

STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

2007-2008



“Building a Brighter Future for All Students”

Gadsden County Schools

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(Revised 2007-2008)

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DEFINITIONS

- (1) Approved Course of Study – An approved course of study is one that is:
 - a. In a program listed in Chapter 1003, Florida Statutes;
 - b. An educational activity that constitutes a part of the instructional program approved by the School Board;
 - c. Conducted under the supervision of an instructional staff member as defined in Section 6A-1.0501, State Board of Education Rules; and
 - d. Listed in the “Course Code Directory”, which is a document published from time to time by the Florida Department of Education, and which is hereby incorporated as a part of this rule. Copies of the “Course Code Directory” may be obtained from the Superintendent’s office or from the Florida Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida.
- (2) A school day for any group of students is that portion of the day in which school is actually in session and shall comprise not less than 5 net hours, excluding intermissions, for all grades above the third; not less than 4 net hours for the first three grades; and not less than 3 net hours for kindergarten or pre-kindergarten students with disabilities; or the equivalent as calculated on a weekly basis. The net hours specified in the subsection shall consist only of instruction in an approved course of study and shall exclude all non-instructional activities as defined by rules of the State Board of Education. With Board approval, the last three (3) days of the 90-day term, and/or the 180-day term may be designated as final examination days for secondary school students. These final examination days shall consist of no less than 4 net hours, excluding intermissions. The minimum length of the school day herein specified may be decreased under rules which shall be adopted by the state board for double session schools or programs, experimental schools, or schools operating under emergency conditions.
- (3) A full credit, for the purpose of requirements for promotion in grades 9-12 or graduation from high school, means:
 - a. A minimum of 135 hours of bona fide instruction in a designated approved course of study which contains student performance standards as provided by Section 1003.436, Florida Statutes, or
 - b. The equivalent of six semester hours of college credit earned through dual enrollment as provided by Section 1007.271, Florida Statutes.

In order to be awarded a full credit, a student must have:

- c. Been in attendance for instruction for at least 135 hours (excluding excused absences pursuant to Section 1003.436, Florida Statutes, for which missed work has been made up) in either the regular class, or in an activity related to the instructional outcomes of one or more of the classes missed, and made up all class work and homework missed as required by the school where he/she is enrolled, or
- d. Made up all class time and work missed to the satisfaction of the principal of the school where he/she is enrolled; and has demonstrated, by performance on tests

and other measures required by the school, mastery of the student performance standards in the course of study.

- (4) One-half credit is defined as one-half of the requirements set forth herein.

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION AND ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT IN GRADES K-12

- (1) No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion. Each student must participate in the statewide assessment tests required by s.1008.22. A student not meeting the specified levels of performance in reading, writing, mathematics, and/or science as defined herein, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessment to determine the nature of the student's difficulties and areas of academic need. Based upon the results of statewide assessments or based on teacher recommendation, a student who is substantially deficient in reading, mathematics, science, and/or writing skills will be given intensive instruction following the identification of the deficiency. Intensive instruction may include, but is not limited to, participation in tutoring, mentoring, or curriculum modification. The student's proficiencies will be reassessed at the beginning of the following grade, and, if any deficiency is still present, the student will be given additional intensive instruction different from the previous year that takes into account the student's learning style on an ongoing basis until the deficiency has been remediated, or he/she graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory attendance.

- (2) The district's Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative will be made available to all K-3 students who are at risk of retention as identified by its assessment system that measures phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The services, which are grounded in the State of Florida reading curriculum, will be provided during regular school hours in addition to regular reading instruction. Each elementary school shall regularly assess the reading ability of each K-3 student.

- (3) The district school board shall assist schools and teachers to implement reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in improving reading among low performing readers. The parent of any student must be immediately notified in writing if his/her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading. The notification must include a description and explanation of the services currently being provided to the child and the proposed supplemental services and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency. Strategies must be included for parents to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency. The parent will be notified if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for "Good Cause."

- (4) Good Cause exemptions shall apply only to a student in grades 1-8 who has not met certain requirements for promotion to the next higher grade. Good Cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

- a. A student with limited English proficiency who has had less than two (2) years of instruction in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL);
- b. A student with a disability whose individual education plan indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule;
- c. A student who demonstrates an acceptable level of performance on a district and State approved alternative standardized reading assessment;
- d. A student who demonstrates, through a student portfolio, that he/she is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery on the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the FCAT;
- e. A student who demonstrates through a portfolio that promotion requirements have been met in other applicable subject areas;
- f. A student with a disability, who has been previously retained in the K-3 grade group, who participates in the FCAT, and who has an individual education plan or a 504 plan that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than 2 years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading;
- g. A K-3 student who has received intensive remediation in reading for 2 or more years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and/or mathematics, and who was previously retained in the K-3 grade group for 2 or more years; A 4-8 student who has received intensive remediation in reading and/or mathematics for 2 or more years in the 4-8 grade group but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and/or mathematics and who was previously retained for 2 or more years in the 4-8 grade group or combined retentions of 3 years in the K-8 grade group;

A student promoted under either of the conditions in section “g” must have met other applicable promotion requirements. Additionally, the student must be provided intensive reading and/or mathematics instruction in an altered instructional day based upon a plan (AIP/IEP/MSSP/LEP) that includes individually specific diagnostic information and specific reading and/or mathematics strategies for the student.

- (5) Request for good cause exemptions for a student who demonstrates acceptable performance in reading through alternative standardized reading assessment, or through a student portfolio of Sunshine State Standards mastery, shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- a. Documentation shall be submitted from the student’s teacher to the school principal indicating that the promotion of the student is appropriate and is based upon the student’s academic record. In order to minimize paperwork requirements, such documentation shall consist only of the current AIP/IEP, report card, or student portfolio.
- b. The school principal shall review and discuss the request with the teacher and make a determination as to whether the student should be promoted or retained. If the school principal determines that the student should be promoted,

the school principal shall make such recommendation in writing to the district school superintendent. The superintendent shall accept or reject the school principal's recommendation in writing.

