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May 2, 2008

The Honorable Margaret Spellings
Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Spellings:

On behalf of the State Board of Education, I am delighted to submit Florida's proposal for participation in the Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program which you announced on March 20. Our proposal consists of blending our state accountability program with that of the No Child Left Behind Act. I firmly believe that it will provide an improved foundation for public communication and will facilitate moving forward for improved educational expectations and opportunities for the children and young adults in our state.

I briefed representatives of the Governor's Office, State Legislative Leadership, the State Board of Education, District School Superintendents, and our Congressional delegation regarding the approach described in our proposal. I have received positive feedback about the logic of our approach and I have also been told that this is an important step that many have looked forward to for several years.

Our approach differentiates the status of schools in need of improvement based on the proportion of adequate yearly progress objectives met and the school grade assigned via the state accountability program. It combines resources, services, and interventions provided in state and federal legislation which will enable us to focus the combined resources around improving our schools and educational services to our children. It differentiates among these services and interventions in an escalating fashion when schools fail to improve.

Secretary Spellings

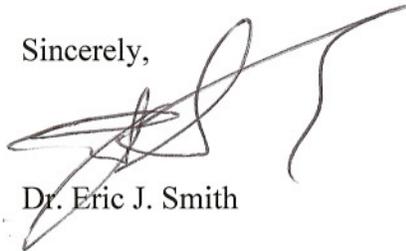
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One of the primary purposes of Florida's approach to the Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program is to harmonize differences in the state and federal requirements. In a few cases this endeavor and other elements of the plan will require legislative authorization or agency rulemaking. It is my intention to seek or make these required changes at the earliest opportunity.

I am pleased with the opportunity to participate and look forward to a favorable reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Smith", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Eric J. Smith

c: Patrick Rooney
Kerri Briggs

Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program: Florida's Proposal

Florida Department of Education



Dr. Eric J. Smith, Commissioner
www.fdoe.org

May 2, 2008

[interior front cover]

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I. Florida's Differentiated Accountability Model: Executive Summary

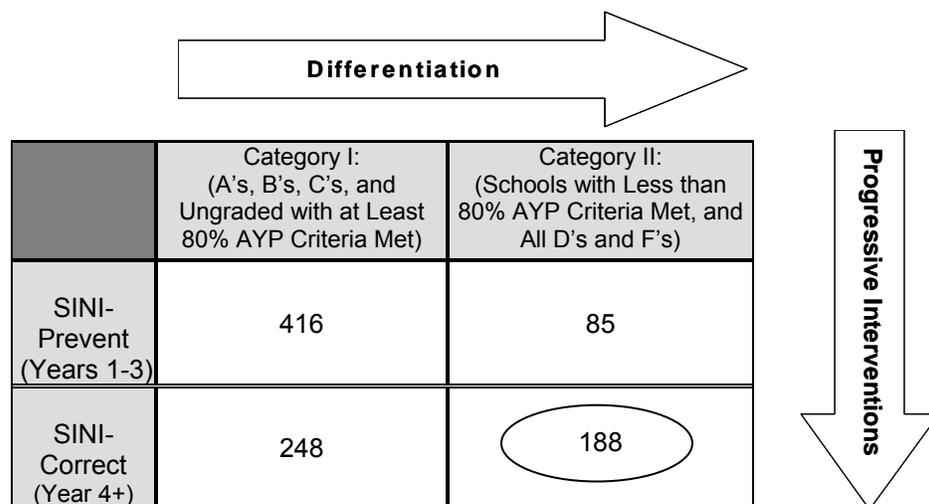
Florida's differentiated accountability model is a consolidation of federal and state accountability systems for the purpose of identifying the lowest performing schools in need of assistance and to classify schools for applying a more nuanced system of support and interventions, as envisioned by U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings for the Differentiated Accountability Pilot Program.

The successful model for Florida's differentiated accountability model will leverage current processes used in accountability reporting and school improvement, will merge aspects of both the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system and Florida's current school accountability system, and will feature one or more indicators that weigh longitudinal subgroup performance in determining areas for targeted intervention. The objectives of Florida's proposed model are to:

- provide more school-wide assistance and direction for schools at or in restructuring to improve school performance and maintain success;
- provide targeted and/or school-wide support and intervention for schools not yet in restructuring to prevent the need for complete restructuring;
- provide focused assistance for schools that have previously been identified for improvement but have demonstrated recent improvement and have the opportunity to exit "in need of improvement" status;

The model (1) consolidates Title 1 schools in need of improvement (SINIs) into two groupings that separate schools not yet at the planning stage for restructuring from schools that are at or beyond the planning stage for restructuring and (2) differentiates schools in these two groupings based on a combination of school grade performance and percent of adequate yearly progress (AYP) criteria met.

Consolidated Grouping of Florida's 2006-07 SINIs



The SINI-Prevent grouping in the preceding table includes schools that are in years 1 through 3 of SINI status, and the SINI-Correct grouping includes schools that are at or beyond year 4 of SINI status. Schools in Category I include those with satisfactory grades (C or higher) that have met at least 80% of AYP criteria, including ungraded schools that have met at least 80% of AYP criteria, while schools in Category II include all schools that met less than 80% of AYP criteria, as well as all D and F schools (regardless of percent of AYP criteria met).

In order to identify those schools in need of the most intensive intervention (SINI-Intervene), the Florida Department of Education has examined the performance of schools in Category II and in SINI-Correct within the Florida differentiated accountability system. Schools with the worst performance record since 2003 are identified according to the following criteria:

1. The school has earned an F or D grade in current year's School Grades calculation, or
2. The school has earned two F grades in a four year period.

To further corroborate the declining performance of these schools, the following four questions are asked, based on the AYP calculation:

- Has the percentage of non-proficient students in reading increased since 2003?
- Has the percentage of non-proficient students in math increased since 2003?
- Are 70 percent or more of the school's students non-proficient in reading?
- Are 70 percent or more of the school's students non-proficient in math?

The most critically low-performing schools are identified as those for which the answer is "YES" to three or more of the questions listed above. Through this process, 13 schools were identified, based on 2006-07 AYP and School Grades results. All of these schools have received services including guidance and technical assistance through the state and federal accountability systems. State-level monitoring notes and additional data for each of these schools were then examined to further identify schools that show no signs of making progress. This examination targets seven schools in need of the most serious intervention strategies.

With the final identification of SINI Intervene schools, the five-cell model for Florida's Differentiated Accountability is complete, as shown in the following table.

Final Differentiated Accountability Matrix

2006-07 SINIs	Category I: (A's, B's, C's, and Ungraded Schools with at Least 80% AYP Criteria Met)	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D's and F's)
SINI-Prevent (SINIs 1, 2, & 3)	416	85
SINI-Correct (SINIs at Year 4 and Up)	248	181
SINI-Intervene (MOST CRITICAL)		7

Florida's system of differentiated accountability will apply measures that comply with current federal requirements for school improvement under NCLB and will shift emphasis to more rigorous intervention and support for schools with the greatest need for improvement. These measures for support and intervention will be differentiated according to the five classifications of the model.

General Strategies and Interventions

	Category I: (A's, B's, C's, and Ungraded Schools with at Least 80% AYP Criteria Met)	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D's and F's)
SINI-Prevent	Focus planning on missed elements of AYP.	Implement comprehensive school improvement planning.
SINI-Correct	Focus reorganization on missed elements of AYP.	Reorganize the school.
SINI-Intervene		Restructure/Close the school.

For each classification, there will be a customized program of support services and interventions that will be defined by the following elements:

- **Specific interventions** for attaining benchmarks and executing the school improvement plan.
- **Roles** for the school, district, and state in preparing, directing, implementing, and monitoring the plan; and reporting progress.
- **Measurable benchmarks** for determining the progress of the plan.
- **Consequences** for non-compliance with requirements.

For all classifications, Florida will combine monitoring assistance, services, choice options, and collaboration as authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act as well as the substantial assistance provided under the state's accountability plan.

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II. Florida's Differentiated Accountability Model: Background and Description

1. Introduction

On March 20, 2008¹, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced a pilot program for differentiated accountability to allow selected states to vary the intensity and type of intervention for a school in need of improvement or intensive reform as defined under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Through the pilot program, selected states with Title I schools in need of improvement (SINI), would be able to better target resources and activities based on the degree of intervention and reform required.

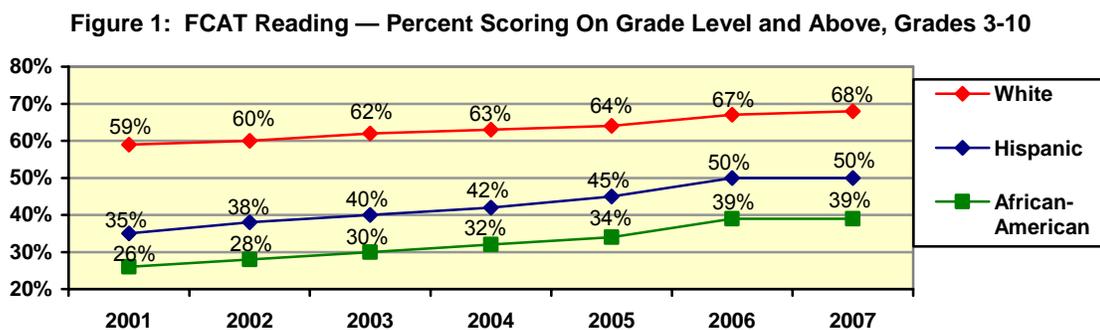
The following proposal addresses Florida's progress in meeting the "bright line principles" of NCLB, the state's remaining challenges with schools nearing or at restructuring necessitating a need for differentiated accountability, the development of the state's differentiated accountability model, the state eligibility requirements for the pilot program, and the four key areas as stipulated in the application guidelines: accountability, differentiation, interventions for schools, and schools in restructuring.

