

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MR. JAMES F. NOTTER  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

*Approved memorandum with signatures is on file.*

November 21, 2008

**REVISED 01/14/09**

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Joanne W. Harrison, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent  
Educational Programs & Student Support

VIA: James F. Notter  
Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: **GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES FOR BROWARD COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2002-03 TO 2007-08 (REVISED)**

**A review of previously released school-level graduation rates in November 19, 2008, raised concerns for some Broward County Public Schools (BCPS), Staff communicated with the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) to resolve the issues that were identified. Last Monday, January 12, 2009, FDOE notified BCPS that the state had recalculated the Districtwide and school-by-school graduation rates, as a result of our inquiry. Consequently, information that appears in this memorandum, originally released in November 2008, has been revised to reflect FDOE's recalculation of the 2007-08 graduation rates for BCPS.**

On ~~Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>~~ **Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>**, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) released **recalculated** graduation rates ~~and dropout rates~~ for Florida and the 67 individual Florida school districts. These data can be located online at the FDOE's Education Information & Accountability Services Web site (<http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/default.asp>). **An examination of the data for Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) revealed a dramatic increase in the graduation rate from 66.3 percent in 2006-07 to ~~68.8~~ 69.7 percent in 2007-08. Furthermore, BCPS' dropout rate decreased more than one percentage point from 3.2 percent in 2006-07 to 2.0 percent in 2007-08.** Please note that graduation and dropout rates are calculated independently. While graduation rates are determined by a four-year cohort of students, dropout rates are determined based on a single year's enrollment in Grades 9-12.

The graduation rate in a given school year (e.g., 2007-08) is calculated by first creating a cohort of students entering the ninth grade in the fall term, four years prior to the scheduled year of graduation, in addition to transferring students. The number of graduating students in this cohort is divided by the total number in the cohort minus the students who:

- ~~transfer~~ **transferred** out of the school system to attend school elsewhere; or
- withdrew to attend private school, an approved home education program, or an adult education program.

## Graduation and Dropout Rates for Broward County

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In addition, incoming transfer students were included in the class with which they were scheduled to graduate and tracked accordingly. The state defined a graduate as a student who received a standard diploma, special diploma, or a diploma awarded after successful completion of the General Educational Development (GED) examination.

An analysis of the graduation data revealed that the BCPS' graduation rate increased each of the last five years, with the exception of 2006-07, as illustrated in Table 1. The graduation rate for Florida districts overall increased by 3.0 percent in 2007-08, while the BCPS graduation rate rose by ~~2.5~~ **3.4** percent from 2006-07 to 2007-08.

Table 1

*Comparison of BCPS Graduation Rates with Other Large Florida School Districts, 2002-03 to 2007-08*

|              | 2002-03 | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08                     |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Broward      | 62.7    | 66.2    | 67.1    | 67.8    | 66.3    | <del>68.8</del> <b>69.7</b> |
| Hillsborough | 75.8    | 79.3    | 79.5    | 77.3    | 79.1    | 80.0                        |
| Miami-Dade   | 57.9    | 60.6    | 59.9    | 59.2    | 63.9    | 65.8                        |
| Orange       | 68.5    | 72.7    | 73.8    | 72.2    | 71.7    | 75.6                        |
| Palm Beach   | 66.0    | 65.9    | 69.0    | 69.3    | 71.8    | 75.6                        |
| Florida      | 69.0    | 71.6    | 71.9    | 71.0    | 72.4    | 75.4                        |

To determine the dropout rate in any given year (e.g., 2007-08) the unduplicated count of students assigned a dropout code at the end of the school year is divided by the total count of students attending school at anytime during that year. This figure includes students who were expected to enroll but did not.

**A comparison of BCPS dropout rates from 2006-07 to 2007-08 indicates a 1.2 percentage points decline, while Florida's dropout rate declined by 0.7 percentage points, as shown in Table 2.** BCPS continues to report lower incidence of dropouts than two of the other four large districts and the state overall—while Orange County Public Schools evidenced a 0.2 percentage points decline in the dropout rate, and Hillsborough registered a 0.2 percentage points increase.

