



RESEARCH CAPSULE

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2006-07 Overview of M-DCPS Academic Performance

At A Glance

Although higher levels of performance were observed at varying grade levels, depending on the specific FCAT subtest administered, the district did not achieve the across the board increases realized in prior years. The district's Black and Hispanic students, as well as Zone school students, made some progress in closing the achievement gap. This Information Capsule answers 10 of the most frequently asked questions regarding M-DCPS' academic performance during the 2006-07 school year.

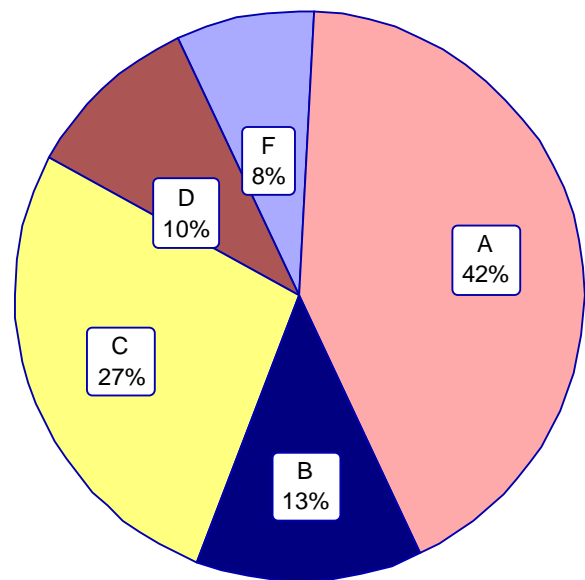
1. What performance grade did M-DCPS receive?

The state's performance grading system for school districts awards points for high scores on the FCAT and for students' annual learning gains. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) earned 486 points, or a grade of "C," down from a "B" in both 2005 and 2006.

2. What grades did the district's schools receive?

Three hundred thirty-four M-DCPS schools, including charter schools, received a 2007 performance grade. Forty-two percent of schools earned an "A" and 8 percent of schools earned an "F." Figure 1 shows the proportion of grades assigned to M-DCPS schools.

Figure 1
Proportion of Grades Assigned to M-DCPS in 2007



Excludes schools that received a performance grade of "Incomplete."

3. How did M-DCPS' performance in 2007 compare to its performance in 2006?

From 2006 to 2007, the percent of schools receiving a grade of "A" or "B" decreased by 11 percent and 5 percent, respectively. The percent of schools receiving a grade of "C" or "D" each increased by 6 percent. The percent of schools graded as "F" increased by 7 percent. Of the 322 schools with performance grades in both 2006 and 2007, 8 percent (27 schools) improved their performance grade; 49 percent (159 schools) maintained their grade; and 42 percent (136 schools) decreased their grade.

4. How did the state's performance grading system change in 2007 and what impact did these changes have on M-DCPS' performance grades?

For the first time in 2007, the state included two new components in the calculation of school grades: the percent of students meeting high standards in science and the percent of the lowest 25 percent of students making learning gains in mathematics.

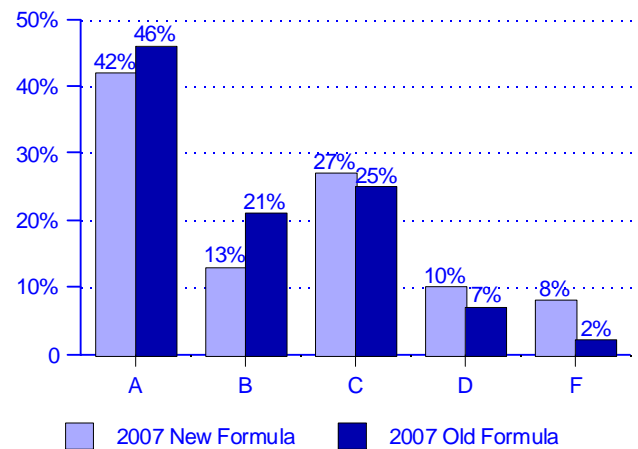
Since changes were made to the method in which the state computed school performance grades, analyses were conducted to calculate the grades M-DCPS and its schools would have received under the state's 2006 grading system. These analyses were conducted in an effort to provide a true comparison between the district's performance in 2006 and 2007.

Comparison of 2007 performance grades using new and old formulas. If performance grades had been calculated using the 2006 formula, M-DCPS would have earned a grade of "B."

Figure 2 displays the percent of schools receiving each performance grade in 2007 and the percent of schools that would have received each grade if they had been calculated using the 2006 formula.

