

STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

2009-2010



“Building a Brighter Future for All Students”

Gadsden County Schools

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STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

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FOREWORD

In 1976, the Florida State Legislature passed into law the Educational Accountability Act of 1976, which includes the statutory requirement that each school district in the State of Florida establish a comprehensive program for pupil progression.

In 2003, the Legislature enacted Florida Statute 1008.25, which changed the name of this document from Pupil Progression Plan to Student Progression Plan and requires more stringent student performance for promotion and greater communication with parents regarding progress, including the publication of annual reports in the local newspaper.

The Student Progression Plan is revised and updated annually, based on input from school and district personnel and legislative and State Board Rule changes. This plan is written in the best interest of individual students and complies with the State Statutes and directives from the Florida Department of Education. All district level and school level instructional personnel, parents, and students are encouraged to study the requirements of the Gadsden County Schools Student Progression Plan, with the understanding that the legislative intent is to raise the quality of education in Florida schools.

Promotion, remediation, retention, or specific assignment procedures contained in this plan are designed to ensure that each student's grade placement is made to serve the best interests of the student and are in accordance with *F.S.1008.25* and all other relevant state and school board rules.

The Gadsden County Public School District has a strategic plan in place to improve instruction and student achievement in all of its schools. The plan incorporates many of the Best Practices recommended by the guidelines of Florida's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability (OPPAGA).

Every student in the Gadsden County public school system is expected to make satisfactory progress through the grades and achieve a level of academic proficiency and social/emotional development which will enable him/her to benefit from instruction at the next grade level. The Gadsden County Student Progression Plan implements school board policy and establishes procedures to be followed. It provides each student enrolled in the Gadsden County public schools with the maximum opportunity to succeed in school.

All Gadsden County Public Schools are expected to make every reasonable effort to assist students in meeting promotion and/or graduation requirements.

Statement of Beliefs

The Gadsden County School District believes that . . .

All students can learn.

Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

The commitment to continuous improvement to achieve the goal of enabling all students to realize their potential in a rapidly changing, diverse, global society is expected of all stakeholders of the school system.

Assessments of student learning provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate the achievement of the expectation for their learning.

Education is the key to opportunity and social mobility.

A safe and supportive learning environment promotes student achievement

Students need to not only develop a deep understanding of essential knowledge and skills, but also need to develop the capacity to apply their learning, and to reason, solve problems, and produce quality work.

The chief priority of any school system should focus on learning across the system. (Student learning, professional learning, and organizational learning)

The development of a caring school community should be a priority for our school system.

The allocation of our resources, in alignment with our mission and goals, helps to maximize the opportunity for students to learn and experience success in school.

VISION STATEMENT

It is the vision of The School Board of Gadsden County that all students are prepared for success in a rapidly changing, diverse, global society through a variety of educational opportunities.

The district is committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments that ensure continuous progress towards high student achievement. Through the collaboration of a caring school community and the allocation of resources, aligned with our mission and goals, we will maximize the opportunities for all students to succeed in life.



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to build a brighter future as we prepare students for success in life.

LEGAL BASIS OF THE STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

F. S. 1008.25 Public school student progression; remedial instruction; reporting

requirements. --It is the intent of the Legislature that each student's progression from one grade to another be determined, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, science, and mathematics; that district school board policies facilitate such proficiency; and that each student and his or her parent be informed of that student's academic progress.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM - F.S. 1008.25 (2)

Each district school board shall establish a comprehensive program for student progression which must include the following:

1. Standards for evaluating each student's performance, including how well he or she masters the performance standards approved by the State Board of Education.
2. Specific levels of performance in reading, writing, science and mathematics for each grade level, including the levels of performance on statewide assessments, as defined by the Commissioner of Education. If below level performance is documented, the student must receive remediation or be retained within an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and takes into account the student's learning style.
3. An appropriate alternative placement must be made for a student who has been retained two (2) or more years. For students retained in third grade who have been retained twice in the K-3 school years, an Intensive Acceleration Class is to be provided.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES - F.S. 1008.25 (3)

District school boards shall allocate remedial and supplemental instructional resources to students, with priority given to: students who are deficient in reading by the end of third grade and students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion, consistent with the District school board's plan for student progression required in # 2.

ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIATION - F.S. 1008.25 (4)

- (a) Each student must participate in the statewide assessment tests required by *F.S.1008.22*. Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in reading, writing, science, and mathematics for each grade level, or who scores below Level 3 in reading or math, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for appropriate intervention and instruction as described in paragraph (b).
- (b) The school in which the student is enrolled must develop, in consultation with the student's parent, and must implement a **progress monitoring plan**. A progress monitoring plan is intended to provide the school district and the school flexibility in meeting the academic needs of the student and to reduce paperwork. A student who is not meeting the school district or state requirements for proficiency in reading and math shall be covered by one of the following plans to target instruction and identify ways to improve his or her academic achievement:
 1. A federally required student plan such as an individual education plan;
 2. A school-wide system of progress monitoring for all students; or
 3. An individualized progress monitoring plan.The plan chosen must be designed to assist the student or the school in meeting

state and district expectations for proficiency. If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading, the K-12 comprehensive reading plan required by **F.S.1011.62(9)** shall include instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. District school boards may require low-performing students to attend remediation programs held before or after regular school hours or during the summer if transportation is provided.

- (c) Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated, the student may be retained. Each student who does not meet the minimum performance expectations defined by the Commissioner of Education for the statewide assessment tests in reading, writing, science, and mathematics must continue to be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the expectations are met or the student graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

READING DEFICIENCY AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION - F.S. 1008.25 (5)

- (a) It is the ultimate goal of the Legislature that every student read at or above grade level. Any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, based upon locally determined or statewide assessments conducted in kindergarten or grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3, or through teacher observations, must be given intensive reading instruction immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency. The student's reading proficiency must be reassessed by locally determined assessments or through teacher observations at the beginning of the grade following the intensive reading instruction. The student must continue to be provided with intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.
- (b) Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, if the student's reading deficiency, as identified in paragraph (a), is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at Level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment test in reading for grade 3, the student must be retained.
- (c) The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, as described in paragraph (a), must be notified in writing of the following:
 1. That his or her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading.
 2. A description of the current services that are provided to the child.
 3. A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.
 4. That 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.
 5. Strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency.
 6. That the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is not the sole determiner of promotion and that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews, and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion.
 7. The district's specific criteria and policies for midyear promotion. (Midyear promotion means promotion of a retained student at any time during the year of retention once the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.)

ELIMINATION OF SOCIAL PROMOTION - F.S. 1008.25 (6)

- (a) No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
- (b) The district school board may only exempt students from mandatory retention for good cause. Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:
 - 1. Limited English proficient students who have had less than 2 years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program.
 - 2. Students with disabilities 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.
 - 3. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
 - 4. Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the FCAT.
 - 5. Students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT and who have an individual education plan or a Section 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 and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3.
 - 6. Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for 2 or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3 for a total of 2 years. Intensive reading instruction for students so promoted must include an altered instructional day that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies for each student. 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.
- (c) Requests for good cause exemptions for students from the mandatory retention requirement as described in **F.S. 1008.25 (b)3** and 4 shall be made consistent with the following:
 - 1. Documentation shall be submitted from the student's teacher to the school principal that indicates 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 existing progress monitoring plan, individual educational plan, if applicable, report card, or student portfolio.
 - 2. The school principal shall review and discuss such recommendation with the teacher and make the 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 district school superintendent shall accept or reject the school principal's recommendation in writing.

SUCCESSFUL PROGRESSION FOR RETAINED READERS - F.S. 1008.25 (7)

1. Students retained due to a deficiency in reading must be provided intensive interventions in reading to improve the student's specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment. This intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies, participation in the school district's summer reading camp, and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist those students in becoming successful readers, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the next grade.
2. Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, each school district shall:
 1. Conduct a review of student progress monitoring plans for all students who did not score above Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT and did not meet the criteria for one of the good cause exemptions in **F.S. 1008.25 (6)(b)**. The review shall address additional supports and services, as described in this subsection, needed to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency. The school district shall require a student portfolio to be completed for each such student.
 2. Provide students who are retained under the provisions of paragraph (5)(b) with intensive instructional services and supports to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency, including a minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically research-based reading instruction and other strategies prescribed by the school district, which may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Small group instruction.
 - b. Reduced teacher-student ratios.
 - c. More frequent progress monitoring.
 - d. Tutoring or mentoring.
 - e. Transition classes containing 3rd and 4th grade students.
 - f. Extended school day, week, or year.
 - g. Summer reading camps.
 3. Provide written notification to the parent of any student who is retained under the provisions of **F.S. 1008.25 (5)(b)** that his or her child has not met the proficiency level required for promotion and the reasons the child is not eligible for a good cause exemption as provided in **F.S. 1008.25 (6)(b)**. The notification must comply with the provisions of s. 1002.20(15) and must include a description of proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.
 4. Implement a policy for the midyear promotion of any student retained under the provisions of **F.S. 1008.25 (5)(b)** who can demonstrate that he or she is a successful and independent reader, reading at or above grade level, and ready to be promoted to grade 4. Tools that school districts may use in reevaluating any student retained may include subsequent assessments, alternative assessments, and portfolio reviews, in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. Students promoted during the school year after November 1 must demonstrate proficiency above that required to score at Level 2 on the grade 3 FCAT, as

determined by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall adopt standards that provide a reasonable expectation that the student's progress is sufficient to master appropriate 4th grade level reading skills.

5. Provide students who are retained under the provisions of **F.S. 1008.25** (5)(b) with a high-performing teacher as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals.
6. Provide parents of students to be retained with at least one of the following instructional options:
 - a. Supplemental tutoring in scientifically research-based reading services in addition to the regular reading block, including tutoring before and/or after school.
 - b. A "Read at Home" plan outlined in a parental contract, including participation in "Families Building Better Readers Workshops" and regular parent-guided home reading.
 - c. A mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.
7. Establish a Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative. The focus of the READ Initiative shall be to prevent the retention of grade 3 students and to offer intensive accelerated reading instruction to grade 3 students who failed to meet standards for promotion to grade 4 and to each K-3 student who is assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency. The READ Initiative shall:
 - a. Be provided to all K-3 students at risk of retention as identified by the statewide assessment system used in Reading First schools. The assessment must measure phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
 - b. Be provided during regular school hours in addition to the regular reading instruction.
 - c. Provide a state-identified reading curriculum that has been reviewed by the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University and meets, at a minimum, the following specifications:
 - (I) Assists students assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency in developing the ability to read at grade level.
 - (II) Provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
 - (III) Provides scientifically based and reliable assessment.
 - (IV) Provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress.
 - (V) Is implemented during regular school hours.
 - (VI) Provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in maintaining or meeting proficiency levels for the appropriate grade in all academic subjects.
8. Establish at each school, where applicable, an Intensive Acceleration Class for retained grade 3 students who subsequently score at Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT. The focus of the Intensive Acceleration Class shall be to increase a child's reading level at least two grade levels in 1 school year. The Intensive Acceleration Class shall:

- a. Be provided to any student in grade 3 who scores at Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT and who was retained in grade 3 the prior year because of scoring at Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT.
 - b. Have a reduced teacher-student ratio.
 - c. Provide uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of student contact time each day and incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 Sunshine State Standards in other core subject areas.
 - d. Use a reading program that is scientifically research-based and has proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year.
 - e. Provide intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientifically research-based program, including use of a speech-language therapist.
 - f. Include weekly progress monitoring measures to ensure progress is being made.
 - g. Report to the Department of Education, in the manner described by the department, the progress of students in the class at the end of the first semester.
9. Report to the State Board of Education, as requested, on the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented at the school district level. The Commissioner of Education shall annually prescribe the required components of requested reports.
10. Provide a student who has been retained in grade 3 and has received intensive instructional services but is still not ready for grade promotion, as determined by the school district, the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such setting shall specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency.

ANNUAL REPORT - F.S. 1008.25 (8)

- (a) Each district school board must annually report to the parent of each student the progress of the student toward achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, science, and mathematics. The district school board must report to the parent the student's results on each statewide 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.
- (b) Each district school board must annually publish in the local newspaper, and report in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year, the following information on the prior school year:
 - 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.
 - 1. 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.
 - 2. By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades 3 through 10.

