

WITH STUDENTS AS TOP PRIORITY, FLORIDA CHOOSES REPLACEMENT FOR FCAT
~ *Florida's new assessment tool will assess student progress on new Florida Standards* ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Continuing historic steps to ensure all Florida children have the opportunity to succeed, Florida Department of Education Commissioner Pam Stewart today announced a new test has been selected to replace the FCAT 2.0 exams beginning with the 2014-15 school year.

“The new assessment will measure each child’s progress and achievement on the Florida Standards, which were developed with an unprecedented amount of public input,” said Stewart. “This assessment supports our new standards, which emphasize flexibility for teachers to make their own decisions in classrooms while preparing our students to analyze and think.”

“The selection of our new assessment tool is a critical step forward. Florida students will be assessed on their knowledge of the Florida Standards, which will prepare them for success in college, careers and in life,” said State Board of Education Chairman Gary Chartrand.

In August 2013, Governor Rick Scott convened the state’s top education leaders and bipartisan stakeholders to discuss the sustainability and transparency of the state’s accountability system in a three-day accountability summit.

Using input from the summit, Governor Scott issued Executive Order 13-276, which initiated Florida’s departure from the national PARCC consortium as its fiscal agent, to ensure that the state would be able to procure a test specifically designed for Florida’s needs without federal intervention.

Governor Scott also set out eight goals for the new assessment to ensure the best outcome for Florida students. Among those eight objectives were an emphasis on prompt reports of results, no significant change in testing time for students, no significant increase in costs of the assessments and an assurance that testing dates be as close as possible to the end of the school year to maximize learning opportunities. This assessment meets those goals.

Governor Scott also requested additional public comments about the standards, which resulted in public hearings around the state and thousands of comments from Floridians. In February 2014, the State Board of Education approved changes to the standards that reflected the input. The new Florida Standards for mathematics and English language arts stress a broader approach for student learning, including an increased emphasis on analytical thinking. With the new and more rigorous standards, a new assessment was needed to measure student progress.

The Invitation to Negotiate was posted for public review in October 2013 and proposals were received in December. An evaluation team reviewed five proposals and narrowed the choice to three groups. Subsequently, a negotiation team unanimously recommended the not-for-profit American Institutes for Research (AIR) to Commissioner Stewart, who announced her selection of AIR today.

For more information about the new assessment and its benefits for Florida students, please see the attachment.