

CO-SPONSORS: Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair
Ms. Mary Blanco
Mr. Joseph S. Geller

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) recently released district-level results from the Spring 2026 administration of statewide assessments aligned to the Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards. The assessment results include the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) for English Language Arts (ELA) Reading in Grades 3–10 and Mathematics in Grades 3–8; B.E.S.T. Writing assessments for Grades 4–10; and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in Algebra 1 and Geometry. Additionally, results were also released for the Biology 1 Science EOC, Social Studies EOCs in Civics and U.S. History, and the Statewide Science Assessments for Grades 5 and 8. These results provide important insights into student academic performance and serve as a critical foundation for identifying areas of strength, addressing instructional gaps, and informing targeted strategies to accelerate student achievement.

For this agenda item, the results presented are limited to the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) Reading for Grades 6–8 and Mathematics for Grades 6–8, the Social Studies End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment in Civics, and the Statewide Science Assessment for Grade 8. The remaining EOC assessments are not included due to the small number of students tested, as these assessments are primarily associated with high school courses. The limited student participation resulted in data that was not statistically meaningful, with some results falling as low as the first percentile in Achievement Levels 1 and 2.

The middle grades represent a critical transition point in students' academic development, serving as a bridge between elementary and high school and playing a pivotal role in establishing the academic foundation, skills, and readiness necessary for success in more rigorous high school coursework. Ensuring sustained academic progress during these years is essential to positioning students for a successful transition to high school and increasing their likelihood of achieving long-term academic success.

The assessment results underscore the need for a focused and comprehensive approach to addressing instructional gaps across the middle grades, where student performance has historically demonstrated areas of decline on statewide assessments. At the same time, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) continues to demonstrate improvement in middle grades assessment performance, reflecting the impact of ongoing instructional initiatives and targeted academic support. Despite these positive gains, a significant number of students continue to perform below Achievement Level 3, indicating the need for sustained and intensified efforts to ensure that more students attain Achievement Levels 3 or 4 and demonstrate proficiency or higher. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) must prioritize the identification of specific standards and skill deficiencies, strengthen data-driven instructional practices, and implement targeted, evidence-based interventions to address identified learning gaps. Through ongoing progress

monitoring, collaborative professional learning, and strategic support for teachers and school leaders, the District must work to accelerate student achievement, strengthen academic readiness, and ensure that middle grade students enter high school prepared to meet the demands of advanced coursework and graduate college and career ready.

The following charts which were provided to the Board by the Superintendent in his memorandum dated June 26, 2026, offer an overview of middle grades assessment performance across the identified statewide assessment areas. The data highlight student achievement levels and performance trends across key subject areas, providing a clear representation of areas of progress as well as opportunities for continued academic growth. Collectively, these results serve as an important data point for identifying instructional priorities, targeting student support, and informing strategic actions designed to increase the percentage of students achieving proficient and above-proficient performance levels.

FAST ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) READING
Number Tested, Percentages of Students Scoring in Level 1 and Level 2

	Number Tested		Level 1		Level 2	
	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026
GRADE 6						
District	23,595	23,521	19	15	18	17
GRADE 7						
District	24,751	23,092	21	16	18	17
GRADE 8						
District	26,133	24,300	21	17	19	19

FAST MATHEMATICS
Number Tested, Percentages of Students Scoring in Level 1 and Level 2

	Number Tested		Level 1		Level 2	
	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026
GRADE 6						
District	23,569	23,115	14	12	22	22
GRADE 7						
District	15,503	13,623	25	21	21	22
GRADE 8						
District	18,353	16,821	17	13	24	22

STATEWIDE SCIENCE ASSESSMENT
Number Tested, Percentages of Students Scoring in Level 1 and Level 2

	Number Tested		Level 1		Level 2	
	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026
GRADE 8						
District	22,676	20,343	26	22	28	28

CIVICS END-OF-COURSE (EOC)
Number Tested, Percentages of Students Scoring in Level 1 and Level 2

	Number Tested		Level 1		Level 2	
	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026
GRADE 7						
District	24,511	22,834	13	10	13	11
GRADE 8						
District	191	145	31	22	24	23

While M-DCPS continues to demonstrate academic improvement across statewide assessments, a substantial percentage of middle grade students continue to perform at achievement Levels 1 and 2. These students represent a critical area of focus for the District and require targeted, differentiated, and evidence-based instructional support. By identifying and addressing specific learning gaps, strengthening interventions, and closely monitoring student progress, M-DCPS can accelerate academic growth and increase the number of students who attain achievement Levels 3 and 4. Ensuring that middle grade students currently performing below proficiency receive timely and strategic support is essential to advancing academic success and strengthening their readiness for future coursework.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR
MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, directs the Superintendent of Schools to:

1. conduct a comprehensive review of the essential components of high-quality middle grades instruction, including current practices and systems that support middle grades teaching and learning, the implementation of state academic standards, the adoption and effective use of high-quality instructional materials, professional learning and ongoing support for educators, evidence-based classroom instructional practices, the strategic use of assessment data to inform and strengthen instruction, pre-service preparation and professional development for middle grades teachers, and program delivery models to improve student achievement and academic outcomes;
2. identify the District's current strengths, instructional and programmatic gaps, and opportunities for improvement, and recommend evidence-based strategies, measurable outcomes, implementation timelines, and projected budget enhancements, as appropriate, to strengthen middle grades instruction and accelerate student achievement across the District;
3. develop findings and recommendations that establish a strategic framework for strengthening the District's middle grades instructional program, with a focus on ensuring that every student has equitable access to rigorous, engaging, high-quality learning experiences that address identified learning gaps, promote sustained academic growth, and prepare students for a successful transition to high school, postsecondary education, and future college and career opportunities; and
4. present the comprehensive report, including findings, recommendations, implementation strategies, timelines, and resource considerations, to the School Board at the Academics, Innovation, Evaluation & Technology Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 9, 2026.