3. Information on the total number of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as specified in **F. S.1008.25 (6)(b)**.
4. Any revisions to the district school board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year.

RESPONSIBILITIES/ROLES RELATING TO STUDENT PROGRESSION

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Supervise the implementation of the Student Progression Plan at the school
- Assist and supervise teachers use of focus calendars/lessons, pacing guides, Sunshine State Standards, FCAT item specifications, and assessment information
- Make final decisions regarding the assignment of specific students
- Insure that parents or guardians are advised of student progress and of the possible retention of their child as soon as possible
- Upon request, make available to all parents/guardians and students a copy of the Student Progression Plan at the time the student is officially enrolled in the school.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHER

- Use focus calendars/lessons, pacing guides, Sunshine State Standards, reading/language arts, mathematics and science assessment information as required by the school and district
- Utilize all available data including mini-assessments, quarterly assessments, daily assignments, teacher observations, portfolios, past performance, and other available information to plan instruction and evaluate student performance
- Correlate student evaluation to Sunshine State Standards, FCAT item specifications, and district adopted programs
- Determine student's grades and follow established district and school procedures for reporting and recording student grades
- Help students acquire study skills and self-discipline needed to complete their subjects successfully,
- Inform parents or guardians of students' progress and seek their assistance in meeting student needs
- Schedule conferences with parents if a student's progress report indicate that he/she is having difficulty
- Follow the Student Progression Plan as it pertains to grade level assignment

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENT

- Ensure regular school attendance by the student
- Encourage student to have good study habits, work habits, self-discipline and respect for his/her school and school personnel
- Respond promptly to all requests from the school for information
- Review school progress reports at the middle of each nine-week period and school

- report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period
- Schedule parent/teacher conferences if progress reports or report cards indicate your child is having difficulty
- Participate in scheduled conferences with your child's teacher or school

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

- Maintain regular attendance
- Complete all assignments in each of your classes
- Make sure all report cards and other communications from the school is given to your parent/guardian
- Develop good study habits and self-discipline, as well as accept additional help from available educational personnel and parents if experiencing school related problems,
- Develop good test taking strategies and put forth your best effort when taking tests

PROGRESS MONITORING PLAN

Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district School Board in reading, writing, mathematics and science, as defined in the progression section, must be provided additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need. Assessment results and notification of an academic deficiency will be shared with parent/guardian in a formal conference or by mail. The teacher and counselor, in consultation with the student's parent/guardian, must develop a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency.

A PMP is required for all students scoring a level 1 in reading and/or math in grades 3-10, and science in grade 11. The plan must include intensive remedial instruction in the areas of weakness. Schools are expected to provide strategies that meet the needs of students. These strategies may include but are not limited to dropout prevention services, parent tutorial programs, contracted academic services, exceptional student education services, modified curriculum, reading instruction, after school and other extended day services, tutoring, mentoring, and intensive skills development programs. F.S. 1008.25 (4) (b) (c))

The Progress Monitoring Plan should provide the following information:

- Clearly identify the specific diagnosed academic needs to be remediated,
- Clearly identify the proven research-based intervention strategies to be used,
- Clearly identify a variety of remedial instruction to be provided, and
- Clearly identify the monitoring and re-evaluation activities to be used

If the student has been identified with a reading deficiency, Gadsden County School District's K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan dictates that instructional and support services will be provided to desired levels of performance.

Additionally, if subsequent evaluation determines that the deficiency has not been remediated, the student may be retained. Each student who does not meet minimum performance expectations for the statewide assessment tests in reading, writing, science, and mathematics must continue remedial or supplemental instruction until expectations are met, or the student graduates from high school, or the student is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

F.S. 1008.24(4) states that each student must participate in the Statewide Assessment Testing Program (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test - FCAT) that measures achievement of the Sunshine State Standards.

The FCAT is administered by content area and grade levels as follows:

- **FCAT Reading and Mathematics** are administered at grades 3-10
- **FCAT Science** is administered at grades 5, 8, and 11.
- **FCAT Writes** is administered at grades 4, 8, and 10.

In addition to the required state assessments, the Gadsden County School District has identified various methods of assessing students' progress:

- The Stanford 10 nationally normed standardized achievement test is used at grades 1 and 2 to determine student achievement levels in reading
- District produced assessments will provide consistent documentation of performance regarding Sunshine State Standards
- Other school/district developed assessments may be used to measure student performance

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

F. S. 1003.21 (1)(a) requires all children who have attained the age of 6 years or who will have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than 6 years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years, except as otherwise provided, are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term.

F. S. 1003.21(1)(a) 2. Children who will have attained the age of 5 years on or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for admission to public kindergartens during that school year under rules adopted by the district school board.

(a) Any child who has attained the age of 6 years on or before September 1 of the school year and who has been enrolled in a public school or who has attained the age of 6 years on or before September 1 and has satisfactorily completed the requirements for kindergarten in a private school from which the district school board accepts transfer of academic credit, or who otherwise meets the criteria for admission or transfer in a manner similar to that applicable to other grades, shall progress according to the district's student progression plan. However, nothing in this section shall authorize the state or the school

district to oversee or exercise control over the curricula or academic programs of private schools or home education programs.

(b) A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. Public school students who have attained the age of 16 years and who have not graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until the formal declaration of intent is filed with the district school board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the student and the student's parent. The school district must notify the student's parent of receipt of the student's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment. The guidance counselor or other school personnel must conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. The student must be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including, but not limited to, adult education and GED test preparation. Additionally, the student must complete a survey provided by the Department of Education to provide data on student reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled.

(c) Students who become or have become married and students who are pregnant shall not be prohibited from attending school. These students and students who are parents shall receive the same educational instruction or its equivalent as other students, but may voluntarily be assigned to a class or program suited to their special needs. Consistent with F.S.1003.54, pregnant or parenting teens may participate in a teenage parent program. Pregnant students may attend alternative education programs or adult education programs, provided that the curriculum allows the student to continue to work toward a high school diploma.

(d) Consistent with rules adopted by the State Board of Education, children with disabilities who have attained the age of 3 years shall be eligible for admission to public special education programs and for related services. Children with disabilities younger than 3 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing; visually impaired; dual sensory impaired; orthopedically impaired; other health impaired; who have experienced traumatic brain injury; who have autism spectrum disorder; established conditions, or who exhibit developmental delays or intellectual disabilities may be eligible for special programs and may receive services in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. Rules for the identification of established conditions for children birth through 2 years of age and developmental delays for children birth through 5 years of age must be adopted by the State Board of Education.

(e) Children and youths who are experiencing homelessness and children who are known to the department, as defined in F.S.39.0016, must have access to a free public education and must be admitted to school in the school district in which they or their families live.

School districts shall assist such children in meeting the requirements of **F. S. 1003.21 (4)** and F.S.1003.22, as well as local requirements for documentation.

F. S. 1003.21 (4) Before admitting a child to kindergarten, the principal shall require evidence that the child has attained the age at which he or she should be admitted in accordance with the provisions of F. S. 1003.21(1)(a)2. The district school superintendent may require evidence of the age of any child whom he or she believes to be within the limits of compulsory attendance as provided for by law. If the first prescribed evidence is not available, the next evidence obtainable in the order set forth below shall be accepted:

- (a) A duly attested transcript of the child's birth record filed according to law with a public officer charged with the duty of recording births;
- (b) A duly attested transcript of a certificate of baptism showing the date of birth and place of baptism of the child, accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;
- (c) An insurance policy on the child's life that has been in force for at least 2 years;
- (d) A bona fide contemporary religious record of the child's birth accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;
- (e) A passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child;
- (f) A transcript of record of age shown in the child's school record of at least 4 years prior to application, stating date of birth; or
- (g) If none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a public health officer or by a public school physician, or, if these are not available in the county, by a licensed practicing physician designated by the district school board, which states that the health officer or physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct. Children and youths who are experiencing homelessness and children who are known to the department, as defined in F.S.39.0016, shall be given temporary exemption from this section for 30 school days.

ENFORCEMENT OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE / TRUANCY

F.S. 1003.26 states that the Legislature finds poor academic performance is associated with nonattendance and school districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance. It is the policy of the state that each superintendent be responsible for enforcing school attendance of all students subject to the compulsory school age in the school district and supporting enforcement of school attendance by local law enforcement agencies. School board policies require the parent of a student to justify each absence of the student, and that justification will be evaluated based on adopted district school board policies that define excused and unexcused absences. The policies provide that

schools track excused and unexcused absences and contact the home in the case of an unexcused absence from school, or an absence from school for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance. The Legislature finds that early intervention in school attendance is the most effective way of producing good attendance habits that will lead to improved student learning and achievement. Each public school shall implement the following steps to promote and enforce regular school attendance:

(1) (a) Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school principal or his or her designee shall contact the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence. If the absence is an excused absence, as defined by district school board policy, the school shall provide opportunities for the student to make up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time.

(b) If a student has had at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period, the student's primary teacher shall report to the principal or his or her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. The principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies, and the principal shall notify the superintendent and the school district contact for home education programs that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.

(c) If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team shall implement the following:

1. Frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the family.
2. Evaluation for alternative education programs.
3. Attendance contracts.

The child study team may, but is not required to, implement other interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or recommendation for filing a truancy petition pursuant to F.S. 984.151.

(d) The child study team shall be diligent in facilitating intervention services and shall report the case to the superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance behavior are exhausted.

(e) If the parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to

the school board. The school board may provide a hearing officer, and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the school board. If the school board's final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

(f)1. If the parent of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to chapter 1002 of the Florida Statutes, the superintendent shall provide the parent a copy of F.S. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements of this paragraph. The superintendent shall also refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the district contact for home education programs and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a district list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least 3 years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee. The home education review committee shall review the portfolio of the student, as defined by F.S. 1002.41, every 30 days during the district's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with F.S.1002.41(1)(b). The first portfolio review must occur within the first 30 calendar days of the establishment of the program.

(f)2. If the parent fails to provide a portfolio to the committee, the committee shall notify the superintendent. The superintendent shall then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the child in an attendance option that meets the definition of "regular school attendance" under F.S. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (c), or (e), within 3 days. Upon termination of a home education program, the parent shall not be eligible to reenroll the child in a home education program for 180 calendar days. Failure of a parent to enroll the child in an attendance option as required after termination of the home education program shall constitute noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of F.S.1003.21 and may result in criminal prosecution under F.S.1003.27(2). Nothing contained herein shall restrict the ability of the district school superintendent, or the ability of his or her designee, to review the portfolio pursuant to F.S.1002.41(1)(b).

(g) If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent or the superintendent or his or her designee shall refer the case to the district's school visiting teacher/social worker pursuant to F.S. 984.12, and the district school superintendent or his or her designee may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in F.S. 984.151.

(2) (a) Under the direction of the superintendent, a designated school representative shall give written notice that requires enrollment or attendance within 3 days after the date of notice, in person or by return-receipt mail, to the parent when no valid reason is found for a student's non-enrollment in school. If the notice and requirement are ignored, the designated school representative shall report the case to the superintendent, and may refer the case to the district's school visiting teacher/social worker. The superintendent shall take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent.

(b) Subsequent to the activities required under subsection (1), the superintendent or his or her designee shall give written notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The superintendent may file a truancy petition, as defined in F.S. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in F.S. 984.151.

(3) The district's visiting teacher/social worker may visit the home or place of residence of a student and any other place in which he or she is likely to find any student who is required to attend school when the student is not enrolled or is absent from school during school hours without an excuse, and, when the student is found, shall return the student to his or her parent or to the principal or teacher in charge of the school, or to the private tutor from whom absent, or to the juvenile assessment center or other location established by the district school board to receive students who are absent from school. Upon receipt of the student, the parent shall be immediately notified.

(4) The district's visiting teacher/social worker shall report to the appropriate authority designated by law to receive such notices, all violations of the Child Labor Law that may come to his or her knowledge.

(5) The district's visiting teacher/social worker shall have the right of access to, and inspection of, establishments where minors may be employed or detained only for the purpose of ascertaining whether students of compulsory school age are actually employed there and are actually working there regularly. The designated school representative shall, if he or she finds unsatisfactory working conditions or violations of the Child Labor Law, report his or her findings to the appropriate authority.