As can be seen in Figure 2, only 2 percent of M-DCPS schools (6 schools), instead of 8 percent (26 schools), would have received a

Figure 2
Comparison of Percent of M-DCPS Schools Receiving Each 2007 Performance Grade, Using New and Old Formulas*



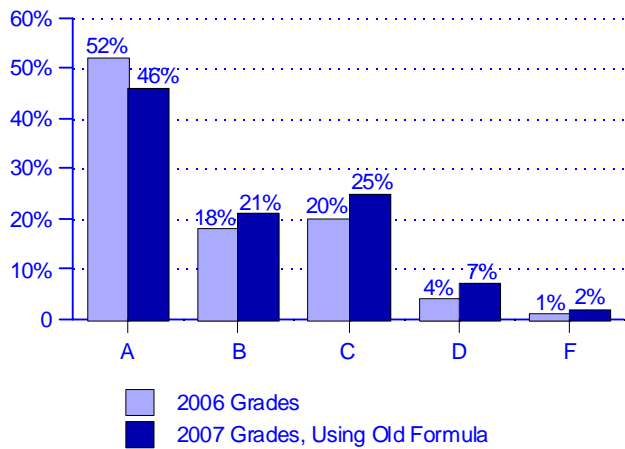
*Calculations are based on the 334 M-DCPS schools receiving a school performance grade and do not include schools that received an "incomplete."

grade of "F" if the 2006 formula for calculating school grades had been applied. Conversely, 46 percent of the district's schools (152 schools), instead of 42 percent (141 schools), would have received a grade of "A."

Examination of the performance grades indicated that the addition of the FCAT Science score was responsible for a substantial amount of the decrease in M-DCPS' performance. Only 34 percent of M-DCPS students met the state's criteria for high standards in science. In contrast, 66 percent of the district's students in the lowest 25 percent made learning gains in mathematics.

Comparison of 2007 performance grades: 2006 versus 2007 using old formula. Although M-DCPS' performance would not have declined as dramatically if school grades had been computed using last year's formula, decreases would still have been evident. The district would have earned 386 points in 2007, compared to 403 points in 2006. As can be seen in Figure 3, the percent of schools receiving a grade of "A" would still have decreased from 2006 to 2007 and the percent of schools receiving a grade of "B," "C," "D," or "F" would have increased.

Figure 3
Percent of M-DCPS Schools Earning Each Performance Grade, 2006 Compared to 2007 (Calculated With Old Formula)

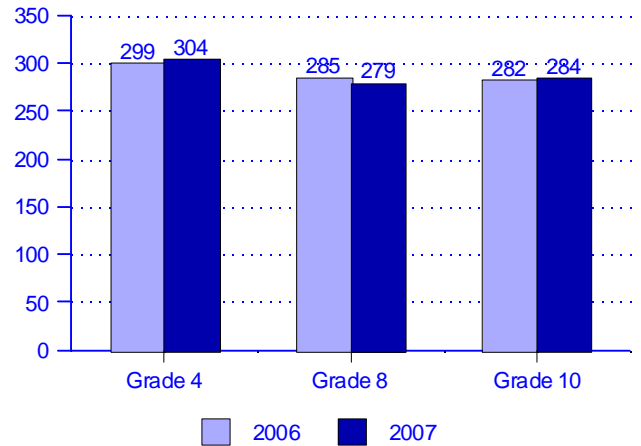


5. **How did M-DCPS students perform on the FCAT Writing+?**

The 2007 FCAT Writing+, administered at grades 4, 8, and 10, included both essay and multiple-choice sections. Whole-test scale scores (ranging from 100 to 500), representing students' performance on both portions of the assessment, and separate subscores for the essay portion of the test (ranging from 1 to 6) were reported. The essay score is the score the Florida Department of Education has reported for all previous administrations of the FCAT Writing. In addition, achievement levels for the FCAT Writing+, based on whole-test scores, were reported for the first time in 2007.