Table 2

*Comparison of BCPS Dropout Rates with Other Large Florida School Districts, 2002-03 to 2007-08*

|              | 2002-03 | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Broward      | 1.0     | 1.1     | 1.7     | 2.7     | 3.2     | 2.0     |
| Hillsborough | 2.6     | 1.9     | 2.1     | 2.1     | 1.6     | 1.8     |
| Miami-Dade   | 4.2     | 4.6     | 4.5     | 6.7     | 5.8     | 4.5     |
| Orange       | 4.4     | 2.5     | 2.0     | 1.9     | 1.7     | 1.5     |
| Palm Beach   | 2.6     | 2.6     | 2.8     | 3.0     | 4.4     | 3.9     |
| Florida      | 3.1     | 2.9     | 3.0     | 3.5     | 3.3     | 2.6     |

Attached, please find the school-by-school listings with graduation and dropout rates information for BCPS schools, as well as two released documents from the Florida Department of Education, regarding graduation and dropout rates. **(Please note that the two FDOE documents do not reflect the graduation rates recalculated in January 2009.)** **In the BCPS school-by-school listings,**

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**previously released graduation rates have been struck through and recalculated rates and differences have been added.**

A review of the **previously released** school-level data **had** raised concerns for two of our schools, Smart School Institute and McFatter Technical High School. For these two schools, local data is **were** not in alignment with the graduation rates provided by the Florida Department of Education.

- **Smart School Institute.** **Initially,** The FDOE reported a graduation rate of 100% for Smart School Institute; however, a preliminary analysis conducted by District staff during the summer of 2008 **had** yielded a graduation rate of 48%. The preliminary analyses were conducted, while District and Smart School Institute staff collaboratively reviewed student academic records. Smart School staff entered student information corrections into the District's database; however, review of the data file used by FDOE to **initially** compute the graduation rates did not reflect these corrections. **The recalculated graduation rate for Smart School Institute was 67.3%. This figure is incomplete, given that it incorrectly excludes Smart School students whose archived records indicated the school's previous location number.**
- **William T. McFatter Technical High School.** Staff is also reviewing **reviewed** records for McFatter Technical High, as their graduation rate ~~appears~~ **appeared** to be lower than expected. **McFatter's recalculated graduation rate was 89.0, which represented an increase of 16.6 percentage points over the original rate reported.**
- **In addition, two other District high schools showed large increases in the recalculated graduation rates; Nova High (increased 18.5 percentage points from 69.0% to 87.5%) and McArthur High (increased 8.2 percentage points from 64.7% to 72.9%).**

Staff ~~is in communication~~ communicated with FDOE to resolve these issues. **This memorandum reflects changes that addressed BCPS' concerns.** ~~You will be apprised of changes once they are finalized with FDOE.~~ If you have any questions or concerns regarding this memorandum, please contact **Dr. Katherine Blasik, Associate Superintendent, Research Development & Assessment at 754-321-2470 or Dr. Maria Ligas, Research Specialist, Research Services at 754-321-2500.**