- c. In each case of promotion based on "good cause", the student's report card should indicate "grade placement by alternative assignment." Parents should be notified formally in writing that their child is being alternatively assigned to the next higher grade, the reason(s) for the assignment, and the name of the principal who approved the placement. A copy of this notification should be placed in the student's cumulative guidance record.
- (6) A Limited English Proficient (LEP) student is required to meet the same standards for promotion/graduation as non-LEP student unless the LEP student has been enrolled in the ESOL program less than 2 years. In such case the promotion requirements are waived. A LEP student must receive language arts/English instruction through ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). A LEP student may not be failed if instructional strategies, materials, and testing have not been appropriately modified and documented to meet his/her needs. A student cannot be retained based solely on English language proficiency or based on the results of any single assessment instrument. Promotion of a LEP student in any grade other than grade 3, who has not met district criteria for promotion, must be based on the recommendation of the AIP/LEP committee. A LEP student may be retained only through the action of A LEP committee.
 - (7) The assignment of a student in grades K-8 to a higher grade level which results in the student's skipping of a grade, or part of a grade, should be made only on the basis of exceptionally high achievement by the student and evidence that the student will benefit more from the instructional program at the higher grade level. The probable long-range academic, social and emotional effects of the decision should be considered. The principal has the responsibility for recommending such assignment. A student will not be accelerated without parental consent and approval of the Superintendent. The student's report should be noted to indicate, "accelerated grade placement." Parent(s) should be notified in writing that their child is receiving an accelerated grade placement to the next high grade, the reasons(s) for the assignment, and the name of the principal who initiated and approved the placement. A copy of the notification should be placed in the student's cumulative guidance record.
 - (8) Any student (grades 3-8) who is currently retained because of one (1) course failure and/or failure of one (1) FCAT section for the same course will be allowed to take courses at the next higher grade level while simultaneously being remediated for the course and/or FCAT section failed if the FCAT SSS Level 1 score is no more that fifty (50) points below Level 2 or the FCAT NRT score is no less than thirty percent (30%). This is a concept referred to as "Bridging". If the student is retained for failing two (2) or more courses and/or two or more sections of FCAT, the student may not be bridged. Also, if the student fails one course and not the same corresponding section on the FCAT, the student may not be bridged. If a student is bridged and has to transfer to another school, the transfer will be approved on a space available basis. Upon meeting the criteria

for promotion, as determined by the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled, the student may be promoted to the next higher grade.

- (9) Any student (K-8 except 3rd grade) who has been retained in his/her current grade and who meets promotion requirements by demonstrating proficiency/mastery, may be reassigned at any time during the next school year to the next higher grade, upon recommendation of the principal, in consultation with teacher(s), and approval of the Superintendent. This reassignment should occur at the end of a grading period if such assignment results in the student being transferred to another school. To be eligible for mid-year promotion after November 1, a student in **third grade** must demonstrate mastery of reading skills consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade. Evidence of demonstrated mastery is as follows: (1) successful completion of portfolio elements that meet state criteria **or** (2) satisfactory performance on a locally-selected standardized assessment.

The student portfolio must meet the following requirements:

- be selected by the student's teacher.
- Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and include only student work that has been independently produced in the classroom.
- Include evidence of master of the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 Reading FCAT. For each benchmark, there must be five examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of "c" or better.
- Include evidence of beginning mastery of fourth grade benchmarks that are assessed by the grade 4 Reading FCAT. This includes multiple choice, short response, extended response items and passages that are approximately 50% literary text and 50% information text, and that are between 100-900 words with an average of 375 words. For each benchmark, there must be two examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of "c" or better; and
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

To promote a student mid-year using a locally-selected standardized assessment, there must be evidence that the student scored at or above grade level in reading comprehension, as demonstrated by standard scores or percentiles, consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade.

Students that have been in the third grade for three consecutive years (Tier 3 students) must be provided grade level work for the subject areas that are not at risk. Districts must provide all Tier 3 students with intervention instruction and the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting.

- (10) The teacher and/or the student study team must carefully evaluate any student who appears to be having difficulty meeting course requirements for promotion. Any student who is retained should receive counseling services and be referred to the student study

team for further evaluation by appropriately certificated specialists.

- (11) The school will annually report in writing, to the parent of each student, the progress being made by the student toward achieving state and district grade level expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, science, social studies, and mathematics. The school will also report to the parent, the results of the student's performance on each state assessment test. The evaluation of each student's progress must be based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information. Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format adopted by the district school board. The District School Board must annually publish in the local newspaper, and report in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1st of each year, the following information on the prior school year: 1. The provisions of this section relating to public school student progression and the district school board's policies and procedures on student retention and promotion. 2. By grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3 through 10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the reading portion of the FCAT. 3. By grade the number and percentage of all students retained in grades 3 through 10. 4. Information on the total number of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause. 5. Any revisions to the district school board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year.
- (12) Schools shall provide for the frequent monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance. This monitoring should take the form of daily, weekly or chapter exams; teacher observations; or any district assessment. Parents or adult students will be notified in writing at any time during a grading period when it is apparent that the student may fail or is doing unsatisfactory work in any course or grade assignment. Parents or adult students will also be notified in writing at any time during the school year when it is apparent that the student may be retained and may not be eligible for a "good cause" exemption. An acknowledgment of such notification should be obtained and retained by the school. The opportunity for a conference with the teacher, principal or other school official is available to any parent or adult student. Notification to the parent or adult student as specified herein shall be deemed to be directory only, and the failure to so notify the parent or adult student shall not negate or invalidate the action taken.
- (13) Students in grades 1 (one) through 10 (ten) are required to be assessed in reading and mathematics. Science and writing will be assessed at selected grade levels. Based upon the results of statewide assessments, or teacher recommendation, a student who is substantially deficient in reading, writing, science, or mathematics skills will be provided an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) and given intensive instruction following the identification of the deficiency. The student's deficiency will be reassessed at the beginning of the next school year, and, if any deficiency still exists, the student will be given additional intensive instruction until the deficiency has been remediated, or the student graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory school attendance. Remedial instruction provided during high school may not be in lieu of English and mathematics credits required for graduation.

