

What the new Florida Standards & Assessments mean for public schools



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The move to new academic standards is a major change in what students will be learning in the state of Florida. Combined with the shift to a new annual test, called the FSA or **Florida Standards Assessment**, this is a significant transition for teachers, students and others involved in public schools.

The new **Florida Standards** were adapted from the Common Core State Standards, which were developed with an eye towards what students will need in order to graduate ready for college or careers in the 21st Century and internationally benchmarked against other high-performing countries. They also call for more critical thinking, and deeper understanding. Here's one example:

Old 3rd Grade Standard:

Model multiplication and division, including problems presented in context: repeated addition, multiplicative comparison, array, how many combinations, measurement, and partitioning.

New 3rd Grade Florida Standard:

Understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division.

The **Florida Standards Assessment** will be used in grades 3-11 every year to judge student learning. The test will replace the comprehensive FCAT 2.0 test students are used to. It will include questions that ask students to select all correct answers instead of just one correct answer, as well as open response questions, for example:

Old (FCAT 2.0) Test Item:

If there are 35 bugs all together and Robbie puts 5 bugs into each jar, how many jars does he need to hold all of the bugs?

- a. 3
- b. 10
- c. 7
- d. none of the above

New (FSA) Test Item:

Create a multiplication equation that you could use to solve $21 \div 3 = \square$.

(Students would have to type an answer, such as $7 \times 3 = 21$, into a blank box)

What to Expect

The new Florida Standards Assessment will be significantly different than the current FCAT. See below for a list of key changes between the FCAT and FSA:

FCAT

Grades 3-5 (paper) and 6-10 (computer) participate

140 minutes of testing/year

All multiple choice

Tests the Sunshine State Standards

Separate writing test

FSA

Grades 3-4 (paper) and 5-11 (computer) participate

Testing length is slightly longer:
Grades 3-5: 160 minutes
Grades 6-8: 170 minutes
Grades 9-11: 180 minutes

Different types of responses, including open ended

Grades 5-11 include a listening section, taken with headphones

Grammar is explicitly tested with an editing task

Tests the Florida Standards

Writing scores included

Ways you can advocate for Florida's students this legislative session



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1. **Contact your legislators to support a pause in school grades during the 2014-15 school year. Visit www.jaxpef.org/take-action to send a message directly.**

Sample message for emails, letters or postcards:

The new Florida Standards will help all students prepare for college or career. But as schools transition to these new standards this year, we need a one-time suspension of school grades to ensure that they remain meaningful and accurate.

As you know, major factor in school grades is student growth from one year to the next. But measuring student growth from the old FCAT 2.0 to the new Florida Standards assessment is like comparing apples and oranges. In fact, because of the new test, the Florida Department of Education wouldn't issue this year's grades until December, so a pause would only delay grades by six months.

As your constituent, I look forward to learning more about what you will do about this issue in the Legislative session. Thank you for your time and attention.

2. **Call your legislators and make your voice heard on the case for a pause in schools grades.**

Some tips for your call to make the most impact:

- Identify yourself with your name and your city or town of residence.
- State your support (or opposition) to the bill and a brief reason for your position.
- Request the legislator's support (or opposition) to the bill and leave your telephone number.
- Be polite to the staff and express thanks.

3. **Share the information you learned today with others in your circle to make sure public education moves forward.**

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

Learn more about the new standards and assessments at www.flstandards.org or www.fsassessments.org and share what you learn with others via social media.

Find out how you can support your child with Parent Guides by grade level by visiting www.iadvocateforkids.org Duval County Council of PTAs . Spanish Parent Guides are available as well.

Give the new Florida Standards Assessment a try by taking a sample test online at www.fsassessments.org/training-tests.

2014-2015 Assessment Calendar

See below for a list of testing windows for the state and Duval County Public School district:

State Assessment Calendar

March 23-April 10

FSA English Language Arts & Mathematics – Grades 3-4

TBD

Comprehensive English Language Learner Assessment and the Florida Competency Test on Personal Fitness

April 13-May 8

FSA English Language Arts & Mathematics – Grade 5

FCAT 2.0 Science – Grade 8

May 1-15

Voluntary Prekindergarten Assessment

District Assessment Calendar

May 5-June 4

i-Ready Diagnostic Reading & Math (used for CAST) – Grades K-2, 4-5

May 18-27

CGA Art, Music, Physical Education Post Assessment (used for CAST) – Grade 5

May 18-29

Get Ready to Read Post-Test – VPK

May 26-29

Alternate Assessment SAT 10 (if applicable) – Grades K-3