



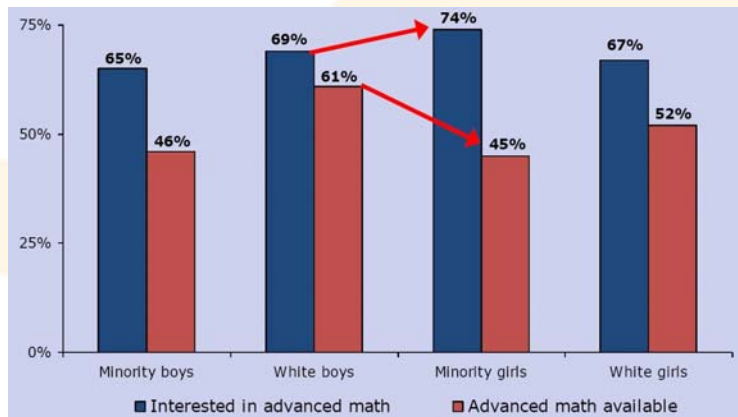
The Foundation for Florida's Future SUPPORTS

SB 4 Relating to Education Accountability by Sen. Detert

The Foundation asks that you vote **YES** on SB 4 in the Education Pre-K – 12 Committee on March 10th. To provide for our state's future economic growth, SB 4 raises high school graduation standards to better prepare our students for life after high school, ensuring students are prepared to compete in the global marketplace and saving them and the state money on needless postsecondary remediation.

Education Week's well-respected *Quality Counts* reports have consistently highlighted Florida as a leader in education. Over the past four years Florida has gone from a rank of 31st, to 14th, to 10th, and is now ranked the 8th best system in the country. Despite our overall improvement, Florida perpetually fails in the category of "college readiness" – never receiving higher than 50 out of 100 points. SB 4 addresses the college readiness problem by aligning course requirements to the expectations of life after high school.

To regain our strength in the global market, we need to ensure that all students have access to rigorous math and science courses. Surveys conducted by Harris Interactive reveal that, especially for minority children, interest in advanced math courses greatly exceeds what is available to students at schools:



National research is clear: more challenging, college and career-aligned high school classes lead to continued success:

- 68% of non-college students who took Algebra II or higher say they are prepared for the math they face at work.
- 84% of individuals with highly paid professional jobs took Algebra II or higher.

Currently, a student can meet the requirements for high school graduation and not meet the minimum college admissions requirements for **any** state university.

When we raise the bar, more students work to meet the higher standards. Since adding Algebra I and the more challenging 10th grade FCAT to graduation requirements, **more** Florida students are graduating and receiving a diploma than when algebra I was not required and the exit exam was just an 8th grade level test.

"Let's challenge our states to adopt world-class standards that will bring our curriculums to the 21st century."

- President Barack Obama

Specifically, the bill:

- **Incrementally raises graduation requirements** in Florida to better align with the expectations of college and the workforce. Starting next year, the class of 2014 will be required to take geometry to graduate. Each year following, students will be required to take Biology I, then Algebra II, and finally chemistry or physics will be required for students in the class of 2017.
- **Increases rigor** by replacing portions of the FCAT with end-of-course exams in Algebra I, geometry, and biology.
- **Ensures access to college preparatory courses for all** by requiring every high school to offer advanced math, science, history, and English courses using AP, IB, AICE, or dual enrollment. Districts may use Florida Virtual School to fulfill this requirement, resulting in no additional costs.
- **Prepares students for their future** by requiring them to take at least one course online before graduating.

Support of our legislative priorities will be reflected in the grade you earn on the 2010 Florida's Education Report Card. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Peshek, Policy Analyst, at (850) 298-8571 or adam@afloridapromise.org.

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