- (14) A personalized middle school success plan will be developed and implemented for each entering sixth (6th) grade student who scored below Level 3 in reading on the most recently administered FCAT. The plan must be followed until the student completes the eighth (8th) grade or scores at Level 3 or above in reading on the FCAT. The success plan must identify educational goals and intermediate benchmarks for the student in the core curriculum areas; be based upon academic performance data and identification of strengths and weaknesses; include academic intervention strategies and frequency of monitoring, provide innovative methods to promote advancement, and other interventions that have been shown to accelerate the learning process. The success plan must be incorporated in the student's AIP, I.E.P, 504 Plan, and/or ESOL Plan as appropriate. Each principal of a school with grades 6, 7, or 8 shall designate a certified staff member at the school to administer the development and implementation.
- (15) The school will develop the Academic Improvement Plan in consultation with the student's parent(s) immediately following the identification of the deficiency. The plan must implement improvements designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency. If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading the academic improvement plan shall identify the student's specific areas of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary; the desired levels of performance in these areas; the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. The District School Board shall assist schools and teachers to implement research-based reading activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students. The parents will be notified of the student's progress in correcting the deficiency at the end of each semester until the deficiency has been corrected. Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated in accordance with the academic improvement plan, the student may be retained.
- (16) It is the intent of the Gadsden County School Board to implement full accountability in terms of student performance as specified in Section 1008.25, Florida Statutes. If state assessment results are not available by the first day of post-school planning, promotions will be determined based on the other promotional criteria as specified in this Student Progression Plan. These may include, but are not limited to, the student's portfolio, performance on classroom work, teacher observation, and student performance on teacher-made test and district assessments.
- (17) Teachers of courses in Language Arts, Reading, English, Mathematics, Science, or Social Studies for grade levels one (1) through ten (10) are required to maintain an individual student portfolio that serves as official documentation that the student has or has not mastered Sunshine State Standards for that specific course.

PROMOTION CRITERIA FOR A STUDENT IN GRADES K-3

In order to be promoted to the next higher grade within grades K-3, a student must meet the following requirements for the grade in which he/she is enrolled:

Kindergarten to Grade 1.

A student must receive at least a “satisfactory” grade in language, reading, mathematics, and writing, and demonstrate progress in science, and social studies. Consideration should also be given to social growth, work habits, and school Readiness Uniform Screening.

Grade 1 to Grade 2 and Grade 2 to Grade 3.

A student must receive passing grades in the areas reading, language, and mathematics, and demonstrate progress in process writing, science, and social studies.

Grade 3 to Grade 4

A student must receive passing grades in the areas of reading, language, mathematics, science, and process writing. Florida Statute 1008.25 (5) (b) requires that a grade 3 student must also score at or above Level 2 on FCAT Reading or at or above the forty-fifth (45th) percentile on FCAT Reading NRT or another district approved reading test.

A 3rd grade student who is deficient in reading at the end of the school year, as demonstrated by not scoring at level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment test (FCAT) must be retained unless exempted for “good cause”.

Required Services for Certain Retained Third Grade Students

- (1) Each school will review all AIP’s for all retained third grade students who did not score above level 1 on FCAT Reading and did not meet one of the good cause exemptions. Additional support and services will be offered to remedy the identified deficiencies. Additional support and services may take the form of supplemental tutoring in research based reading services; a “Read at Home Plan outlined in a parental contract, including participation in “Families Building Better Readers Workshops” and regular parent-guided home reading; and/or a mentor or tutor with specialized training in reading..
- (2) In addition to the above, retained third grade students will be provided intensive instructional services and support to address their identified area of reading deficiency including a minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted researched based instruction and other strategies including but not limited to: Small group instruction, reduced teacher-student ratios; more frequent progress monitoring, tutoring or mentoring; transitional classes (Bridge), extended school day, week, or year, and/or summer reading camps.
- (3) For any Tier 3 students (grade 3 students who have been retained 2 or more years) who scored at Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT and who were retained in grade 3

the prior year, the District School Board shall allocate remedial and supplemental instruction resources to students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion consistent with the district school board's plan for student progression required in paragraph (2)(b) by establishing an Intensive Acceleration Class (IAC). The IAC must have a reduced teacher-student ratio; provide uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of the student contact time each day and incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 Sunshine State Standards in other core subject areas; use a reading program that is research-based with proven results in accelerating student reaching achievement within the same school year that is different from the previous years program; provide research-based intensive language and vocabulary instruction, including use of a speech language therapist; and weekly progress monitoring. The progress of students in this class will be reported to the Department of Education at the end of the first semester.

- (4) All efforts will be made to ensure that third grade students have high-performing teachers as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals.

