

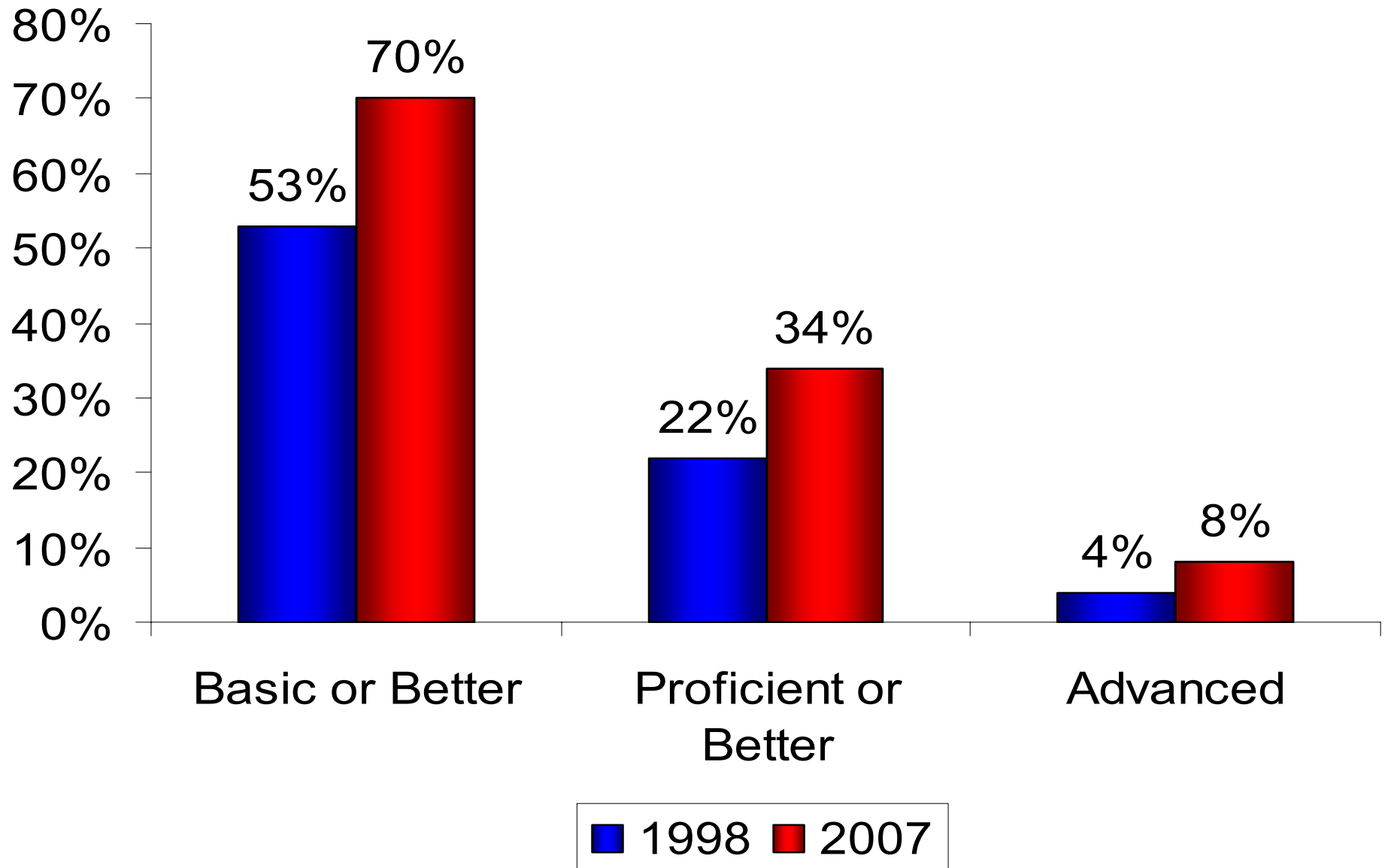
DEMOGRAPHY IS NOT DESTINY

Reform Lessons from Florida
on Overcoming Achievement Gaps

BY MATTHEW LADNER AND VICKI E. MURRAY

Foreword by Jeb Bush

Figure 1: Florida 4th Grade NAEP Reading Scores- 1998 and 2007



Pop Quiz



What do the following states have in common?