COURT PROCEDURE AND PENALTIES

F.S.1003.27 requires that the court procedure and penalties for the enforcement of the provisions of this part, relating to compulsory school attendance, shall be as follows:

(1) The circuit court has original and exclusive jurisdiction of all proceedings against, or prosecutions of, students under the provisions of this part. Proceedings against, or prosecutions of, parents or employers as provided by this section shall be in the court of each county having jurisdiction of misdemeanors wherein trial by jury is afforded the defendant.

(2) (a) In each case of non-enrollment or of nonattendance upon the part of a student who is required to attend some school, when no valid reason for such non-enrollment or non-attendance is found, the district school superintendent shall institute a criminal prosecution against the student's parent.

(b) Each principal or the principal's designee shall notify the district school board of each minor student under its jurisdiction who accumulates 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days. The superintendent must provide the Department of Highway Safety

and Motor Vehicles the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor student who has been reported under this paragraph and who fails to otherwise satisfy the requirements of F.S. 322.091. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may not issue a driver's license or learner's driver's license to, and shall suspend any previously issued driver's license or learner's driver's license of, any such minor student, pursuant to the provisions of F.S. 322.091.

HABITUAL TRUANCY CASES

F.S.1003.27 (3) states that the superintendent is authorized to file a truancy petition, as defined in F.S. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in s. 984.151. If the district school superintendent chooses not to file a truancy petition, procedures for filing a child-in-need-of-services petition shall be commenced pursuant to this subsection and chapter 984. In accordance with procedures established by the district school board, the designated school representative shall refer a student who is habitually truant and the student's family to the children-in-need-of-services and families-in-need-of-services provider or the case staffing committee, established pursuant to F.S. 984.12, as determined by the cooperative agreement required in this section. The case staffing committee may request the Department of Juvenile Justice or its designee to file a child-in-need-of-services petition based upon the report and efforts of the district school board or other community agency or may seek to resolve the truant behavior through the school or community-based organizations or agencies. Prior to and subsequent to the filing of a child-in-need-of-services petition due to habitual truancy, the appropriate governmental agencies must allow a reasonable time to complete actions required by this section and F.S. 1003.26 to remedy the conditions leading to the truant behavior. Prior to the filing of a petition, the district school board must have complied with the requirements of F.S.1003.26, and those efforts must have been unsuccessful.

F.S.1003.27 (6) Proceedings or prosecutions under this chapter may be commenced by the superintendent, the district visiting teacher/social worker, by the probation officer of the county, by the executive officer of any court of competent jurisdiction, by an officer of any court of competent jurisdiction, or by a duly authorized agent of the Department of Education or the Department of Juvenile Justice. If a proceeding has been commenced against both a parent and a child pursuant to this chapter, the presiding courts shall make every effort to coordinate sanctions against the child and parent, including ordering the child and parent to perform community service hours or attend counseling together.

F.S.1003.27 (7) The penalties for refusing or failing to comply with Florida Statutes and School Board Rules shall be as follows:

(a) *The parent.--*

1. A parent who refuses or fails to have a minor student who is under his or her control attend school regularly, or who refuses or fails to comply with the requirements in subsection (3), commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082 or F.S. 775.083.

2. The continued or habitual absence of a minor student without the consent of the principal or teacher in charge of the school he or she attends or should attend, or of the tutor who instructs or should instruct him or her, is prima facie evidence of a violation of this chapter; however, a showing that the parent has made a bona fide and diligent effort to control and keep the student in school shall be an affirmative defense to any criminal or other liability under this subsection and the court shall refer the parent and child for counseling, guidance, or other needed services.

3. In addition to any other punishment, the court shall order a parent who has violated this section to send the minor student to school, and may also order the parent to participate in an approved parent training class, attend school with the student unless this would cause undue hardship, perform community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate. If a parent is ordered to attend school with a student, the school shall provide for programming to educate the parent and student on the importance of school attendance. It shall be unlawful to terminate any employee solely because he or she is attending school with his or her child pursuant to a court order.

(b) A principal or teacher who willfully violates any provision of this rule may, upon satisfactory proof of such violation, have his or her certificate revoked by the Department of Education.

(c) 1. An employer who fails to notify the superintendent when he or she ceases to employ a student who commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082 or F.S. 775.083.

(c) 2. An employer who terminates any employee solely because he or she is attending school with a student pursuant to court order commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082 or F.S. 775.083.

(d) 1. In addition to any other authorized sanctions, the court shall order a student found to be a habitual truant to make up all school work missed and may order the student to pay a civil penalty of up to \$2, based on the student's ability to pay, for each day of school missed, perform up to 25 community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate.

(d) 2. Upon a second or subsequent finding that a student is a habitual truant, the court, in addition to any other authorized sanctions, shall order the student to make up all school work missed and may order the student to pay a civil penalty of up to \$5, based on the student's ability to pay, for each day of school missed, perform up to 50 community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate.

TRANSFERRING STUDENTS

Students **transferring from a non-public Kindergarten** must meet the Florida age requirement for entry to Kindergarten.

Students **transferring from out-of-state** to Kindergarten or first grade must meet the **age requirements** for public schools in the state from which they are transferring. Official documentation that the parent(s) or guardian(s) was a legal resident(s) of the state in which the child was previously enrolled in school must be provided.

In order to be **admitted to Florida schools**, a student must provide the following information:

- Evidence of date of birth in accordance with *F.S.1003.21*,
- Evidence of immunization against communicable diseases as required by *F.S.1003.22*,
- Evidence of a medical examination completed within the last twelve months in accordance with *F.S.1003.22*,
- Evidence of residence at an address within the attendance area of the school to which admission is requested **or** a request for reassignment approved by the school board.
- Appropriate exceptions and accommodations will be made to minimize the barriers related to student assignment for students identified as eligible for services through the 1) Department of Children and Families or 2) under *s.722 (d) (2), F.S.*, of the Steward B. McKinney-Bruce Vento Homeless Assistance Amendments Act of 1990 and related Florida Statutes.

Students **transferring from an out-of-state school** must provide an official letter of transcript from a proper school authority, which shows the record of attendance, academic information, and the grade placement of the student.

The principal of the receiving school will determine grade placement of transfer student after receipt of official records or transcripts. If the records/transcripts or not received within two weeks of student's admission, a suitable evaluation will be done by the school counselor at the school to help determine appropriate grade placement.

Students shall be placed in the grade assigned by the previous school whenever possible.

The student shall be placed academically according to the student's educational needs as determined by the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY

The 2007 Legislature passed House Bill 967 which included changes in policy as it relates to Physical Education (PE).

House Bill (HB) 967

Each district school board shall provide 150 minutes of physical education each week for students in kindergarten through grade 5. Students enrolled in such instruction shall be reported through the periodic student membership surveys, and records of such enrollment shall be audited pursuant to F.S.1010.305. Such instruction may be provided by any instructional personnel as defined in F.S.1012.02(2), regardless of certification, who are designated by the school principal. Each district school board is encouraged to provide 225 minutes of physical education each week for students in grades 6 through 8.

Senate Bill (SB)610

SB610 revises the language of HB967 to require:

- Availability of one-on-one counseling concerning the benefits of physical education.
- Inclusion of 6th grade students who are enrolled in an elementary school to received 150 minutes of physical education per week
- Provision of at least 30 consecutive minutes of physical education on any day during which physical education instruction is conducted
- Provision for waiver options to go into effect in 2009-2010.

F.S.1003.455 requires that each district school board shall adopt a written physical education policy that decides school district's physical education program and expected program outcomes. The Gadsden County School Board recognizes the value of Physical Education to the maintenance of the health and the development of life-long habits that will enhance personal fitness and wellness. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that instruction in Physical Education shall be available to students in grades PreK through 12. These programs shall consist of physical activities of at least a moderate intensity level and for duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing capabilities of students.

In this new legislation, PE is defined as “the development and maintenance of skills related to strength, agility, flexibility, movement, and stamina, including dance; the development of knowledge and skills regarding teamwork and fair play; the development of knowledge and skills regarding nutrition and physical fitness as part of a healthy lifestyle; and the development of positive attitudes regarding sound nutrition and physical activity as a component of personal well-being.”

The PE requirement for students with severe and profound disabilities can be met through participation in adaptive or specially designed PE.

Strategies:

1. A standards based, balanced, sequential and progressive program of physical education that involves moderate to vigorous physical activity:
 - Teaches knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, and positive attitudes;
 - Provides experiences that are age and developmentally appropriate;

- Promotes activities, including dance and sports, that students find enjoyable and personally relevant which they can pursue throughout their lives;
 - Gives assignments and projects that encourage students to interact with family members
 - Is taught by well-prepared and well-supported certified physical education staff;
 - Is coordinated with the Sunshine State and National Health and Physical Education Standards
 - Reinforces and supports knowledge from other subject areas.
2. Opportunities and encouragement for K-6 elementary students to participate in supervised recess are provided.
 3. Opportunities and encouragement for students to voluntarily participate in before and after school physical activity programs, such as intramurals, clubs, and at the high school level, interscholastic athletics are provided.
 4. Opportunities and encouragement for staff and family members to be physically active are made available.
 5. School staff institutes a safe and healthy environment in which to conduct age appropriate physical activity.
 6. The program shall make effective use of school and community resources and equitably service the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences of gender, cultural norms, physical and cognitive abilities, and fitness levels.
 7. Provision shall be made at all levels to excuse individual students from specific activities if direction to do so is received, in writing, from the student's physician after discussion with all interested parties has taken place regarding what is best for the student. In addition, students may be excused from specific activities if those activities are contrary to their religious beliefs; a request to excuse a student from such activities must be received, in writing, from the student's parent or guardian.

Under the new legislative language, instructional personnel approved to teach PE in grades K-5 are defined in Section 1012.01(2), Florida Statutes (F.S.). The specifications of Section 1012.01(2), F.S., are as follows:

INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL.--"Instructional personnel" means any K-12 staff member whose function includes the provision of direct instructional services to students. Instructional personnel also includes K-12 personnel whose functions provide direct support in the learning process of students. Included in the classification of instructional personnel are the following K-12 personnel:

(a) Classroom teachers.--Classroom teachers are staff members assigned the professional activity of instructing students in courses in classroom situations, including basic instruction, exceptional student education, career education, and adult education, including substitute teachers.

(b) Student personnel services.--Student personnel services include staff members responsible for: advising students with regard to their abilities and aptitudes, educational and occupational opportunities, and personal and social adjustments; providing placement services; performing educational evaluations; and similar functions. Included in this

classification are guidance counselors, social workers, career specialists, and school psychologists.

(c) Librarians/media specialists.--Librarians/media specialists are staff members responsible for providing school library media services. These employees are responsible for evaluating, selecting, organizing, and managing media and technology resources, equipment, and related systems; facilitating access to information resources beyond the school; working with teachers to make resources available in the instructional programs; assisting teachers and students in media productions; and instructing students in the location and use of information resources.

(d) Other instructional staff.--Other instructional staff are staff members who are part of the instructional staff but are not classified in one of the categories specified in paragraphs (a)-(c). Included in this classification are primary specialists, learning resource specialists, instructional trainers, adjunct educators certified pursuant to s. 1012.57, and similar positions.

(e) Education paraprofessionals.--Education paraprofessionals are individuals who are under the direct supervision of an instructional staff member, aiding the instructional process. Included in this classification are classroom paraprofessionals in regular instruction, exceptional education paraprofessionals, career education paraprofessionals, adult education paraprofessionals, library paraprofessionals, physical education and playground paraprofessionals, and other school-level paraprofessionals.



ELEMENTARY STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Initial Entry to Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

Children entering voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) must comply with FS.1002.53(2), regarding entry age. A child must be four (4) years old by September 1, in order to meet the Florida age requirement for voluntary prekindergarten.

For information regarding registration and VPK Programs, please visit Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program website at <http://www.vpkflorida.org>.

Mandatory School Age

F.S.1003.21 requires that a child, who will be six (6) years old by February 1, must attend school regularly during the entire school term. Therefore, a child who will be six by February 1 must start school at the beginning of the school year in which he or she will become six.