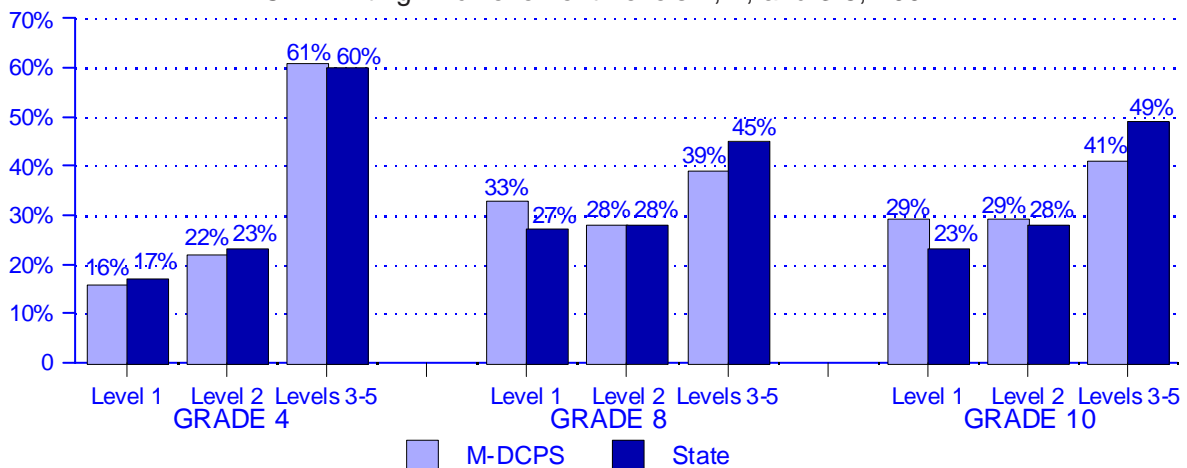
Whole-Test Scores. Figure 4 shows the district's average whole-test scale scores in 2006 and 2007 for each grade level tested. M-DCPS students' scores increased at grades 4 and 10, but decreased at grade 8. The district's average score was higher than the average score of students statewide at grade 4.

Figure 4
M-DCPS FCAT Writing+ Average Whole-Test Scale Scores, 2006 and 2007



Achievement Levels. The state released FCAT Writing+ achievement levels for the first time in 2007. Figure 5 presents a comparison of the percent of the students in the district and state scoring at achievement levels 1, 2, and 3-5. A higher percent of the district's grade 4 students scored at achievement levels 3-5 than students statewide.

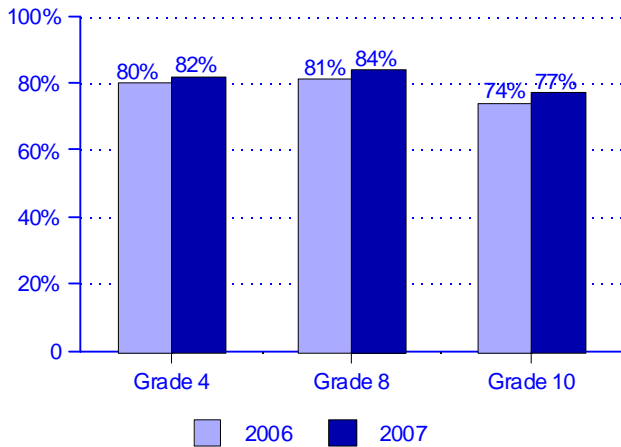
Figure 5
Percent of M-DCPS Students and Students Statewide Scoring at FCAT Writing+ Achievement Levels 1, 2, and 3-5, 2007



Essay Subscores. Analysis of the 2006 and 2007 essay subscores revealed that the district's combined average score remained stable at grade 4 and increased at grades 8 and 10. The district's 2007 combined average score matched the state average at each of the grade levels tested.

As can be seen in Figure 6, the percent of students scoring 3.5 and above on the essay portion of the FCAT Writing+ increased at all three grade levels tested. At grade 4, the percent of M-DCPS students scoring 3.5 and above exceeded the percent of students scoring 3.5 and above statewide (82 percent and 78 percent, respectively).

Figure 6
M-DCPS FCAT Writing+ Essay Subscores, Percent Scoring 3.5 and Above, 2006 and 2007



In summary, average whole-test scores, which represent both the multiple-choice and essay portions of the FCAT Writing+, increased at grades 4 and 10, but decreased at grade 8. The percent of students scoring 3.5 and above on the essay portion of the FCAT Writing+ increased at all three grade levels tested.