PROMOTION CRITERIA FOR A STUDENT IN GRADES 4 THROUGH 8

In order to be promoted to the next higher grade, a student in grades 4 through 8 must receive passing grades in the areas of reading and/or language process writing (where applicable), mathematics and science. A student must also score:

- (1) *At or above Level 2* on FCAT Mathematics, or at or above the *fortieth (40th)* percentile on FCAT Mathematics NRT or achieve a gain score on FCAT Mathematics representing at least a year's growth. In lieu of the FCAT mathematics requirement, a student may demonstrate mastery through the use of an approved mathematics portfolio or through a district/state approved alternative assessment. [and]
- (2) *At or above Level 2* on FCAT Reading, or at or above the *fortieth (40th)* percentile on FCAT Reading NRT or achieve a gain score on FCAT Reading representing at least a year's growth. In lieu of the FCAT reading requirement, a student may demonstrate mastery through the use of an approved reading portfolio or through a district/state approved alternative assessment. [and]
- (3) *At or above Level 2* on FCAT Science for a student in grades five (5) or eight (8). In lieu of the FCAT science requirement, a student may demonstrate mastery through the use of a science portfolio or through a district/state approved alternative assessment. [and]
- (4) A *3.5 or higher* on the FCAT Writes for students in grades four (4) and eight (8). Alternatively, a student's writing portfolio demonstrating mastery may be used in lieu of this requirement.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MIDDLE GRADES PROMOTION --

Florida Statute 1003.4156 requires the following:

(1) Beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2006-2007 school year, promotion from a school composed of middle grades 6, 7, and 8 requires that:

a. The student must successfully complete academic courses as follows:

1. Three middle school or higher courses in English. These courses shall emphasize literature, composition, and technical text.
2. Three middle school or higher courses in mathematics. Each middle school must offer at least one high school level mathematics course for which students may earn high school credit.
3. Three middle school or higher courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.
4. Three middle school or higher courses in science.
5. One course in career and education planning to be completed in 7th or 8th grade. The course must include career exploration using CHOICES for the 21st Century or a comparable cost-effective program; must include educational planning using the online student advising system known as Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students at the Internet website FACTS.org; and shall result in the completion of a personalized academic and career plan.

Each school must hold a parent meeting either in the evening or on a weekend to inform parents about the course curriculum and activities. Each student shall complete an electronic personal education plan that must be signed by the student; the student's instructor, guidance counselor, or academic advisor; and the student's parent.

b. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 on FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year. Placement of Level 2 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be determined by diagnosis of reading needs. The department shall provide guidance on appropriate strategies for diagnosing and meeting the varying instructional needs of students reading below grade level. Reading courses shall be designed and offered pursuant to the comprehensive reading plan required by s. 1011.62(8).

c. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year, which may be integrated into the student's required mathematics course.

(2) Students in grade 6, grade 7, or grade 8 who are not enrolled in schools with a middle grades configuration are subject to the promotion requirements of this section.

PROMOTION CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12

In order to be promoted from grade *9 to grade 10*, a student must have accumulated at least five (5) credits.

In order to be promoted from grade *10 to grade 11*, a student must have accumulated at least eleven (11) credits.

In order to be promoted from grade *11 to grade 12*, a student must have accumulated at least seventeen (17) credits.

In order to participate in the commencement/graduation exercise, a student must have completed all graduation requirements; which include achieving a passing score on all applicable sections of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, achieving an overall GPA of 2.00, and earning the required number of credits based on the diploma option selected.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 9 FOR THE FIRST TIME DURING THE 2007-2008 SCHOOL YEAR

Except as otherwise authorized pursuant to s. 1003.429, beginning with students entering their first year of high school in the 2007-2008 school year, graduation requires the successful completion of a minimum of 24 credits, an International Baccalaureate curriculum, or an Advanced International Certificate of Education curriculum. Students must be advised of eligibility requirements for state scholarship programs and postsecondary admissions. Florida Statutes, 1003.428, General Requirements for High School Graduation, revised.

- (1) The 24 credits may be earned through applied, integrated, and combined courses approved by the Department of Education and shall be distributed as follows:
 - a. Sixteen core curriculum credits:
 1. Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature.
 2. Four credits in mathematics, one of which must be Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics course. School districts are encouraged to set specific goals to increase enrollments in, and successful completion of, geometry and Algebra II.
 3. Three credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component.
 4. Three credits in social studies as follows: one credit in American history; one credit in world history; one-half credit in economics; and one-half credit in American government.

5. One credit in fine or performing arts, which may include Art, Dance, Music, Drama/Theatre, Speech and Debate.
 6. One credit in physical education to include ½ credit in physical education and ½ credit in Personal Fitness (which includes integration of health). Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education if the student passes a competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or better. The competency test on personal fitness must be developed by the Department of Education. A district school board may not require that the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of one semester with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, in a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a dance class shall satisfy one-half credit in physical education or one-half credit in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Completion of 2 years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class, a significant component of which is drills, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan.
- b. Eight credits in majors, minors, or electives:
1. Four credits in a major area of interest, such as sequential courses in a career and technical program, fine and performing arts, or academic content area, selected by the student as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156. Students may revise major areas of interest each year as part of annual course registration processes and should update their education plan to reflect such revisions.
 2. Four credits in elective courses selected by the student as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156. These credits may be combined to allow for a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest, elective courses, intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses,
 - a. Minor areas of interest are composed of three credits selected by the student as part of the education plan required by Florida Statute 1003.4156 and approved by the District School Board.
 - b. Elective courses are selected by the student in order to pursue a complete education program as described in s. 1001.41(3) and to meet eligibility requirements for scholarships.
 - c. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 on FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year. Placement of Level 2 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content

area course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be determined by diagnosis of reading needs.

- d. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year. These courses may be taught through applied, integrated, or combined courses.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO ENTERED GRADE 9 IN 2004-2005, 2005-2006, AND 2006-2007

A student who enters grade 9 in the 2004-2005 school year and thereafter may select one of the following 3 options for receiving a standard high school diploma. Graduation options 2 and 3 are accelerated graduation programs.

- (1) Prior to selecting Option 2 or Option 3, both the student and his/her parent(s) must meet with school personnel.
 - A signed parental consent must be submitted to the principal and guidance counselor.
 - The student shall have achieved at least an FCAT reading scale score of 300, an FCAT mathematics scale score of 300 and an FCAT Writing+ score of 300. In accordance with s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ test will become a graduation requirement beginning in 2010. This means that a student enrolled in Grade 9 for the first time in the 2006-2007 school year must achieve a passing score of at least 300 on the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ assessment. Any student who selected an accelerated graduation program before July 1, 2004 may continue that program. All statutory program requirements that were applicable when the student made the program choice shall remain applicable to the student as long as the student continues that program.
- (2) A student who entered a Florida public school after grade 9 upon transfer from a private school or another state or was prevented from choosing a graduation option due to illness during grade 9 shall select one of the graduation options prior to the end of grade 9 or the end of a student's first semester of grade 10.