Initial Entry to Kindergarten

Children entering kindergarten in Gadsden County Public Schools for the first time must comply with F.S.1003.21 regarding entry age. A child must be five (5) years old by September 1, in order to meet the Florida age requirement for kindergarten.

Initial Entry into First Grade

Children entering the first grade must comply with F.S.1003.21. Any child who has attained the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the school year, and who has satisfactorily completed the requirements for kindergarten in a public or nonpublic school, shall be eligible to enter first grade. A public or nonpublic school must provide written documentation of satisfactory completion of Kindergarten.

Transfer Requirements

Elementary grade placement of transfer students to the district shall be in accordance with the requirements as stated in s. 1003.21, Florida Statutes, and State Board Rule 6A-1.0985 and shall be subject to the following conditions:

- A. Underage In-State Transfers from Nonpublic Schools to Kindergarten Pupils transferring from a nonpublic Florida kindergarten to Brevard Public Schools must meet the Florida age requirements for entry age to kindergarten as stated in s. 1003.21, Florida Statutes.
- B. **Underage In-State Transfers from Public and Nonpublic Schools to First Grade** Children entering the first grade in Brevard Public Schools for the first time must comply with F.S. 1003.21. Any child who has attained the age of six (6) years old, on or before September 1, and has written documentation of satisfactory completion of kindergarten from a public or nonpublic school from which the district accepts transfer of academic credit, or who otherwise meets the criteria for admission or transfer in a manner similar to that applicable to other grades, shall progress according to the district's student progression plan. Pupils not meeting the above requirements will be enrolled in kindergarten.

C. Underage Out-of-State Transfers to Kindergarten and First Grade from Public and Nonpublic Schools

Entry into kindergarten and first grade by out-of-state transfer students who do not meet regular age requirements for admission to Florida public schools shall be in accordance with Florida Administrative Rule 6A-1.0985 which states:

Any student who transfers from an out-of-state public school shall be admitted upon presentation of the following data:

1. official documentation from the parent(s) or guardian(s) that the child was a legal resident of the state in which he or she was previously enrolled in school;
2. an official letter or transcript from a proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student;
3. evidence of immunization against communicable diseases as required in F.S.1003.22,
4. evidence of date of birth;
5. evidence of a medical examination completed within the last 12 months.

Any student who transfers from an out-of-state public or nonpublic school may be admitted if the student meets the age requirement for public schools within the state from which the student is transferring, and if the transfer of the student's academic credit is acceptable under the rules of the Gadsden County School Board.

Transfer Students

Elementary grade placement of all transfer students shall be on a probationary basis until transfer work is validated on the basis of official evidence of pupil achievement made available to the school counselor or principal.

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION AND ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT IN GRADES K-5

- (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 than fifty (50) points below Level 2. 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
 2. Satisfactory performance on a locally-selected standardized assessment.

To promote a student using a portfolio as a good cause exemption, there must be evidence that demonstrates the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. Such evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading.

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 mastery 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 that the benchmarks assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading have been met. Evidence is to include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty (60) percent literary text and forty (40) percent information text, and that are between 100-700 words with an average of 350 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards or teacher-prepared assessments.
- Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. For each benchmark, there must be at least five (5) examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of "C" or above, and
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

Mid-Year Promotion For Retained Third Graders S.1008.25 (7)(B)4

Mid-year promotion is an option for any retained 3rd grade student who can demonstrate that he or she is a *successful and independent reader* at or above grade level and is ready

to be promoted to grade 4. When promoting 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.

Schools can make the determination for mid-year promotion using:

- Subsequent Assessments
- Alternative Assessments
- Portfolio Review in accordance with the State Board of Education Rules governing third grade portfolios:
 - Must 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 mastery of the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 Reading FCAT
 - Include evidence of beginning mastery of grade 4 benchmarks that are assessed by the grade 4 Reading FCAT
 - 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. Such evidence could include district assessments, chapter or unit tests, teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards.

- (1) 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.
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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.

- (4) 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.
- (5) 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.
- (6) 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.

- (7) 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.
- (8) 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.
- (9) 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.
- (10) The classroom teacher has the responsibility for assessing and grading each student's performance. The decision shall be based on some or all of the following:
1. Daily observation of classroom performance
 2. Student performance of classroom/homework assignments
 3. Criterion reference and/or standardized achievement test results
 4. District produced tests
 5. Teacher made tests
 5. Text-related test results
 6. Student portfolios

GRADING SCALE

E = Excellent

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs to improve

U = Unsatisfactory

<u>Letter Grades</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>GPA</u>	<u>Summary</u>
A	90-100%	4.0	Outstanding Progress
B	80-89%	3.0	Above Average Progress
C	70-79%	2.0	Average Progress
D	60-69	1.0	Needs Improvement
F	0-59%	0.0	Unsatisfactory Progress

Kindergarten

All subjects will receive letter grades of **E, S, N, U**

Grades 1-2

The following subjects will receive letter grades of **A, B, C, D, F**

- Reading
- Language Arts
- Math

The following subjects will receive letter grades of **E, S, N, U**

- Science
- Social Studies
- Process Writing

Grades 3-5

The following subjects will receive letter grades of **A, B, C, D, F**

- Reading
- Language Arts
- Process Writing
- Science
- Math

The following subject will receive letter grades of **E, S, N, U**

- Social Studies

In Grades 1-5 academic subject areas (Reading, Writing, English, Spelling, Science, and Mathematics) are graded with letter grades, A-F.

In Grades 1-5 other areas (Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, and Music) are graded with E, S, N, and U.

**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. **Students may be promoted to grade four if he/she scores at or above the 45th percentile on the Reading SAT 10, or score at or above the 50th percentile on another alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the Department of Education.**

The earliest the alternative assessment may be administered for student promotion purposes is following administration of the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. An approved standardized reading assessment may be administered two (2) times if there are at least 30 days between administrations and different test forms are administered pursuant to SBE Rule 6A 1.094221(2)(d).

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 5

In order to be promoted to the next higher grade, a student in grades 4 through 5 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 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 by scoring at or above the 50TH percentile.
- (2) *At or above Level 2* on FCAT Reading, 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 by scoring at or above the 50TH percentile.
- (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 by scoring at or above the 50TH percentile.
- (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.



MIDDLE GRADES STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN



GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION AND ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT IN GRADES 6-8

- (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 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 school year, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for "Good Cause."

- (3) **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 student in grades 4-8 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 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.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

- (6) 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.
- (7) **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.**
- (8) 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
 2. Satisfactory performance on a locally-selected standardized assessment.

To promote a student using a portfolio as a good cause exemption, there must be evidence that demonstrates the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. Such evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading.

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 mastery 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 that the benchmarks assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading have been met. Evidence is to include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty (60) percent literary text and forty (40) percent information text, and that are between 100-700 words with an average of 350 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards or teacher-prepared assessments.
- Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. For each benchmark, there must be at least five (5) examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of "C" or above, and
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

(9) 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.

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.

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 F.S. [1011.62](#)(8).

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.

(3) As part of the newly passed requirements for middle grades promotion, each student should be enrolled in a career and education planning course in 7th or 8th grade. The course must include educational planning using the online student advisement system known as Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students at the Internet Web site FACTS.org and shall result in the completing of a personalized academic and career plan. Each student's plan must be signed by the student, the student's parent, and the student's guidance counselor.

GRADING SCALE

Grades 6-8:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>GPA</u>	<u>Summary</u>
A	90-100%	4.0	Outstanding Progress
B	80-89%	3.0	Above Average Progress
C	70-79%	2.0	Average Progress
D	60-69	1.0	Lowest Passing Grade/Needs Improvement
F	0-59%	0.0	Failure
I			Incomplete

PROMOTION CRITERIA FOR A STUDENT IN GRADES 6 THROUGH 8

In order to be promoted to the next higher grade, a student in grades 6 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 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 **by scoring at or above the 50TH percentile.**
- (2) *At or above Level 2* on FCAT Reading, 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 **by scoring at or above the 50TH percentile.**
- (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 **by scoring at or above the 50TH percentile.**]
- (5) *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.

MANDATORY RETENTION EXEMPTIONS FOR GOOD CAUSE

Good Cause Exemption from Mandatory Retention is the assignment of a student to the next grade level who has failed to meet grade level requirements. Students who are eligible for a Good Cause Exemption must meet one or more of the following:

- English Language Learner student who has had less than two years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program;
- Student with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirement of the State Board of Education rule;
- Student who demonstrates, through a student portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level, as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the FCAT;
- Student with disabilities who participated in the FCAT and who has an individual education plan or a Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received the intensive remediation in reading, as required by paragraph (4)(b), for more than two years but who still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained;
- Student who has received the intensive remediation in reading as required by paragraph (4)(b) for two or more years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and who was previously retained for a total of two years;
- Student who demonstrates an annual (one year) learning gain on FCAT in the area of Reading

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

Middle school students may take high school courses for high school credit. Such students, along with his/her parent/guardian, will receive academic counseling regarding the consequences of their choices. To promote academic progress and instructional validity, middle school and high school principals shall be responsible for ensuring teacher collaboration in the selection of text, development of curricula, and development of comprehensive assessment exams for middle school courses intended to earn high school credit. Middle school students taking courses for high school credit may retake the same or comparable course in high school for any grade earned less than B. F.S.1003.43(5)(e). Note: Only Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, and Algebra IA & Algebra IB are eligible for middle grades weighted grading.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN



GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION AND ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT IN GRADES 9-12

- (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 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.

- (3) 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.

- (4) 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.
- (5) 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.
- (6) 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.
- (7) 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. 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.

- (8) 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.
- (9) 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.
- (10) 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.
- (11) 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.

- (12) 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.
- (13) For each year in which a student scores 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 and are subject to approval by the Department for inclusion in the Course Code Directory.
- (14) Credit recovery courses shall be offered so that students can simultaneously earn an elective credit and the recovered credit.
- (15) Parents of students who have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of less than .5 above the 2.0 cumulative GPA required for graduation (less than a 2.5) at the end of each semester in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 shall be notified that the student is at risk of not meeting the graduation requirements. The notice shall contain an explanation of the policies the district has in place to assist the student in meeting the GPA requirement. (s.1003.43 (5) (e) 2, F.S.) In addition, at the beginning of each school year, parents of students in or entering high school will be notified of the opportunity and benefits of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, Dual Enrollment, and Florida Virtual School courses.

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.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

If you are the parent of a Florida middle or high school student, this guide is for you. It is designed to explain Florida's high school graduation programs, including two programs that provide students with the opportunity to graduate from high school in three years. The guide also provides information to help students and their families as they plan and prepare for postsecondary goals. Florida students entering their first year of high school in the 2007-2008 school year may choose from five different graduation options: 24-Credit Program; a three-year, 18-Credit Career Preparatory Program; a three-year, 18-Credit College Preparatory Program; the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program; and an Advanced International Certificate of Education Program. All of these graduation paths include opportunities to take rigorous academic courses designed to prepare students for their future academic and career choices. All students, regardless of graduation program, must still earn a specific grade point average on a 4.0 scale and achieve passing scores on the Grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) in order to graduate with a standard diploma (refer to graduation options charts). However, the two three-year programs are significantly different from the 24-credit program. In addition to the above mentioned graduation options, some students with disabilities can earn a Special Diploma. For specific graduation options for students with disabilities, contact your child's school counselor, exceptional student education teacher, or visit <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/diploma.pdf>.

24-CREDIT PROGRAM -This program requires students to take 24 credits in the subject areas of English, mathematics, science, social studies, fine or performing arts, and a physical education course to include the integration of health. Foreign language credit is not required for this program, although it is recommended for community college preparation and is **required** for admission to Florida's state universities. This program requires students to take eight elective credits—four credits in a Major Area of Interest (MAI) and four credits combined to allow for a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest, or elective courses. An MAI will allow students to define their interests and use their high school experience to become better prepared for higher education and/or a career of their choosing.

ACCELERATED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OPTIONS -Florida's three-year programs are designed for students who are clear about their future goals and are ready to pursue their goals beyond high school in an accelerated manner. To assist students and parents with this task, each school district shall provide each student in grades six through nine, and their parents, with information concerning the three-year and the 24-credit high school graduation options. To select a three-year graduation program, students and their parents must meet with designated school personnel to receive an explanation of the requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of each program option. Students must also receive the written consent of their parents. The student must select the graduation program prior to the end of ninth grade that will best address his/her future.

