

**SB926/HB773** – This bill pursues the worthwhile goal of attempting to decrease testing in Florida. While it does reduce the testing window to three weeks and puts the testing at the end of the year, in fact, it does not decrease the number of tests or the stakes attached to the tests. In addition, there are two significantly problematic pieces of language in this legislation. Below are our concerns and recommendations for dealing with them.

- Unrealistic FSA Cut Scores** - Language in this bill increases the FSA cut scores to levels beyond grade level proficiency, tying them to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This is contrary to a 6 to 1 decision of the Florida State Board of Education to tie level 4 on the FSA to proficiency and keeping the level 3 as satisfactory. This position was also supported by multiple reactor panels made up of teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. If the cut scores are changed as proposed, the passing rate will change from 54% to 39% on the 4th grade FSA, according to data from the Florida Department of Education. This will result in many more students being retained in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade as well as high school students not receiving their diplomas, all based on an arbitrary decision. The likely result of this will be cost prohibitive in both human and financial terms.

  
**Summary of Commissioner's Recommended Cut Scores  
Comparison to External Data**

	Commissioner's Recommendation, FSA Spring 2015	NAEP, 2015	Commissioner's Recommendation, FSA Spring 2015
	Level 3 (Satisfactory) and Above	Proficient and Above	Level 4 (Above Satisfactory) and Above
Grade 4 Reading	54%	39%	27%
Grade 4 Mathematics	59%	42%	31%
Grade 8 Reading	55%	30%	29%
Grade 8 Mathematics	45%	26%	18%

*Recommendation – This provision is so problematic it must be removed.*

- Expanding CBE Statewide** - The language shown below will result in expansion of Competency Based Education (CBE) to every district in the state instead of districts included in the pilot program last year. ( Lake, Palm Beach, Pinellas, and Seminole County districts plus the PK Yonge Developmental Research School) No expansion of CBE should be considered until data from the pilot districts becomes available. Already, Lake County, one of the pilot districts, is considering halting the program due to scant evidence of improvement at a very high cost of 2.5 million dollars per year.

128     (d) Beginning with any new contract for the ELA assessment  
 129     in grades 3 through 10 and the mathematics assessment in grades  
 130     3 through 8 entered into after July 1, 2017, each new assessment  
 131     shall be made available once per quarter for students who the  
 132     school district has identified through competency-based  
 133     education as having mastered the content and who are prepared to  
 134     take the applicable assessment.

*Recommendation – The language in lines 128-134 should apply only to the districts cited in the CBE pilot program.*