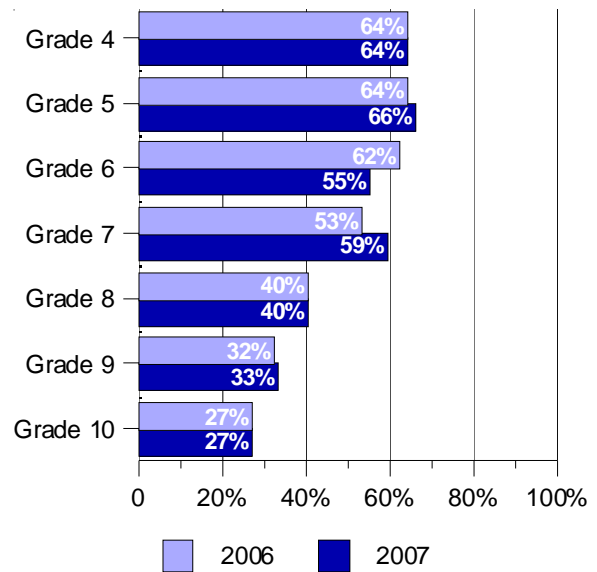
6. How did M-DCPS students perform on the FCAT SSS Reading?

The FCAT SSS Reading is administered to all students at grades 3-10. The Florida Department of Education identified an error in the scores reported for the 2006 Grade 3 FCAT SSS Reading. Therefore, comparisons between the 2006 and 2007 scores on the FCAT SSS Reading for grade 3 have been omitted from this section of the report.

The majority of the district's students are now scoring at the higher achievement levels at grades 4 through 7. As can be seen in Figure 7, the percent of students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 (the highest levels) increased at three of the seven grade levels.

The district's scoring patterns were similar to those of students statewide. M-DCPS had a lower percent of students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 than students statewide across all grade levels; however, the increase in the percent of the district's grade 7 students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 was triple that of students statewide (+6 percent and +2 percent, respectively).

Figure 7
M-DCPS FCAT SSS Reading: Percent Scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5, 2006 and 2007



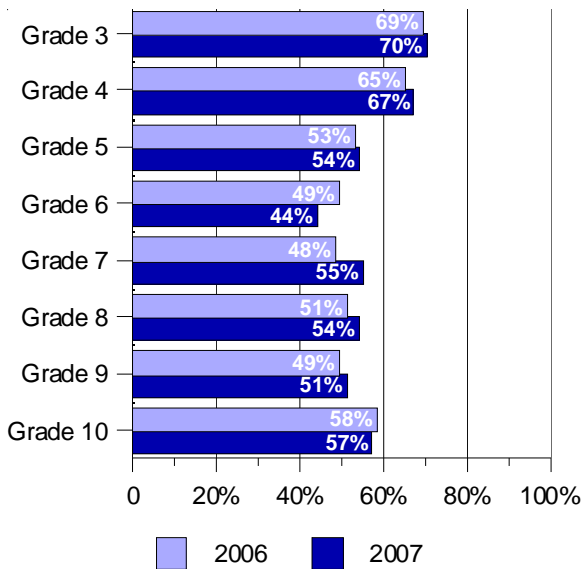
7. How did M-DCPS students perform on the FCAT SSS Mathematics?

The FCAT SSS Mathematics is administered to all students at grades 3-10. The majority of the district's students are now scoring at the higher achievement levels at grades 3-5 and 7-10. The percent of students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 increased at six grade levels (Figure 8).

The district's score patterns were similar to those of students statewide. M-DCPS had a lower percent of students scoring at

Achievement Levels 3-5 than students statewide across all grade levels; however, the percent of M-DCPS students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 increased more than the percent of students statewide at grades 7 and 9.

Figure 8
M-DCPS FCAT SSS Mathematics: Percent Scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5, 2006 and 2007



8. **How did M-DCPS students perform on the FCAT SSS Science?**

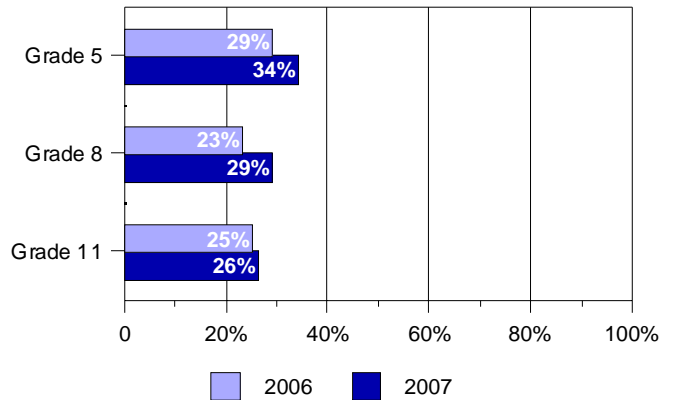
The FCAT SSS Science is administered to all students at grades 5, 8, and 11. The percent of the district's students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 increased at all three of the grade levels tested from 2006 to 2007 (Figure 9).