- **THREE-YEAR, 18-CREDIT CAREER PREPARATORY PROGRAM** -This accelerated graduation program requires fewer credits than the 24-credit program and does not require the student to select a Major Area of Interest. This program focuses more on academic courses, which means students take fewer elective courses. Unlike

the 24-credit program, the three-year career preparatory program requires students to earn specific credits in a single vocational, career, or technical education program. It requires students to maintain a cumulative weighted grade point average of a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale with a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least a 2.0 or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits. The requirements of the program are designed to prepare students for entrance into a technical center, community college, or the workforce.

- **THREE-YEAR, 18-CREDIT COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM** -This accelerated graduation program requires fewer credits than the 24-credit program and does not require the student to select a MAI. This program focuses more on academic courses, which means students take fewer elective courses. Unlike the 24-credit program, the three-year college preparatory program requires students to earn two credits in a foreign language. Students must earn at least 6 of the 18 required credits in specified rigorous courses and maintain a cumulative weighted grade point average of a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale with a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least a 3.0 or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits. It also requires higher-level mathematics courses than does either the 24-credit program or the three-year career preparatory program. The credits required by this program must satisfy the minimum standards for admission into Florida's state universities.

SPECIAL DIPLOMA -Students who have been identified in accordance with State Board of Education rules as “educable, trainable, or profoundly handicapped,” “deaf, hard-of-hearing, or dual sensory impaired,” “specific learning disabled,” “language impaired,” “physically impaired with an orthopedic, other health impairment, or traumatic brain injury,” “autism spectrum disorder,” or “emotional/behavioral disabilities,” are not required to meet all the requirements of a standard diploma. Requirements for special diplomas are established by district school boards. However, the availability of a special diploma does not restrict the right of a student with a disability solely to a special diploma. There are two options available to special diploma students. Special Diploma Option 1 requires the student to:

- earn the minimum number of course credits determined by the local school board; and
- show mastery of the standards for special diploma.

Special Diploma Option 2 requires the student to:

- be successfully employed for at least one semester, at or above minimum wage
- achieve all annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks related to employment and community competencies in the graduation training plan; and
- show mastery of competencies in his or her employment and community competencies training plan.

Students who graduate with a special diploma are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) until they reach age 22 or receive a standard diploma, whichever comes first. For more information about a special diploma and other graduation options for students with disabilities, contact your child's school counselor, exceptional student education teacher, or visit <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/diploma.pdf> .

STUDENT OPTIONS

Within the five graduation programs, students have multiple options in a variety of areas.

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL -Middle school students can take some high school courses for high school credit while in middle school. To encourage this practice, for middle school students who take any high school course for high school credit and earn a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F” or the equivalent of a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F,” the district grade forgiveness policy must allow the replacement of the grade with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. Course offerings vary by district. For more information, contact your district or your middle school guidance counselor.

ACCELERATION PROGRAMS AND ADVANCED COURSEWORK -Studies show that students who complete a solid academic program in high school, including advanced courses, are more likely to be successful in college. Students in all graduation programs are encouraged to take advantage of advanced course offerings and acceleration programs such as dual enrollment, early admission, Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, Advanced International Certificate of Education courses, and courses from the Florida Virtual School. These courses are available to all qualified students, no matter which graduation program they choose. For information, contact your child’s school counselor.

DUAL ENROLLMENT AND EARLY ADMISSION -**Dual enrollment** allows eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses. They earn credit toward high school graduation and, at the same time, earn credit toward a college degree or technical certificate. All 28 public community colleges and some of the state universities in Florida participate in dual enrollment. Students are permitted to take dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Dual enrollment students do not have to pay registration, matriculation, or laboratory fees. In addition, textbooks for dual enrollment are provided to students free of charge. **Early admission** is similar to dual enrollment, except that students enroll in college/university courses full time. They earn credits simultaneously toward a college degree and a high school diploma.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) PROGRAM -The College Board’s AP Program is a nationwide program consisting of more than 30 college-level courses and exams offered at participating high schools. Subjects range from art to statistics. Students who earn a qualifying grade of 3 or above on an AP exam can earn college credit or advanced placement or both, depending on the college or university in which the student enrolls. Students in Florida’s public secondary schools enrolled in AP courses do not have to pay to take the exams. For information, visit www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html.

INTERNATIONAL GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (PRE-AICE) PROGRAM (IGCSE) -The optional pre-AICE curriculum program, called the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), was developed in 1985 to meet the need for an internationally focused curriculum appropriate for a wide range of student ability. IGCSE is suitable for grades 9 and 10 and features over 50 subjects with end-of-course, international criterion-referenced, externally assessed examinations. While schools offering AICE subjects are not required to also offer IGCSE courses, students are expected to have mastered the IGCSE level of study and skills in a subject before beginning an A-level AICE course. Most IGCSE subjects are offered at two levels: extended and core. The extended level is for students planning to progress to AICE or other college level equivalent courses in grades 11 and 12. The core level of IGCSE is suitable for a wider range of ability student. Students at the core level may find during their course of study that they are actually able to move up to the higher, extended level of IGCSE study and continue on to the AICE program. This possibility opens doors for previously unidentified advanced students. For information, visit www.cie.org.uk and select “Qualifications.”

FLORIDA VIRTUAL SCHOOL (FVS) -The FVS offers high-quality, online high school curricula, including AP courses. The FVS Program can be a resource for students with limited access to AP offerings. All students have the option of taking online courses from the Florida Virtual School. For information, visit www.flvs.net.

ADULT EDUCATION -Many school districts let high school students take courses through the district’s adult education program. Credits earned may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to local school board policies.

GED EXIT OPTION MODEL - The GED Exit Option is a graduation strategy that permits currently enrolled high school students who are at risk of not graduating with their cohort group to earn a standard diploma through an alternate graduation route. For more information go to www.fldoe.org/faq/default.asp?Dept=108&Cat=90.

GRADING

Grades 6-12

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>GPA</u>	<u>Summary</u>
A	90-100%	4.0	Outstanding Progress
B	80-89%	3.0	Above Average Progress
C	70-79%	2.0	Average Progress
D	60-69	1.0	Lowest Passing Grade/Needs Improvement
F	0-59%	0.0	Failure
I			Incomplete

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Students are required to have a minimum cumulative grade point average based on a 4.0 scale for the following: Four-Year Standard 24 Credit and 26-Credit Program – 2.0 unweighted GPA, or the Three-Year Standard 18 Credit College Preparatory Program – 3.5 weighted GPA, or the Three-Year Standard 18 Credit Career Preparatory Program – 3.0 weighted GPA.

UNWEIGHTED GPA

The cumulative unweighted grade point average includes all courses taken for credit. It is calculated for high school graduation purposes with the exception of those courses retaken under the Grade Forgiveness Policy.

Grade	Points
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F	0

WEIGHTED GRADES/GPA

For the purposes of class ranking, high school may use a weighted grading system pursuant to F.S. 1007.271. A high school student may earn an additional quality point for a passing grade in any Advanced Placement or dual enrollment course. In addition, specific courses designated as Level III in the state's Course Code Directory and identified as honors courses in the high school program of study may also earn an additional quality point for a passing grade. These quality points increase the point value for credits earned, and when divided by the credits attempted may result in a higher GPA for a student enrolled in these more challenging courses. (F.S.1003.437)

College level dual enrollment courses must be weighted the same as honors and advanced placement courses. A student must have a 3.0 unweighted GPA in order to enroll in a college credit class, and a 2.0 unweighted GPA in order to enroll in a career certification program. There must be no discrimination against dual enrollment courses in the assigning of weighted grades or the calculation of cumulative grade point averages.

The cumulative weighted grade point average includes additional weight for Dual Enrollment (DE), Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), courses as well as Level III (Advanced) high school courses.

F.S. 1007.271 (16) requires that School Districts must weight dual enrollment courses the same as Advanced Placement courses when grade point averages are calculated. Alternative grade calculation or weighting systems that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.

Grade	Dual Enrollment/ AP/IB/AICE Courses	Level III Courses
	<i>Points</i>	<i>Points</i>
A	5	4.5
B	4	3.5
C	3	2.5
D	1	1
F	0	0

HIGH SCHOOL GRADING SYSTEM – RANK-IN-CLASS

Rank-in class shall be for the purpose of college admissions and scholarship applications. The release of such individual student information shall be in accordance with School Board Policy 8330. Rank in class shall be computed on a cumulative unweighted GPA. State universities in Florida recalculate a student’s grade point average for admissions purposes in accordance with Florida statute and rule.

Upon a student or parent request, for purposes of admissions to colleges and universities which are not a part of the Florida state system, and for certain scholarship applications, the rank-in-class procedure utilizing only academic subjects on a weighted basis shall be used.

A student selecting one of the three-year graduation options must be included in the overall class ranking for his/her graduation year based on the relative ranking of his/her cumulative GPA. These students are also eligible for consideration as Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and the Talented 20 Program. If the student meets all the requirements, he/she is also eligible for a National Merit Scholarship, a Bright Futures Scholarship, and participation in college athletics. (s.1003, 437. F.S.)

HONOR GRADUATES

- Any student with a minimum of 3.50 cumulative weighted GPA at the end of the first semester during his/her graduation year shall be declared an honor graduate, provided that the student maintains a comparable level of performance during the second semester.
- All high school course grades earned in grades 7-12 are to be included in the grade point average for determining honor graduates with the following exceptions:

- a. Adult education
- b. Pass/fail grades (transfer students)
- c. On-the-job
- d. Lowest grade for a course that is repeated
- The cumulative weighted grade point average as indicated in the chart above shall be utilized in computing a student's grade point average.

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 exercises, which include Baccalaureate and Class Night, 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 OR LATER

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 (IB) curriculum, an Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum or the successful completion of an 18-hour college or career preparatory accelerated graduation program. 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.

For the college preparatory 18-credit option: At least six of the eighteen credits required for this program must be received in classes that are offered pursuant to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, the Advanced Placement (AP) Program, dual enrollment, Advanced Certificate of Education (AICE), or are specifically listed or identified as rigorous pursuant to S. 1009.531(3), F.S. The grade point average requirement for a student to pursue an accelerated graduation option is a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.

Prior to selecting an accelerated career or college preparatory program, a student and the student's parent must meet with designated school personnel to receive an explanation of the requirements, advantages and disadvantages of each program option, and the student must also receive written consent from the student's parent.

The 24 credits may be earned through applied, integrated, and combined courses approved by the Department of Education. The credits are split between sixteen (16) core curriculum credits, four (4) credits in a major area of interest, and four (4) credits combined to allow for a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest, elective courses, intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses, or credit recovery courses.

- (1) The 24 credits 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. (Courses that will fulfill the Algebra I requirement are: Algebra I (1 credit), Algebra I Honors (1 credit), Pacesetter Mathematics I (1 credit), Algebra IA and Algebra IB (2 credits), Applied Mathematics I and Applied Mathematics II (2 credits), Integrated Mathematics I and Integrated Mathematics II (2 credits) Note: Only Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, and Algebra IA & Algebra IB are eligible for middle grades weighted grading.
 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ credit in physical education and $\frac{1}{2}$ credit in Personal Fitness (which includes integration of health).
 - Participation in two full seasons of an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity and varsity levels AND a passing grade of “C” on the Personal Fitness Competency test replaces both the .5 credit requirement in Personal Fitness and the .5 credit requirement in a PE Activity elective for a total of 1 credit in PE.
 - Completion of one semester of marching band with a passing grade of “C” replaces the .5 credit of the PE Activity elective. (Note: Another option is to have this satisfy the Performing Arts requirement.) The student must still take the Personal Fitness class (.5 credit) to complete the 1 credit in PE. 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.
 - Participation in a dance class satisfies the .5 credit of the PE activity elective. (Note: Another option is to have this satisfy the Performing Arts requirement.) The student must still take the Personal Fitness class (.5 credit) to complete the 1 credit in PE. 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 two years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class satisfies 1 credit of the PE activity electives. However, the student must still take the Personal Fitness class (.5 credit) to satisfy the PE graduation requirement in those districts choosing this option. Students using the R.O.T.C. waiver and the Personal Fitness class will have 1.5 credits in PE. 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.
- Dual Enrollment courses that can satisfy the high school PE graduation requirement include Personal Health and Fitness; Human Performance; Personal Health; Perspectives of Health and Wellness; Wellness: Nutrition, Personal Growth, Fitness; and Application of Scientific Principles to Conditioning Programs.
- Senate Bill 2092 specifically states that a district school board may not require that the one credit in PE be taken during the 9th grade year.