Option 1 – The four-year 24-credit graduation option:

- (1) To receive a standard diploma under Option 1, a student must:
 - a. Earn passing scores on the FCAT or earn scores on the SAT or ACT that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT as defined by the Florida D.O.E..
 - b. Earn a 2.0 cumulative un-weighted grade point average as prescribed by Florida Statutes.
 - c. Earn a minimum of 24 credits as follows:
 - English - 4 credits
(With major concentration in composition and literature)
 - Mathematics - 3 Credits
(Must include at least one of the following:)

- Algebra 1
- Algebra 1a and Algebra 1b
- Applied Mathematics I and Applied Mathematics II
- Integrated Mathematics I and Integrated Mathematics II

- Science - 3 Credits
(including two credits in courses with laboratory components)
- American History - 1 Credit
(including instruction in African and African-American History)
- World History - 1 Credit
(including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major political systems and holocaust education)
- Economics - 0.5 Credit
(including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major economics systems)
- American Government - 0.5 Credit
(including the study of the Constitution of the United States and the study of Florida government, including study of the State Constitution, the three branches of state government, and municipal and county government.)
- Physical Education - 1.0 Credit
(including assessment, improvement and maintenance of personal fitness)

An adaptive Physical Education I.E.P. will satisfy this requirement for those exceptional education and/or 504 students seeking a standard diploma, who cannot be assigned to Personal Fitness.

Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level, for two full seasons, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education if the student passes a state developed personal fitness competency test with a score of "C" or better.

Completion of one semester with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class or in a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity shall satisfy a one-half credit requirement in physical education but not the personal fitness requirement.

Completion of one (1) semester with a grade of "C" or better in a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) class where drills are a significant component, shall satisfy a one-half (1/2) credit requirement in physical education but not the personal fitness requirement.

- Life Management Skills - 0.5 Credit

(to include consumer education, positive emotional development, nutrition, information and instruction on breast cancer detection and breast self-examination; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; drug education; prevention of human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV), acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and other sexually transmissible diseases; instruction stressing the benefits of sexual abstinence and consequences of teenage pregnancy; and the hazards of smoking)

- Practical Arts Career Education or Exploratory Career Education and/or Performing Fine Arts - 1 Credit

(any vocational secondary or eligible postsecondary course; may be used to satisfy the practical arts requirement). This requirement may be satisfied in one of the following ways:

- ♦ One credit in practical arts career education or exploratory career education; or
 - ♦ One credit in performing fine arts to be selected from music, dance, drama, painting; Or sculpture, a course that requires manual dexterity; or a course in speech and debate; or
 - ♦ One-half credit in practical arts or exploratory career education and one-half credit in performing fine arts.
- Electives – 8 ½ Credits. Elective courses may include up to one-half credit in Volunteer School/Community Service and one-half credit in Volunteer Public Service.
 - A student who enters grade 9 in the 2006-2007 school year or thereafter must achieve an acceptable score (as defined by the Florida State Board of Education) on FCAT Writes.

Total Required - 24 Credits

- d. Of the courses required for graduation, no student may be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in any Level I course except as an elective unless the student's assessment indicates that a more rigorous course of study would be inappropriate. A written assessment of need must be included in a student's AIP or IEP.
- e. A cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, for all required credits, including electives, shall be a prerequisite for graduation. All course grades will be included in the calculation for the cumulative GPA with the exception of courses re-taken for grade forgiveness. Grades of "D" or "F" can only be replaced with a grade of "C" or higher or both will be counted in calculating GPA.
 1. If a student's current or cumulative grade point average drops below 2.0 for any grading period, the principal shall notify the parent or guardian that the student is at risk of not meeting the requirements for graduation, and explain the options available to the student.

2. The principal shall provide opportunities for the student to improve his/her grade point average. Such opportunities may include, but not necessarily be limited to:
 - a. Special assistance, including individual or group tutoring;
 - b. Special classes designed to assist the student in developing appropriate study skills.
 - c. Summer school courses, in which the student may retake a course failed.

- f. No student may be granted credit toward graduation for enrollment in the following courses or programs:
 1. More than a total of 8 ½ elective credits;
 2. More than one credit in exploratory career courses; and
 3. More than three credits in practical arts home economics.

- g. All courses required herein for graduation must be taken in grades 9-12; however, when authorized by the Course Code Directory approved by the State Board of Education, a high school course may be taken for graduation credit by a student enrolled in the eighth grade or lower.

- h. JROTC course substitution--A student in grades 9-12 who completes a JROTC Program, may substitute credit for a required course as follows:
 1. One-half (.5) credit in Life Management Skills upon completion of JROTC Leadership Education and Training courses I and II.
 2. One (1) credit in Practical Arts upon completion of the JROTC program courses I-IV.

- (2) Any student who meets district credit requirements but has not passed the Grade 10 FCAT and/or achieved the district minimum grade point average may be awarded a Certificate of Completion; however, any student who is entitled to a Certificate of Completion may, as an alternative, elect to remain in the secondary school on either full-time or part-time basis for up to one (1) additional year and receive special instruction designed to remedy his/her identified deficiencies. **If a student elects to receive a Certificate of Completion and later decides to pursue a Standard Diploma or GED, the student must pursue the diploma through the adult education program only.**

- (3) Any grade 12 student who has passed the Grade 10 FCAT, but who has not met district credit and/or GPA requirements may attend summer school or return to regular school to complete requirements for a diploma.

