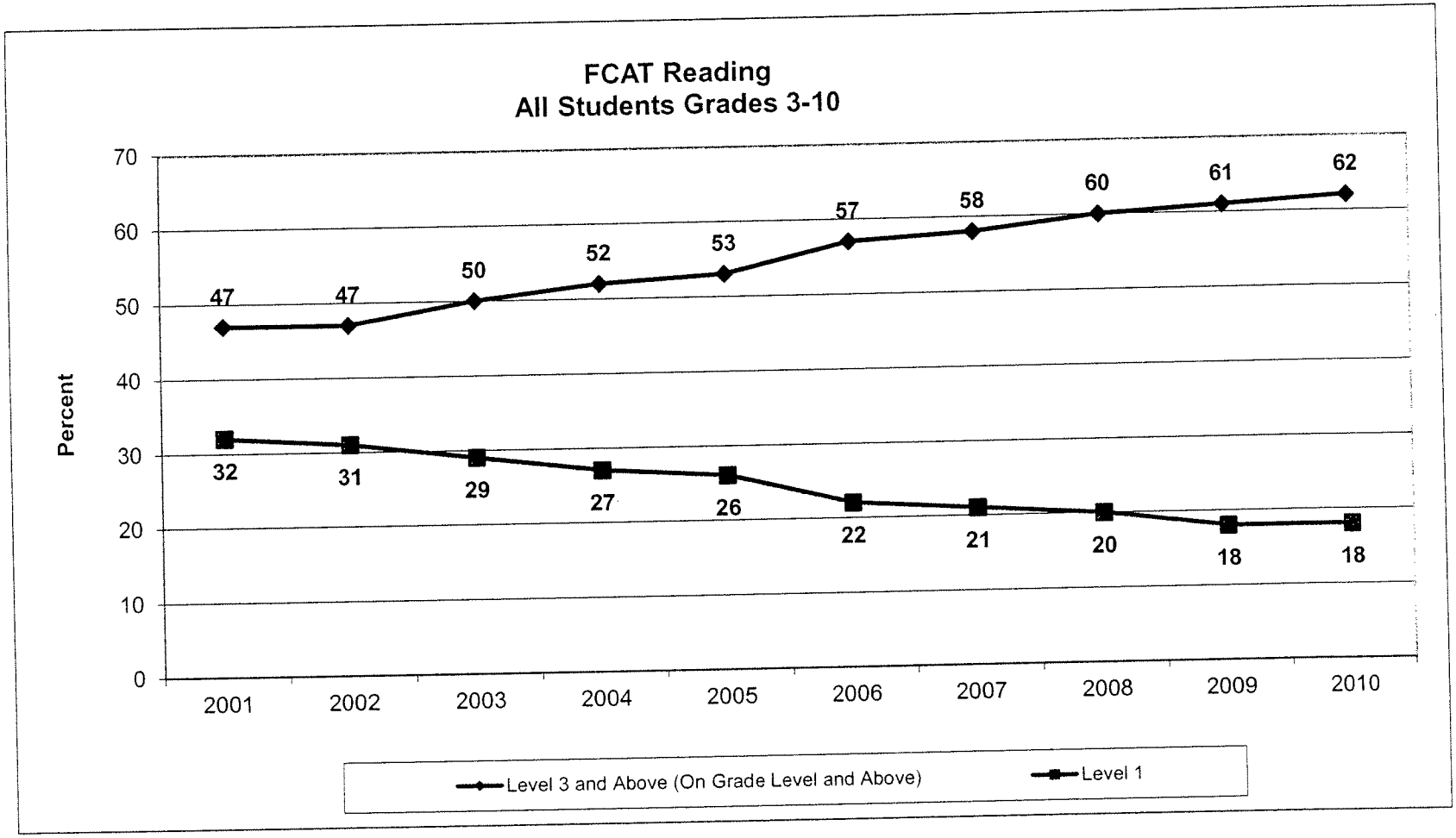
All Florida Students



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