Alaska

Arizona

Arkansas

Louisiana

Nevada

Oklahoma

South Carolina

West Virginia

Alabama

California

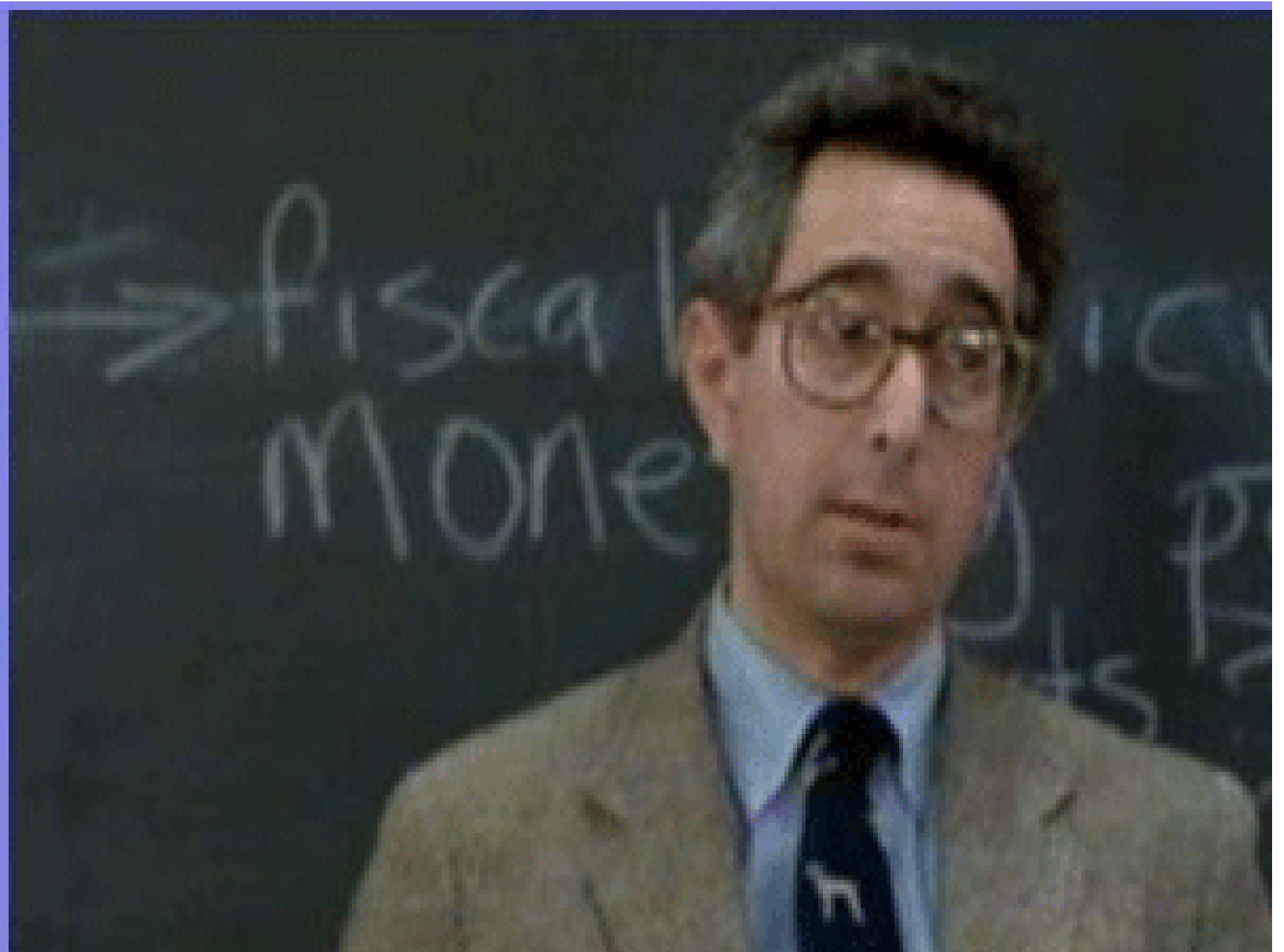
Hawaii

Mississippi

New Mexico

Oregon

Tennessee



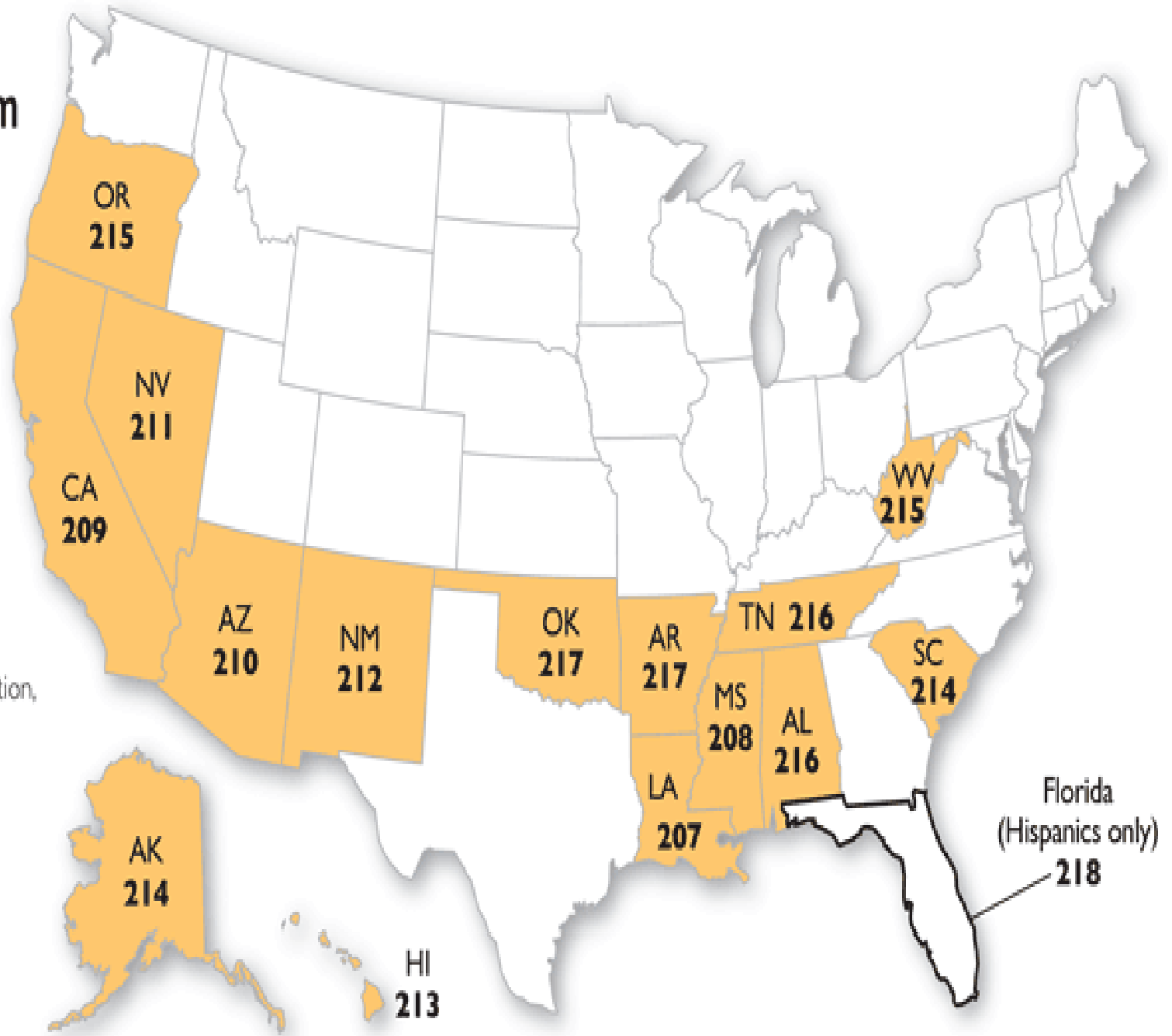
Answer :