District trends closely paralleled those of students statewide, with a higher percent of the district's students moving out of the lowest achievement level than students statewide at grade 8.

9. **Did the district make any progress in closing the achievement gap on the FCAT?**

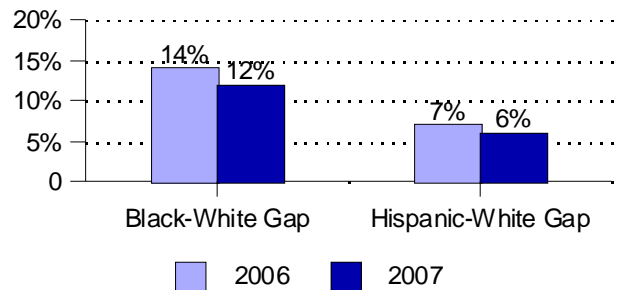
The performance of the district's Black, Hispanic, and White students was compared on the FCAT Writing+, Reading, Mathematics, and Science.

Figure 9
M-DCPS FCAT SSS Science: Percent Scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5, 2006 and 2007



FCAT Writing+. The percent of students scoring 3.5 and above on the essay portion of the FCAT Writing+ increased across all ethnic groups from 2006 to 2007. The district continued to close the achievement gap in writing. The gap between the percent of Black and White students scoring 3.5 and above decreased by 2 percent and the gap between Hispanic and White students scoring 3.5 and above decreased by 1 percent (Figure 10).

Figure 10
M-DCPS FCAT Writing+Essay Subscores: Percent Scoring 3.5 and Above, Black-White and Hispanic-White Achievement Gaps, 2006 and 2007



FCAT Reading. A higher percent of White students scored at Achievement Levels 3-5 than Black or Hispanic students at all grade levels. The percent of Black students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 increased at five grade levels; the percent of White students scoring at Levels 3-5 increased at four levels; and the percent of Hispanic students scoring at Levels 3-5 increased at three grade levels. Black students' closed the reading gap with

White students by 5 percent at grade 7 and 1 percent at grades 8 and 9. Hispanic students closed the reading gap with White students by 1 percent at grade 5 and by 2 percent at grades 7 and 9.

FCAT Mathematics. A higher percent of White students scored at Achievement Levels 3-5 than Black or Hispanic students at all grade levels. The percent of Black students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 increased at 6 of the 8 grade levels tested and the percent of Hispanic and White students scoring at Levels 3-5 increased at 5 grade levels. Black students closed the mathematics gap with White students by 1 percent at grades 4, 5, and 9, by 2 percent at grade 8, and by 4 percent at grade 7. Hispanic students closed the mathematics gap with White students by 1 percent at grade 3 and by 2 percent at grades 7 and 9.

FCAT Science. A higher percent of White students scored at Achievement Levels 3-5 than Black or Hispanic students across the three grade levels tested. The percent of students scoring at the higher achievement levels increased at grades 5 and 8 across all ethnic groups. The district's students closed the science achievement gap at grade 11: The gap between the percent of Black and White students scoring at the higher achievement levels decreased by 2 percent and the gap between Hispanic and White students decreased by 3 percent (Figure 11).

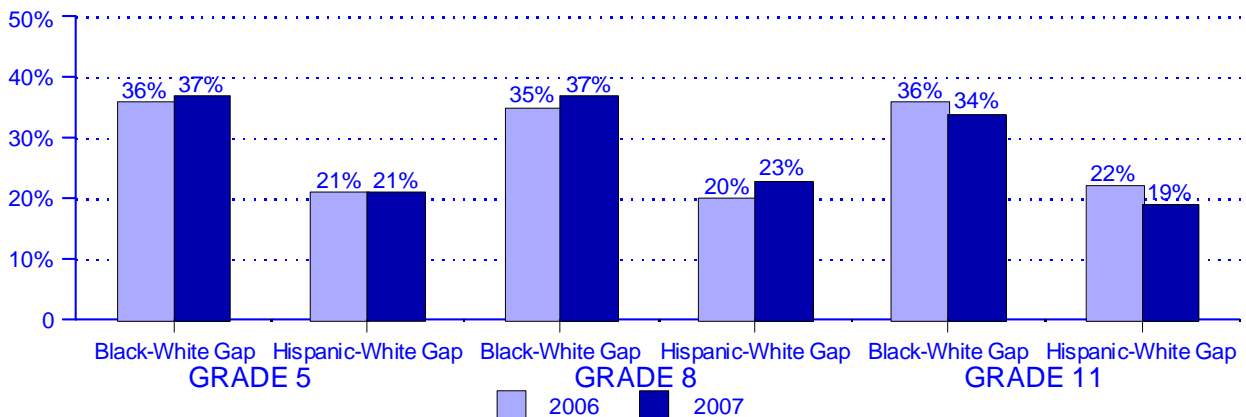
10. How did the School Improvement Zone perform on the FCAT?