- (4) If a student does not pass the Grade 10 FCAT, the district shall provide special instructional assistance for the student. Such special assistance may be in one or more of the following forms:

- a. Informal consultation between student and teacher;
- b. Tutoring of one student by another student;
- c. Structured or non-structured independent study;
- d. Special classroom study of short duration (1 to 5 days);
- e. Special classroom study of longer duration; or
- f. Such other appropriate form as determined by the principal of the school where the student is enrolled.

Option 2 – The three-year, 18 credit standard college preparatory graduation option:

- (1) To receive a standard diploma under Option 2, a student must:
- a. Earn passing scores on the FCAT or earn scores on the ACT or SAT that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT as defined by the Florida D.O.E.
 - b. Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the college preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option.
 - c. Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.5 points, or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the college preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option.
 - d. Earn a minimum of 18 credits as follows:
 - 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
 - 3 credits in mathematics (Algebra 1 or higher that qualify for state university admission)
 - 3 credits in natural sciences (two of which must include a lab component)
 - 3 credits in social science (American History, World History, American Government, and Economics)
 - 2 credits in the same foreign language (If the student is a native speaker of or can otherwise demonstrate competency in a language other than English, the student may replace the language requirement with two (2) credits in other academic courses.)
 - 3 credits in electives
- (2) At least 6 of the 18 credits required for completion of this program must be received in classes that are honors, dual enrollment, advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, specifically listed or identified by the Department of Education as being rigorous, or weighted by the school board for class ranking purposes.

Option 3 – The three-year, 18-credit career preparatory graduation option:

- (1) To receive a standard diploma under Option 3, a student must
- a. Earn passing scores on the FCAT or earn scores on the SAT or ACT that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT as defined in by the Florida D.O.E.
 - b. Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the career preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option.
 - c. Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points, or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the career preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation.
 - d. Earn a minimum of 18 credits as follows:
 - 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
 - 3 credits in math (must include Algebra I, or Ia & Ib)
 - 3 credits in natural sciences (two of which must include a lab component)
 - 3 credits in social science (American History, World History, American Government, Economics)
 - 3 credits in a single vocational or career education program, three credits in career and technical certificate dual enrollment courses, or five credits in vocational or career education courses
 - 2 credits in electives unless five credits are earned in vocational or career courses.

If, at the end of grade 10, a student is not on track to meet the credit, assessment, or grade-point-average requirements of the accelerated graduation option selected, the school shall notify the student and parent of the following:

- (a) The requirements that the student is not currently meeting.
- (b) The specific performance necessary in grade 11 for the student to meet the accelerated graduation requirements.
- (c) The right of the student to change to the 4-year program.

A student who selected one of the accelerated 3-year graduation options shall automatically move to the 4-year program if the student:

- (a) Exercises his or her right to change to the 4-year program;
- (b) Fails to earn 5 credits by the end of grade 9 or fails to earn 11 credits by the end of grade 10;
- (c) Does not achieve a score of 4 or higher on the grade 10 FCAT Writing assessment; or
- (d) By the end of grade 11 does not meet the FCAT, grade point average, or credit requirements.

A student shall be required to take the grade 10 FCAT a total of three times without earning a passing score in order to use the scores on an alternative assessment. This requirement shall not apply to a student who is a new student to the public school system in grade 12.

PROMOTION WITHIN GRADES K-12 FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

Most students with a disability are required to meet regular standards with appropriate accommodations. Promotion of a student with a disability who has not met district criteria for promotion, requires a current IEP indicating that a disabling condition exists, and the disabling condition impacts his/her progress in the general curriculum to such an extent that special standards are being followed, and the student is therefore exempt from general promotion requirements. **Students with disabilities may not be retained if appropriate accommodations, specified on the IEP, have not been provided.**

A student who has been properly identified as educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, hearing impaired, specific learning disabled, emotionally handicapped, profoundly handicapped, physically impaired or language impaired may be exempt. The IEP must indicate that the disabling condition of the student impacts progress in the general curriculum to such an extent that special standards will be followed. A student who has been classified as gifted, hospital/homebound, visually impaired or speech impaired may not be exempt, except when dually enrolled in another exceptional program as described above. For a student on special standards, the IEP committee will determine promotion/retention requirements.

(1) ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS OF INSTRUCTION AND GRADING (PK-12)

The following modifications, if specified on the IEP, may be used in EITHER the regular classroom AND/OR the ESE classroom and will result in ESE grading and/or special credit leading to a special diploma:

- a. Lower the content level to the student's performance level, or
- b. Use special performance standards or ESE curriculum standards for instruction.

The following accommodations authorized by the Department of Education and specified in the student's IEP will not result in ESE grading on the report card or affect the type of credit earned for a standard diploma:

- a. An increase or decrease in the instructional time.
- b. Variations in instructional strategies such as:
 1. Change of presentation technique
 2. Decrease of assignment quantity, without lowering comprehension or difficulty, and/or
 3. Oral presentation/evaluation methods as opposed to independent reading/written tests.
- c. Teacher instruction or student response through special communication system(s).
- d. Exceptional student certification required of the student's teacher.

- e. Modification of test administration procedures and other evaluation systems to accommodate the student's disability.
- f. Modification of the outcomes and student performance standards for vocational courses or programs based on specific requirements for the individual's vocational needs

(2) **MODIFICATIONS OF THE STATE STUDENT ASSESSMENT TEST INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS AND OTHER ELIGIBLE HANDICAPPED STUDENTS AS DEFINED BY SECTION 504 (PK-12)**

- a. A student enrolled in the program for the gifted is not eligible for any testing modifications, unless the/she is dually enrolled in another exceptional program.
- b. The modifications as outlined in (1) above are authorized for any student who has been determined to be an eligible exceptional student pursuant to rules 6A-6.0301 and 6A-6.0331, FAC, and has a current IEP, or who has been determined to be a handicapped person pursuant to rule 6A-19.001(6), FAC., and has a current accommodation plan.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

(1) **STANDARD DIPLOMA**

Requirements to receive a regular standard diploma for any exceptional student will be the same as for a general education student.