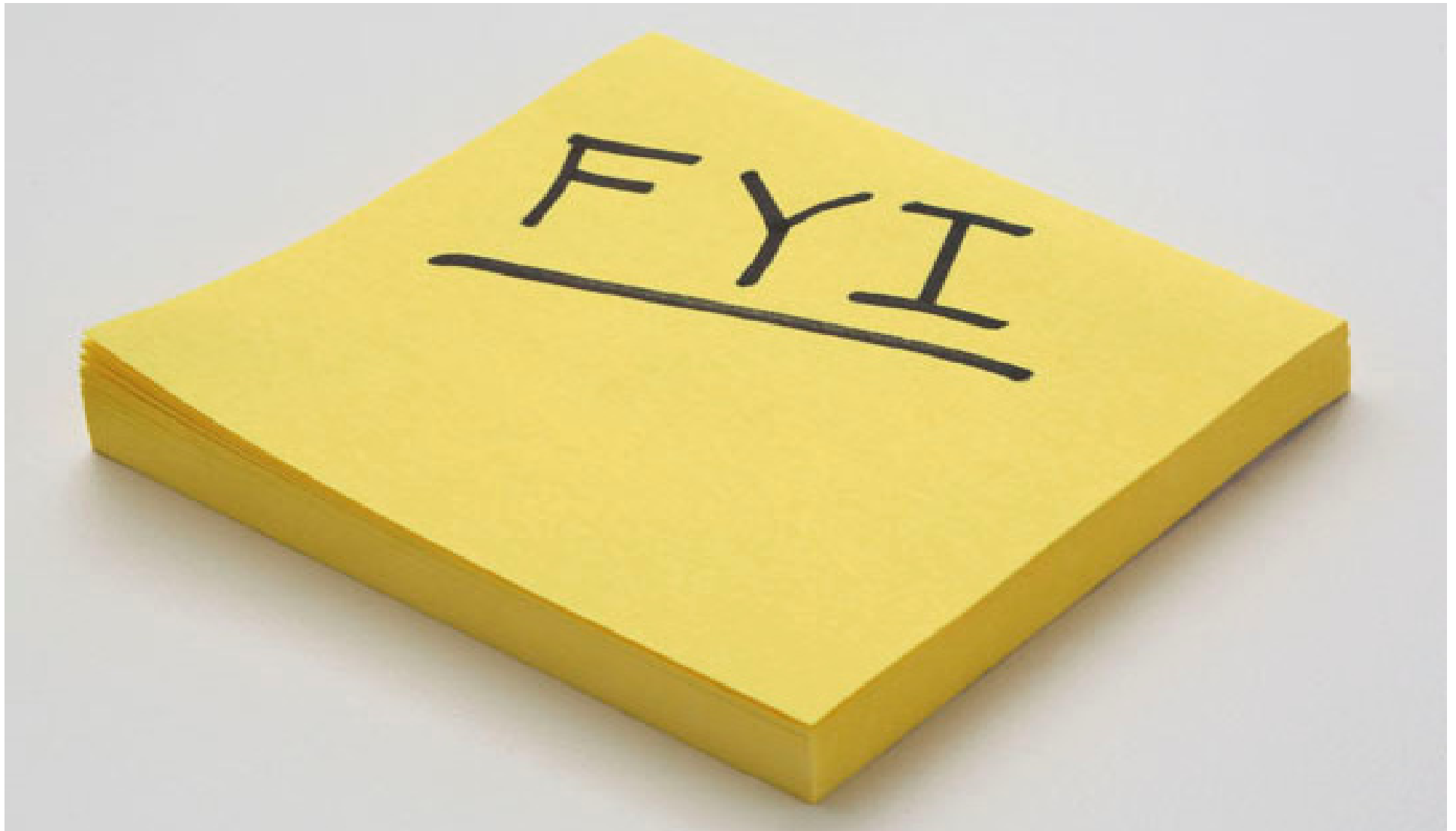
Florida's Hispanic Students Outscored the Statewide Average for All Students on the 2007 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Assessment in those 15 states.

Florida Hispanic Students Outperform 15 Statewide Averages

Hispanic 4th-graders in Florida earned better reading NAEP scores (218) in 2007 than the average scores for students of all races in 15 other states.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata> (January 5, 2009).





10 NAEP Points approximately equals
one grade level of learning...

Figure 2: NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores-All Florida Students and All New Mexico students, 1998-2007