JFN/JWH/KAB/RWC/MRL:ddr

Attachments

cc: Executive Leadership Team  
Area Directors  
High School Principals

BCPS School-by-School Graduation and Dropout Rates, 2007-08

| School Name                        | <u>Original</u>        | <u>Re-Calculated 2007-08</u> | <u>Difference</u>  | 2007-08 |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
|                                    | 2007-08                | <u>Graduation Rate</u>       |                    | Dropout |
|                                    | <u>Graduation Rate</u> |                              |                    | Rate    |
| <b>HIGH SCHOOLS</b>                |                        |                              |                    |         |
| ATLANTIC TECHNICAL CENTER          | <del>87.3</del>        | <b><u>88.1</u></b>           | <b><u>0.8</u></b>  | 0.4     |
| BLANCHE ELY HIGH                   | <del>81.7</del>        | <b><u>82.8</u></b>           | <b><u>1.1</u></b>  | 2.9     |
| BOYD H. ANDERSON HIGH              | <del>62.3</del>        | <b><u>62.4</u></b>           | <b><u>0.1</u></b>  | 4.1     |
| CHARLES W FLANAGAN HIGH            | <del>85.9</del>        | <b><u>86.6</u></b>           | <b><u>0.7</u></b>  | 0.3     |
| COCONUT CREEK HIGH                 | <del>62.0</del>        | <b><u>62.0</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 2.3     |
| COLLEGE ACADEMY AT BCC             | <del>100.0</del>       | <b><u>100.0</u></b>          | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.0     |
| COOPER CITY HIGH                   | <del>90.4</del>        | <b><u>90.7</u></b>           | <b><u>0.3</u></b>  | 0.2     |
| CORAL GLADES HIGH                  | <del>86.0</del>        | <b><u>86.2</u></b>           | <b><u>0.2</u></b>  | 1.1     |
| CORAL SPRINGS HIGH                 | <del>85.8</del>        | <b><u>86.0</u></b>           | <b><u>0.2</u></b>  | 0.5     |
| CYPRESS BAY HIGH                   | <del>90.1</del>        | <b><u>90.3</u></b>           | <b><u>0.2</u></b>  | 0.9     |
| DEERFIELD BEACH HIGH               | <del>76.7</del>        | <b><u>76.8</u></b>           | <b><u>0.1</u></b>  | 2.2     |
| DILLARD HIGH                       | <del>70.2</del>        | <b><u>70.2</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 1.8     |
| EVERGLADES HIGH                    | <del>82.3</del>        | <b><u>82.5</u></b>           | <b><u>0.2</u></b>  | 2.1     |
| FORT LAUDERDALE HIGH               | <del>82.8</del>        | <b><u>83.0</u></b>           | <b><u>0.2</u></b>  | 0.1     |
| HALLANDALE HIGH                    | <del>71.0</del>        | <b><u>71.0</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.4     |
| HOLLYWOOD HILLS HIGH               | <del>76.7</del>        | <b><u>76.7</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.0     |
| J. P. TARAVELLA HIGH               | <del>89.7</del>        | <b><u>89.5</u></b>           | <b><u>-0.2</u></b> | 0.2     |
| MARJORY STONEMAN DOUGLAS HIGH      | <del>90.7</del>        | <b><u>90.7</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.1     |
| *MCARTHUR HIGH                     | <del>64.7</del>        | <b><u>72.9</u></b>           | <b><u>8.2</u></b>  | 1.2     |
| MIRAMAR HIGH                       | <del>74.1</del>        | <b><u>77.2</u></b>           | <b><u>3.1</u></b>  | 0.3     |
| MONARCH HIGH                       | <del>85.9</del>        | <b><u>85.9</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.4     |
| NORTHEAST HIGH                     | <del>76.5</del>        | <b><u>76.5</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.4     |
| *NOVA HIGH                         | <del>69.0</del>        | <b><u>87.5</u></b>           | <b><u>18.5</u></b> | 1.5     |
| PIPER HIGH                         | <del>77.4</del>        | <b><u>77.3</u></b>           | <b><u>-0.1</u></b> | 1.6     |
| PLANTATION HIGH                    | <del>71.1</del>        | <b><u>71.4</u></b>           | <b><u>0.3</u></b>  | 2.8     |
| POMPANO BEACH HIGH                 | <del>92.2</del>        | <b><u>92.2</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.0     |
| SOUTH BROWARD HIGH                 | <del>72.3</del>        | <b><u>72.5</u></b>           | <b><u>0.2</u></b>  | 0.4     |
| SOUTH PLANTATION HIGH              | <del>76.6</del>        | <b><u>76.6</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 1.5     |
| STRANAHAN HIGH                     | <del>74.5</del>        | <b><u>74.5</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 1.0     |
| WESTERN HIGH                       | <del>89.3</del>        | <b><u>89.1</u></b>           | <b><u>-0.2</u></b> | 0.1     |
| *WILLIAM T. MCFATTER TECH. CENTER  | <del>72.4</del>        | <b><u>89.0</u></b>           | <b><u>16.6</u></b> | 1.1     |
| <b>CENTERS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS</b> |                        |                              |                    |         |
| BRIGHT HORIZONS                    | <del>10.0</del>        | <b><u>10.0</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 2.0     |
| BROWARD CHILDREN'S CENTER NORTH    | <del>0.0</del>         | <b><u>0.0</u></b>            | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 50.0    |
| BROWARD DETENTION CENTER           | <del>0.0</del>         | <b><u>0.0</u></b>            | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.2     |
| BROWARD INTENSIVE HALFWAY          | <del>0.0</del>         | <b><u>0.0</u></b>            | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.0     |
| BROWARD VIRTUAL EDUCATION          | <del>89.6</del>        | <b><u>90.2</u></b>           | <b><u>0.6</u></b>  | 2.0     |
| CITY OF CORAL SPRINGS CHARTER      | <del>84.0</del>        | <b><u>84.0</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.0     |
| CITY/PEMBROKE PINES CHARTER HIGH   | <del>89.1</del>        | <b><u>89.1</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 0.1     |
| CROSS CREEK                        | <del>22.2</del>        | <b><u>22.2</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 6.8     |
| CYPRESS RUN ALTERNATIVE/ESE        | <del>44.4</del>        | <b><u>40.0</u></b>           | <b><u>-4.4</u></b> | 2.1     |
| DAVE THOMAS EDUCATION CENTER       | <del>14.4</del>        | <b><u>14.4</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 12.6    |
| DROP BACK IN                       | <del>19.6</del>        | <b><u>19.6</u></b>           | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | 20.4    |
| ELAINE GORDON TREATMENT CENTER     | <del>0.0</del>         | <b><u>0.0</u></b>            | <b><u>0.0</u></b>  | NA      |