2. Closing the Achievement Gap

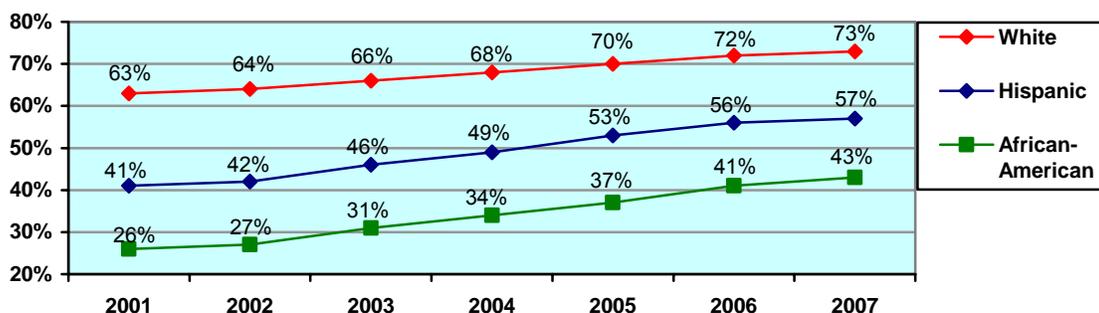
Florida has made great progress in raising student achievement by implementing NCLB's requirements for school improvement. From 2006 to 2007, the percentage of Florida schools meeting 100 percent of AYP criteria increased from 29 percent to 34 percent.

During the past ten years, Florida has demonstrated continuing progress in improving educational achievement for students in minority groups, as evidenced not only by rising scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) but also increasing performance on NAEP as well as other indicators.

- Students in Florida's largest minority groups have made steady annual progress on the FCAT:



¹ See <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/080320.html>.

Figure 2: FCAT Mathematics — Percent Scoring On Grade Level and Above, Grades 3-10

- In 2007, Florida's performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)² ranked it as one of the top four states in closing achievement gaps between Hispanic students and white students and between African-American students and white students from 2003 to 2007 in reading and math (grades 4 and 8).
 - Florida was one of only five states that showed a significant narrowing of the white/African-American gap between 2003 and 2007 in fourth grade reading (from a scale score differential of 31 to 24).
 - Florida is one of only two states where the gap between low and higher income fourth grade students decreased significantly in math between 2003 and 2007 (from a scale score differential of 23 to 18). Florida was also one of three states where the performance gap between low and higher income students decreased between 2003 and 2007 in fourth grade reading (from a scale score differential of 26 to 21).
 - Florida is one of only seven states where the gap between white and African American eighth grade students decreased significantly in eighth grade math (from a scale score differential of 37 to 30).
 - Reading and math scores for fourth grade Hispanic and African-American students significantly rose between 2003 and 2007.
 - African-American fourth grade scores in reading increased from 198 in 2003 to 208 in 2007; in math, the increase was from 215 to 225.
 - Hispanic fourth grade scores in reading increased from 211 in 2003 to 218 in 2007; in math, the increase was from 232 to 238.
 - African-American and Hispanic eighth grade students also showed an increase in math scale scores during this time (from 249 to 259 for African Americans, and from 264 to 270 for Hispanics).
- Improvements were also witnessed by increased Advanced Placement (AP) participation among minority students.
 - The number of students participating in AP in Florida from 2005 to 2006 increased by 17.1%, with the largest increase among African-American students. Last year, there was a 20.0% increase in the number of Hispanic students taking AP exams and a 22.5% increase in the number of African-American students taking AP exams.

In addition to narrowing achievement gaps between its minority students and white students, Florida continues to make overall progress on several fronts, including increased SAT and ACT participation, and greater participation in AP coursework.³

² For additional information, visit the NAEP website at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

³ See <http://www.fldoe.org/evaluation/act-sat-ap.asp> for more on Florida's ACT, SAT, and AP performance.

Education Week's Quality Counts "Tapping in Teaching" report for 2008 (see <http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2008/01/10/index.html>) reflects this progress as Florida moved up from a 31st place ranking to a 14th place ranking among the 50 states and the District of Columbia during the past year. The 12th edition of Quality Counts grades the states based on performance and policy in six distinct areas: Chance for Success; K-12 Achievement; Standards, Assessments, and Accountability; Transitions and Alignment; the Teaching Profession; and School Finance. In the Standards, Assessments and Accountability section, Florida ranked 12th with a state grade of an A- and a score of 90.8. The national average was a grade of a B with a score of 83.6. Florida surpassed the national average by 7.2 points.

3. Florida's Accountability – Challenges and Opportunities

3.1 Size and Diversity

As the nation's fourth largest state in overall population, Florida faces greater challenges for accountability than most other states in the nation.

- Florida has the highest average enrollment count per elementary and secondary school of any state nationally.⁴
- Florida has a rich demographic diversity with a large non-English-speaking population.
- Florida has a relatively low base for minimum cell-size in its AYP model which makes for high direct representation of subgroups in the calculations for schools.
- Florida has high standards in determining annual measurable objectives for student proficiency across subgroups.

3.2 Growing Numbers of Title I Schools Approach Restructuring

The growth in student achievement over recent years – as supported by state and national assessment results -- is reflected in rising school performance. For example, under the state's accountability system (i.e., School Grades⁵), nearly 70% of Florida's public schools have been identified as high performing, compared to 21% in 1999, even after standards used to evaluate the schools were raised. Despite these gains, Florida continues to face challenges. Currently, 937, or 69%, of the state's 1,363 Title I schools are identified as SINIs based on 2006-07 AYP results. Though many factors, such as those outlined in Section 3.1, can explain this significantly large number, Florida nonetheless faces increasing challenges as greater numbers of the state's SINIs approach mandatory restructuring with each passing year.

Figure 3: Florida Title I Schools In Need of Improvement (SINIs), 2002-03 to 2006-07

Year	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
SINI 1	44	945	324	132	111
SINI 2	0	36	659	301	141
SINI 3	0	0	33	547	249
SINI 4	0	0	0	31	409
SINI 5	0	0	0	0	27
Total	44	981	1,016	1,011	937

⁴ For elementary school size results across states, see http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d06/tables/dt06_095.asp; for secondary school size results, see http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d06/tables/dt06_096.asp.

⁵ For further discussion of School Grades, see Section 3.3, Appendix A, or <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>.

Schools identified as SINI 4 have not made AYP for five consecutive years and are in the “Planning for Restructuring” phase under the requirements of NCLB. Schools that are in Year 5 of SINI status are at the restructuring stage.

3.3 NCLB and State Accountability Requirements

One of the challenges Florida faces each year is communicating to the public regarding the performance of schools, as measured by AYP and the state’s accountability system known as “School Grades.” For example, in 2007, 69% of Florida’s schools received an A or B grade, yet only 34% of the state’s schools made AYP.

The goal of this proposal is to reduce the apparent dissonance in the two systems by merging aspects of both AYP and the state’s school grading system into one valuable, consistent, and understandable indicator of school performance.

AYP Measurements

Under the current AYP system, a school’s final AYP status is either “yes” or “no.” The school has either made AYP, or it hasn’t. If a school fails to meet any one of the 39 component criteria of AYP, then the school’s overall AYP status is “No.”

Figure 4: The Components of AYP

36 Components by Subgroup . . .

	% Tested, Reading	% Tested, Math	% Proficient, Reading	% Proficient, Math
Subgroup	≥ 95%?	≥ 95%?	≥ Annual Objective?	≥ Annual Objective*?
White	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Black	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Hispanic	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Asian	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Am. Indian	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Economically Disadvantaged	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Students with Disabilities	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
English Language Learners	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
Total	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N

* Florida’s annual measurable objectives (AMOs) are adjusted upward annually.

+ 3 School-wide Measures:

- Graduation Rate (for high schools) = ≥ 85% or shows an increase of at least 1% (rounded) vs. prior year
- Writing Proficiency = ≥ 90% or an increase of at least 1% vs. prior year
- School Grade ≠ D or F

Florida’s School Grading System

Florida’s school grading system assigns points to schools based on demonstrated student proficiency in four subject areas and student learning gains in four component areas (two for math and two for reading). The system equally weights current-year performance and learning gains.

Components of Florida School Grades:

- Current-year performance on FCAT math (100 possible points)
- Current-year performance on FCAT reading (100 possible points)
- Current-year performance on FCAT writing (100 possible points)
- Current-year performance on FCAT science (100 possible points)
- Learning gains for the overall tested population in FCAT math (100 possible points)
- Learning gains for the overall tested population in FCAT reading (100 possible points)
- Learning gains for the low-performing quartile in FCAT math (100 possible points)
- Learning gains for the low-performing quartile in FCAT reading (100 possible points)

Figure 5: School Grade Scale

Points Earned	Grade
525+	A
495 - 524	B
435 - 494	C
395 - 434	D
Less than 395	F

While Florida's school grading system places extra emphasis on the learning gains of the lowest performers in reading and math, it does not specifically address the performance of subgroups as does AYP.

Common Ground

A statistical common ground for AYP and Florida's school grading system exists when AYP is considered in terms of "percent of criteria met," as shown in the following table.

Figure 6: Comparison of School Grades and AYP results by Percent of AYP Criteria Met

School Grading Results (2007)		NCLB (2007)		
1	2	3	4	5
School Grade	Number of Schools by Grade	Percent of AYP Criteria Met	Schools from Column 2 Meeting Criteria from Column 3	Percent (Column 4 ÷ Column 2)
A	1,483	90% or more	1,400	94%
B	469	80% or more	413	88%
C	587	70% or more	525	89%
D	216	60% or more	202	94%
F	83	50% or more	80	96%

The preceding table shows the number and percent of schools by grade that met or exceeded a specified percentage of AYP criteria. For example, the table shows that of the 1,483 "A" schools, 1,400 satisfied 90% or more of the 39 AYP components. That is, 94% of the "A" schools satisfied at least 90% of the AYP criteria.

The differentiated accountability pilot program will provide Florida the opportunity to merge the strengths of both systems: AYP's focus on the performance of all student subgroups and School Grades' differentiation of schools by levels of performance.

4. Florida's Proposed Differentiated Accountability Model

The successful model for Florida's differentiated accountability system will:

1. leverage current processes used in accountability reporting and school improvement.
2. merge aspects of both AYP and Florida's school grading system.
3. feature one or more indicators that weigh longitudinal subgroup performance in determining areas for targeted intervention.
4. ensure compliance with federal requirements for reporting AYP.
5. maintain continuity with the current calculation of AYP and SINI status (as approved in Florida's Accountability Workbook⁶).
6. apply a blended approach to restructuring.
7. add a longitudinal performance measure for AYP components to provide additional flexibility in focusing reforms/interventions and/or applying corrective action.

4.1 Criteria for Grouping and Differentiating the Accountability Status of Schools

4.1.1 Step 1: Preliminary Grouping of Florida's SINIs

Initially, a preliminary model was constructed using AYP and School Grades with the following requirements in mind:

- merge state and NCLB accountability systems,
- be technically sound and substantiated by data, and
- present a format that the public can easily understand.

Figure 7: Florida's 2006-07 SINIs by Preliminary Differentiated Accountability Grouping

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
SINI 1	68	31	3	10
SINI 2	91	29	6	14
SINI 3	160	61	6	22
SINI 4	136	151	27	95
SINI 5	1	11	3	12

In this preliminary classification, SINIs are identified and assigned status (Year 1 - Year 5) following current procedures with an additional accountability grouping based on a combination of AYP status, percentage of AYP criteria met, and state-assigned school grades. The four groupings are explained as follows.

Group 1 = A or B schools with 80% or more AYP criteria met.

Group 2 = C schools with 70% or more AYP criteria met.

⁶ <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplans03/flcsa.pdf>

Group 3 = Inconsistencies with AYP and School Grades:

- A or B schools with less than 80% criteria met; and
- C schools with less than 70% criteria met.

Group 4 = D or F schools.

4.1.2 Step 2: Consolidation of Groups in the Model

Consolidation of groups in the preliminary model provides for a simpler differentiated system (more easily presented to and understood by the public) and focuses school improvement support and interventions not only on low-performing schools in the grading system that are in restructuring under NCLB requirements, but also on schools with higher grades that have underperformed by NCLB standards and are in restructuring.

4.1.2.1 Grouping by School Grade and Percentage of AYP Met (Horizontal Axis)

The first part of this step consolidated the four school performance groups into two main groups:

- **CATEGORY I** – Combines all of Group 1 and part of Group 2 to create A, B, and C schools that have met at least 80% of the AYP criteria.
- **CATEGORY II** – Combines part of Group 2 and all of Groups 3 and 4 to create graded and ungraded schools that have met less than 80% of the AYP criteria, as well as all D and F schools.

Figure 8: Phase 1 – Combine Groups 2, 3, and 4

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
SINI 1	68	31	3	10
SINI 2	91	29	6	14
SINI 3	160	61	6	22
SINI 4	136	151	27	95
SINI 5	1	11	3	12

This consolidation provides the following advantages:

- Separates schools with comparatively fewer problem areas in AYP from schools with more widespread problem areas.
- Accounts for the most recently measured performance of schools.
- Separates schools with comparatively high learning gains from schools with lower gains.
- Makes state accountability criteria a factor, but one that is subordinate to federal AYP criteria.
- Helps further differentiate between improvement needs of schools by including state accountability criteria (school grading).
- Directs the targeting of interventions narrowly or broadly, based on category.
- Facilitates communicating with the public by simplifying state accountability designations.

4.1.2.2 Grouping by SINI Status (Vertical Axis):

Next, the model combines schools into two SINI-status groups:

- SINI-Prevent – combines SINI groups 1, 2, and 3 and identifies schools that are not yet in the restructuring phase, yet need services to prevent the progression to restructuring.
- SINI-Correct – combines schools in SINI groups 4 and 5, and identifies schools that are in restructuring mode and for which the need for intervention is more urgent.

Figure 9: Phase 2 – Combine SINI Groups 1, 2, and 3; Combine SINI Groups 4 and 5

	Category I: (A's, B's, C's, and Ungraded with ≥ 80% AYP Criteria Met)	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D's and F's)
SINI 1		
SINI 2		
SINI 3		
SINI 4		
SINI 5		

This grouping provides the following advantages:

- Provides continuity in applying federal criteria for determining SINI status.
- Uses performance trends (accountability history) to target persistently underperforming areas.
- Identifies schools nearing or entering restructuring.
- Facilitates communicating with the public by simplifying federal accountability designations.

By combining elements of existing SINI status and school grades, the total number of cells are reduced to four from 20 (Fig. 7). This four-cell grouping forms the basic scheme for establishing the status of schools included in Florida's differentiated accountability model in the initial year of implementation.

Figure 10: Consolidated Grouping of Florida's 2006-07 SINIs

	Category I: (A's, B's, C's, and Ungraded with ≥ 80% AYP Criteria Met)	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D's and F's)
SINI-Prevent	416	85
SINI-Correct	248	188

This simplified model differentiates SINI schools based on a combination of AYP and School Grades while taking into account school performance with progressive interventions for schools that continue to not make AYP.

4.1.2.3 Substantiating Data for Model Grouping Criteria

Schools in Category I are generally performing well, missing relatively few components of AYP. On the other hand, schools in Category II are performing poorly and missing multiple components of AYP. Data support this classification, as performance progressively worsens from Category I, SINI-Prevent to Category II, SINI-Correct.

The following tables show the average percentage of proficient students by subject area (reading and math) for each component subgroup of AYP, by differentiated accountability group. Schools in Category II, SINI-Correct have the lowest percentage of students scoring at proficient levels for every subgroup. Note the large difference between performance for Category I and Category II schools in SINI-Prevent; while both groupings include schools in the same consolidated SINI grouping (SINI 1, 2, & 3), the groupings are distinguished by the difference in their school grade performance and comparative AYP performance.

Figure 11: Average Percent Proficient for Each Subgroup in Reading by Differentiated Group, 2007

	Category I SINI Prevent	Category I SINI Correct	Category II SINI Prevent	Category II SINI Correct
Reading Proficiency - Total	62	54	39	38
Reading Proficiency - White	74	68	60	59
Reading Proficiency - Black	50	46	34	34
Reading Proficiency - Hispanic	57	51	43	40
Reading Proficiency - Asian	#	#	#	#
Reading Proficiency - American Indian	#	#	#	#
Reading Proficiency - Economically Disadvantaged	58	51	38	36
Reading Proficiency - English Language Learners	46	40	31	26
Reading Proficiency - Students with Disabilities	38	30	19	18

Figure 12: Average Percent Proficient for Each Subgroup in Math by Differentiated Group, 2007

	Category I SINI Prevent	Category I SINI Correct	Category II SINI Prevent	Category II SINI Correct
Math Proficiency - Total	60	54	40	38
Math Proficiency - White	71	66	59	58
Math Proficiency - Black	49	44	35	32
Math Proficiency - Hispanic	58	53	46	43
Math Proficiency - Asian	#	#	#	#
Math Proficiency - American Indian	#	#	#	#
Math Proficiency - Economically Disadvantaged	56	50	39	36
Math Proficiency - English Language Learners	50	45	35	30
Math Proficiency - Students with Disabilities	40	32	20	20

A pound sign replaces results where counts are too small for reliable information to be derived or no counts were reported.

4.1.3 Step 3: Final Matrix – Identification of SINI-Intervene

An additional set of criteria is applied to the lowest performing schools at or beyond the restructuring stage (Category II, SINI-Correct schools) to further differentiate schools most critically in need of intervention.

Figure 13: Number of Schools in Category II, SINI Correct

	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D’s and F’s)
SINI-Correct (SINIs at Yr. 4 and Beyond)	188

In order to identify those schools in need of the most intensive intervention (SINI-Intervene), the performance of schools in Category II and in SINI-Correct within the Florida differentiated accountability system is examined. Schools with the worst performance record since 2003 were identified according to the following criteria:

1. The school has earned an F or D grade in current year’s School Grades calculation, or
2. The school has earned two F grades in a four year period.

To further corroborate the declining performance of these schools, the following four questions are asked, based on the AYP calculation:

- Has the percentage of non-proficient students in reading increased since 2003?
- Has the percentage of non-proficient students in math increased since 2003?
- Are 70 percent or more of the school’s students non-proficient in reading?
- Are 70 percent or more of the school’s students non-proficient in math?

The most critically low-performing schools are identified as those for which the answer is “YES” to three or more of the questions listed above. Through this process, 13 schools were identified, based on 2006-07 AYP and School Grades results. All of these schools have received services including guidance and technical assistance through the state and federal accountability systems. State-level monitoring notes and additional data for each of these schools was then examined to further identify schools that show no signs of making progress. This examination targets seven schools in need of the most serious intervention strategies.

With the final identification of SINI-Intervene schools, the five-cell model for Florida’s Differentiated Accountability is complete, as shown in the following table.

Figure 14: Final Differentiated Accountability Matrix

2006-07 SINIs	Category I: (A’s, B’s, C’s, and Ungraded Schools with at Least 80% AYP Criteria Met)	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D’s and F’s)
SINI-Prevent (SINIs 1, 2, & 3)	416	85
SINI-Correct (SINIs at Year 4 and Up)	248	181
SINI-Intervene (MOST CRITICAL)		7

4.2 Assessing School Status in Year 2 of the Model

The differentiated accountability model described above forms the basis for the application of support services and interventions beyond those already in place to meet NCLB school improvement requirements for SINIs. The movement of schools within or out of this model is contingent on performance in Year 2. With regard to their position in the model and classification for differentiated support/intervention, schools that are in Year 1 of the model (the SINIs identified in 2007) will do one of the following in Year 2:

- improve sufficiently to exit SINI status completely (an option available only to schools that made AYP in Year 1 and are therefore poised to exit SINI status in Year 2)
- fail to improve and move to a classification requiring more intensive intervention
- remain stationary in the model (note that remaining in a holding pattern for “in year of improvement” status means that the school has actually improved sufficiently to avoid an increased “year in improvement” designation).

Movement of schools within the model is determined by the variables that define the classification of schools in the model: assigned school grade, percentage of AYP criteria met, and year in SINI status. (For example, an improved school grade and/or improved AYP performance [based on the criteria defined for the classifications in the model] can move a school to a classification that allows greater flexibility in implementing its improvement plan.) Each year, SINIs will be evaluated based on these criteria and will be classified in the model accordingly. Each year, a specific set of requirements will be applied to schools based on their classification in the model and will be accompanied by benchmarks defining success in meeting these requirements. Accordingly, specific consequences will be tied to schools' compliance with the requirements applied to their classification.

5. Florida's Differentiated Accountability Model – Intervention Strategies

5.1 Applying Differentiated Measures – Overview

Florida's system of differentiated accountability will apply measures that comply with current federal requirements for school improvement under NCLB and will shift emphasis to more rigorous intervention and support for schools with the greatest need for improvement. These measures for support and intervention will be differentiated according to the five classifications of the model.

5.1.1 Level of Support Services and Interventions

For each classification, there will be a customized program of support services and interventions that will be defined by the following elements:

- **Specific interventions** for attaining benchmarks and executing the school improvement plan.
- **Roles** for the school, district, and state in preparing, directing, implementing, and monitoring the plan; and reporting progress.
- **Measurable benchmarks** for determining the progress of the plan.
- **Consequences** for non-compliance with requirements.

Figure 15: General Strategies and Interventions

	Category I: (A’s, B’s, C’s, and Ungraded Schools with at Least 80% AYP Criteria Met)	Category II: (Schools with Less than 80% AYP Criteria Met, and All D’s and F’s)
SINI-Prevent	Focus planning on missed elements of AYP.	Implement comprehensive school improvement planning.
SINI-Correct	Focus reorganization on missed elements of AYP.	Reorganize the school.
SINI-Intervene		Restructure/Close the school.

For all classifications, Florida will combine monitoring assistance, services, choice options, and collaboration as authorized under NCLB as well as the substantial assistance provided under the state’s accountability plan.

5.1.2 Overview of Roles of the School, District, and State

The roles of the school, district, and state are defined separately for each differentiated accountability classification of schools. The authority and responsibility to direct support and intervention shifts from the school to the district to the state as classifications move from Category 1 to Category 2 and from SINI-Prevent status to SINI-Correct status. For example, a school in SINI-Prevent status that has earned a satisfactory grade and has met at least 80% of AYP criteria will be able to (and will be required to) prepare and implement its own school improvement plan, whereas a school that is in SINI-Correct status will be expected and required to comply with requirements of a school improvement plan that has been developed for it by the district. Generally, the more widespread and persistent the need for improvement at a school, the more the district and/or state will become actively involved in directing the development and implementation of the school improvement plan.

Figure 16: General Roles of the School, District, and State

SINI-Prevent, Category I	
School:	The school directs intervention.
District:	The district provides assistance.
State:	The state reviews progress (monitors/reports).
SINI-Correct, Category I	
School:	The school complies with district-determined measures.
District:	The district directs intervention and provides assistance.
State:	The state reviews progress (monitors/reports).
SINI-Prevent, Category II	
School:	The school complies with district-determined measures.
District:	The district directs intervention, provides planning and assistance.
State:	The state provides assistance; monitors and reports.
SINI-Correct, Category II	
School:	The school complies with district-directed interventions.
District:	The district complies with state-directed interventions.
State:	The state directs intervention through the district, monitors and reports.
SINI-Intervene	
School:	The school complies with district-directed interventions.
District:	The district complies with state-directed interventions.
State:	The state directs intervention through the district, monitors and reports.

5.2 Comprehensive Intervention and Support Plan

Florida has developed a comprehensive plan to address the intervention and support for each of the five SINI groups – SINI Prevent I, Correct I, Prevent II, Correct II, and Intervene. For each group the plan reviews nine areas of improvement: (1) Improvement Planning for Schools and Districts, (2) Leadership, (3) Educator Quality, (4) Professional Development, (5) Curriculum (Aligned and Paced), (6) Continuous Improvement, (7) Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, and (8) Monitoring.

5.2.1 Specific Interventions and Governing Roles

The chart below provides an overview of our differentiated plan per group and highlights the activities across each group.

Figure 17: Table of Specific Interventions and Governing Roles

SINI Category	Improvement Planning	Leadership	Educator Quality	Professional Development
SINI-Prevent I	School develops the school improvement plan and district approves.	Principal has prior record of increasing student and school achievement; district monitors hiring of leadership team.	Teachers must have more than two years of teaching experience; state reviews district performance appraisal instrument.	Individual professional development plan (IPDP) includes professional development (PD) targeting subgroups; master schedule provides for common planning and job-embedded PD targeting subgroups.
SINI-Correct I	School develops school improvement plan; district approves and monitors implementation.	Principal has prior record of increasing student achievement in targeted subgroups not making AYP; district reviews/hires school leadership team.	Lead teachers are assigned based on demonstrated student achievement in AYP subgroups; school must show evidence of accelerated student achievement; state monitors district performance appraisal.	District provides resources for school to redesign its schedule; state ensures professional development plans target subgroups and district is monitoring implementation of school PD plans
SINI-Prevent II	District develops school improvement plan in collaboration with school, and the district monitors implementation.	All leadership team members have prior record of increasing student achievement in AYP subgroup areas; district reviews/hires school leadership team.	School staff must have documented success in similar school environment; school hires additional staff to meet lead teacher requirement; district must reassign qualified staff as needed; state audits district organization of HR staff.	School PD is organized around professional learning communities; all IPDPs are completed and reviewed by October 1.
SINI-Correct II	District develops the school improvement plan in collaboration with school and ensures implementation.	Leadership team must have demonstrated success in school improvement in a similar setting; district reviews/hires school leadership team.	No teachers in need of improvement; ensure teacher appraisal instruments are implemented with fidelity; district declares emergency to negotiate special provisions in contracts; state monitors implementation of performance appraisals.	The professional learning communities are aligned to the district focused delivery model; district participates in IPDP meetings with principal; state monitors focused delivery plan, IPDP processes and PD follow-up for district and school.
SINI-Intervene	District develops the school improvement plan in collaboration with school and ensures implementation.	District reviews and hires leadership with Department of Education.	Lead teachers have demonstrated student success in subgroup and in similar school setting.	School PD plans are completed prior to the first day of school.

Figure 17 (continued): Table of Specific Interventions and Governing Roles

SINI Category	Curriculum	Continuous Improvement Model	Choice and SES	Monitoring
SINI-Prevent I	Aligned to Florida's Sunshine State Standards and paced; district provides funding to support alignment and reports progress monitoring of student progress three times a year.	Implement Response to Intervention with problem solving model; school develops curriculum calendar with student diagnostics, remediation, and enrichment.	SINI 1 provide SES; SINIs 2-3 provide SES and choice with transportation.	School clearly defines monitoring plan; district analyzes progress monitoring three times a year.
SINI-Correct I	District reports prescribed reading screening and progress monitoring assessments three times a year; targeted funding and teaching incentives tied to diagnostic outcomes.	District prescribes formative and summative assessments aligned to the curriculum calendar; state analyzes the prescribed reading progress monitoring assessments three times a year.	School provides SES and choice with transportation.	Schools monitor progress of implementation monthly; District analyzes progress monitoring three times a year and reports to the state; State monitors effectiveness of district leadership plan and use of resources.
SINI-Prevent II	District reports prescribed reading screening and progress monitoring assessments three times a year; targeted funding and teaching incentives tied to diagnostic outcomes.	District prescribes formative and summative assessments aligned to the curriculum calendar; state analyzes the prescribed reading progress monitoring assessments three times a year.	SINI 1 provide SES; SINIs 2-3 provide SES and choice with transportation; repeat F schools provide choice with transportation.	State monitors the reporting of student progress monitoring; State audits district and school use of capital and material resources and staff assignments prior to the beginning of the school year.
SINI-Correct II	State identifies research-based core curriculum programs and school-wide reform model; district defines for the state and the school the instructional model followed in all classrooms; District reports prescribed reading screening and progress monitoring assessments monthly; State monitors fidelity of implementation.	District reports monthly on results of both formative assessments and prescribed reading progress monitoring assessment.	School provides SES and choice with transportation; repeat F schools provide choice with transportation.	District reports progress monitoring monthly; district PD development consultant monitors implementation of professional learning communities; state monitors district delivery of federal program services; state monitors development of and implementation of corrective action and restructuring plans.
SINI-Intervene	State identifies research-based core curriculum programs and school-wide reform model; district defines for the state and the school the instructional model followed in all classrooms; District reports prescribed reading screening and progress monitoring assessments monthly; State monitors fidelity of implementation.	Districts report monthly; State monitors fidelity of implementation of the Continuous Improvement Model and intervenes if required.	School provides SES and choice with transportation; repeat F schools provide choice with transportation.	Comprehensive monitoring plan is required in charter school district contracts; Superintendent reports progress of interventions to the State Board of Education and district school board two times per year.

5.2.2 Measurable Benchmarks

Benchmarks established to determine compliance will ensure timely implementation of the differentiated accountability requirements for schools in all SINI classifications. Benchmarks for each of the intervention components for schools in SINI-Intervene status are established as follows (with newly established benchmarks for differentiated accountability underlined).

Figure 18: Measurable Benchmarks, SINI-Intervene (Newly proposed measures are underscored.)

Improvement Intervention	Measurable Benchmarks
Improvement Plan: • School • District	The state approves the school plan prior to September 1. The state approves the district plan prior to September 1.
Leadership • Principal • Leadership Team	<u>A qualified principal is verified or assigned by August 1. The performance appraisal instrument is modified as applicable by the first day of school.</u>
Educator Quality	<u>Qualified teachers are verified or assigned before pre-planning.</u>
Professional Development	<u>All IPDPs are completed and discussed by the first day of school. The master schedule and PD plan meet criteria and are completed before pre-planning. District/principal has assigned needed mentors and coaches before the first day of school.</u>
Alignment and Pacing of Curriculum	<u>There is evidence of implementation of research-based curriculum programs and a school-wide reform model that includes teacher and school administration professional development prior to the first day of school.</u>
Continuous Improvement Model, Including Formative and Diagnostic Assessments	<u>The school instructional calendar is in place prior to the first day of school. Submission of progress monitoring through the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network and mid-year report.</u>
Choice (and/or Choice with Transportation) Supplemental Educational Services (SES)	Parent requests are fulfilled until all required set aside funds are expended.
Monitoring Plans and Processes	<u>Benchmarks will be determined for each component of the comprehensive monitoring plan and will be assessed throughout the year and over years until the district and school demonstrate capacity to maintain an acceptable level of student achievement for all students.</u>

Note: A complete set of measurable benchmarks is likewise established for each of the other differentiated classifications of schools (SINI-Prevent I, SINI-Prevent II, SINI-Correct I, SINI-Correct II, and SINI-Intervene) and is available in the Comprehensive Intervention and Support Plan.

5.2.3 Consequences of Non-Compliance

Schools that do not meet the requirements of the differentiated accountability plan will be subject to consequences including possible loss of federal Title I and or Title II funding, possible loss of state funding, the authority to direct use of funding, possible accelerated movement to a more stringent category within the model (e.g., movement from SINI-Prevent to SINI-Correct), and, for schools in SINI-Correct or Intervene status, closure of the school.

5.3 SINI Profile Reporting

For SINIs in specified categories, the Florida Department of Education will prepare special profile reports for widespread release, including posting on the FDOE website following release of AYP results and school grades. These SINI profiles will focus on school-performance-related indicators such as assessment results in mathematics and reading; data on teachers and administrators, including degree-level of staff and percentage of first-year teachers; and percentage of classes taught by out-of-field teachers.

The performance of SINIs in these profiles will also include comparative results for “model” Title I schools (Title I schools that made AYP, are graded “A”, and are not in SINI status). In addition, profiles will include a five-year AYP history for profiled schools, showing performance for each of the school’s 39 AYP components, as shown in the sample table below. Indicators to be included on the SINI Profile Reports include the following:

- School Grade
- Percent AYP Criteria Met
- Differentiated Accountability Category
 - Category I – SINI-Prevent;
 - Category I – SINI-Correct;
 - Category II – SINI Prevent;
 - Category II – SINI Correct; or
 - SINI Intervene
- Student Performance (most indicators compared to model Title I schools)
 - Reasons for not making AYP
 - % of students using Supplemental Education Services
 - % of students exercising Choice options
 - Attendance - % absent 21 days or more
 - Mobility rate
 - Number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions
 - Total incidents of crime and violence
- Teacher Profile (all indicators compared to model Title I schools)
 - % first year teachers
 - % teachers with a temporary certificate
 - % teachers teaching out of field (also, shown separately by ESE and ELL areas)
 - % of teachers with a Master’s degree or higher
 - % National Board Certified
 - Average years experience
 - Average number of days present
 - Principal; years experience

An additional component of the SINI Profile would be to apply results of a longitudinal performance measure that includes an “AYP history” for each of the 39 component criteria. An example of a composite history of this type could be presented on SINI profiles as shown below.

Figure 19: AYP Component History Grid, Sample School (Five-Year AYP History)

AYP Component Criteria >	Percent Tested, Reading	Percent Tested, Math	Percent Proficient, Reading	Percent Proficient, Math	Grad Rate (School-wide)	Writing (School-wide)	Sch Grade (School-wide)
	# Years NOT Met	# Years NOT Met	# Years NOT Met	# Years NOT Met	# Years NOT Met	# Years NOT Met	#Years NOT Met
White	0	0	2	1			
Black	0	0	0	0			
Hispanic	0	0	1	1			
Asian	0	0	0	0			
Am. Indian	0	0	0	0			
Econ. Disadvantaged	0	0	3	1			
Students with Disabilities	0	0	5	3			
English Language Learners	0	0	0	0			
Total	0	0	4	3	0	0	1

Sample School, Current Year AYP Results

AYP Component Criteria >	Percent Tested, Reading	Percent Tested, Math	Percent Proficient, Reading	Percent Proficient, Math	Grad Rate (School-wide)	Writing (School-wide)	Sch Grade (School-wide)
	Criterion Met (Y/N)	Criterion Met (Y/N)	Criterion Met (Y/N)	Criterion Met (Y/N)	Criterion Met (Y/N)	Criterion Met (Y/N)	Criterion Met (Y/N)
White	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Black	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Hispanic	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Asian	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Am. Indian	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Econ. Disadvantaged	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Students with Disabilities	Y	Y	N	Y			
English Language Learners	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Total	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

SINI Status: 4 (SINI-Correct) Percent AYP Criteria Met = 97%

Differentiated Group = SINI-Correct, Category 1 Most Recent School Grade = A

5.4 Transitioning to the Differentiated Accountability Model

Florida expects to be able to move directly into its differentiated accountability system after computation of AYP and school grades in 2008. The differentiated system would make use of measures that are already in place to establish schools within classifications. Implementation of differentiated improvement requirements, interventions, and support could begin forthwith. The process would begin in late July of 2008 with the release of AYP and school grades and the follow-on processes for school improvement planning and interventions.

III. Differentiated Accountability Model Requirements

1. State Eligibility Criteria

1.1 Fully Approved Standards and Assessment System for 2007-08

The latest decision letter on Florida's assessment system was delivered by Dr. Kerri Briggs in a letter dated June 27, 2007.⁷ As Dr. Briggs states:

I am pleased to approve Florida's assessment system under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). . . .

I have concluded that the evidence demonstrates that Florida's standards and assessment system satisfies the NCLB requirements. Specifically, Florida's system includes academic content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science; student achievement standards in reading/language arts and mathematics; alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in reading/language arts and mathematics; grade-level assessments in each of grades 3-8 and high school in reading/language arts and mathematics; and alternate assessments in each of grades 3-8 and high school in reading/language arts and mathematics for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities on the Independent and Supported levels.

Florida received full approval of its assessment system, with the following caveat:

I understand Florida is planning to implement a new alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards to replace the FAAR, which will no longer be used after the 2006-07 school year. Please note that this approval does not include this new assessment. Florida will need to submit additional evidence to the Department for review and approval when Florida implements this assessment in the 2007-08 school year.

Status of the new Florida Alternate Assessment: Florida has expectations for full approval of its new alternate assessment for 2007-08. The initial peer review submission has been delivered to the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The Florida Department of Education is awaiting approval from ED.

1.2 No Outstanding Monitoring Findings Related to NCLB Requirements

Representatives of ED conducted monitoring of Florida's NCLB compliance for Title I areas in November 2007. ED produced initial and final reports for Florida's response. The state finalized its responses to the final ED monitoring report in documentation for submission to ED on April 18, 2008, including descriptions of measures to ensure full compliance in areas of findings. Florida has no outstanding findings related to IDEA monitoring.

⁷ See <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbfinalassess/fl3.html>.

For two of the findings in ED's Title I monitoring report for Florida, the state is in ongoing dialog with ED. For the first of these findings, ED notes that "the FDE [Florida Department of Education, also referenced as "FDOE" in other parts of the current document] continues its use of an alternative assessment procedure⁸ for some English language learners with less than one year of English language services instead of participating in the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), and includes these scores in adequate yearly progress (AYP)." In its monitoring report, ED provides the following directive: "These alternative assessments and procedures must be presented for peer review in March 2008 or their use must be discontinued for AYP purposes." Florida is in dialog with ED regarding the treatment of these students in its 2008 AYP calculation and will comply with whatever specific measures may be required in that regard, going forward. For the second finding noted above, ED states: "For the purposes of AYP calculation and accountability reporting, the FDE must use a consistent cut score for English language proficiency tests to determine membership in the LEP subgroup. The Consent Decree indicates that the minimum a student may score to be exited from the ESOL program and be classified as a former English Language learner is at the 33rd percentile. Therefore, for the purposes of AYP calculation and accountability reporting, students who score at least at the 33rd percentile on the English language proficiency test will be included in the LEP subgroup." The Florida Department of Education will seek a means of compliance that will meet ED's requirements for this item while continuing to operate in compliance with the Consent Decree.

1.3 Approved Plan to Meet NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements

On December 14, 2006, Florida received approval⁹ of its revised state plan to meet requirements for highly qualified teachers. A copy of the approved state plan is available online at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/hqtplans/fl.doc>.

1.4 Timely and Transparent Public Reporting on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Each year, in order to allow for effective and timely communication of choice options and other important school improvement information to parents, teachers, and administrators, the Florida Department of Education calculates and publishes initial AYP results several weeks before the beginning of the school year. On the date of release, a media advisory is provided to the press, and results for individual schools, districts, and the state can be accessed online at <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/default.asp>. In the days following release of AYP results, the department prepares its state, local education agency (LEA), and school-level annual report cards to meet public reporting requirements for NCLB. These reports (locally titled NCLB School Advisory Council Reports) are available online at <http://doeweb-prd.doe.state.fl.us/eds/nclbspar/index.cfm>, and copies of reports are made directly available to parents by LEAs. For the reporting of 2006-07 AYP results, initial results were provided on the department's web site on June 29, 2007, along with a press release (see http://www.fldoe.org/news/2007/2007_06_29.asp). After the close of the 30-day appeals window, another press release is distributed to the media, and results are updated on the web site.

⁸ Under current state regulations, alternate assessments in lieu of the FCAT for newly arrived English language learners (ELLs) are permitted in limited circumstances.

⁹ See <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/hqtplans/flcl2.doc>.

2. Core Principles of Differentiated Accountability Models

2.1 Accountability

2.1.1 AYP Determinations Consistent with State's Consolidated Accountability Workbook

Each year, Florida's AYP calculation is processed according to provisions in its approved accountability plan and workbook. Any changes to the calculation must be reflected in an approved version of the state's workbook prior to processing. An edition of Florida's accountability plan and workbook, updated as of May 18, 2007, is available online at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplans03/flcsa.pdf>. Florida's AYP plan is addressed in Appendix E (p. 94) in this version of the plan. Note that Florida later submitted an amendment to its accountability plan to incorporate growth model calculations, as Florida was approved for inclusion in the Growth Model Pilot Program on June 26, 2007 (see approval letter at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/growthmodel/fl/flgmdecltr3.doc>). Florida's growth model proposal is also available online at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/growthmodel/fl/flrevisions2006.doc>. The growth model calculation is included in Florida's amended accountability workbook submitted for review by ED on February 15, 2008. The amended workbook also covers requested flexibilities such as the mathematical adjustment to proficiency results for students with disabilities. Florida will abide by all decisions rendered by ED on its amended accountability workbook regarding the 2008 AYP calculation. Under its proposed differentiated accountability model, Florida will continue to calculate AYP for all schools using the elements and procedures documented in its approved accountability plan.

2.1.2 Transparent Information about AYP Calculations

Florida has measures in place to ensure that all students are included in the AYP calculation, as indicated in the following language from its accountability workbook addressing Principle 2 of the Consolidated State Application, Accountability Workbook (language revised in the submitted amended accountability plan for 2008 is underscored with a dotted line; bracketed text was not included in the submission and is used only to enhance clarity):

All students are included in the NCLB accountability system. The vast majority of students take the FCAT in grades 3-10. English language learners (ELLs) who have been enrolled in an approved English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for 12 months or less for whom it is determined on an individual basis (based on majority decision of the ELL Committee) that the FCAT is not an appropriate measure of academic proficiency are assessed using other measures of academic performance. . . .

Florida statute requires that school districts operate educational programs for students in juvenile justice centers and programs. Each such program has a unique school number and will be treated as a school. All students shall be assessed and included in the state accountability system.

All students who are "mobile," meaning they attend more than one school during the year, shall be included in the statewide assessment system and included within the district and/or state AYP calculation.

Of Florida's 3,309 schools, 210 or 6.3% have less than 30 students. Schools with highly mobile populations such as juvenile justice facilities, teen parent programs, and hospital/homebound programs will not receive an AYP status designation [if the total number of full-year students at the school is less than 11]. Students' performance and participation rates will be rolled up to the district and/or state level. This accounts for approximately 98 of the 210 schools with a population of less than 30 students. The remaining 112 schools including all elementary, middle, high schools, charter schools, exceptional student education, and vocational schools will receive an AYP designation so long as their student population is larger than 10. While there are a few "schools" with student populations of less than 10 in the testing age range, these consist primarily of special situations in which one or more students have unique placements based on individual circumstances, e.g., an adult education center or a county jail. Again, these students' performance and participation rates will roll up to the district and/or state levels.

The SEA has implemented a process for monitoring more closely the existence of separate schools with exceptionally small numbers of students to ensure that it is necessary for such small schools to exist as separate entities. An advisory group convenes weekly to review school district applications for the assignment of official school numbers in the state system in order to ensure that entities applying for separate school numbers perform the functions of actual schools and meet accountability criteria.

Students with disabilities whose individualized education plan (IEP) indicates that FCAT is not an appropriate assessment are being tested in 2007-08 on the new Florida Alternate Assessment, for which peer review documentation has been submitted to ED, as described previously.

Inclusion of all students in the assessment process, regardless of program type, is ensured by state legislation addressing assessment requirements. Relevant statutes include [s. 1008.22](#), Florida Statutes (assessment); [ss. 1008.31-34](#), Florida Statutes (accountability); and [ss. 1003.51-52](#), Florida Statutes (Department of Juvenile Justice [DJJ] services).

Results of AYP calculations are made available to the public, both in summarized form via a press release describing initial results (and at the end of the appeals process)¹⁰ and in greater detail via interactive website resources such as the report at <http://schoolgrades.fdoe.org/default.asp>. The FDOE also prepares information on the AYP performance of its schools for national entities such as the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

A step-by-step and comprehensive description of the AYP calculation is provided in a technical assistance paper online (see <http://schoolgrades.fdoe.org/pdf/0607/2007AYPTAP.pdf>).

2.1.3 Title I Schools Continue to be Identified for Improvement as Required by NCLB

In Florida's differentiated accountability model, Title I schools will continue to be identified for improvement as required by NCLB and as indicated in the state's approved accountability workbook. Florida will continue to identify SINIs as it has done in previous years, without a change in procedures for doing so. SINI status (e.g., SINI 1, SINI 2, SINI 3, etc.) will be assigned just as in previous years. However, as allowed in ED's guidance for Core Principle 3, Florida will apply additional accountability groupings that reflect how interventions and

¹⁰ Press releases on Florida's 2006-07 AYP and school grades results are available at http://www.fdoe.org/news/2007/2007_06_29.asp and at http://www.fdoe.org/news/2007/2007_08_21-2.asp.

school improvement requirements will be differentiated. In Florida's model, the categories SINI-Prevent, SINI-Correct, and SINI-Intervene are applied to further differentiate among schools for which regular SINI status has been determined.

2.2 Differentiation Model

2.2.1 Method of Differentiation (Technical Soundness)

Florida's method of differentiation in its model is described in detail on pages 6 -11 of this document, including development of the model as well as presentation of the final model, with new labels for groupings based on SINI status and categories that combine AYP performance and state-based accountability measures (School Grades). School movement within the model over time (based on annual change in performance) is described in subsection 4.2, "Assessing School Status in Year 2 of the Model," on page 11. Substantiating data (such as the tables presented on page 9) illustrate the increasingly acute need for support/interventions in schools classified in the Category 2 and "SINI-Correct" cells. School counts in cells of the differentiated model were considered by FDOE staff in determining which levels to consolidate for the final model – the aim being to have cells that (based on available and current data) would include enough schools to make the applicable support services and interventions for each cell-group practical.

Labels applied to the groupings/levels in Florida's differentiated model are consistent with and based on existing laws and regulations. The labels do not replace original SINI status designations; instead, the new labels would be overlaid on the existing designations to delineate groups that will receive differentiated support services and interventions.