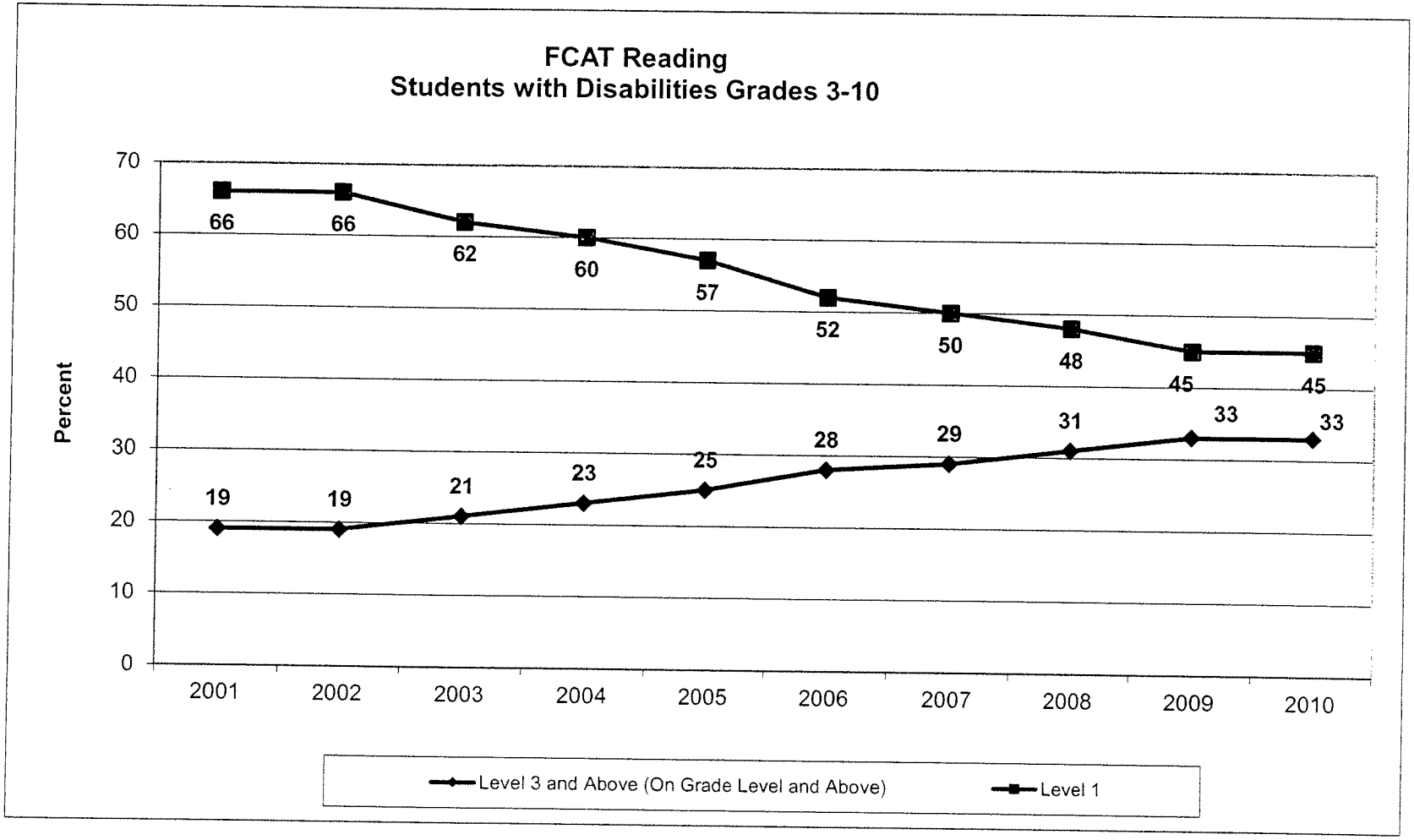
Florida Students with Disabilities