(Table continues)

(Table continued)

| School Name                       | <u>Original</u>            | <u>Re-Calculated 2007-08</u> |                   | 2007-08         |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
|                                   | 2007-08<br>Graduation Rate | <u>Graduation Rate</u>       | <u>Difference</u> | Dropout<br>Rate |
| CENTERS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS       |                            |                              |                   |                 |
| FLORIDA OCEAN SCIENCES INSTITUTE  | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 15.3            |
| HALLANDALE ADULT/COMM. CENTER     | 7.4                        | <u>7.4</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 1.1             |
| LANIER-JAMES EDUCATION CENTER     | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 0.0             |
| LIFE SKILLS BROWARD COUNTY        | <del>51.5</del>            | <u>51.0</u>                  | <u>-0.5</u>       | 21.9            |
| LIGHTHOUSE CARE CENTER OF FLORIDA | 50.0                       | <u>50.0</u>                  | <u>0.0</u>        | 0.0             |
| N. LAUDERDALE ACADEMY HIGH        | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | NA              |
| NORTH LAUDERDALE ACADEMY HIGH     | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | NA              |
| PACE CENTER FOR GIRLS, INC.       | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 13.4            |
| PARKWAY ACADEMY                   | <del>71.3</del>            | <u>71.6</u>                  | <u>0.3</u>        | 2.5             |
| PINE RIDGE ALTERNATIVE CENTER     | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 4.7             |
| SEAGULL SCHOOL                    | 9.8                        | <u>9.8</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 27.0            |
| SMART INSTITUTE OF TECH/COM       | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | NA              |
| *SMART INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY    | <del>100.0</del>           | <u>67.3</u>                  | <u>-32.7</u>      | 2.2             |
| SOMERSET ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH     | 68.8                       | <u>68.8</u>                  | <u>0.0</u>        | 1.3             |
| SOUTH PINES ACADEMY               | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 0.0             |
| SUNSET SCHOOL                     | 38.1                       | <u>38.1</u>                  | <u>0.0</u>        | 4.0             |
| THE QUEST CENTER                  | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 28.6            |
| THOMPSON ACADEMY                  | 4.3                        | <u>4.3</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 0.0             |
| WHIDDON RODGERS EDUC. CENTER      | 3.8                        | <u>3.8</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 13.4            |
| WHISPERING PINES                  | <del>22.2</del>            | <u>33.3</u>                  | <u>11.1</u>       | 9.1             |
| WINGATE OAKS CENTER               | 0.0                        | <u>0.0</u>                   | <u>0.0</u>        | 0.0             |

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