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.

**Three Graduation Programs For
Students Entering Grade Nine In 2007-2008 School Year and Later**

Subject Area	Graduation Requirements of 24-Credit Program	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year, 18-Credit College Preparatory Program ¹	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year, 18-Credit Career Preparatory Program
English	4 credits, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature	4 credits with major concentration in composition and literature	4 credits with major concentration in composition and literature
Mathematics	4 credits, one of which must be algebra I or its equivalent, or a higher-level mathematics course ²	3 credits at the algebra I level or above, from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission	3 credits, one of which must be algebra I or its equivalent ²
Science	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component
Social Studies	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics
Foreign Language	Not required for high school graduation, but required for admission into state universities	2 credits in the same language or demonstrated proficiency in a second language	Not required
Fine Arts or Performing Arts	1 credit in fine or performing arts, which may include speech and debate	Not required	Not required
Physical Education	1 credit in physical education to include the integration of health ³	Not required	Not required
Major, Minor, or Electives	8 credits ⁴ √ 4 credits in a Major Area of Interest (MAI) √ 4 credits in elective courses, which may be combined to allow for a second Major Area of Interest, a minor area of interest (3 credits), individual elective courses, or intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses	3 credits in electives	3 credits in single vocational/career education program and 2 credits in electives Or 3 credits in single career/technical certificate dual enrollment and 2 credits in electives Or 5 credits in vocational/career education (including 3 credits in one sequential career and technical education program)
TOTAL	24 credits	18 credits	18 credits
State Assessment Requirements⁵	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)
Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements.⁶	Cumulative GPA or 2.0 on a 4.0 scale ⁶	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits

All courses earned toward the three-year, 18-credit college preparatory program must satisfy admission requirements for the State University System. To determine which courses meet State University System admissions requirements, please see the high school counselor for assistance. At least 6 of the 18 credits must be completed in courses that include dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), or are specifically listed as rigorous by the Department of Education.

²See high school counselor for assistance with Algebra I equivalents. Courses or series of courses deemed "equivalent" for satisfying the Algebra 1 graduation requirements are: Algebra I; Algebra I Honors; Algebra Ia and Ib; Applied Mathematics I and II, Integrated Mathematics I and II; Pre-AICE Math; and Pacasetter Mathematics I.

³For more information on meeting the physical education requirement, please visit <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4461k12-2007-103.pdf> or see a high school counselor.

⁴Students may revise their Major Areas of Interest (MAI) each year as part of their annual course registration process.

⁵Students must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT in mathematics and reading (or scores that are concordant with the passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT). Students must also pass the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+. Please visit <http://fcats.fldoe.org/pdf/fcatpass.pdf> for additional information on state assessment requirements.

⁶Students in grades 6-8 who take any high school-level course(s) from high school credit and earn a grade of "C", "D", or "F" may replace the grade with a grade of "C" or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course(s) in accordance with the district school board's grade forgiveness policy.

Points to Remember When Choosing a Graduation Program

- High school credits awarded before grade nine can be counted toward the required credits for all graduation programs.
- Students who meet specified requirements for a comprehensive program of study in career education may be recognized with a career education certification on their high school diploma.
- Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program may still qualify for acceleration programs (e.g., Advanced Placement dual enrollment, International Baccalaureate) and for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship if they meet the eligibility and/or admissions requirements for those programs and scholarships.
- Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program can participate in the National Merit Scholarship Program if they take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) in either the next-to-last year or the last year they are enrolled in high school. Those who take the PSAT/NMSQT in their last year of high school will be entering competition for awards to be offered as they are completing their first year of college.
- Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program; complete the 18 credits; earn a specified, cumulative weighted GPA (with individual course credit GPA requirements); and pass the Grade 10 FCAT, must graduate at the end of the three years. Students cannot remain in school for a fourth year after graduating from high school.
- Students will lose a year of potential athletics eligibility by opting for a three-year program. Issues such as continued eligibility for high school athletics or other extracurricular activities should be taken into consideration when making the decision.
- Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program will automatically be assigned to the 24-credit program if they do not earn 5 credits by the end of grade nine or 11 credits by the end of grade 10; do not achieve a score of three or higher on the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ assessment; do not pass the Grade 10 FCAT; or do not meet credit or GPA requirements by the end of their third year. Passing the Grade 10 FCAT is mandatory.
- The three-year, 18 credit programs are only available to students who will receive a standard diploma.
- Selection of one of the three-year, 18-credit programs must be completed by the student prior to the end of grade nine, and the decision is exclusively up to the student and parent.
- Students who complete the three-year, 18 credit college preparatory program must still satisfy minimum academic core requirements for State University System admissions for admission to those institutions.
- Students who choose the three-year, 18-credit career preparatory program must take their electives in vocational, career, or technical education courses.
- Students who plan to apply to an out-of-state or private in-state college or university and who are interested in one of the three-year, 18-credit programs should contact those institutions as early as possible for specific admissions requirements.
- Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program must be treated equally in all ways with students who choose the 24-credit program, including eligibility for graduation honors, valedictorian or salutatorian ranking, the Talented 20 Program, and the Bright Futures Scholarship.

Major Area of interest

A major area of interest includes four (4) credits in a common area 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 student's education plan. A student must earn a total of four (4) credits in a major area of interest. One (1) of these credits may be earned in a practicum, as described in the Course Code Directory. Major areas of interest will be proposed by school districts to the Commissioner of Education and, once approved, will be available for students to consider. When a student is selecting a major area of interest, it is important for educators providing academic advisement to review the student's transcript to advise the student and to help ensure that the student is on track to meet the requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and the 18 units course distribution requirements for state university system (SUS) admission, if applicable, based on the student's desired postsecondary education goals.

The purposes of a major area of interest are to provide students:

- Opportunities to earn additional credit toward college or technical school, or beginning certification in an occupation
- Opportunities to learn more in areas that students might be considering as future professions or lifetime skills
- Opportunities to receive credit and recognition for high level accomplishments outside of the school day for a supervised activity directly related to the major area of interest
- Opportunities to increase the relevance of the high school experience through more in-depth study in an area students find engaging
- Opportunities to increase the value of "elective" classes
- Opportunities to increase the value of the high school diploma

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.**

A Certificate of Completion may be awarded to a student who completes the minimum number of credits and other requirements in statute s.1003.428 (1-3), F.S. but who is unable to earn a passing score on the FCAT, or standardized tests that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT, or complete all requirements in the student progression and remedial instruction, or achieve a cumulative grade point average of a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, or requirements as specified in paragraph (5)(c), or complete all other requirements prescribed by the district school board.

At the end of the senior year, a student who has earned the minimum required 24 (or 26) credits but who has not met the testing or GPA requirements may elect one of the following:

A student who is eligible for this option may enroll in the day school program, or may apply for admission to the adult education program to complete graduation requirements. To be eligible:

- 1. A student must have met state and school district credit requirements (student progression and remedial instruction) for graduation and GPA requirements for graduation, but not passed the FCAT, **or**
- 2. A student must have met state and school district credit requirements (student progression and remedial instruction) for graduation and passed the FCAT, but not have the required GPA requirements for graduation, **or**
- 3. A student must have met state and school district credit requirements (student progression and remedial instruction), but not passed the FCAT and not have the required GPA requirements for graduation.

Any student who is entitled to a Certificate of Completion or who receives a Certificate of Completion may elect to remain in the secondary school either as a full-time student or a part-time student for up to one additional year and receive special instruction to remedy the identified deficiencies. A student who has received a Certificate of Completion who subsequently meets the requirements for a standard high school diploma shall be awarded a standard high school diploma whenever the requirements are completed. Additionally, the awarding of a Certificate of Completion is limited to those students choosing the four year 24 (or 26) credit general high school graduation program and is not applicable to the three year -accelerated graduation programs.

- (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.

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.)

**Three Graduation Programs For
Students Entering Grade Nine In 2004-2006 School Years**

Subject Area	Graduation Requirements of 24-Credit Program	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year, 18-Credit College Preparatory Program ¹	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year, 18-Credit Career Preparatory Program
English	4 credits, with major concentration in composition and literature	4 credits with major concentration in composition and literature	4 credits with major concentration in composition and literature
Mathematics	3 credits, one of which must be Algebra I, Algebra 1a and 1b, Applied Mathematics I and II, Integrated Mathematics I and II ²	3 credits at the algebra I level or above, from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission	3 credits, one of which must be algebra I or algebra 1a and 1b ²
Science	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component
Social Studies	1 credit World History 1 credit American History .5 credit American Government .5 credit Economics	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics
Foreign Language	Not required for high school graduation, but required for admission into state universities	2 credits in the same foreign language	Not required
Life management Skills	0.5 credits	Not required	Not required
Fine Arts or Performing Arts	1 credit in fine or performing arts, which may include speech and debate	Not required	Not required
Physical Education	1 credit in physical education to include the integration of health ³	Not required	Not required
Vocational or Career Courses	Not required	Not required	3 credits in single vocational/career education program, <i>or</i> three credits in career and technical certificate dual enrollment courses, <i>or</i> five credits in vocational or career education courses
Electives	8.5 credits ⁴	3 credits	2 credits in electives unless five credits are earned in vocational or career courses
State Assessment Requirements⁵	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)
Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements⁶	Cumulative GPA or 2.0 on a 4.0 scale ⁶	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.5 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits At least 16 of the 18 credits must be received in honors, dual enrollment, advanced placement, international Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education classes.	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits

All courses earned toward the three-year, 18-credit college preparatory program must satisfy admission requirements for the State University System. To determine which courses meet State University System admissions requirements, please see the high school counselor for assistance. At least 6 of the 18 credits must be completed in courses that include dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), or are specifically listed as rigorous by the Department of Education.

²See high school counselor for assistance with Algebra I equivalents. Courses or series of courses deemed "equivalent" for satisfying the Algebra 1 graduation requirements are: Algebra I; Algebra I Honors; Algebra 1a and 1b; Applied Mathematics I and II, Integrated Mathematics I and II; Pre-AICE Math; and Pacasetter Mathematics I.

³For more information on meeting the physical education requirement, please visit <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4461k12-2007-103.pdf> or see a high school counselor.

⁴Students may revise their Major Areas of Interest (MAI) each year as part of their annual course registration process.

⁵Students must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT in mathematics and reading (or scores that are concordant with the passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT). Students must also pass the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+. Please visit <http://fcats.fldoe.org/pdf/fcatpass.pdf> for additional information on state assessment requirements.

⁶Students in grades 6-8 who take any high school-level course(s) from high school credit and earn a grade of "C", "D", or "F" may replace the grade with a grade of "C" or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course(s) in accordance with the district school board's grade forgiveness policy.

DIPLOMAS, CERTIFICATES AND ENDORSEMENTS

A student attending Gadsden County Public Schools may seek one of the following types of diplomas:

- Standard diploma;
- Standard diploma with a College Ready, Tech Prep, or Florida Gold Seal Career and Technical Endorsement;
- Certificate of completion; or a
- Special diploma or special certificate of completion.

STANDARD DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING FROM OUT-OF-STATE OR FOREIGN STUDENTS

Students entering Gadsden County Public Schools at the eleventh or twelfth grade from out-of-state or from a foreign country may waive or modify the credit requirements for a standard diploma. These entering students must meet the following criteria:

1. A cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above;
2. A passing score on the Tenth grade FCAT, or a state approved alternative assessment with an established concordant passing score; and
3. Met all the credit requirements of the transferring school system.

These entering students are eligible for intensive assistance based upon demonstrated student need in any of the following areas:

1. English language skills for ELL/ESOL students with less than two years in the program,
2. Mastery of benchmarks contained in the Sunshine State Standards, and/or
3. GED Exit Option.

A student defined under this subsection receiving a certificate of completion is eligible to take the College Placement Test (CPT) and to be admitted into remedial or credit courses at a state community college. The certificate of completion must contain “CPT Eligible” and is reported with a W8 withdrawal code in order to identify the student as eligible for admission to community college.