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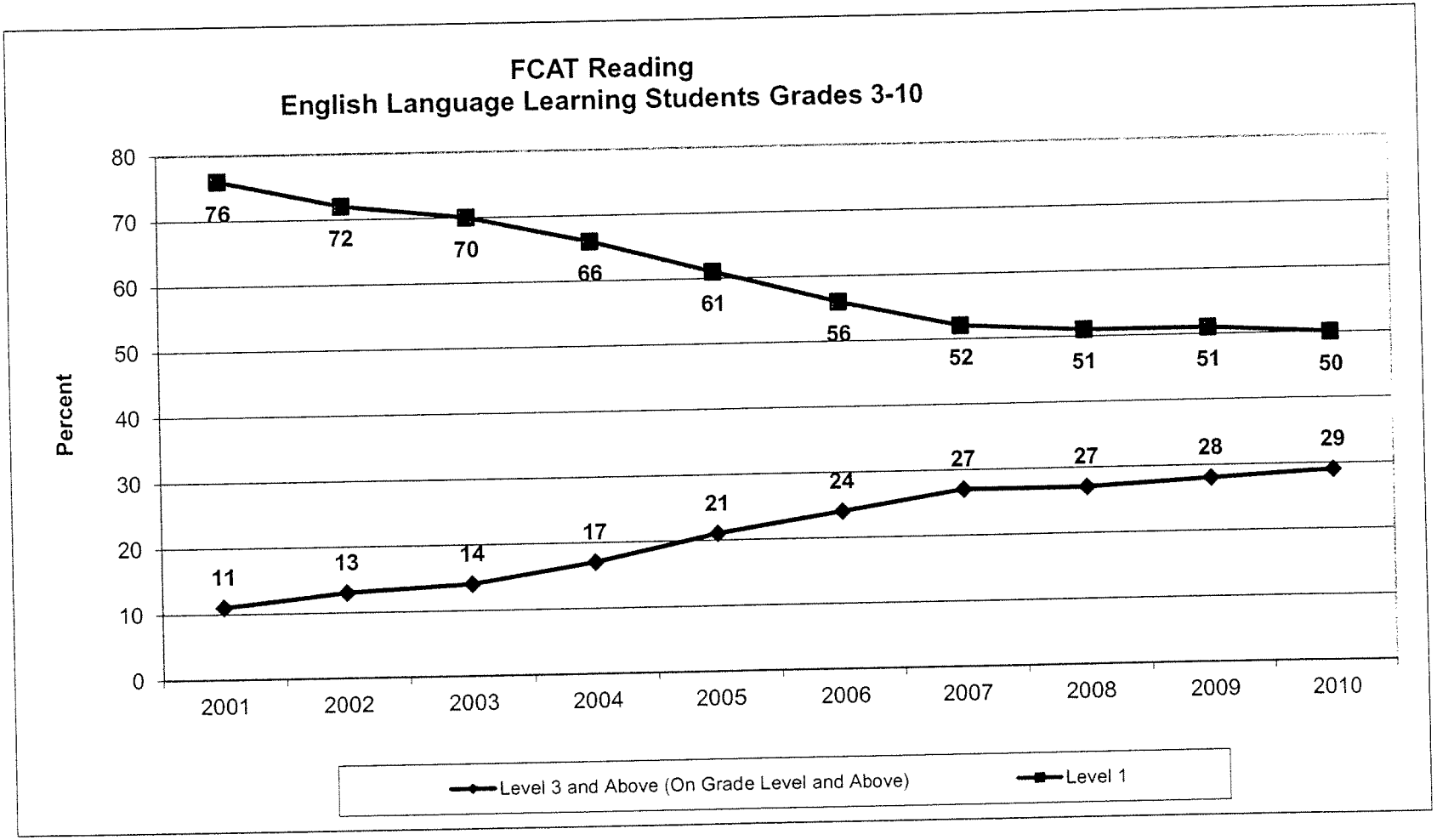
Florida English Language Learning Students



