Florida’s K-12 Reforms: An Advocate’s Point of View
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Grading Schools “A – F” based on solid state standards and a state accountability exam which has not been made easier to pass over time. Real consequences for prolonged school failure in the A= Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Parental Choice: the nation’s largest voucher program (McKay Scholarships), largest private school tax credit program (Step Up for Students). The nation’s sixth strongest charter school law, with 379 charter schools educating over 100,000 students. Florida is also a national leader in virtual schooling.

Financial Incentives for Success: $100 per student bonus for schools scoring an A or improving a letter grade, $700 bonus for students passing one or more Advanced Placement Exams.

Alternative Teacher Certification: the nation’s leader. Florida now hires approximately half of all new teachers from alternative certification routes.

Social Promotion Ban: Beginning in 203, Florida put in place a social promotion ban for students not learning basic literacy skills by the end of the third grade.

Just Read Florida: Florida lawmakers revamped early childhood literacy curriculum and instruction.

NOTES on FLORIDA ADVOCATES

1. Belief that the entire set of reforms must be put into place in order to achieve the desired improvements in student performance.
2. Using National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results after 11 years of REFORM: (a) Florida’s African-American students now outscore or tie the statewide Reading average of all students in eight states (including NM); (b) Florida’s Hispanic students now outscore or tie the statewide Reading average of all students in 31 states (including NM).
3. Florida has also closed the achievement gap between Hispanic and White students over the past 11 years. There is now less than a 6 point difference b/t Florida’s Hispanic Students and the national average of White students.