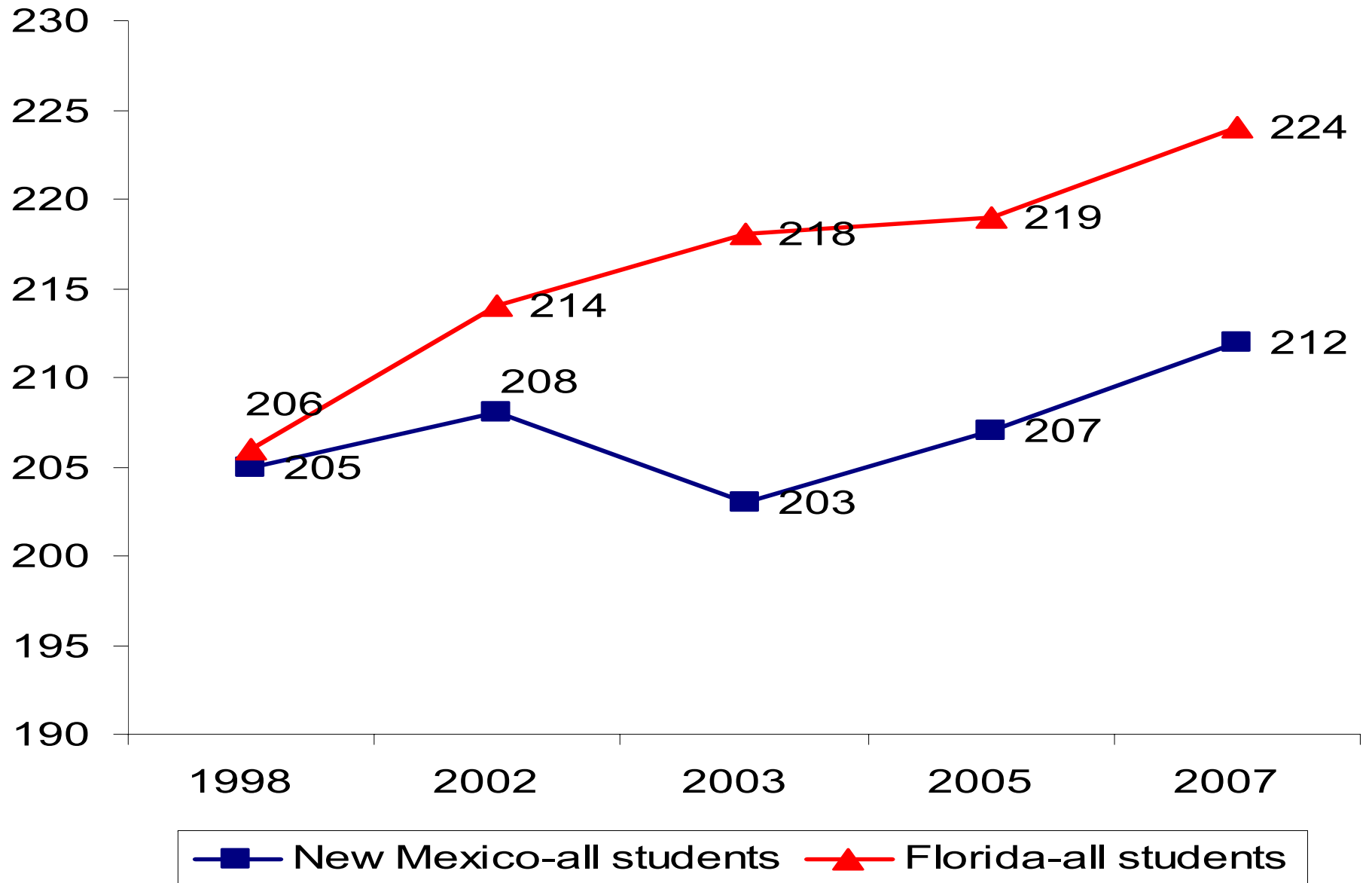


Figure 3: NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores-Florida Free and Reduced Lunch Hispanics and ALL New Mexico students, 1998-2007