A student defined under this sub-section may participate in an adult general education program, and is exempt from any tuition or fees. A student attending an adult general education program may retake the 10th grade FCAT an unlimited number of times, and upon meeting FCAT graduation requirements is eligible for a standard diploma. (F.S.1003.433)

STANDARD DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENTS - COLLEGE-READY ENDORSEMENT

The student must meet the requirements for a standard diploma.

The credits must be earned in the following disciplines:

1. Algebra, 2 credits; Geometry, 1 credit (or equivalents);
2. Biology, 1 credit; Chemistry, 1 credit; Physics, 1 credit (or equivalents);
3. Foreign Language, 2 sequential credits (or equivalents); and
4. Honors or College English, 1 credit; (or equivalent).

The student must also meet the following requirements:

1. An acceptable score of at least 1000 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or 20 on the Enhanced American College Test (ACT), or a passing score on the College Placement Test; and
2. Earn a grade of C or better in each course used to qualify for the endorsement (D grades count toward graduation, but do not meet requirements for the endorsement).

The college-ready diploma entitles a student to admission in any public post-secondary program, which terminates with a technical certificate, an A.S., or A.A. degree, without having to take a placement test.

FLORIDA GOLD SEAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL ENDORSEMENT

The student must meet all requirements for a standard diploma, and she/he must complete a vocational job preparatory program consisting of a minimum of three credits. The student must meet these other conditions for Gold Seal Endorsement:

The student must demonstrate competency related to the specific job preparatory programs as evidenced by passing a countywide career and technical examination; basic skills of reading, writing and computation relating to the occupation as evidenced by passing the FCAT; and general skills and knowledge related to employability as evidenced by the interview required during the verification process.

The student must earn a minimum cumulative unweighted grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale for courses taken in the vocational job preparatory program and an overall 3.0 grade point average.

Applications for the Florida Gold Seal Career and Technical Endorsement must be submitted by each school's guidance department to the Department of Education no later than April 1 of the student's senior year. (F.S.1003.43(9))

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Gadsden County Public Schools may award a Certificate of Completion to a student who completes standard graduation course credit requirements, but who is unable to earn a passing score on the FCAT, completes all requirements in student progression and remedial instruction, achieves a cumulative grade point average requirement as specified in paragraph (5) (c) or completes all other requirements prescribed by the district school board. Students may elect to remain in secondary school as full-time or part-time students for up to one additional year and receive instruction to remedy the deficiencies. A student who has received a certificate of

completion who subsequently meets the requirements for a standard high school diploma shall be awarded a standard high school diploma whenever the requirements are completed. Additionally, the awarding of a certificate of completion is limited to those students choosing the 4-year 24 credit or 26 credit general high school graduation program and is not applicable to the three-year accelerated graduation program. (F.S.1003.43 (10) (b))

The student must be counseled and made aware of the alternatives available.

Students who have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the grade 10 FCAT or an alternate assessment by the end of grade 12 must be provided the following learning opportunities:

1. participation in an accelerated high school equivalency diploma preparation program during the summer (if available);
2. upon receipt of a certificate of completion, be allowed to take the College Placement Test and be admitted to remedial or credit courses at a state community college, as appropriate; and
3. participation in an adult general education program as provided in s.1004.93, F.S. for such time as the student requires to master English, reading, mathematics, or any other subject required for high school graduation.

A student who attends an adult general education program shall have the opportunity to take the Grade 10 FCAT an unlimited number of times in order to receive a standard high school diploma. (s.1003.433(2)(a)-(c), F.S.)

STANDARD DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS FOR A GED EXIT OPTION

A high school student may not receive special assistance toward earning a General Educational Development (GED) test unless the student has met all other graduation requirements with the exception of the 2.0 GPA. In addition, a student enrolled in an approved GED Exit Option program may receive special assistance in passing the GED test and mastering the necessary skills to pass the FCAT.

A student must pass FCAT requirements and the GED in order to receive a Standard Diploma under the GED Exit Option. Requirements to participate in the GED Exit Option are updated yearly. This option is available only to students who are past the compulsory attendance age. **F.S. 1003.43(5)**

SPECIAL DIPLOMA

The student must have been enrolled in the special education program and completed all requirements of federal and state guidelines governing placement in the special education program. A student with disabilities pursuing a special diploma must meet all the requirements set forth in the district's policies and procedures for student's with disabilities. A student classified as Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH) may qualify if the student meets all the district requirements for a PMH student. (F.S.1003.438)

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

A student must have met the requirements for a special diploma except for demonstrated mastery of special state minimum requirements for his exceptionality. The student must be counseled and made aware of the alternatives available. An exceptional student pursuing a special certificate of completion must meet requirements. A student classified as Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH) may qualify if the student meets all the district requirements for a PMH student. (F.S.1003.438)

STANDARD DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENTS

COLLEGE-READY ENDORSEMENT

The student must meet the requirements for a standard diploma.

The credits must be earned in the following disciplines:

- Algebra, 2 credits; Geometry, 1 credit (or equivalents);
- Biology, 1 credit; Chemistry, 1 credit; Physics, 1 credit (or equivalents);
- Foreign Language, 2 sequential credits (or equivalents); and
- Honors or College English, 1 credit; (or equivalent).

The student must also meet the following requirements:

- An acceptable score of at least 1000 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or 20 on the American College Test (ACT), or a passing score on the College Placement Test;
- Earn a grade of C or better in each course used to qualify for the endorsement (D grades count toward graduation, but do not meet requirements for the endorsement).

The college-ready diploma entitles a student to admission to any public post-secondary program, which terminates with a technical certificate, an A.S., or A.A. degree, without having to take a placement test.

FLORIDA GOLD SEAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL ENDORSEMENT

The student must meet all requirements for a standard diploma, and she/he must complete a vocational job preparatory program consisting of a minimum of three credits. The student must meet these other conditions for Gold Seal Endorsement:

The student must demonstrate competency related to the specific job preparatory programs as evidenced by passing a countywide career and technical examination; basic skills of reading, writing and computation relating to the occupation as evidenced by passing the FCAT; and

general skills and knowledge related to employability as evidenced by the interview required during the verification process.

The student must earn a minimum cumulative unweighted grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale for courses taken in the vocational job preparatory program and an overall 3.0 grade point average.

Applications for the Florida Gold Seal Career and Technical Endorsement must be submitted by each school's guidance department to the Department of Education no later than April 1 of the student's senior year. **F.S. 1003.43(9)**

ALTERNATIVE TO A STANDARD DIPLOMA

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

- A student must have met all other requirements for a standard diploma except he/she has not passed the FCAT or the minimum grade point average necessary for graduation.
- The student has been counseled and made aware of the alternatives available.
- A student may continue to master the Sunshine State Standards assessed on the 10th grade FCAT after the senior year as long as she/he meets one of the following conditions:
 - Full-time or part-time high school enrollment for one additional year,
 - Adult school enrollment, and/or Summer school enrollment.
- A student holding a certificate of completion that is able to pass the FCAT requirements for graduation may receive a standard diploma. (F.S.1003.43(9-10))

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESOURCES

FACTS.org is Florida’s free academic advising Web site. The site includes services to help students prepare for success in school and beyond. FACTS.org makes it easy for public middle and high school students and their parents to be actively involved in their academic and career planning. By establishing a log-in ID, students can create an ePersonal Education Plan (ePEP) that maps out high school coursework according to individual goals. Students can also monitor their progress by running evaluations against transcript information and the requirements for high school diplomas, State University System admissions, Bright Futures Scholarships, and a new federal grant called the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG). FACTS.org services support Department of Education initiatives and legislative reforms. For more information, go to <http://www.facts.org> or contact the FACTS.org Help Desk toll-free at (866) 324-2618 or via e-mail at facts@admin.usf.edu.

Florida Counseling for Future Education Handbook is a comprehensive guide designed for Florida’s middle and high school counselors to help advise students who will enroll in Florida’s postsecondary institutions. The Handbook is updated annually with the most current version available on FACTS.org. Please select “Advising Manuals” from the home page main menu.

Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) administers state-funded grants/scholarship programs and federal student loan financial aid programs to assist students with the costs of postsecondary education. For information, go to <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org> or call toll-free (888) 827-2004.

Federal Student Aid is your source for free information from the U.S. Department of Education on preparing for and funding education beyond high school. Visit <http://www.studentaid.ed.gov>.

Talented 20 Program provides eligible students guaranteed admission to one of the 11 state universities. Please note that while eligible students are guaranteed admission to one of the state universities, they may not necessarily be admitted to the campus of their choice. These students are given *priority funding* from the Florida Student Assistance Grant Program, although this program provides no scholarships. For more information on how to qualify, visit <http://www.fldoe.org/Talented20/> or call the Student Support Services Project office at (850) 922-3727.

FCAT Explorer offers five free online programs for Florida’s public school students that offer practice for the skills tested on the FCAT and include features to help students get the most from their study time. The system features three practice programs created especially for middle school students—Reading Island, Interactive Library, and Math Navigator—and two practice programs created for grade ten students—Reading Timeline and Math Timeline. Students may use the system on any computer connected to the Internet, whether at school, at the library, or at home. Visit <http://www.fcatexplorer.com>.

CHOICES Web site is a comprehensive career information system that uses a flexible approach combining graphics, multimedia, and search strategies to allow students to explore career and

educational options. The site includes links to key Web sites related to career exploration to help students plan for a career. Visit <http://www.Florida.echoices.com> .

Career Voyages Web site provides information and guided support for students in determining the best career path for their interests and abilities. The site includes Florida-specific information about high-growth jobs with better wages, including new career fields, video tours for students, and an online interest inventory. Visit <http://www.careervoyages.gov> .

Major Areas of Interest (MAI) is a means by which a student can explore areas of interest in depth. Students entering grade nine in 2007-2008 and thereafter will select a MAI as part of their required electives for graduation. For more information and to view a list of MAIs available in your school district, visit <http://www.fldoe.org/APlusPlus/> or <http://www.FACTS.org> .

FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

This program consists of three types of merit-based scholarships for Florida resident high school graduates. Students are eligible to claim their scholarships for up to three years following graduation for either full-time or part-time study in Florida public and private post secondary institutions, including proprietary vocational schools. Beginning in the ninth grade year, guidance counselors, teachers, and school administrators will monitor each student's eligibility to participate in these scholarship programs. The scholarships are known by the following names:

- Florida Academic Scholars Award,
- Florida Merit Scholars Award, and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award

The amount and type of scholarship award is based on the student's high school grade point average (GPA), the courses the student took in high school, the type of program in which the student enrolls, and the number of student credit hours in which the student enrolls. **Participation in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is defined by s. 1009.53, F.S.** The rules, policies, and procedures are followed as stated in the *Florida Bright Futures High School Guide* and the *Florida Bright Futures Post- secondary Guide* published by the Florida Department of Education. Details are also available at the Bright Futures website, <http://www.MyFloridaEducation.com/brfuture>