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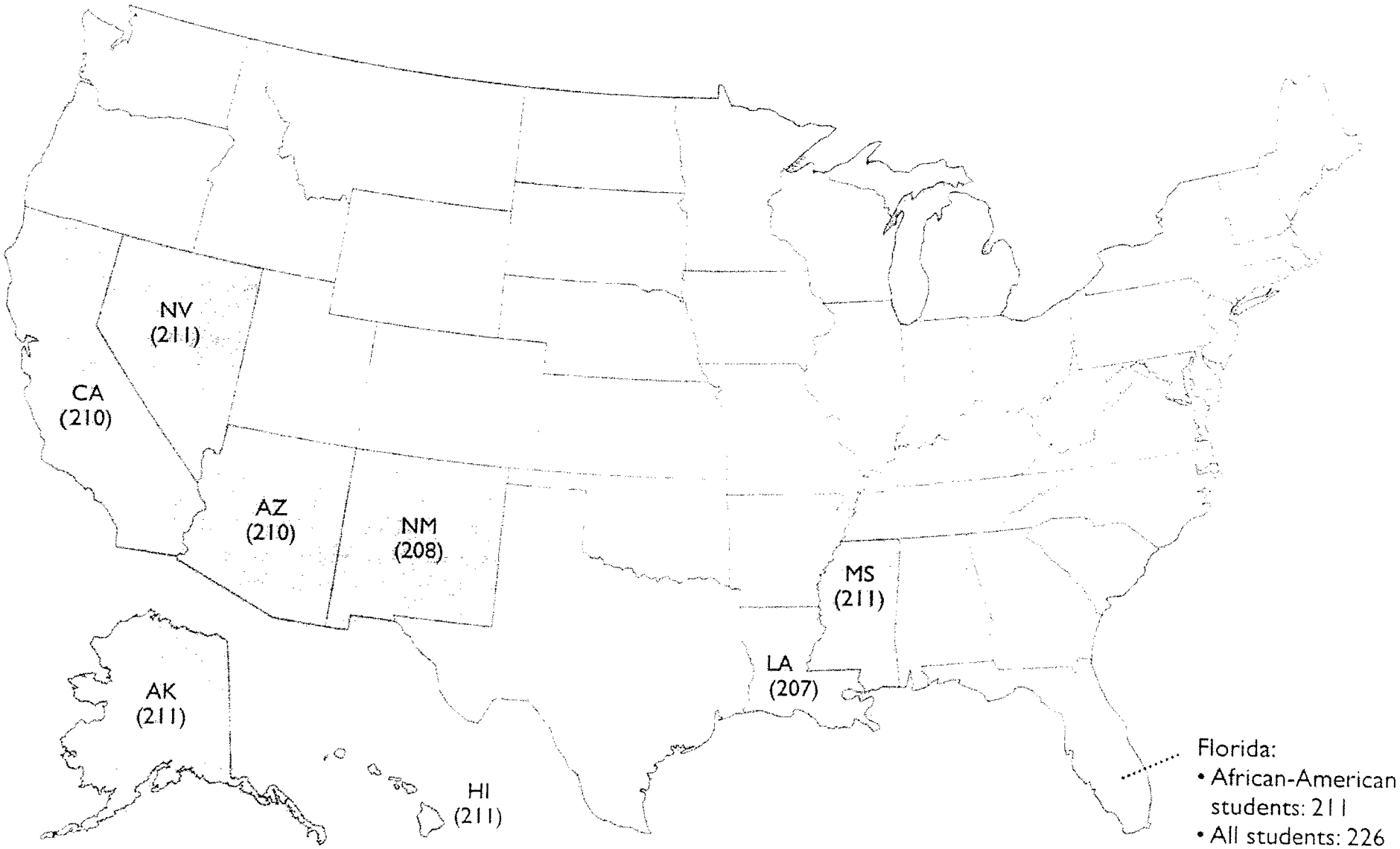
COMPARING STATES TO FLORIDA'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS

African-American students in Florida now outscore or tie the statewide reading average of all students in eight states.