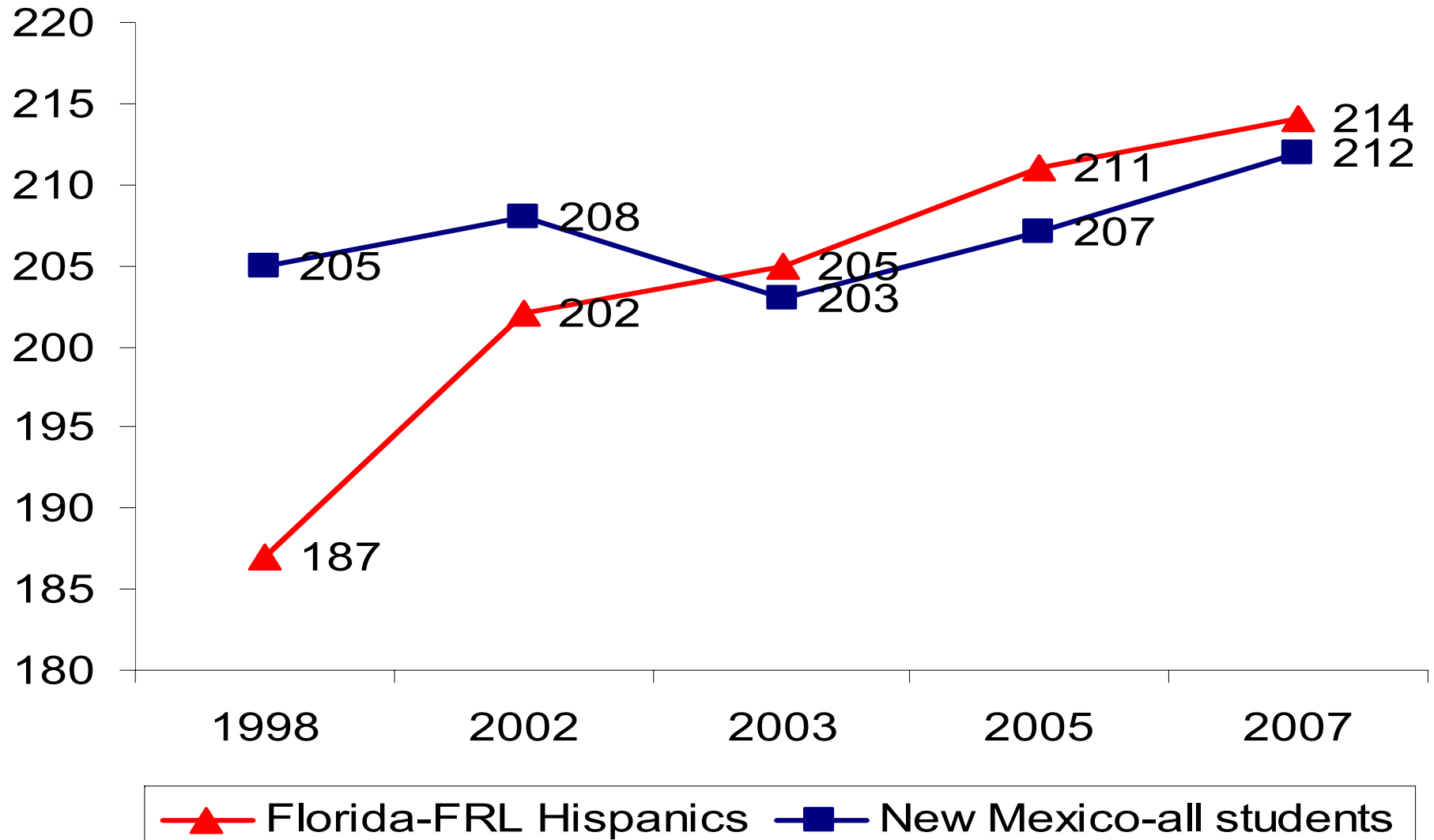
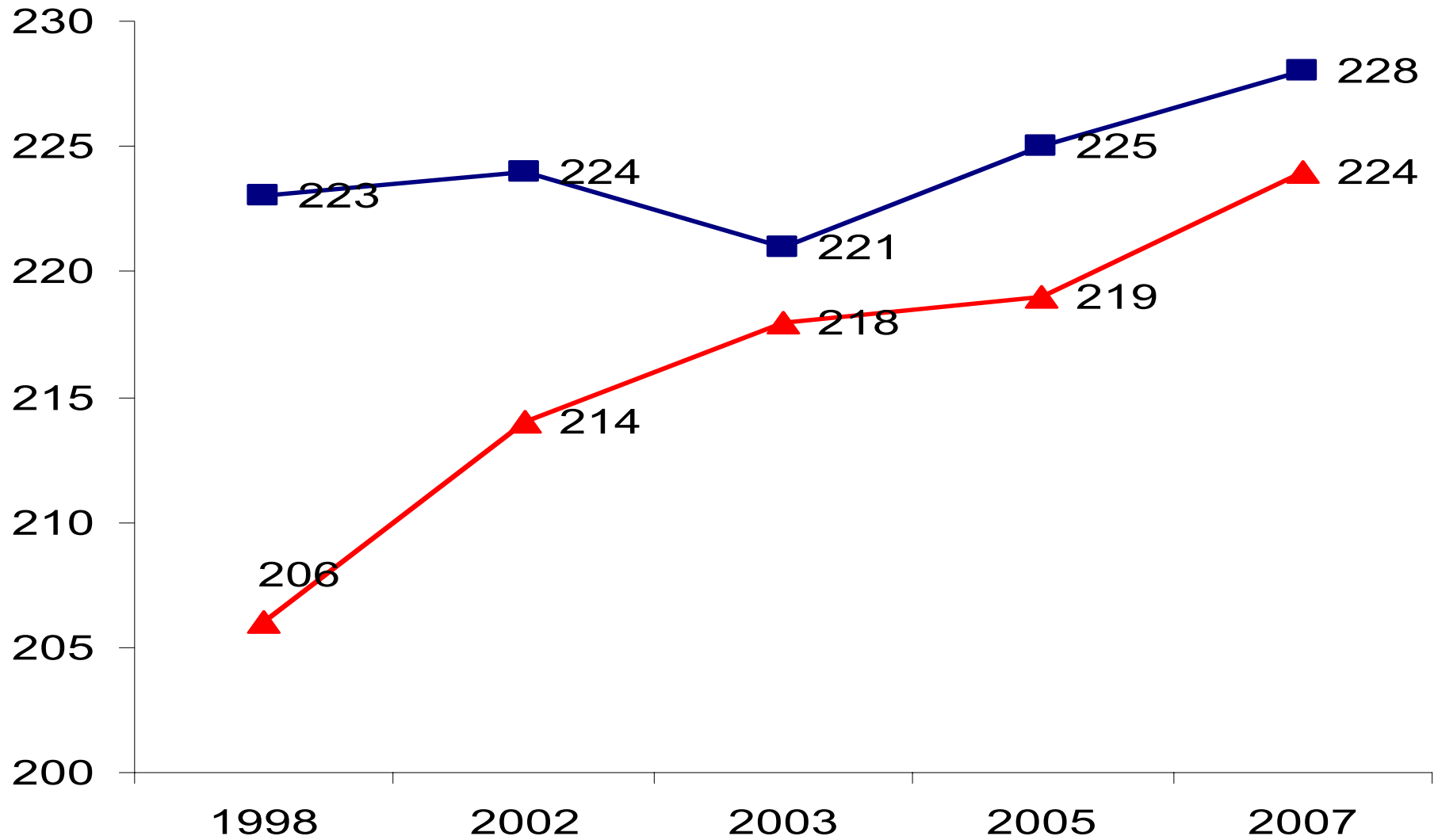