**Higher Education Admission and
Bright Futures Requirements**

State University System (SUS) Admission Requirements	Florida Community College System Admission Requirements	Bright Futures Scholarship Requirements for 2008 High School Graduates
<p>To qualify to enter one of Florida's public universities, a student must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> high school graduation with a standard diploma, and <input type="checkbox"/> a minimum grade point average in high school academic core courses, and <input type="checkbox"/> minimum admissions test scores (ACT or SAT) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Qualify for the Talented 20 program <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be selected through a "student profile assessment" that considers other special factors (e.g., special talents) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain an associate of arts degree from a Florida community college 	<p>To qualify to enter an associate degree program at one of Florida Community colleges, a student must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate with a standard high school diploma <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Earn a high school equivalency diploma <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have previously demonstrated competency in college credit postsecondary coursework <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate readiness for college-level communication and computation skills (often determined by exam or standardized test scores) <p>For those students interested in non-degree certificate programs, please see an admissions counselor as requirements may vary.</p>	<p>Florida Academic Scholars/Florida Medallion Scholars must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 15 credits in college preparatory courses in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ 4 English (3 with substantial writing) √ 3 mathematics (algebra I and above) √ 3 natural science (2 with substantial lab) √ 3 social science √ 2 foreign language (in the same language) <input type="checkbox"/> Up to three additional credits from courses in the academic areas listed above and/or AP, IB, or AICE fine arts courses calculate a higher GPA <input type="checkbox"/> A 3.5 weighted GPA in the above courses; 75 hours community service; and a minimum score of 1270 on the SAT or 28 on the ACT to be a Florida Academic Scholar (FAS) <input type="checkbox"/> A 3.0 weighted GPA in the above courses and a minimum score of 970 on the SAT or 20 on the ACT to be a Florida Medallion Scholar (FMS). <hr/> <p>Florida Gold Seal Vocational (GSV) Scholars⁷ must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 15.5 credits in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ 4 English √ 4 mathematics (including algebra I) √ 3 natural science √ 3 social science (American history, world history, American government, and economics) √ 1 fine arts √ 1 physical education to include the integration of health <input type="checkbox"/> A 3.0 weighted GPA in the above courses (for a 24-credit diploma) <input type="checkbox"/> 3 career/technical job-preparatory or technology education program credits in one career/technical program with an unweighted 3.5 GPA in those courses <input type="checkbox"/> A minimum score listed below on <i>each</i> subsection of <i>either</i> the CPT or SAT or ACT (<i>Subsections of different test types may not be combined.</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPT: Reading 83/Sentence Skills 83/Algebra 72 SAT: Verbal 440/Math 440 ACT: English 17/Reading 18/Math 19
<p>The 18 high school credits required for SUS admission are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ 4 English (3 with substantial writing) √ 4 mathematics (algebra I and above) √ 3 natural science (2 with substantial lab) √ 3 social science √ 2 foreign language (in the same language) √ 3 approved electives (in certain combinations) <p>Students must meet with their school counselor to ensure that courses satisfy SUS admission requirements.</p>	<p>The 18 high school credits recommended for community college admission are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ 4 English (3 with substantial writing) √ 3 mathematics (algebra I and above) √ 3 natural science (2 with substantial lab) √ 3 social science √ 2 foreign language (in the same language) √ 3 approved electives (in certain combinations) 	

⁷College or career preparatory diplomas may be used to qualify for GSV, with appropriate career/technical education electives.

For other ways to qualify for Bright Futures, visit www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org.

K-12 EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS PROGRESSION PLAN



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

Students with disabilities should not be limited to a special diploma or special certificate of completion. A student, after an appropriate request, referral and placement, may pursue a standard diploma or certificate of completion. In order to provide students with disabilities the opportunity to meet graduation requirements for a standard graduation option and standard diploma, schools may use one of the following strategies:

- a. Assignment of the exceptional student to an exceptional education class for instruction in a basic course with the same student performance standards as those required of non-exceptional students in the district school board student progression plan, or
- b. Assignment of the exceptional student to a basic education class for instruction that is modified to accommodate the student's exceptionality.

The strategies employed will be based upon an assessment of the student's needs and shall reflect the decision in the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

A student with a disability for whom the IEP committee determines that the FCAT cannot accurately measure the student's abilities taking into consideration all allowable accommodations, shall have the FCAT requirement waived for the purpose of receiving a standard high school diploma. This waiver can be granted after the student meets the following criteria:

- a. Completes the minimum number of credits and other requirements, and
- b. Does not earn a passing score on the FCAT as required for all three-graduation options after one assessment opportunity in 10th grade and one assessment opportunity in 11th grade.

(2) SPECIAL DIPLOMA – Option I

The student must have been enrolled in the special education program and completed all requirements of federal and state guidelines governing placement in the special education program. A student with disabilities pursuing a special diploma must meet all the requirements set forth in the district's policies and procedures for student's with disabilities. A student classified as Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH) may qualify if the student meets all the district requirements for a PMH student. (F.S.1003.438)

- 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
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.
- b. A student must have met the requirements for a special diploma except for demonstrated mastery of special state minimum requirements for his exceptionality,
- c. A student has been counseled and made aware of the alternatives available,
- d. An exceptional student pursuing a special certificate of completion must meet requirements, and
- e. A student classified as Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH) may qualify if the student meets all the district requirements for a PMH student. (F.S.1003.438)

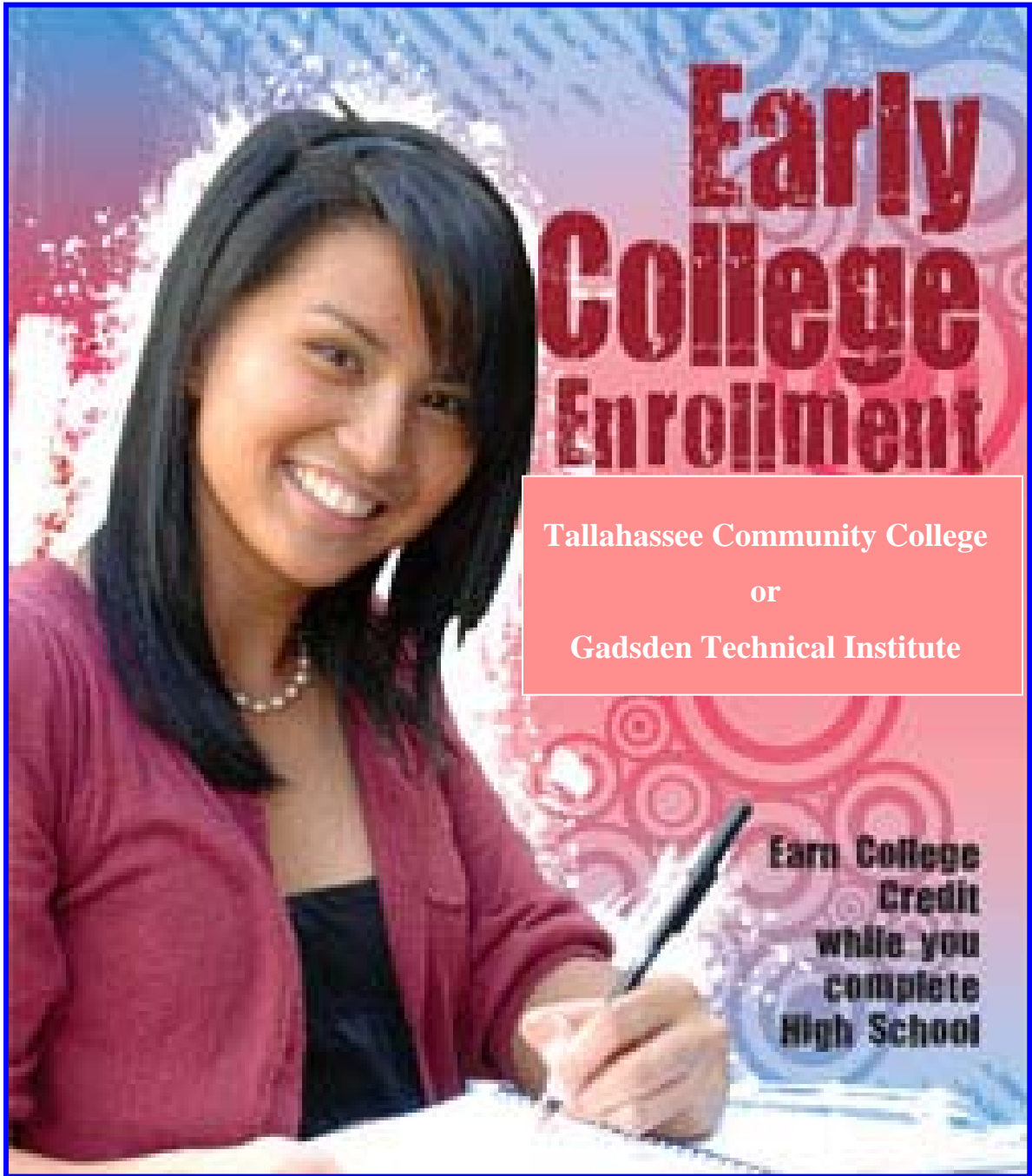
(5) No restrictions may be applied to prohibit an exceptional student from selecting and moving between the Regular and Special Diploma Options.

- 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.

SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

A student must have met the requirements for a special diploma except for demonstrated mastery of special state minimum requirements for his exceptionality. The student must be counseled and made aware of the alternatives available. An exceptional student pursuing a special certificate of completion must meet requirements. A student classified as Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH) may qualify if the student meets all the district requirements for a PMH student. (F.S.1003.438)

Dual Enrollment Options



**Early
College
Enrollment**

Tallahassee Community College
or
Gadsden Technical Institute

**Earn College
Credit
while you
complete
High School**

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, the student must be currently enrolled in a public secondary school in Gadsden County, must have completed the 9th grade (upcoming 10th grader), must have earned at least a 3.0 unweighted grade point average.
- (3) The student must submit placement test scores (SAT, ACT or College Placement Test) that place the student into college level courses. Scores must be less than two years old. Students must place into ENC1101 with their test scores to be eligible to participate in the dual enrollment.

ACT Scores

Reading: 18

English: 17

Placement ENC1101

SAT Scores

Critical Reading: 440

Placement ENC 1101

CPT Scores

Sentence Skills: 83

Reading Comp: 83

Placement ENC1101

- (4) The student must submit a completed application for admission.
- (5) The student must submit a recommendation from his/her principal which has been approved by the School Board of Gadsden County stating that he/she has the maturity, motivation, dependability and academic ability to enable him/her to achieve satisfactorily at the college level.
- (6) Eligibility in the dual enrollment program requires that students maintain a cumulative 2.0 grade point average in Tallahassee Community College 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) The GED Exit Option is designed for students who are in the traditional high school setting, who have been identified as potential school dropouts, or who have dropped out of school. Students enrolled in this program must have demonstrated probability for success on the GED tests as documented by a practice test or achievement test scores and receive regularly scheduled individual and small group counseling

Students must be at least sixteen years of age. A student will be selected for this program based on the recommendation of the principal and with the written permission of the student's parent/guardian(s). To graduate from the GED Exit Option, the student must pass both sections of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and the GED. A student meeting all program requirements will earn a state GED Diploma and a standard high school diploma.

This option is available for high school students who are at risk of not graduating with their peer group. Students using the GED Exit Option must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

- 16 years older and currently enrolled in a PK-12 program.
 - Enrolled in courses that meet high school graduation requirements
 - In jeopardy of not graduating with their cohort because they are overage for grade, are behind in credits, or have a GPA lower than a 2.0
 - The cohort with which student entered kindergarten is graduating
 - Pass the FCAT; and
 - Pass the GED test
- (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 to 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.

DRIVER'S LICENSE LAW

F.S. 322.091 states attendance requirements required for obtaining a driver's or learner's license and establishes eligibility requirements for driving privileges, notification of intent to suspend, and hardship waiver and appeal procedures.

In order to be eligible for driving privileges a minor must satisfy one of the following criteria:

1. Be enrolled in a public school, nonpublic school, or home education program and satisfy relevant attendance requirements;
2. Have received a high school diploma, a high school equivalency diploma, a special diploma, or a certificate of high school completion;
3. Be enrolled in a study course in preparation for the General Educational Development test and satisfy attendance requirements;
4. Be enrolled in other educational activities approved by the district School Board and satisfy relevant attendance requirements;
5. Have been issued a certificate of exemption according to section 1003.21, F.S.; or
6. Have received a hardship waiver.

Each public school principal or designee is required to notify the School Board of each minor who accumulates fifteen (15) unexcused absences within ninety (90) calendar days. The superintendent must report the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor who fails to meet attendance requirements to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. F.S. 1003.27(2)(b)

INTERSCHOLASTIC EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities, a student must maintain the grade point average listed:

Students in Grade 9:

1. To be eligible in the fall semester of 9th Grade, must have been regularly promoted, the previous year, from Grade 8.
2. To be eligible in the spring semester of the 9th Grade year, a student must have a 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.

A student in Grade 10-12:

1. must have a cumulative 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale, or:

Each middle school student who participates in extracurricular activities must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale. Elementary students' initially entering middle school will have their eligibility determined by their GPA for the first grading period.

Interscholastic extracurricular student activities are those organized between or among schools which are carried on outside the curriculum. These activities include displays of talent which may include, but are not limited to, sports; music festivals; and speech, debate, art, drama, foreign language, and club competitions. *s.1006.15, F.S.*

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 teacher of record in the courses in which 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 in #3 above.