(2) **SPECIAL DIPLOMA – Option I**

a. A student who began 9th grade in the 1999-2000 school year will be required to meet the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma when they graduate in the year 2002-2003, and beyond. The requirements for a student identified as being educable mentally-handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, hearing impaired, specific learning disabled, emotionally handicapped, profoundly handicapped, physically impaired, or language impaired are:

1. Demonstration of proficiency at the independent, supported, or participatory level of each Sunshine State Standard for Special Diploma prescribed in Rule 6A-1.094019(1)(h) as determined through the IEP process; and
2. Completion of twenty four (24) course credits for a special diploma, for independent and supported levels, and sixteen (16) credits for the participatory level; and
3. Achieve a grade point average of 2.0 or above; and
4. Meet the Gadsden County course/credit requirements as follows:

a. **Independent Level**

Reading or Learning Strategies	1
Social Studies	2
Language Arts	3
Mathematics	3
Science/Health	3
Life Management	0.5
Vocational Education	4
Physical Education	1
Electives	7.5
Total Credits	24

b. **Supported Level**

Communications	4
Academics	4
Personal and Home Living Skills	4
Leisure/Recreation	4
Vocational	4
Electives	4
Total Credits	24

c. **Participatory Level**

Cognitive and Linguistic Skills	4
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Life Sustaining and Environmental Interaction Skills	8
Leisure/Recreation Skills	8
Development-Functional Motor Skills	4
Total Credits	24

b. A student who began the ninth grade prior to the 1999-2000 school year, will be required to meet the Student Performance Standards for Special Diploma. The requirements are:

1. Mastery of the Student Performance Standards based on their disability.
2. Completion of 24 course credits for a special diploma.
3. Achieve a grade point average of 2.0 or above.
4. Meet the Gadsden County course/credit requirements as follows:

Educable Mentally Handicapped, Hearing Impaired, Language Impaired, physically Impaired, Emotionally Handicapped, and Specific Learning Disabled:

Language Arts	3
Mathematics	3
Science/Health	3
Social Studies	3
Vocational Education	4
Physical Education	1
Electives	7
Total Credits	24

Trainable Mentally Handicapped and Profoundly Mentally Handicapped:

Communications	4
Academics	3
Personal and Home Living Skills	4
Vocational Education	4
Leisure/Recreation Skills	4
Electives	5
Total Credits	24

NOTE:Gadsden County has a multi-district agreement with Leon County to provide Hearing Impaired students with educational services.

NOTE:Parents of each exceptional student eligible to earn a Special Diploma shall be notified of the options

(3) SPECIAL DIPLOMA Option 2 Employment and Community Competencies

- a. The student has achieved all the annual goals and short-term objectives which were specified on the IEP/Transition Plan related to the employment and community competencies as designated in the graduation plan
- b. Special Diploma – Option 2 Eligibility Criteria
 - 1. The student must be in the Exceptional Education Program
 - 2. The student must be at least 16 years old.
 - 3. The student must be recommended by the IEP Committee.
- c. Special Diploma – Option 2 Graduation Requirements
 - 1. The student must be between the ages of 18 – 22 years old at the time of graduation
 - 2. The student must be enrolled in a high school program for a minimum of one semester to work on the Graduation Plan Competencies.
 - 3. The student must have documented full time (a minimum of 30 hours per week) paid employment for a minimum of one semester (90 days) as stated in the Graduation Plan. Parent/student/guardian must provide transportation to and from job sites. District staff is not responsible for providing transportation to job sites.
 - 4. The student must have mastered the designated competencies of the Graduation Plan.
- d. Option 2 is not based on course credits, grade point average or mastery of the state-developed Student Performance Standards of the Sunshine State Standards.
- e. A student does not have to participate in Florida’s Alternative Assessment Report

(4) OPTIONS TO THE SPECIAL DIPLOMA

- a. An exceptional education student (EMH, TMH, EH, SLD, HI, PI, LI) who has completed required credits but fail to master the appropriate state performance standards and/or achieve the district minimum GPA may be awarded a Special Certificate of Completion.

(5) No restrictions may be applied to prohibit an exceptional student from selecting and moving between the Regular and Special Diploma Options.

- a. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) committee shall document whether a student is pursuing a course of study leading toward a Regular or Special Diploma on the IEP developed during the student’s eighth grade year, or the IEP developed during the year prior to the student’s fourteenth birthday, whichever occurs first. This decision shall be reviewed annually.
- b. Nothing contained in this rule shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of an exceptional student solely to a Special Diploma. The awarding of a special diploma or Special Certificate of Completion does not prevent a student with disabilities from pursuing a standard diploma or from receiving a free appropriate public education until the student reaches the age of 22.

FOREGIVENESS POLICY FOR HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

Forgiveness for required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F” with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. Forgiveness of elective courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F” with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently in another course. **The only exception to these forgiveness policies shall be made for a student in the middle grades who takes any high school course for high school credit and earns a grade of “C”, “D”, or “F”. In such case, the district forgiveness policy must allow the replacement of the grade with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student’s grade point average.** Any course grade not replaced according to this forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation. (F.S. 1003.43[5] e.)

