



**ACCELERATED GRADUATION OPTIONS:  
Relevant Sections of Senate Bill 30A  
Including Section 1003.43, Florida Statutes**

**Section 10.** Paragraph (i) is added to subsection (1) of section 1003.02, Florida Statutes, and subsection (4) of that section is amended, to read:

1003.02 District school board operation and control of public K-12 education within the school district.--As provided in part II of chapter 1001, district school boards are constitutionally and statutorily charged with the operation and control of public K-12 education within their school district. The district school boards must establish, organize, and operate their public K-12 schools and educational programs, employees, and facilities. Their responsibilities include staff development, public K-12 school student education including education for exceptional students and students in juvenile justice programs, special programs, adult education programs, and career and technical education programs. Additionally, district school boards must:

(1) Provide for the proper accounting for all students of school age, for the attendance and control of students at school, and for proper attention to health, safety, and other matters relating to the welfare of students in the following fields:

(i) Parental notification of acceleration mechanisms.--At the beginning of each school year, notify parents of students in or entering high school of the opportunity and benefits of advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, dual enrollment, and Florida Virtual School courses.

~~(4) For any school within the district that is not in compliance with the small school size requirements of chapter 1013,~~ In order to reduce the anonymity of students in large schools, adopt policies that encourage subdivision of the school into schools-within-a-school, which shall operate within existing resources. A "school-within-a-school" means an operational program that uses flexible scheduling, team planning, and curricular and instructional innovation to organize groups of students with groups of teachers as smaller units, so as to functionally operate as a smaller school.

Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

(a) An organizational arrangement assigning both students and teachers to smaller units in which the students take some or all of their coursework with their fellow grouped students and from the teachers assigned to the smaller unit. A unit may be grouped together for 1 year or on a vertical, multiyear basis.

(b) An organizational arrangement similar to that described in paragraph (a) with additional variations in instruction and curriculum. The smaller unit usually seeks to maintain a program different from that of the larger school, or of other smaller units.

It may be vertically organized, but is dependent upon the school principal for its existence, budget, and staff.

(c) A separate and autonomous smaller unit formally authorized by the district school board or district school superintendent. The smaller unit plans and runs its own program, has its own staff and students, and receives its own separate budget. The smaller unit must negotiate the use of common space with the larger school and defer to the building principal on matters of safety and building operation.

**Section 11.** Paragraphs (i) and (j) of subsection (1) of section 1003.43, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1003.43 General requirements for high school graduation.--

(1) Graduation requires successful completion of either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits shall be distributed as follows:

(i) One-half credit in life management skills to include consumer education, positive emotional development, marriage and relationship skill-based education, nutrition, parenting skills, prevention of human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome and other sexually transmissible diseases, benefits of sexual abstinence and consequences of teenage pregnancy, information and instruction on breast cancer detection and breast self-examination, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, drug education, and the hazards of smoking. ~~Such credit shall be given for a course to be taken by all students in either the 9th or 10th grade.~~

(j) One credit in physical education to include assessment, improvement, and maintenance of 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 competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or better. The competency test on personal fitness must be developed by the Department of Education. A district school board may not require that the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of one semester with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, ~~or~~ in a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class a significant component of which is drills shall satisfy a one-half credit requirement in physical education. This one-half credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual educational plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

District school boards may award a maximum of one-half credit in social studies and one-half elective credit for student completion of nonpaid voluntary community or school service work. Students choosing this option must complete a minimum of 75 hours of service in order to earn the one-half credit in either category of instruction. Credit may not be earned for service provided as a result of court action. District school boards that approve the award of credit for student volunteer service

shall develop guidelines regarding the award of the credit, and school principals are responsible for approving specific volunteer activities. A course designated in the Course Code Directory as grade 9 through grade 12 that is taken below the 9th grade may be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements or Florida Academic Scholars award requirements as specified in a district school board's student progression plan. A student shall be granted credit toward meeting the requirements of this subsection for equivalent courses, as identified pursuant to s. 1007.271(6), taken through dual enrollment.

(For reference purposes, Section 1003.43, Florida Statutes is inserted.)

**Sec.1003.43 General requirements for high school graduation.**

(1) Graduation requires successful completion of either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits shall be distributed as follows:

(a) Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature.

(b) Three credits in mathematics. Effective for students entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and thereafter, one of these credits must be Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics course.

(c) Three credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component. The State Board of Education may grant an annual waiver of the laboratory requirement to a district school board that certifies that its laboratory facilities are inadequate, provided the district school board submits a capital outlay plan to provide adequate facilities and makes the funding of this plan a priority of the district school board. Agriscience Foundations I, the core course in secondary Agriscience and Natural Resources programs, counts as one of the science credits.

(d) One credit in American history.

(e) One credit in world history, including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major political systems.

(f) One-half credit in economics, including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major economic systems. The Florida Council on Economic Education shall provide technical assistance to the department and district school boards in developing curriculum materials for the study of economics.

(g) One-half credit in American government, including study of the Constitution of the United States. For students entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and thereafter, the study of Florida government, including study of the State Constitution, the three branches of state government, and municipal and county government, shall be included as part of the required study of American government.

(h) 1. One credit in practical arts career and technical education or exploratory career and technical education. Any career and technical education course as defined in s. 1003.01 may be taken to satisfy the high school graduation requirement for one credit in practical arts or exploratory career and technical education provided in this subparagraph; 2. One credit in performing fine arts to be selected from music, dance,

drama, painting, or sculpture. A course in any art form, in addition to painting or sculpture, that requires manual dexterity, or a course in speech and debate, may be taken to satisfy the high school graduation requirement for one credit in performing arts pursuant to this subparagraph; or 3. One-half credit each in practical arts career and technical education or exploratory career and technical education and performing fine arts, as defined in this paragraph. Such credit for practical arts career and technical education or exploratory career and technical education or for performing fine arts shall be made available in the 9th grade, and students shall be scheduled into a 9th grade course as a priority.

(i) One-half credit in life management skills to include consumer education, positive emotional development, marriage and relationship skill-based education, nutrition, prevention of human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome and other sexually transmissible diseases, benefits of sexual abstinence and consequences of teenage pregnancy, information and instruction on breast cancer detection and breast self-examination, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, drug education, and the hazards of smoking. