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Excellence
in Education

Florida Formula for Student Achievement:

Lessons for the Nation

A Nation at Risk

"The United States' failure to educate its students leave them unprepared to compete and threatens the country's ability to thrive in a global economy." Joel Klein and Condoleezza Rice, Chairs, *Council on Foreign Relations Report on US Education Reform and National Security, 2012.*

United States ranks 14th in reading, 25th in math, 17th in science compared to students in other industrialized countries on the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

Nearly 1/3 of students dropout from high school, 1/3 graduate with diplomas yet still need remediation , and only 1/3 graduate from high school prepared for college or career.

More than 25% of students fail to graduate from high school in four years, and for African American and Hispanic students, this number is approaching 40%.

Three-quarters of students who do achieve a high school diploma are not ready for college coursework and often need remedial classes at both the university and community college levels.

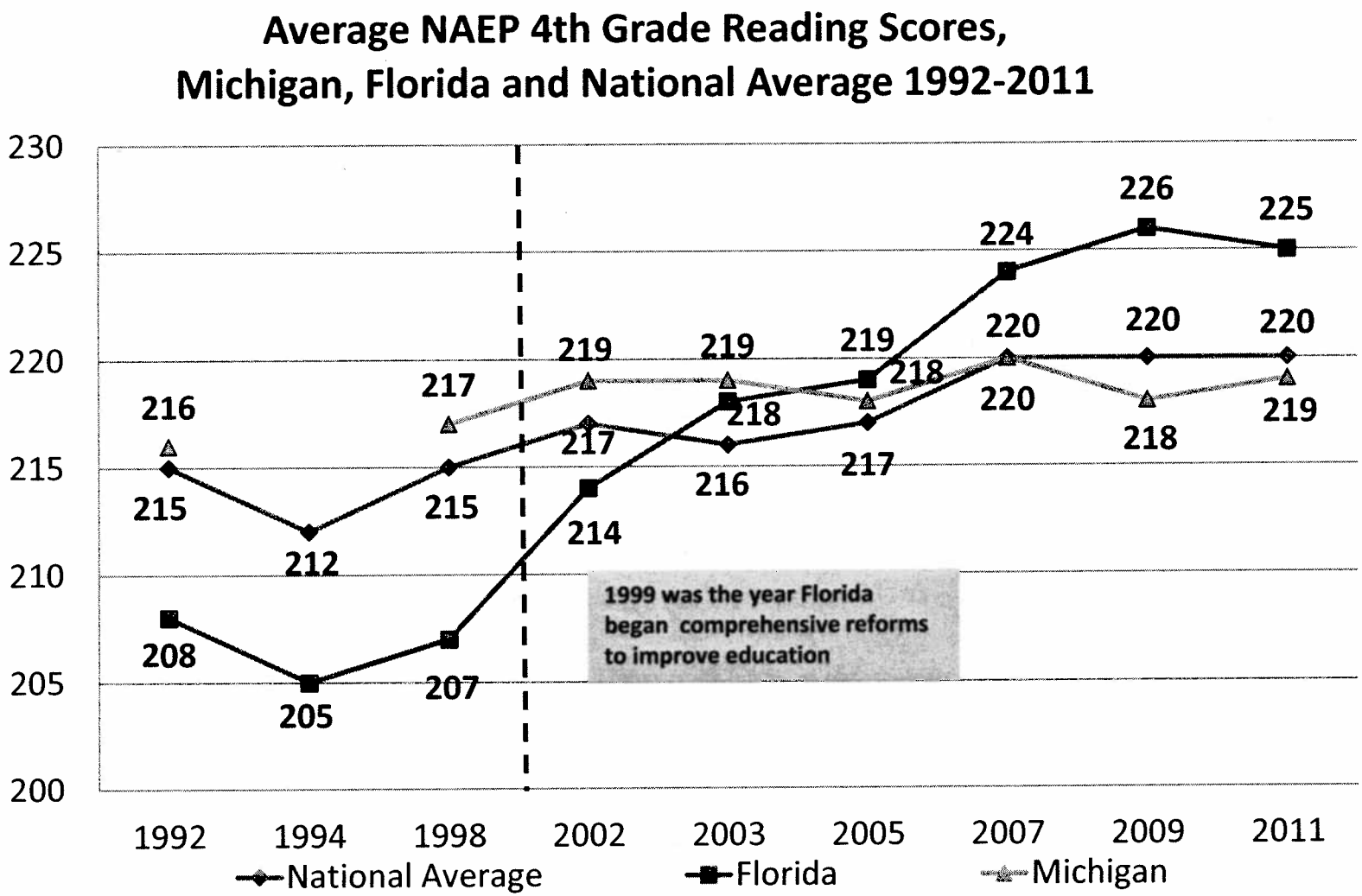
Florida Student Population

- 2.7 million students
- Majority minority student population – 56%
- Large population of English language learning students
- Majority of students are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch – 57%

Florida Pre-Reform

- Among the bottom on National test (NAEP)
- 8 consecutive years of decline in our graduation rates
- Wide achievement gaps in every area:
  - Affluent and Poor students: 30% points
  - White and Black students: 33% points
  - White and Hispanic students: 18% points

NAEP



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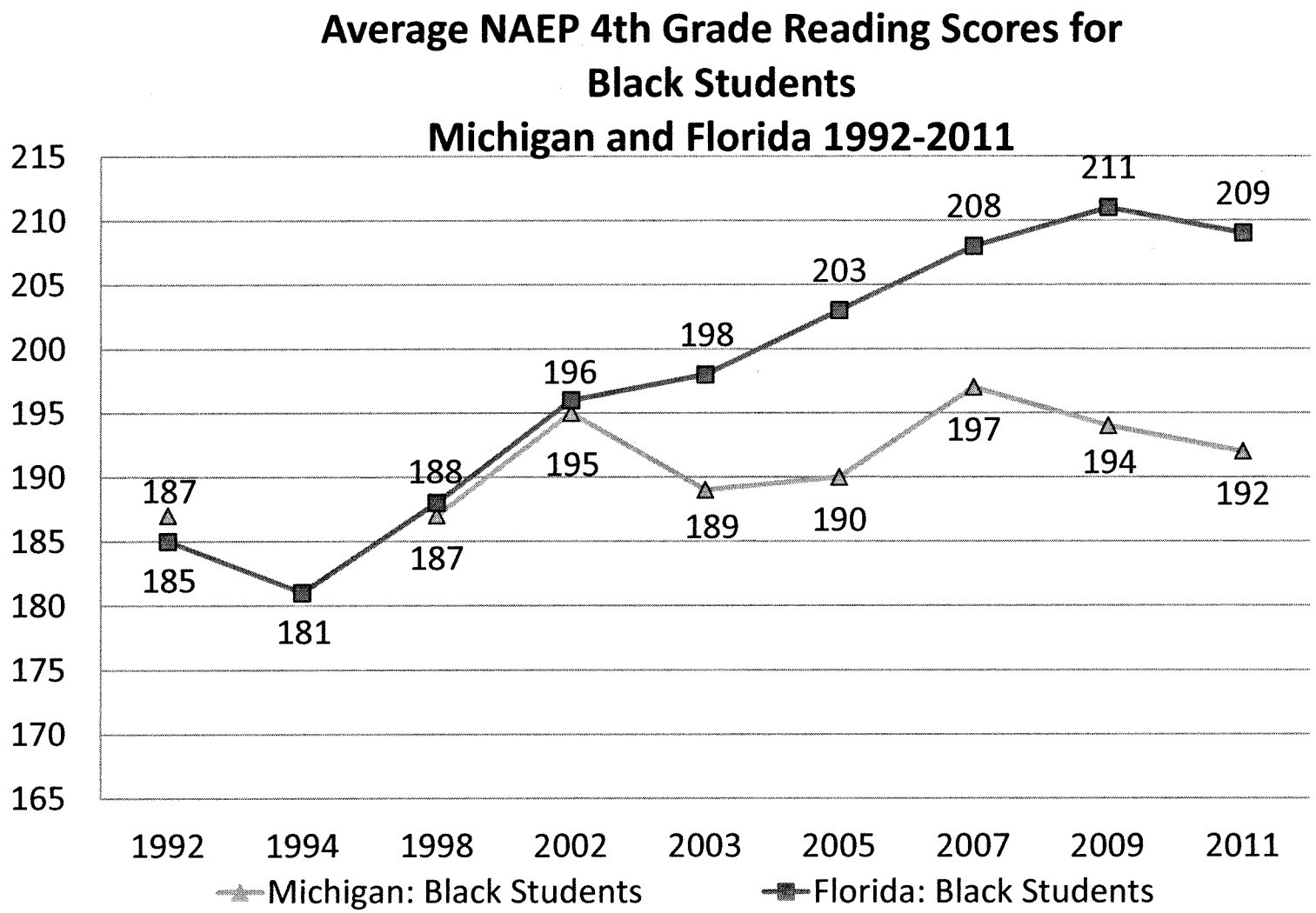
NAEP



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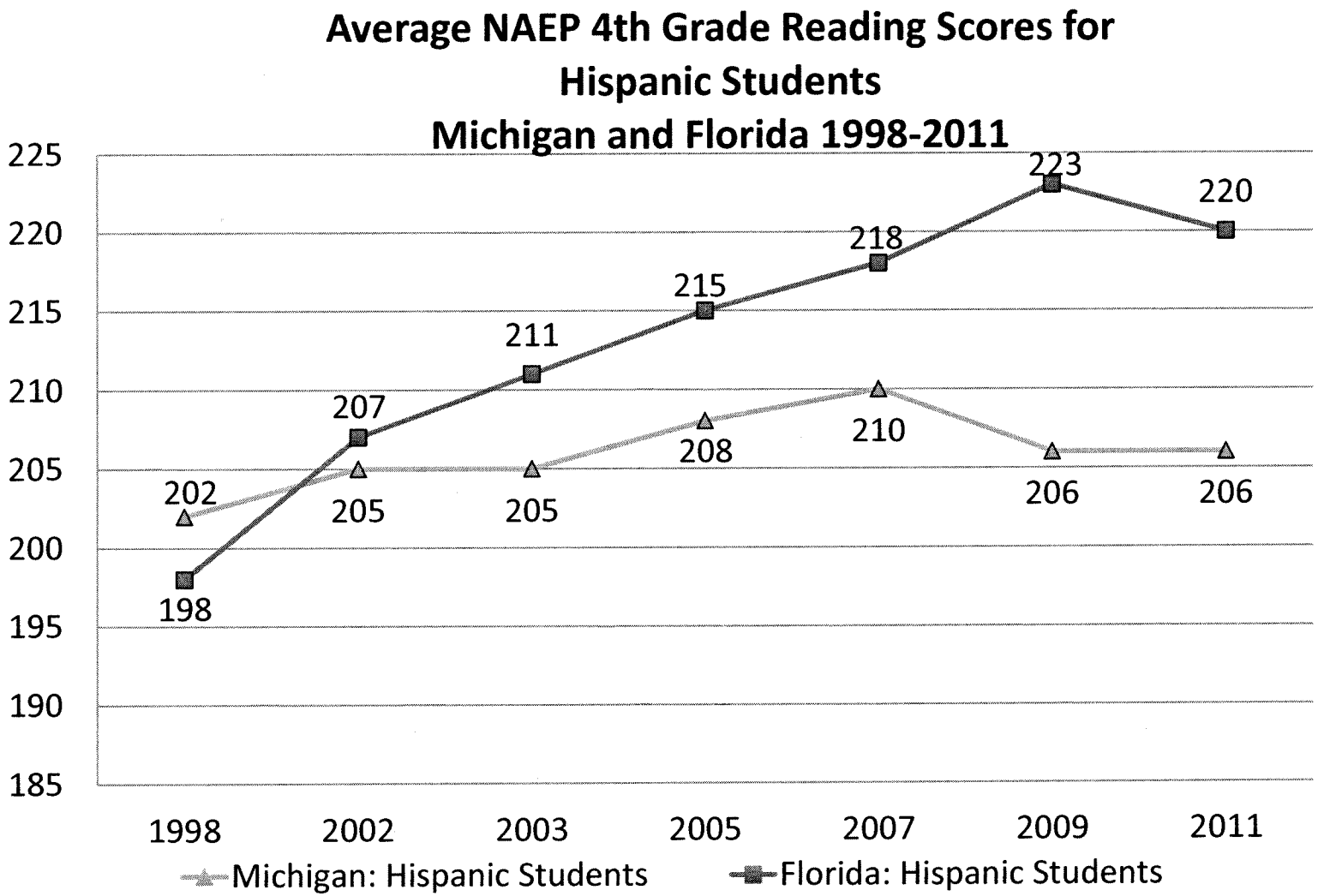

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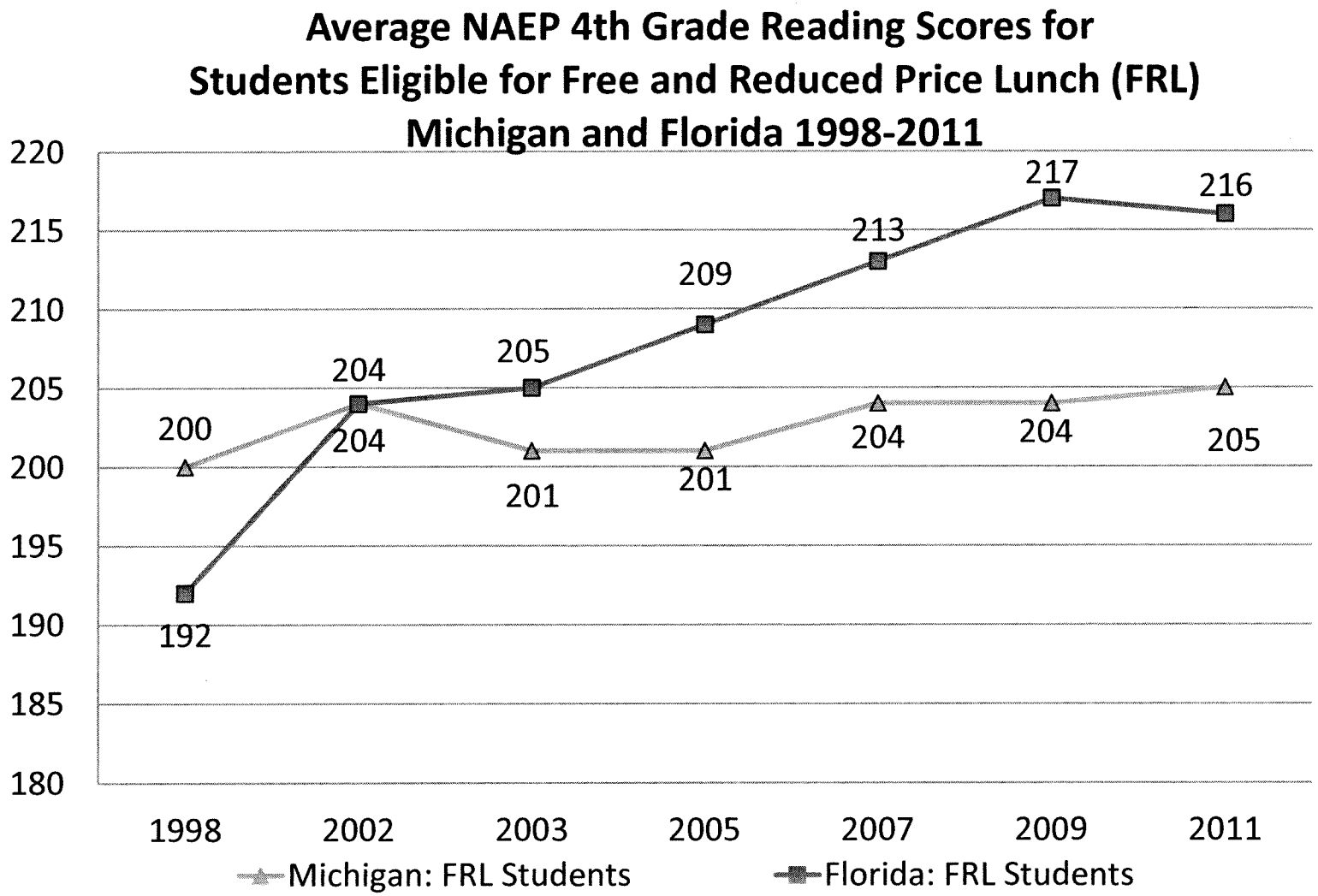
NAEP



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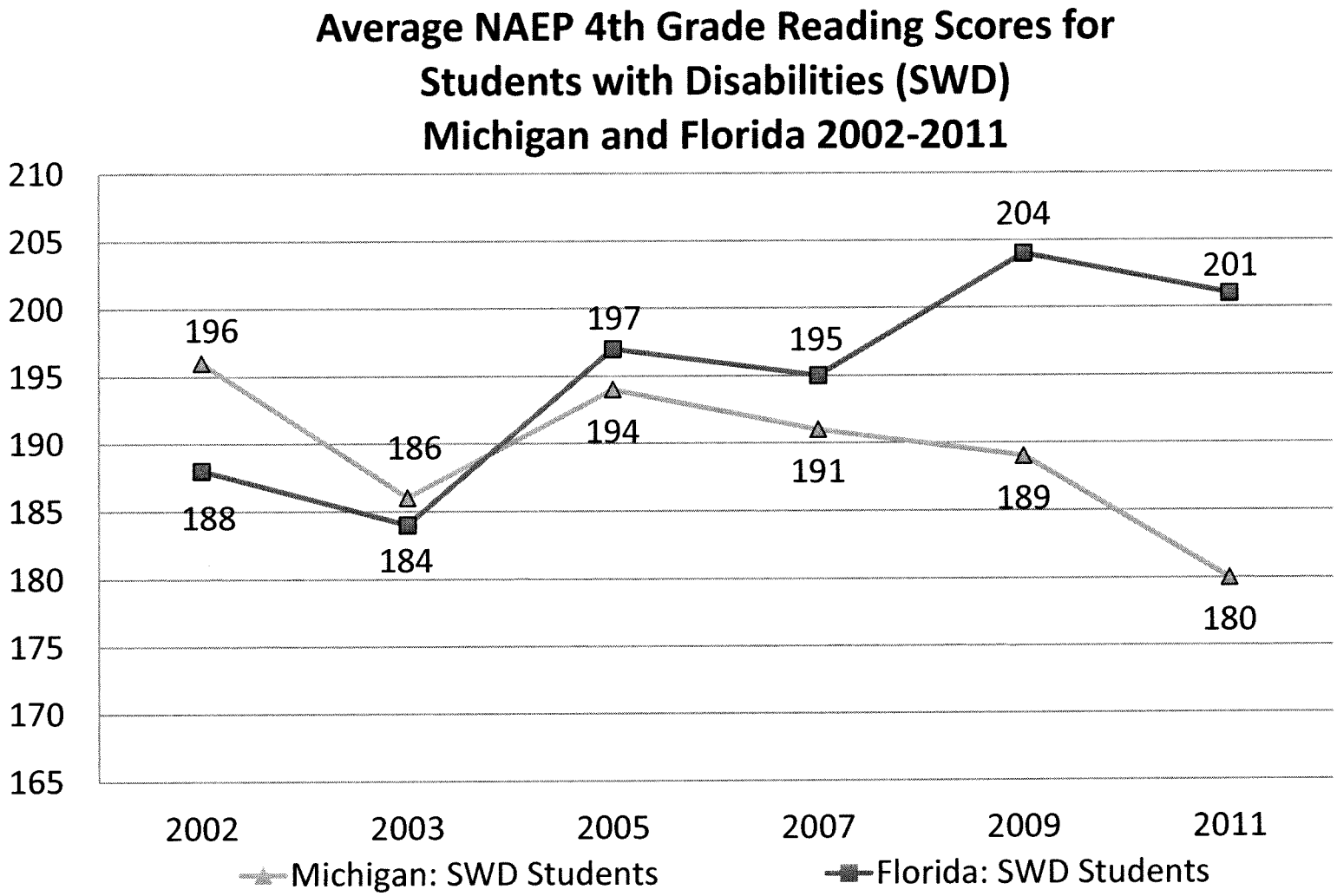
NAEP



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Florida Turn Around

- Graduation Rates – 14 consecutive years of increasing graduation rates, increased graduation rates by 22% since reforms began.

- Dropout Rates – declined by more than half.

- Leading on NAEP:
  - Florida is one of the **top 5** states in closing economic and racial achievement gaps.
  - **Leads** the nation in combined NAEP score gains for students with disabilities
  - Made the **third** largest gains for low-income students
  - Made the **fourth** largest gains for Black students
  - Florida's Hispanic students **outscore or match** the statewide average of all students in 21 states and DC

- America's Promise 2013 *Building a Grad Nation* Report states:
  - Florida has 93 fewer dropout factories and 185,652 fewer students attending dropout factories in 2011, compared with 2002.
  - This is 30 fewer dropout factories than 2010, with 55,066 fewer students attending high-dropout schools than the previous year.

Florida Formula for Student Achievement:

A Roadmap of Reform

Principles of Florida Reforms

- Measurement Matters
- Funding Drives Behavior
- Competition Works

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A-F School Grades

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

Measuring Student Learning

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

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

Testing expanded from 3 subjects in 3 grades to:

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

FCAT Achievement Levels

1	2	3	4	5
Insufficient	Below Grade Level	**Grade Level Proficient**	Above Grade Level	Advanced

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History of School Grades

1995: Florida began "grading" schools:

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

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

1999: Adopted Letter Scale of A to F

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School Grades: A - F

- **School Grade is based primarily on students' performance on the FCAT.**

- **Proficiency / Achievement**: 50% of the grade
  - Percent of all students performing on grade level

- **Progress / Learning Gains**: 50% of the grade
  - Percent of students learning a year's worth of knowledge, regardless of whether they are on grade level
  - Percent of lowest performing 25 percent students who are making a year's worth of progress

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

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Defining Progress

Progress is when a student:

- Increases an Achievement Level
  - Moving from Achievement Level 3 to 4
- Stays at the same Proficient Achievement Level – Achievement Levels 3, 4, or 5 – from one year to the next
  - Stays in Achievement Level 4 from 4th and 5th grades
- Moves up sufficiently within the lowest two Achievement Levels

FCAT Achievement Levels

1	2	3	4	5
Insufficient	Below Grade Level	**Grade Level Proficient**	Above Grade Level	Advanced

School Grades

Each category has 100 possible points (percent of students)

Reading	Math	Writing	Science
Proficiency	Proficiency	Proficiency	Proficiency
Growth All Students	Growth All Students		
Growth Lowest 25%	Growth Lowest 25%		

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Sunshine Elementary School

Reading	Math	Writing	Science
Proficiency 63%	Proficiency 59%	Proficiency 90%	Proficiency 51%
Growth All Students 66%	Growth All Students 68%	508 points = B	
Growth Lowest 25% 57%	Growth Lowest 25% 54%		

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School Grades

	A	B	C	D	F
Points*	ES: 525+ MS: 590+ HS: 1050+	ES: 495–524 MS: 560-589 HS: 990-1049	ES: 435–494 MS: 490-559 HS: 870-989	ES: 395–434 MS: 445-489 HS: 790-879	ES: <395 MS: <445 HS: <790
Percent of Eligible Students Tested	At least **95%**	At least 90%	At least 90%	At least 90%	Less than 90%
Adequate Progress with Lowest 25% in Reading and Math	Within one year	Within two years	Within two years		

*Beginning in 2012-13, if at least 75% of elementary, middle or high school statewide are As or Bs, the point scale will increase by 5% for that school type statewide the following year.

** Beginning in 2012-13, if fewer than 25% of students are reading on grade level, the school is automatically an F.

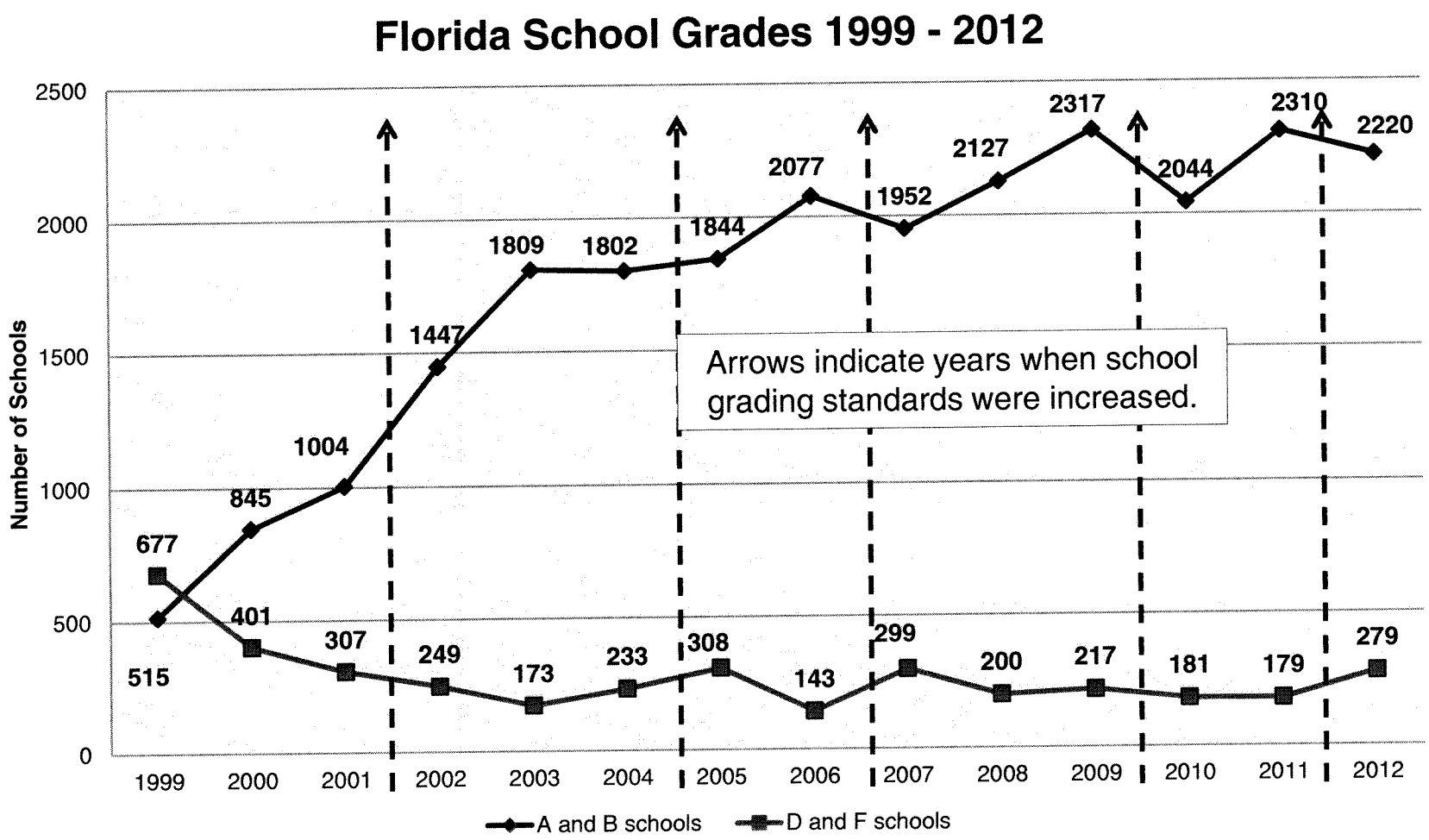
Grading Florida High Schools

Next Generation of Education Reform

Beginning in 2010, high school grades calculation also included:

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

Results of Florida A+ Plan



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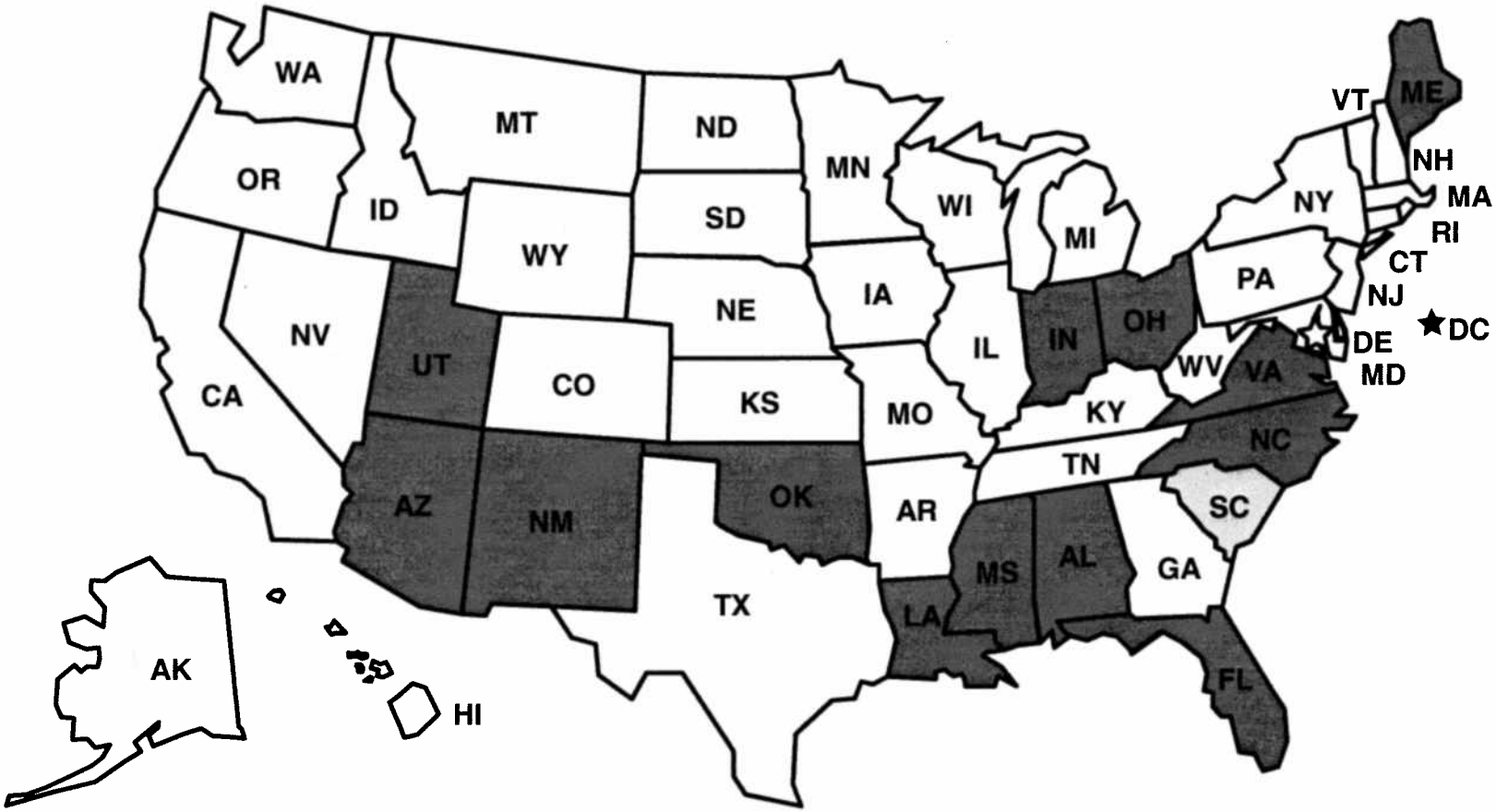
A-F Grading Across the Country



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Impact of an A – F School Grading System

- **Increased Transparency**
  - **A, B, C, D, F vs. . . .**

  - **Red**
  - **Orange**
  - **Yellow**
  - **Lime Green**
  - **Dark Green**

- **Increased Parent Involvement**
  - In Oklahoma, first year of issuing grades, 25,000 more hits on the A-F website than number of students in Oklahoma schools.

- **Command Focus on Learning**
  - Leon County (Tallahassee, FL) School board dedicated entire meeting on how to be the first district in the state with no "C" schools.

A-F Improves Student Achievement

- Research is clear:
  - Schools facing accountability under A-F change their instructional policies and practices in meaningful ways
  - Evidence supports that improvement in student achievement and test scores in low-performing schools are because of the pressure to improve

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3rd Grade Reading Guarantee

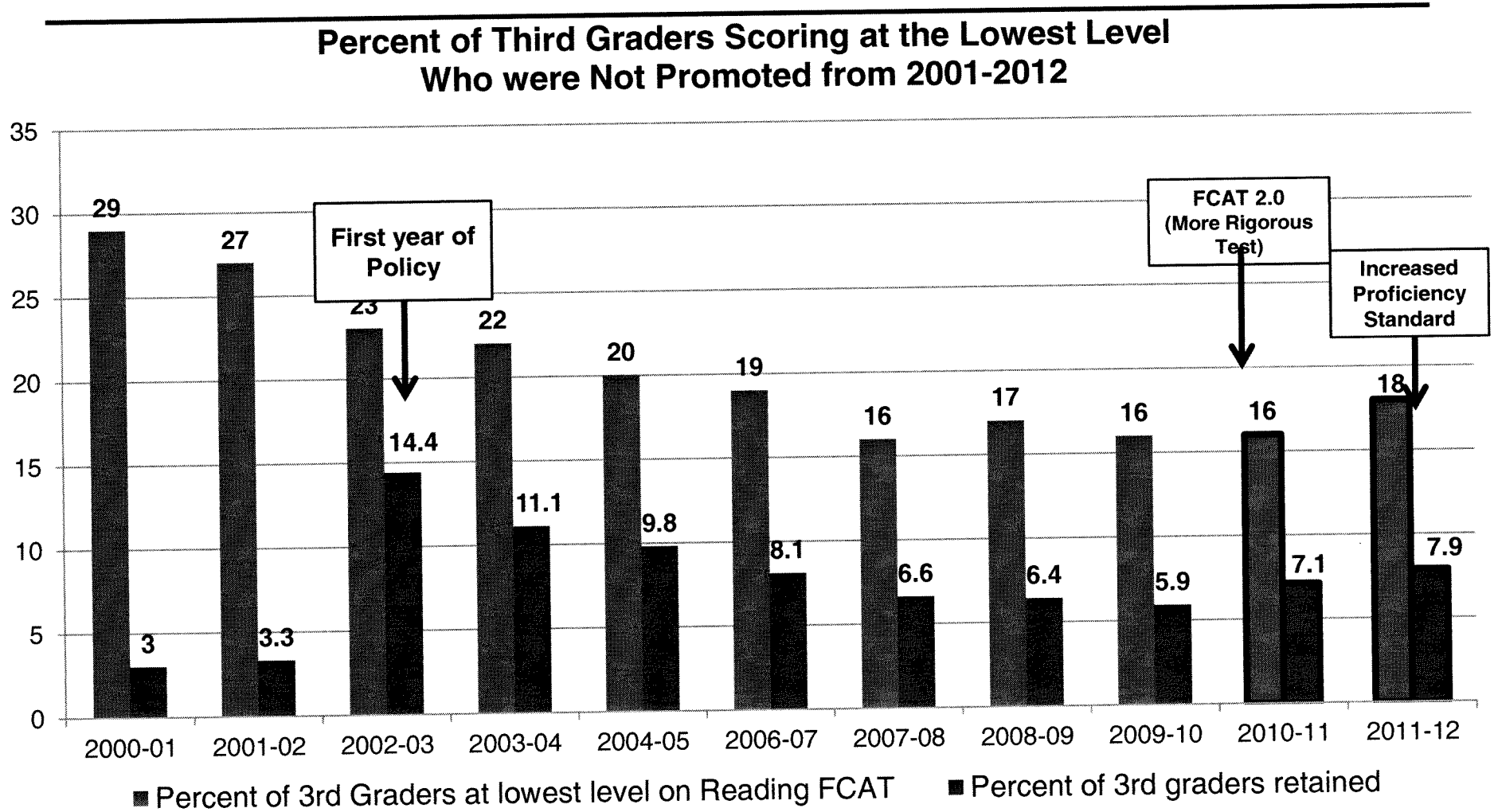
Move On When Reading

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

- Students are promoted to 4th grade:
  - Student meets successful reading score on the state assessment
  - Student meets successful reading score on alternative assessment
  - Student demonstrates through teacher created student portfolio of classroom assessments that the student demonstrated sufficient reading skills throughout the year

- No child is retained based upon one test, given on one day, but there is a clear "line" that must be met for promotion to 4th grade.

A Command Focus on Reading



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Short-Term Effect

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

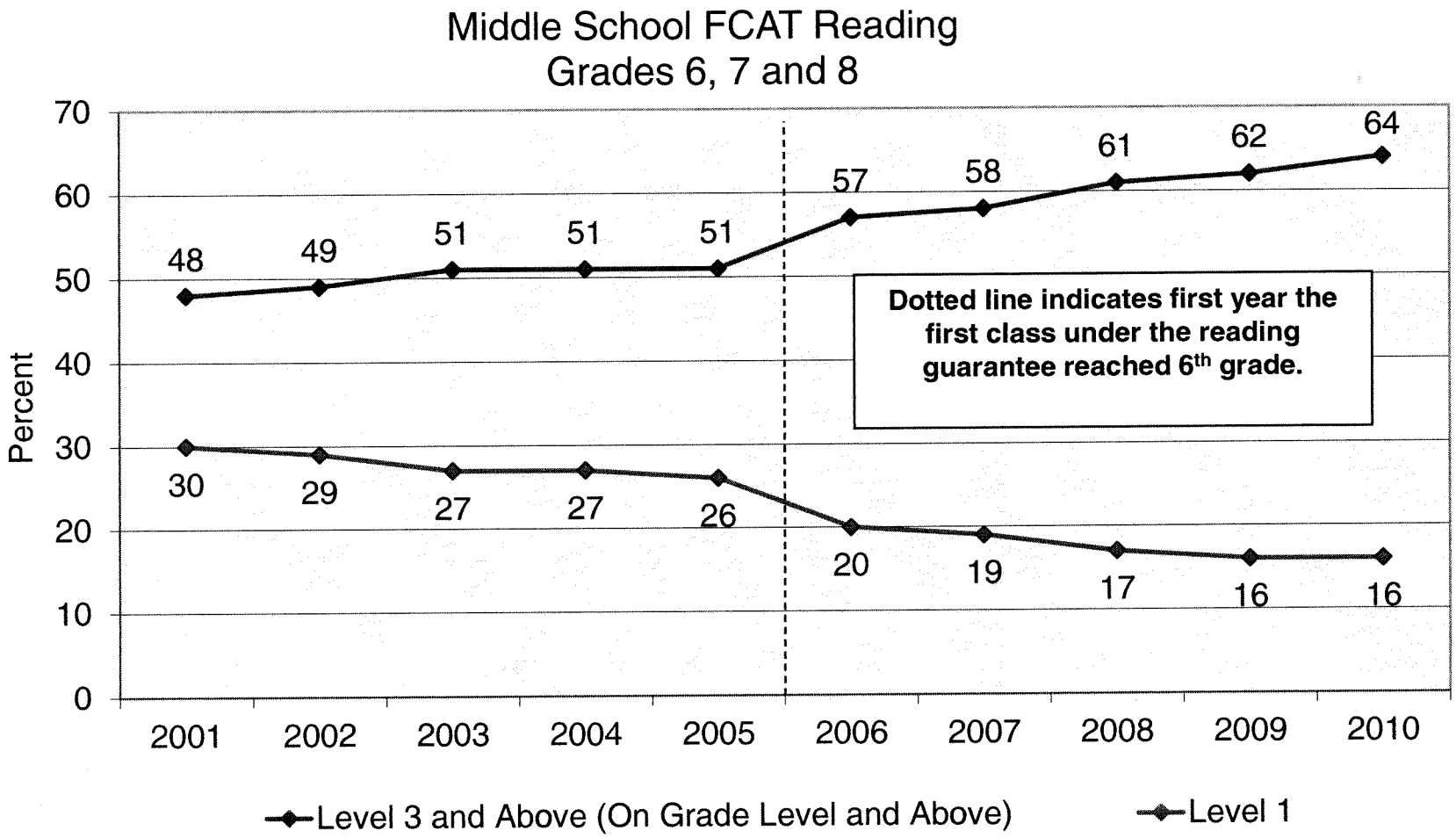
- Retained third graders made significant gains compared to socially promoted students.
- These gains actually grew substantially from the first to the second year after retention.
- Students who are socially promoted appear to fall farther behind over time, while retained third graders are able to catch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

Medium-Term Effect

~~A follow-up study by Marcus Winters examined the performance~~ of the retained and promoted students once they reached 7th grade:

- **Retained students were still outperforming promoted students in reading and math as late as 7th grade**
- **Similar positive effect on 5th grade science test**
- **Results similar on low-stakes standardized test**

Results of the Reading Guarantee in Middle School



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Funding Drives Behavior

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Reward Successful Schools: School Recognition Program

Schools receive $100 per student for improving a letter grade or earn an "A"

Stop Funding Failure: Supplemental Academic Instruction Categorical

Provides flexibility in funding to focus on intervening early and to the most needed priorities

Funding Drives Behavior

Equity in School Level Funding

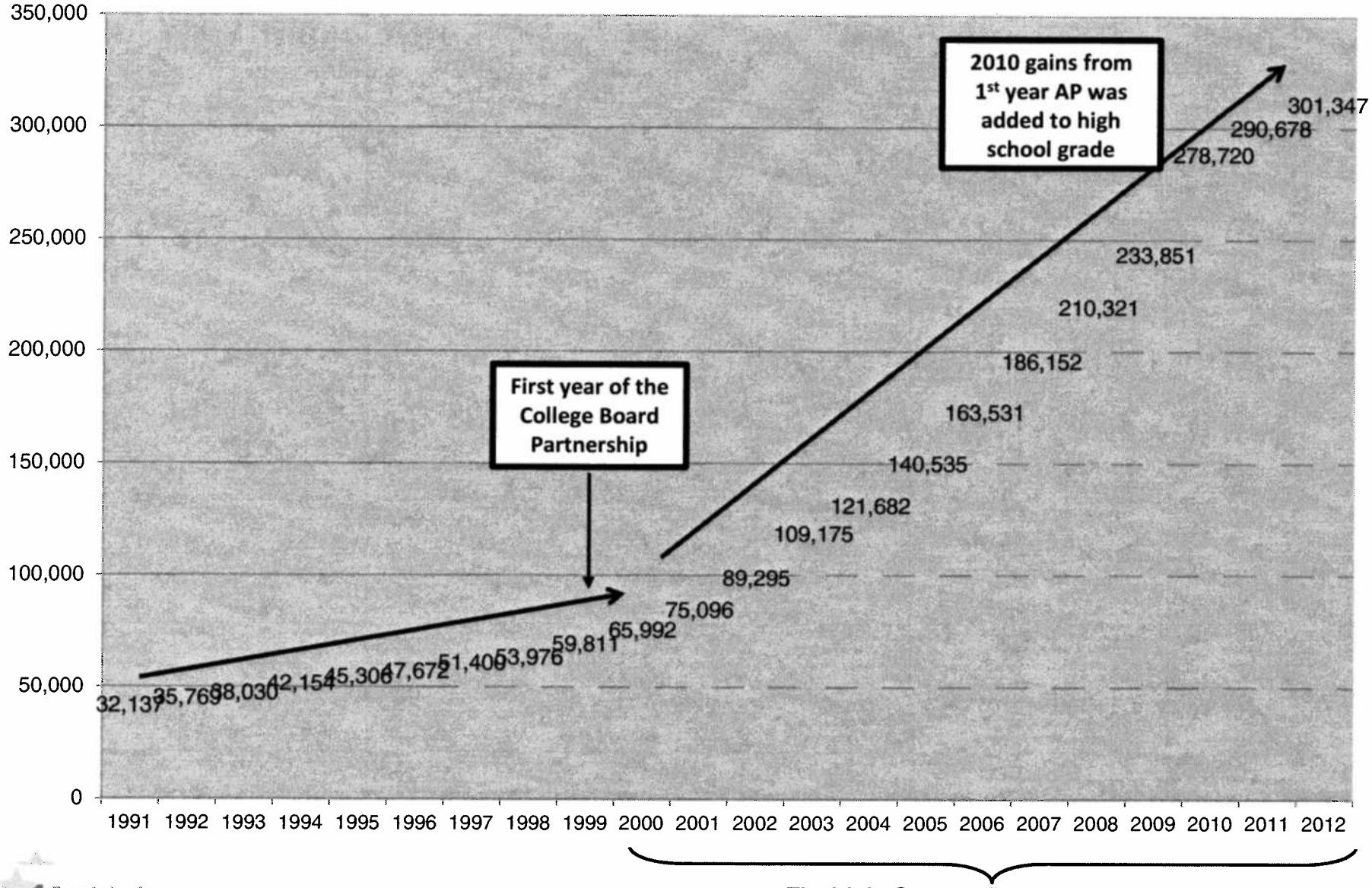
- Ensures all schools receive 85 percent of the funds they generate from the state funding formula.
- Incentivized principals to operate efficiently by allowing principals to keep any unspent funds to use at their discretion.

Incentivize Rigor

- Free PSAT or PLAN tests for all 10th Graders
- Professional Development for teachers to teach AP
- Teacher Bonuses - $50 for every passing student score with $500 for first passing score in D or F school

AP Exams Taken

by All of Florida's Students



Florida's College Board Partnership

(Free PSAT Tests, professional development and Teacher Bonus)

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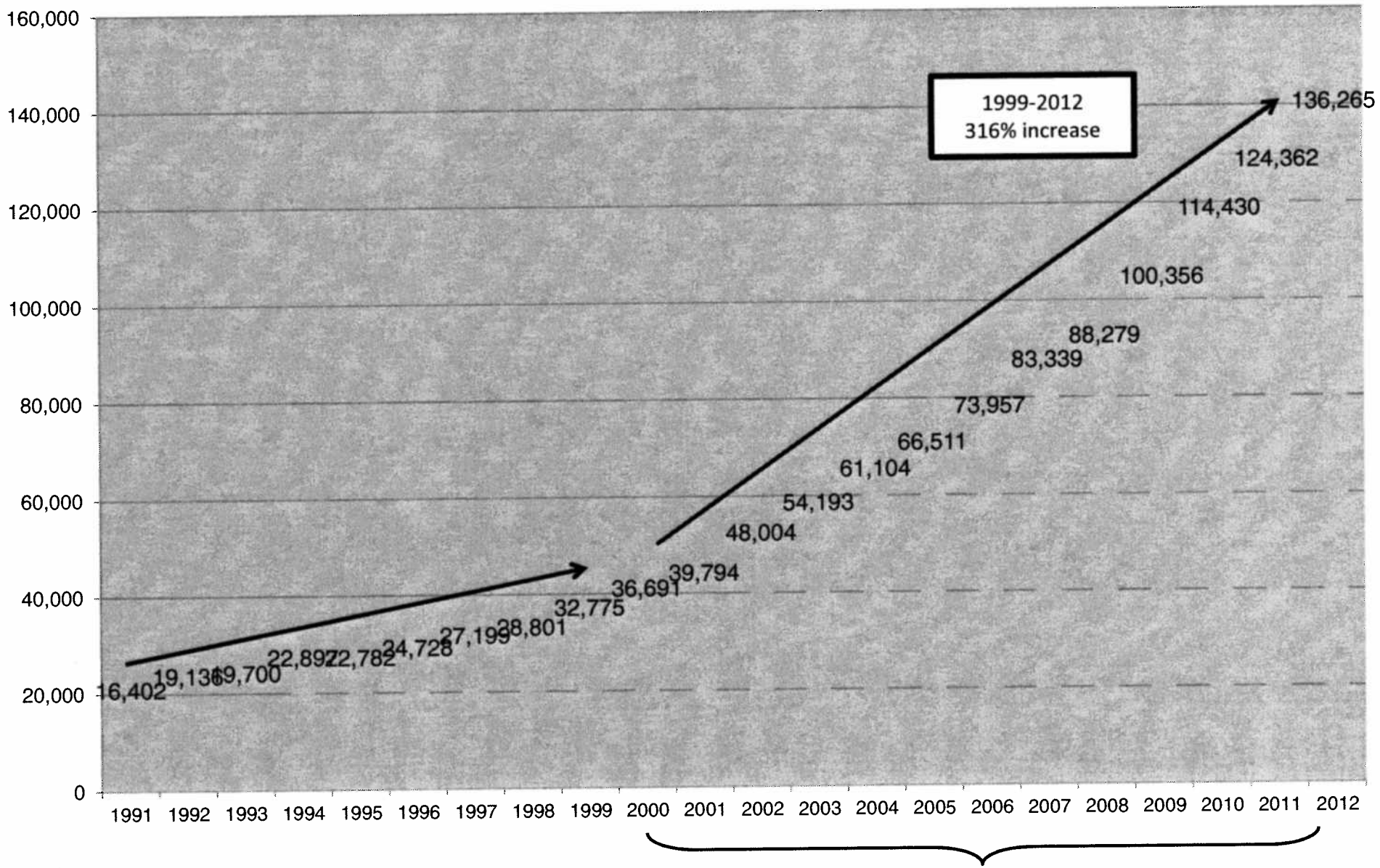
AP Passing Scores

by All of Florida's Students



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Effective Educators

Opportunities to Teach

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification:

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

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

Teacher Effectiveness Reforms

Passed in 2011

Teacher Evaluations – In 2013-14, 50% of an educator's evaluation will be based upon student progress.

Teacher Pay – In 2013-14, districts have to adopt salary schedules that:

- Provide raises for teachers who are rated effective or highly effective based upon the new student-centered evaluations
- Provide additional pay for teachers who teach in low-income or low-performing schools or who teach in a high need subject area

Teacher staffing

- Eliminated LIFO (last in, first out) policies.
- Principals have the authority to not accept the placement of any teacher in their school who is not rated effective or highly effective.
- Parental notification: Parents who are placed in classrooms with teachers who are evaluated as ineffective or needs improvement must be notified.

Teacher Tenure Reform

- Any new teacher hired after July 1, 2011 is on an annual contract.
- Existing tenured teachers retain their tenure; however, there is an expedited process for removing a tenured teacher if the evaluation is not effective or highly effective.

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Competition Works

School Choice

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

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