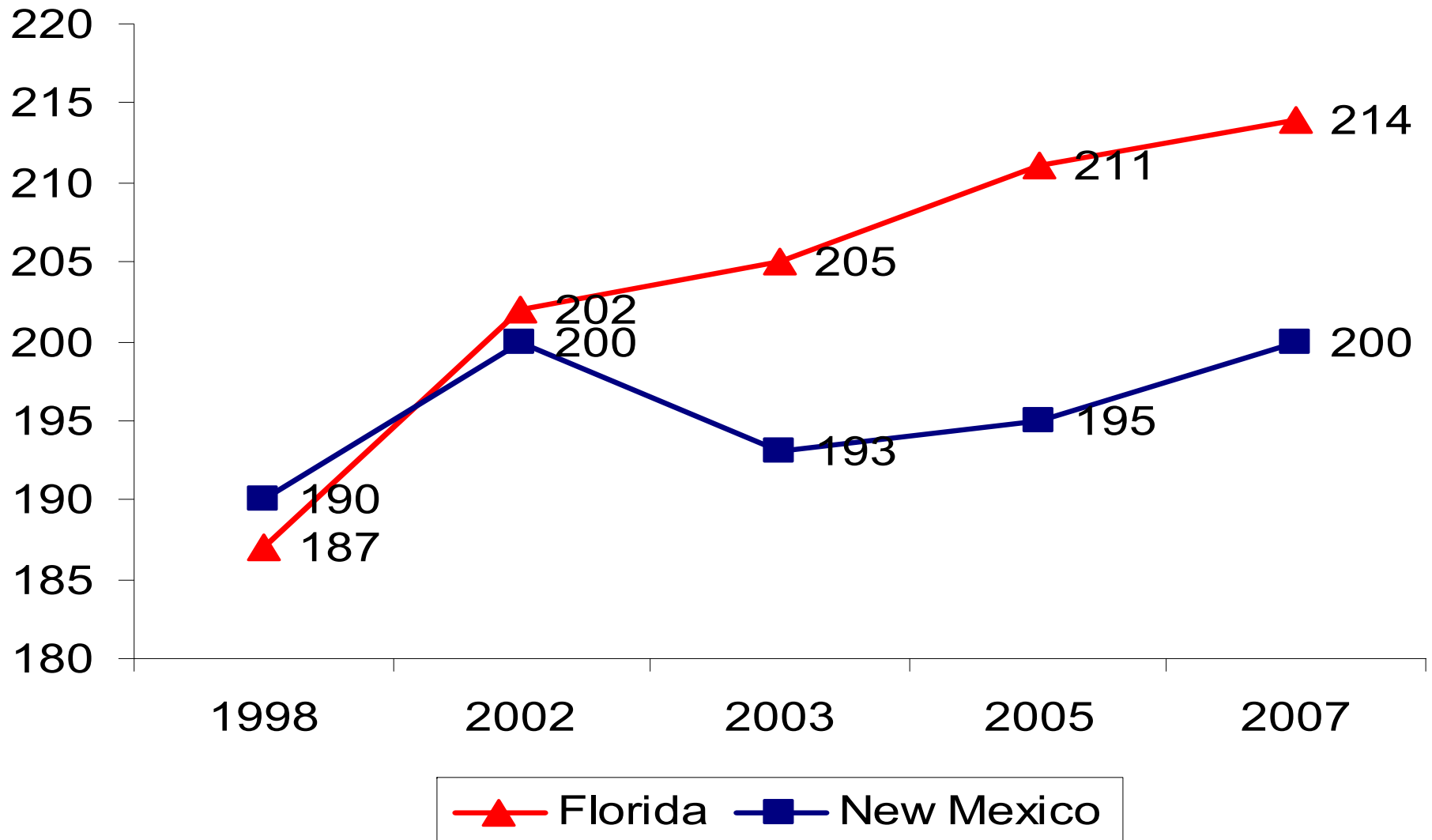


