

P.O. Box 341348  
6344 Nicholas Drive  
Columbus, OH 43234-1348  
1.877.PASSING (727-7464)  
www.passthefcats.com



**A newsletter to keep Florida teachers and school administrators up-to-date on current FCAT issues**



## Show What You Know® Publishing Newsletter

THE LEADING PUBLISHER OF K-12 TEST-PREPARATION MATERIALS

FALL 2007 ISSUE

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Reading First awards Florida \$300 million .... 1

Flawed FCAT tests to be investigated, rescored ..... 1

Educational funding sources ..... 2

Flash Cards bring some glitz, glam into classrooms ..... 2

Upcoming conferences ..... 2

Testing schedule ..... 2

Testing tidbits ..... 2

## Reading First awards Florida \$300 million

*Christine Filippetti*  
*Show What You Know® on the FCAT Editor*

Just Read, Florida! was awarded \$300 million throughout a six-year period by the Reading First national program.

During the 2007–2008 school year, 45 districts and 583 schools will participate in the Reading First grant. This will have an effect on approximately 16,114 teachers and 264,254 students.

Reading First funding will allow these schools to increase the quality of instruction through research-based instructional strategies, hire reading coaches, provide professional development, and improve classroom libraries

for grades K–3.

Reading First is a nationwide initiative dedicated to helping states and local school districts eliminate the reading deficit by establishing comprehensive reading instruction in Kindergarten through grade 3. This program provides assistance to states and school districts to establish scientific-based reading programs for students.

Reading First in Florida is meant to increase the percentage of students reading at grade level, and decrease the percentage of students with reading difficulties.

## Flawed FCAT tests to be investigated, rescored

The Florida Senate will investigate testing irregularities after the Department of Education admitted record-high 2006 reading scores on some 200,000 third-grade tests were inflated despite several rechecks. Some are calling for a limit on the test's use, but for now, the department will use independent auditors to review every test starting in 2008.

According to *The St. Petersburg Times*, Education Commissioner Jeanine Blomberg, who took over after John Winn resigned in February, said last year's test was not properly "equated." The result: inflated scores that may have warped last year's school grades and allowed some students to skate into fourth grade with poor reading skills. More than 200,000 tests will be rescored.

Florida's former Education Commissioner John Winn said he was so concerned about last year's record spike in FCAT scores that he ordered three groups — an internal group of

DOE officials; a group at Harcourt Assessment; and a technical advisory group — to "triple check" the numbers. After further review, Winn says, he was told that no problems were found.

He said context may also explain why last year's review didn't turn up anything — and this year's did. Winn said two years' worth of squirrely numbers made it clear there was a problem, and this time, the DOE didn't stop digging until it found an explanation.

Blomberg said in the article that an independent panel of experts will recommend ways to audit future FCAT tests so similar glitches do not happen again. Despite the rescoring, last year's school grades will not be readjusted, and last year's third-graders will not be at risk of retention.

See more details at:

[http://www.sptimes.com/2007/05/25/State/FCA\\_T\\_blunder\\_overlook.shtml](http://www.sptimes.com/2007/05/25/State/FCA_T_blunder_overlook.shtml)

# Flash Cards bring some TV glitz, glam into classrooms

Courtney Huckabay  
Show What You Know® Publishing

The nationally broadcast “Are You Smarter Than a 5<sup>th</sup> Grader?” Fox Broadcasting Company’s TV show might be a flashy way to integrate education into entertainment, but the Show What You Know® Publishing Flash Cards are bringing it into the classroom.

Teachers can play their own version of the game show using Show What You Know® Publishing Flash Cards for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grades. Whether it’s just a few minutes before that last bell rings, or it’s time to brush up on the previous grade’s standards, the Flash Cards provide a fun way to study for the FCAT without being intimidating.

“The students will gain confidence in their knowledge and their ability to answer test questions correctly by using the Show What You Know® Flash Cards,” Show What You Know® Publishing President Cindi Englefield



said. Just embody the Jeff Foxworthy stage presence and start with a deck of Flash Cards from one grade level

below the students’ current standing – and you’re off! Because the Flash Cards all are specifically aligned with the Sunshine State Standards, students will be preparing for the

test without even realizing it. The affordability of the Flash Cards allows for playing the game like the actual TV show as well – with several grade-level decks for students to pick from a previous year’s testing knowledge. One deck, containing more than 100 cards, is a great value at only

\$14.95.

Englefield agreed, “The students have fun with this activity and don’t even realize that they are learning the skills needed to succeed on the FCAT.”

If the show’s top fifth-grade students Alana, Jacob, Kyle, Marki, and Spencer can contend with adult Marines, teachers, engineers and attorneys, surely students everywhere can face the FCAT with all the confidence of a game-show contestant. Be sure to check out a sample Flash Card inside the new Fall Catalog, or contact Show What You Know® Publishing for a free sample at 1.877.PASSING. Find even more ways to incorporate Flash Cards into your curriculum at

<http://www.eapublishing.com/PDF/NationalFlashCardArticle.pdf>.



## Educational Funding Sources

The Show What You Know® test-prep materials comply with Federal requirements, so put your grant money to good use!

- \$ Title I  
*Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged/Improving Basic Programs Reading First Comprehensive School Reform*
- \$ Title II  
*Improving Teacher Quality*
- \$ Title IV  
*21st Century Community Learning Centers*
- \$ Title V  
*Innovative Programs*
- \$ Title VI  
*Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)*
- \$ GEAR UP  
*Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*
- \$ HSTW & MMGW  
*High Schools That Work & Making Middle Grades Work*
- \$ Charter Schools Program

## “Testing Tidbits”

*Book addresses boy writers, gives insight into their testing habits*

### TIDBIT:

Writing test scores indicate that boys have fallen far behind girls across the grades. In general, boys don’t enjoy writing as much as girls. Developing sensitivity to the unique facets of boy writers and the worlds in which they think will help teachers better address the needs of all their students.

### ACTION:

Handwriting can hamstring boy writers; drawing might help them get started and engaged.

*Boy Writers: Reclaiming Their Voices*  
Ralph Fletcher

## Testing Dates

**September 24–28**  
Grades 11–adult  
Reading & Mathematics  
New students/retakes

**October 1–5**  
Grades 11–adult  
Reading & Mathematics  
New students/retakes

**February 12–15**  
Grades 4, 8, & 10  
Writing+

**March 11–24**  
Grades 3–10  
Reading & Mathematics  
Grades 5, 8, & 11  
Science  
Grades 11–adult  
Reading & Mathematics  
New students/retakes

## Upcoming Conference & Exhibit

Please stop by our booth to review our complete line of test-preparation materials and get a free Flash Card sample!

**Florida Department of Education K-12**  
Orlando, Booth #307  
October 2-5