- Primary Emphasis on Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics Results. Florida's differentiated accountability model, in considering the total percentage of AYP criteria met as one of the model's core criteria, places primary emphasis on reading- and mathematics-based components in determining school status within the model. Of Florida's 39 AYP components, 36 (more than 90%) are tied to reading and math participation and proficiency results. Florida's school grading calculation, which will be combined with AYP performance to determine the group status of schools in the model, has 6 of 8 points-based measures that are tied to FCAT reading and math (proficiency results and learning gains), with the remaining two measures consisting of FCAT science and FCAT writing proficiency results. Florida proposes no additional indicators outside of AYP results (including percent of criteria met) and school grade results for its model.

2.2.2 Transition to the Differentiated Accountability Model

Florida's differentiated accountability model continues current practices for identifying Title I SINIs in accord with provisions for identification of SINIs in the state's approved accountability workbook. Rather than replace aspects of current accountability practices, the model will supplement these practices. It is a model only of addition – an overlay of classifications and practices on the existing accountability system. No current measures for the grading of schools, the calculation of AYP, or the identification of Title I schools that are in need of improvement will be discontinued.

Florida's model will ensure that students participating in public school choice (PSC) and supplemental educational services (SES) during the 2007-08 school year will continue to have those options available to them during the transition to the differential accountability model because the state's proposed application of services and interventions will be designed to have the practical effect of promoting intensified services for non-proficient, low-income students without limiting eligibility for PSC and SES.

Florida's current practices for the provision of PSC and SES are noteworthy as confirmed by the fact that after separate monitoring visits in April and November of 2007, these areas of Florida's NCLB-mandated accountability system emerged with no findings in the monitoring reports.

Details of Florida's plans for differentiated PSC and SES services are provided later in this document in the section addressing Core Principle 9: Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services.

2.2.3 Transparency of Differentiation and Interventions

Florida's process for differentiation will be data-driven, understandable, and accessible to the public. Inputs for classifying schools within the model will include the same comprehensive data-driven processes that the state currently applies in the calculation and reporting of AYP and in the calculation and reporting of school grades. Florida's longitudinal student-based data system is used to compile individual student assessment results, determine full-year status of students, match attendance and assessment records, match current-year assessment records to prior-year assessment records for individuals, track individual learning gains, and provide data-quality-assurance in all accountability processes.

The model will be presented to the public in terms that are already familiar and/or can be readily explained (e.g., years in need of improvement, percent of AYP criteria met, school grades). The basic four-cell diagram for the final model will provide a basis for the description. Title I schools that are in need of improvement will receive services and undergo interventions that are differentiated based on how long they have needed improvement, how well they have recently performed, and whether they have demonstrated improvement in the past year.

Public reporting on the status of schools in the model will be accomplished through the production of SINI profile reports described on p. 15, which will be posted on the FDOE's web site, with appropriate media advisories and instructions to districts for notifying parents at affected schools. These processes will occur concurrent with the production of annual state, LEA, and school reports for NCLB- and state-accountability compliance.

2.3 Interventions

2.3.1 Intervention Timeline (and System)

Florida would expect to implement provisions of its differentiated accountability model beginning in school year 2008-09. The state's system of interventions is described in detail in the section titled "Florida's Differentiated Accountability Model – Intervention Strategies" on pages 11-17 of this document. Measurable benchmarks with timelines are addressed on page 15.

2.3.2 Types of Interventions (and Evidence of Effectiveness)

The specific interventions included in Florida's differentiated accountability model are addressed in the section titled "Florida's Differentiated Accountability Model – Intervention Strategies" on pages 11-17 of this document. See, in particular, the section on the Comprehensive Intervention and Support Plan on pages 13-15. Florida has experienced recent success in improving the performance of low-performing schools by implementing school-improvement measures under current state and federal law. Examples are shown below.

District Name	District Number	School Name	School Number	Grade 2003	Grade 2007	AYP Status 2003	AYP Status 2007	Title I School
BROWARD	06	PLANTATION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	0941	D	B	NO	YES	YES
DADE	13	MAYA ANGELOU ELEMENTARY	0111	D	A	NO	YES	YES
DADE	13	FLORIDA INT'L ACADEMY CHARTER	6010	D	B	NO	YES	YES
DADE	13	ASPIRA SOUTH YOUTH LEADERSHIP	6060	D	A	NO	YES	YES
ORANGE	48	PASSPORT CHARTER SCHOOL	0053	D	B	NO	YES	YES

That school improvement measures can work on a larger scale is evidenced by the fact that 168 of Florida's current SINIs are poised to exit SINI status in 2008. The additional flexibility in focusing support and intervention that would be available through Florida's proposed differentiated accountability model would provide additional focused support for these schools and would provide intensive needed intervention and support for schools most in need of assistance.

2.3.3 Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services

Eligibility Criteria for PSC and SES – One of the primary goals of NCLB is to close the achievement gap and ensure that all students, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve academic proficiency. NCLB currently limits eligibility for SES to children of low-income families and only considers academic achievement if the demand for SES exceeds the available funds. Thus, all low-income students attending Title I schools identified as in need of improvement for two or more consecutive years are eligible to participate in SES regardless of their academic performance.

FDOE proposes to expand the eligibility criteria to require LEAs to offer SES to all eligible students in Title I schools identified in their first year in need of improvement. This expansion will result in approximately the same number of students being served (based on available funds); however, this will prioritize the services for the lowest-performing low-income students.

Under current law, all school districts offer PSC to all students enrolled in Title I schools identified in need of improvement, corrective action, and restructuring; and SES to all eligible students (those eligible for free/reduced-price lunch [FRPL]) in Title I schools identified in their second year of in need of improvement, corrective action, and restructuring. Florida will offer PSC (and all other LEA public school options) to all students enrolled in Title I schools identified as SINI-Correct II and expand the eligibility criteria to require LEAs to offer SES to all eligible students in Title I schools identified in their first year in need of improvement. Expanding the eligibility criteria would result in approximately 40,000 more students eligible for SES. Increasing the number of eligible students will require LEAs to prioritize SES to the low-achieving students in low-income families, thereby focusing services on those students with the greatest overall needs in all Title I schools identified as in need of improvement.

As of December 2007, districts reported approximately 68,000 students participating in SES for the 2007-2008 school year, which is 99% of the students who could be served within available funds. (Available funds are calculated by using an amount equal to 15% of Title I, Part A, funds since districts are required to set aside an amount equal to 5% of their Title I, Part A, funds for PSC). Most districts reported the need to prioritize services to the lowest achieving students for the current school year, using such criteria as scoring Level 1 or 2 on the FCAT for students in grades three through ten or scoring in the lowest quartile on another norm referenced test for those students in kindergarten through second grade, which are not included in the state assessment system. Increasing the number of eligible students would require more districts to prioritize services; thus focusing services for those students with the greatest need in all Title I schools identified as in need of improvement.

Plan to Increase the Number of Students Participating in PSC and SES – The Florida Department of Education places a high priority on the implementation of PSC and SES pursuant to NCLB. The department is focused on improving the implementation of choice and SES, especially in school districts with low participation rates, including the following initiatives:

- State effort to improve the **dissemination of information to parents** related to choice and SES to ensure compliance and quality of parent friendly information to enable parents to make informed decisions
- Annual **NCLB School Choice Leadership Summit** to build capacity for district and school staff and state-approved SES providers
- Implementation of **state data collection and reporting system related to NCLB school choice** on Department's automated student database to enable Department's ability to monitor participation in choice and SES and quality of services including student learning gains
- Development and dissemination of **technical assistance papers** related to parent notification and outreach, contract management, development and evaluation of student learning plans, progress monitoring, background screening for SES providers, and choice with transportation
- **Review and approval of LEA process for parent notification** of NCLB school choice including approval of parental letters prior to LEA disseminating the letters to parents
- **Monthly conference calls** with district coordinators and state-approved SES providers
- **Online application process** to identify high-quality SES providers with state SES provider directory
- **Regular monitoring of LEAs and state-approved SES providers** to ensure compliance and comprehensive system improvement
- **Evaluation of quality and effectiveness of choice and SES** including effectiveness of services offered by state-approved SES providers based on learning gains of students served in the program
- **State law and State Board of Education (SBE) Rule related to SES**

The Department is committed to providing clear, consistent, and timely information and support to school districts and state-approved SES providers related to NCLB school choice.

Public School Choice – Florida has a long history of providing parents and students a variety of school choice options. School choice programs in Florida are in high demand and growing as an increasing number of families take advantage of their right to select the appropriate learning option for their children. Many districts offer students the opportunity to access other public school options, such as open enrollment options, dual enrollment at a community college, magnet schools, charter schools, McKay Scholarships, Florida Virtual School, and career academies.

Although many students are eligible to participate in NCLB public school choice, relatively few parents utilize their option to transfer their children to higher performing schools pursuant to NCLB. With the many choice options and the enrollment time for these options, the NCLB option is usually the last chronological opportunity parents have to transfer their child to the school of their choice. LEAs have extensive parent outreach and marketing programs to inform parents regarding the many choice options available in the district; and most parents who are interested in transferring their children to a higher performing school do so prior to the release of AYP data.

Participation in Public School Choice, Florida K12 Schools

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Title I schools	1,389	1,413	1,382	1,363
SINI 1+ Schools	981	1,016	1,011	937
Eligible Students	755,854	753,342	762,724	605,291
Number and Percent Served	8,227 (1.09%)	8,365 (1.11%)	13,339 (1.75%)	15,170 (2.5%)
Number and Percent of Students Enrolled Based on Parental School Choice Options	645,442 (22.21%)	656,988 (22.64)	667,115 (22.65%)	638,695 (24.11%)

Analysis of student participation data for four years indicates that the percent of students attending schools other than their assigned schools continues to remain steady, with 638,695 students, or 24.11% of the total K12 membership attending schools based on Florida's parental school choice options in 2007-2008.