Figure 4: NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores-All Florida Students and Higher Income Mexico students, 1998-2007



▲ Florida-all students ■ New Mexico-Non FRL students

Figure 5: NAEP 4th Grade Reading Scores-Free and Reduced Lunch Hispanics, Florida and New Mexico, 1998-2007



The Florida K-12 Reforms

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.

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.

Alternative Teacher Certification- the nation's leader, Florida now hires approximately half of all new teachers from alternative certification routes. The percentage of teachers who are Hispanic or African American increased, test scores are up.

Social promotion ban -Beginning in 2003, Florida put in place a social promotion ban for students not learning basic literacy skills by the end of the third grade. Since inception, the percentage of children scoring low enough to be retained has dropped by 40%.

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

The One Florida Program

Financial Incentives for Schools and Teachers
for Students Passing Advanced Placement
Exams



Figure 6: Math, Science and English AP Passing Test Scores per 1,000 students for States with 7,000 or more Hispanic Junior and Senior Students, 2006 (Source: National Math and Science Initiative)

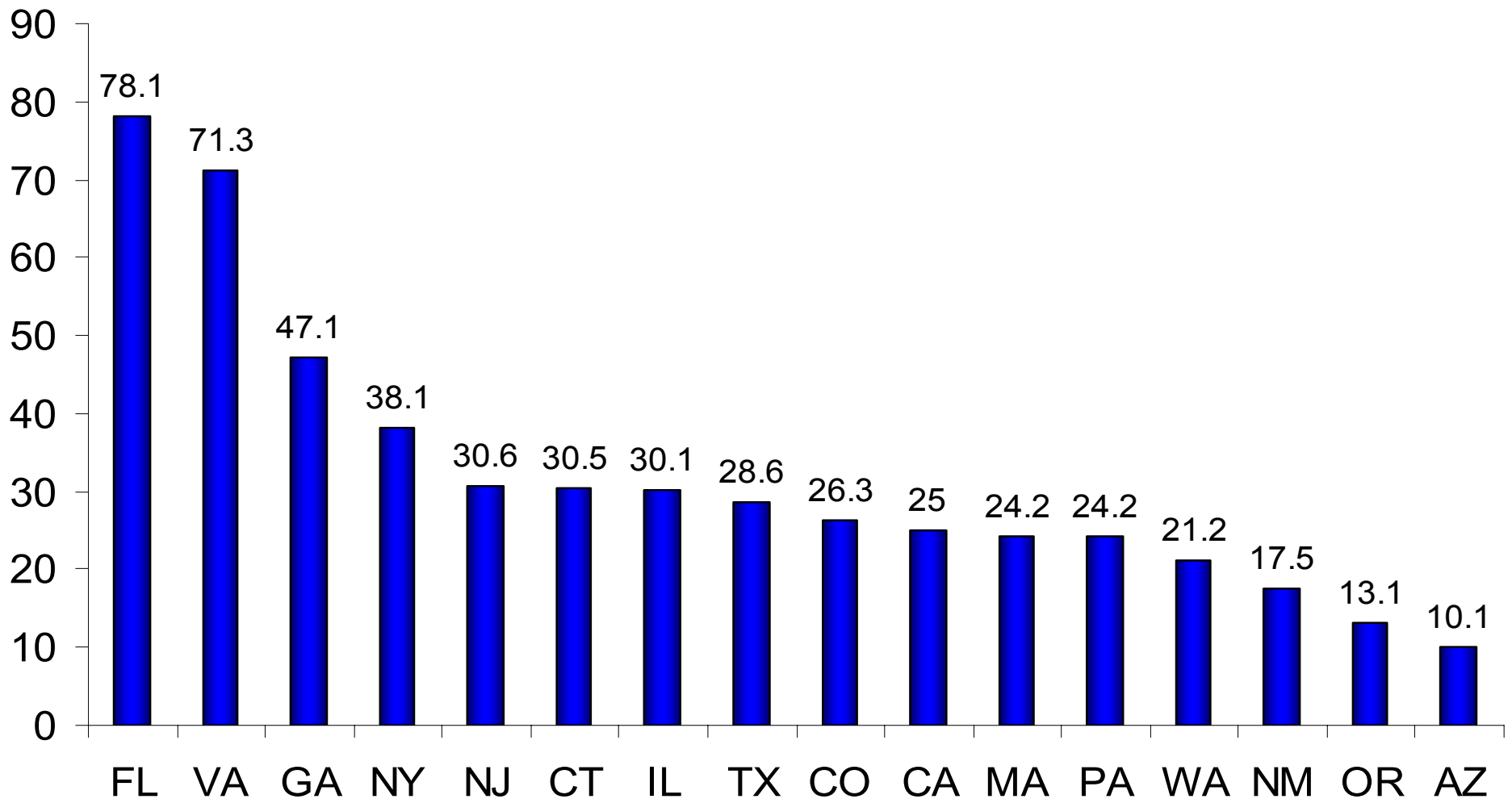


Figure 7: Florida AP Passing Scores- Hispanics and African Americans, 1999-2008