School grades awarded to School Improvement Zone schools were examined, compared to the district's schools as a whole. The performance of the district's School Improvement Zone students was compared to the performance of students districtwide on the FCAT Reading, Mathematics, and Science.

School Grades. Zone schools followed the same pattern as district schools overall. Although the percent of Zone schools receiving a grade of "A" increased slightly, the percent of schools receiving a grade of "B" or "C" decreased and the percent receiving a "D" or "F" increased. Overall, 14 percent of Zone schools received a higher performance grade in 2007 than they had in 2006, 25 percent received the same grade, and 61 percent received a lower grade.

FCAT Reading. The percent of School Improvement Zone students scoring at the higher achievement levels increased at the middle grades and remained stable at the elementary and senior high grades (Figure 12). School Improvement Zone students are still performing at lower levels than students districtwide; however, Zone students closed the gap at the elementary and middle levels. At the senior level, the percent of students scoring at the higher achievement levels did

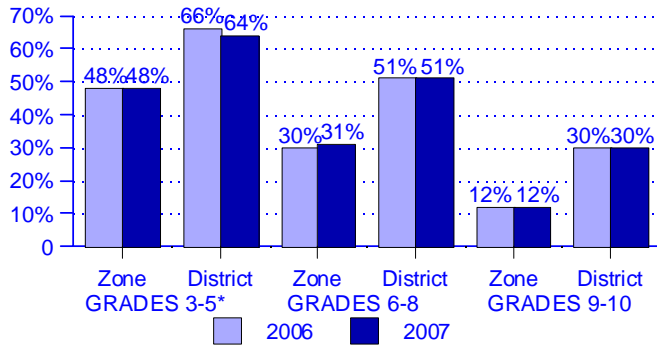
Figure 11
M-DCPS FCAT Science: Percent Scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5, Black-White and Hispanic-White Achievement Gaps, 2006 and 2007



not increase for either Zone or district students.

Figure 12

M-DCPS FCAT Reading: Percent of School Improvement Zone and District Students Scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5, 2006 and 2007

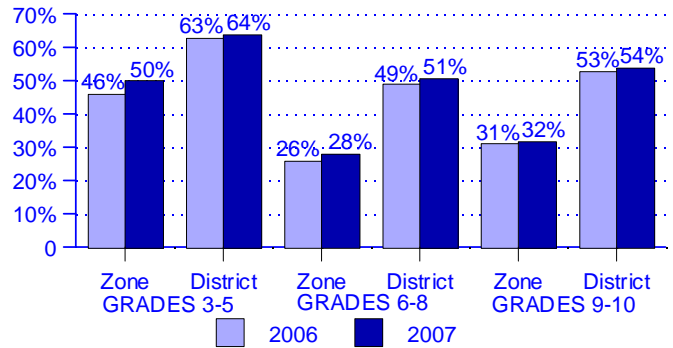


* The Florida Department of Education may provide revised results from the Grade 3 2006 FCAT SSS Reading, due to errors in the equating process. The indicated values may change as a result of these revisions.

FCAT Mathematics. The percent of School Improvement Zone students scoring at the higher achievement levels increased across all grade levels (Figure 13). School Improvement Zone students are still performing at lower levels than students districtwide but are continuing to close the gap. The percent of Zone students scoring at the higher achievement levels increased more than students districtwide at the elementary grades. At the middle and senior grades, Zone students kept pace with students districtwide.

Figure 13

M-DCPS FCAT Mathematics: Percent of School Improvement Zone and District Students Scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5, 2006 and 2007



FCAT Science. In the School Improvement Zone, the percent of students scoring at the higher achievement levels increased at all three grade levels tested. The largest increase was seen at grade 5, where the percent of Zone students scoring at Achievement Levels 3-5 increased by 10 percent. School Improvement Zone students are still performing at lower levels than students districtwide, although grade 5 Zone students' performance improved more than the performance of grade 5 students districtwide.

The reader interested in school-level data and a more extensive discussion of testing results is directed to reports available on Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis' website (<http://oada.dadeschools.net>).