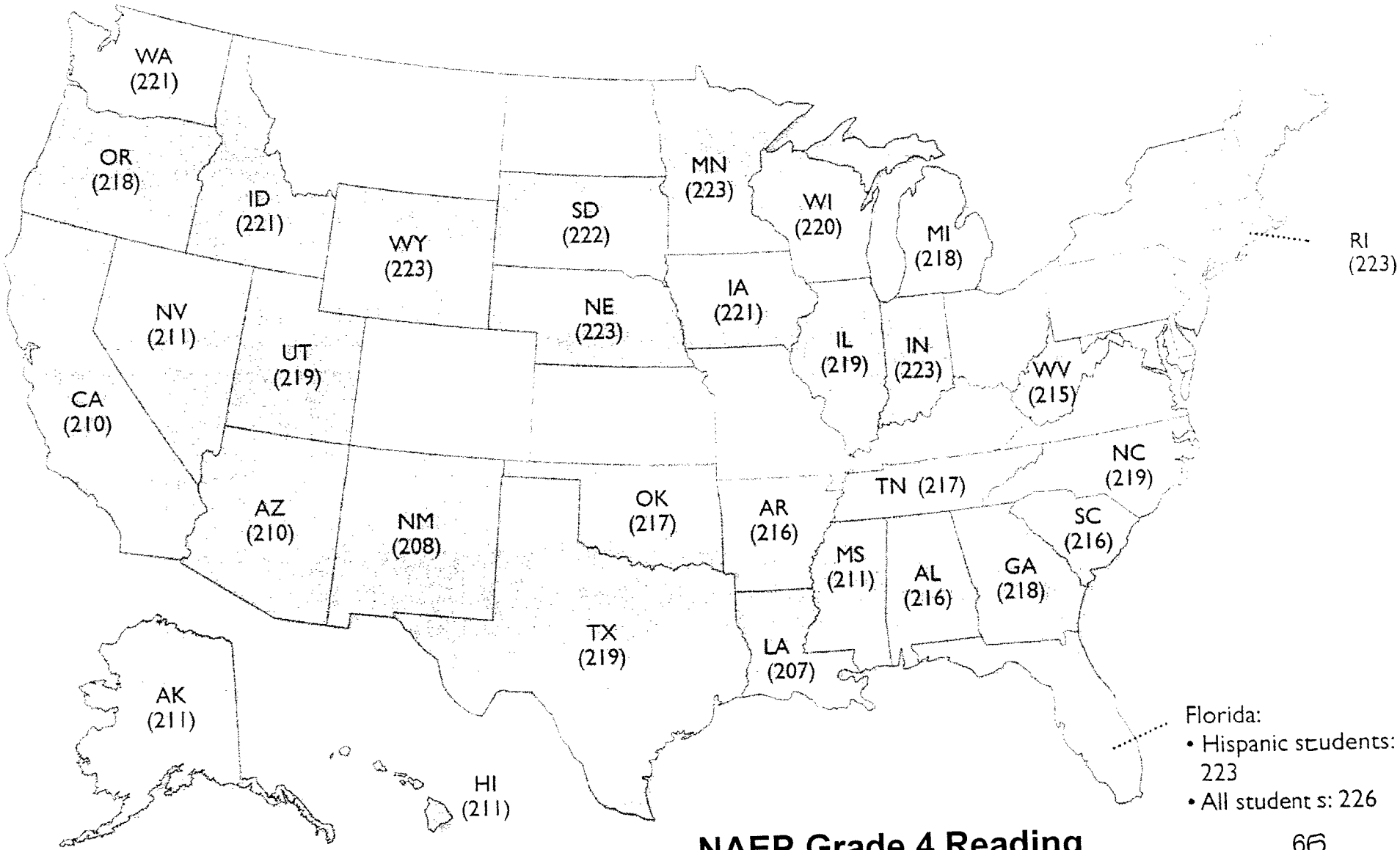
NAEP Grade 4 Reading

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The Heritage Foundation

COMPARING STATES TO FLORIDA'S HISPANIC STUDENTS

Hispanic students in Florida now outscore or tie the statewide reading average of all students in 31 states.



NAEP Grade 4 Reading

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The Heritage Foundation

Florida Rising in Ranks

- Florida is now **#5** in *Education Week's Quality Counts* Report – based upon standards, accountability, teacher quality and student achievement.
- Goldwater Institute analysis of grade 4 NAEP Reading scores identifies Florida's Hispanic students outscoring statewide average of all students in **31 states** and the Districts of Columbia.
- Florida's African American (86%) and Hispanic (96%) students lead the nation among their peers on the NAEP math.
- Florida was one of 3 states recognized as closing the achievement gap between affluent and low-income students.
- Florida was one of 3 states recognized as closing the achievement gap between white and black students in reading and math (4th grade).

Florida's Minority Students Rising in Ranks

- Florida's Hispanic, Black, English Language Learner, Students with Disabilities and Low-income students outperform their peers on NAEP, ranking in the top 10 in 4th grade reading, 4th grade math and 8th grade reading.
- Florida Hispanic students outperform or tie their peers in all but 1 state on 4th grade math.
- Florida Black students outperform or tie their peers in all but 3 states on NAEP 4th grade math.
- Florida students with disabilities outperform or tie their peers in all but 4 states on NAEP 4th grade math.
- Low-income students outperform or tie their peers in all but 4 states on NAEP 4th grade math.

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