TRANSFER OF CREDITS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

Credits **and/or academic grades** earned in other schools, **home education programs**, or institutions may be transferred to the Gadsden County School System in the following manner and under the following conditions:

- (1) All evidence of work or credits earned at another school, community college, or university offered for acceptance shall be based on an official transcript authenticated by the proper school authority.
- (2) Credits and/or academic grades earned in **any school or home education program** that are **documented by an official transcript shall be accepted at face value. Credits and/or academic grades that are not documented by an official transcript will require that the student be placed at the appropriate sequential course level, and overall performance in classes at the receiving school validates the credits from the previous school or home education program in their entirety.**
- (3) Credits earned in a college or area vocational school may be recognized and applied toward a student's graduation requirements. The same standards for course content and performance that apply to the credits earned in the high school apply to credits earned in a college or area vocational program.
- (4) A student transferring to Gadsden County Schools from another state or district during his/her senior year shall be permitted to graduate under the requirements of the state or district from which he/she transferred. However, such student must meet the requirements prescribed by Section 1008.22(3)(C)(5), Florida Statutes.
- (5) The number of high school credits transferred shall not exceed the number of credits that could have been earned in The Gadsden County School System during the same period of time.

CREDIT EARNED IN TRAVEL-STUDY PROGRAMS

Any student above the ninth grade may earn a maximum of three credits for satisfactory completion of a travel-study program. Based upon a recommendation from the Superintendent, the program must be approved in advance by the School Board. No more than one such credit may be earned during any calendar year. All such credits shall be considered elective credits for purposes of satisfying graduation requirements.

ACADEMIC DUAL ENROLLMENT

- (1) The Academic Dual Enrollment Program allows an eligible high school student to take college-level courses and receive both college credit and credit toward a high school diploma. A student taking college-level courses in the Academic Dual Enrollment Program will not be charged for registration, matriculation, or tuition by Tallahassee Community College (TCC). Textbooks will be provided to dually enrolled students by the School Board and shall remain the property of the Board as specified in Section 1007.27(14) F.S.
- (2) To participate in the Academic Dual Enrollment Program, a student must be currently enrolled in a public secondary school in Gadsden County, must have completed the 9th grade, and must have earned at least a 2.5 un-weighted grade point average.
- (3) The student must submit a completed application for admission.
- (4) The student must submit a recommendation form from his/her principal stating that he/she has the maturity, motivation, dependability and academic ability to enable him/her to achieve satisfactorily at the college level.
- (5) Eligibility in the Academic Dual Enrollment Program requires that the student maintain a cumulative 2.0 grade point average in all TCC courses.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL DUAL ENROLLMENT

- (1) Career and Technical Programs in the Gadsden County School District provide a sequenced academic and technical program linked to TCC. The School Board cooperates with TCC in the implementation of a Tech Prep Program that outlines a jointly approved pathway for a student to articulate from high school program to the college level in a variety of career related programs.
- (2) A participating student must be currently enrolled in a Gadsden County Public School, must have completed the 10th grade, and must have earned at least a 2.0 un-weighted grade point average.
- (3) The student must take the TABE test and score at the appropriate level according to the Florida DOE Curriculum Framework Standards.
- (4) The student must submit a completed application for admission.
- (5) The student must submit a recommendation form from his/her principal stating that he/she has the maturity, motivation, dependability and academic ability to enable him/her to achieve satisfactorily at the college level.

**THE GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (GED) TEST
and
THE GED EXIT OPTION**

- (1) A Gadsden District High School Diploma may be awarded to any student who meets the requirements for the General Education Diploma (GED) Exit Option as defined below:
 - a. Meet eligibility criteria for and be enrolled in an approved dropout prevention/alternative education program in the district;
 - b. Have demonstrated probability for success on the GED tests documented by a practice test or achievement test scores;
 - c. Not graduate before the graduation date of the class with whom they entered kindergarten;
 - d. Pass the FCAT; and
 - e. Pass the GED tests

- (2) Administration of the GED Test shall be in compliance with Section 1003.435, Florida Statutes, and conditions outlined in the contract with the Florida Department of Education.

- (3) Age Requirement.—In order to qualify to take the GED Test, a candidate must be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of examination. However, **under extraordinary circumstances**, a person who is at least sixteen (16) years of age may be permitted to take the examination under the following conditions:
 - a. The candidate must present to the Superintendent’s designee the following:
 1. A written request of the candidate’s parent or guardian for him/her to take the examination; and
 2. Written or oral evidence justifying the need for a waiver of the age requirement which may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - (a) Evidence that the candidate has not, any time during the 60 day period immediately preceding the scheduled time of examination, been enrolled in or attended a regular day school at any level in a program normally leading to a high school diploma. Such students must pass a GED pre-test.
 - (b) Written evidence that the candidate has, for a thirty day period preceding by not more than six months the scheduled date of examination, continuously attended a tax-supported program for preparation for the GED examination. A written statement of the principal or teacher in charge of the program, recommending that the student take the examination shall be included.
 - (c) Evidence that the candidate has a child for whom child care cannot be secured in order to enable him/her to attend the K-12 program or the adult program.

- (d) Evidence that a court of law has ordered that he/she take the examination.
 - (e) Written evidence that he/she will be accepted for entry into the armed forces of the United States upon being awarded a GED diploma.
- b. Designee's Decision.—After reviewing all of the evidence presented, the Superintendent's designee shall make a determination as to whether or not the age requirement should be waived and the candidate be permitted to take the examination. The decision shall be in writing and shall be provided the parent or guardian of the candidate.
- c. Superintendent's Review.—If the parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the decision of the Superintendent's designee, the parent or guardian shall have the right to seek a review of the decision by the Superintendent. Upon request for such review the Superintendent shall consider all of the evidence and shall make a determination as to whether or not the age requirement should be waived and the person be permitted to take the examination. The Superintendent's decision shall be final and shall be provided to the parent or guardian in writing.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT STUDENTS

Graduation requirements for a student in an adult education program who is earning a standard diploma are identical to the requirements for a student in grades 9-12 with the following exceptions:

- (1) The one credit in physical education is not required for graduation and shall be substituted with an elective credit to keep the total number of credits required for graduation consistent.
- (2) The one-half credit in performing fine arts shall be satisfied by enrollment in, and satisfactory completion of, any course listed in the State Course Code Directory under the areas of art, dance, drama or music.