Monitoring and Evaluation Model for PSC - Florida's accountability model for NCLB school choice includes three main components: Compliance, Monitoring, and Data Analysis and Evaluation. The Department monitors all LEAs and state-approved SES providers through a comprehensive system beginning with the LEA application process and state-approved provider application and an annual self-evaluation study, desktop monitoring review for selected districts and providers, and onsite monitoring review for selected districts and providers.

LEAs are required to submit an online application for Title I, Part A, which includes an NCLB school choice section. LEAs are required to describe the process for notifying parents regarding NCLB PSC options and SES, LEA contracts with SES providers, and student learning plans. The LEAs must upload copies of their parent notification letters, enrollment forms, provider directory, contracts, and student learning plans. These sections must be appropriately addressed and compliant with all state and federal requirements before Department staff approves the application and funds are released to the LEAs.

The Department will evaluate and report the effectiveness of PSC by measuring the academic proficiency of students in reading/language arts and mathematics for all students participating in PSC. The Department will use a control group and compare the performance of eligible students enrolled in a district who transferred to another school pursuant to PSC and those eligible students in the district that did not transfer. Students will be compared based on their FCAT level from the previous year.

Supplemental Educational Services – The Department approved 218 SES providers for the 2007-2008 school year as compared to 78 providers approved in 2004-2005. All applicants are required to submit an online application, which is reviewed and scored by trained reviewers. The Department posts the State-Approved SES Provider Directory on its web site, which can be searched by LEA, and includes information for each provider related to content

area, type of instruction, grades served, qualification of tutors, location, frequency of sessions, and whether the provider serves students with disabilities or English language learners. The approved provider applications are also available on the website.

Participation in SES, Florida K12 Schools

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
# Title I Schools	1,389	1,413	1,382	1,363
# SINI 2+ Schools	36	692	879	826
Number of Eligible Students	17,907	332,174	428,268	414,739
Number and % Served	2,397(13.39%)	22,046 (6.64%)	70,318 (16.42%)	67,740 (16.3%)
Number and % of Funded Eligible Students Served in SES	2,397 (96.53%)	22,026 (87.74%)	70,318 (92%)	67,740 (99%)

Analysis of the 2006-2007 school year indicates that LEA efforts related to parent notification and outreach have been successful with 92% of the funded eligible students reported as participating in SES, with 17% of the participating students reported as students with disabilities and 15% of the participating students reported as English language learners. Sixty percent of the students participating in SES were in kindergarten through third grade.

State Law and State Board of Education Rule Related to SES – The 2006 Legislature created Section 1008.331, Florida Statutes (Supplemental Educational Services in Title I Schools) to provide policy related to the responsibilities of school districts and providers relative to SES as required in Section 1116 of NCLB. This state law outlines requirements beyond the federal law related to incentives, compliance, penalties for school districts for noncompliance, additional parent notification related to SES, and reallocation of unexpended funds. The law requires school districts to notify parents of all eligible students regarding SES prior to and after the start of the school year. In addition to the requirements related to parent notification in NCLB, the state law requires that notification must include contact information for state-approved providers as well as the enrollment form, clear instructions, and timelines for the selection of providers and commencement of services.

The law requires school districts to create and implement a streamlined process for parent enrollment that ensures students begin receiving services no later than October 15th of each year; and requires state-approved providers to begin providing services to students no later than October 15th of each year. In February 2008, the Florida State Board of Education approved State Board Rule 6A-1.039, FAC (Supplemental Educational Services in Title I Schools) to provide provisions for implementing the state law and provide consistency for both school districts and providers. The rule provides a process for applying to be a state-approved SES provider and includes provisions for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting complaints of alleged violations of NCLB.

Monitoring and Evaluation Model for SES - Florida's accountability model for NCLB school choice includes three main components: Compliance, Monitoring, and Data Analysis and Evaluation. The Department monitors all LEAs and state-approved SES providers through a comprehensive system beginning with the LEA application process and state-approved provider application and an annual self-evaluation study, desktop monitoring review for selected districts and providers, and onsite monitoring review for selected districts and providers.

LEAs are required to submit an online application for Title I, Part A, which includes an NCLB school choice section. LEAs are required to describe the process for notifying parents

regarding NCLB PSC options and SES, LEAs contract with SES providers, and student learning plans. The LEAs must upload copies of their parent notification letters, enrollment forms, provider directory, contracts, and student learning plans. These sections must be appropriately addressed and compliant with all state and federal requirements before Department staff approves the application and funds are released to the LEAs.

The Department will evaluate and report the quality and effectiveness of services provided by each state-approved SES provider. This evaluation will measure the academic proficiency of students in reading/language arts and mathematics for all students participating in SES. Pursuant to NCLB, the Department is required to withdraw approval from any provider that fails to contribute to increasing the academic proficiency of students for two consecutive years. According to SBE Rule 6A-1.039, FAC, providers must demonstrate increased academic proficiency as measured by 60% of students earning a minimum of one normal curve equivalency point learning gain in reading/language arts and 70% of students earning a minimum of one normal curve equivalency point learning gain in mathematics on assessments identified by the Department.

In addition to evaluating the quality and effectiveness of services provided by each state-approved SES provider, the Department will use a control group and compare the performance of eligible students enrolled in a district who participated in SES and those eligible students in the district that did not participate in SES. Students will be compared based on their FCAT level from the previous year. The Department will also calculate the contact hours for reading and mathematics for increments of time to determine an optimal amount of time for tutoring to maximize learning gains.

2.4 Restructuring

2.4.1 Significant and Comprehensive Interventions for Consistently Lowest-Performing Schools

Significant and comprehensive interventions for consistently lowest-performing schools are described in detail on pages 11-17 of this document. For the consistently lowest-performing schools, the state will take a much more active role in approving the hiring of school administration, oversight of professional development and training, and planning for the school's improvement strategy. Newly proposed monitoring requirements for the state in relation to these schools will include the following measures:

- Audits the district and school use of capital and material resources and staff assignments prior to the beginning of school year.
- Participates with the school and district in the development of the comprehensive school monitoring plan.
- Provides professional development and consultation to the district and school leadership team in start-up of school reform and in comprehensive monitoring processes.
- Provides interventions and additional resources when needed. Monitors district and school participation in required reporting and professional development related to the monitoring processes.
- Monitors the district's progress in implementing the school plan on classroom, team and school-wide levels.
- Reports to district on degree of progress in specified areas throughout the year and over multiple years until monitoring plan is modified.

Appendix A: School Grades and AYP Comparison Table

School Grades	AYP
Focuses on School-Wide Performance ; no Separate Subgroup Performance	Includes School-Wide Measures (3) but Focuses on Subgroup Performance in Reading and Math
Emphasizes performance of Lowest Performing 25% (accounting for half of the possible learning gains points, or one quarter of all possible points)	No measures for lowest performing quartile.
Provides for Graded Performance Designation (A –F)	Based on All or Nothing Criteria (Yes/No criterion applied to each component; a single missed component results in “No” for AYP)
Learning Gains = 50% of Grade Points	Learning Gains Factored into Growth Model Provision for Reading and Math proficiency calculations
Standards/Criteria are Periodically Increased	Annual Measurable Objectives are Increased Yearly (for Reading and Math proficiency)
Current Year Performance (Status Model Equivalent) = 50% of Grade Points	Current-Year Performance Measured in Primary Proficiency Calculations ; Growth Model invoked only after status model and safe harbor calculations applied
Points Based Solely on FCAT Results	Combines FCAT and Alternate Assessment Results (for LEP and SWD)
Additional Criteria (after points calculated) = Percent Tested (must be 90% or above) and Adequate Progress of Lowest 25% in Reading and Math (at least 50% of lowest quartile must have learning gains in each subject)	Additional Criteria (besides performance components) = Percent Tested must be 95% or above for each subgroup in reading and math School Grade must be other than D or F
<p>Measured Components Summary:</p> <p>Eight Performance Components</p> <p><u>Current-Year Performance (Percent Proficient)</u></p> <p>Reading Math Writing Science</p> <p><u>Learning Gains (Percent Making LG)</u></p> <p>Reading (all students) Math (all students) Reading (lowest performing 25%) Math (lowest performing 25%)</p> <p><u>Bonus Points Provision (10 possible points)</u></p> <p>Grade 11 and 12 retakes (50% must pass grade 10 FCAT in Reading & Math)</p> <p>Additional Criteria</p> <p>Percent Tested Adequate Progress of Lowest Performing 25%</p>	<p>Measured Components Summary:</p> <p>Thirty-nine Components</p> <p><u>Schoolwide Measures (3)</u></p> <p>Graduation Rate, Writing, School Grade</p> <p><u>Subgroup Measures (36)</u></p> <p>Percent Tested in Reading (x 9 subgroups) Percent Tested in Math (x 9 subgroups) Percent Proficient in Reading (x 9 subgroups) Percent Proficient in Math (x 9 subgroups)</p> <p>Subgroups (9) =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total White Black Hispanic Asian American Indian Economically Disadvantaged LEP (ELL) Students with Disabilities

Florida Department of Education



Dr. Eric J. Smith, Commissioner
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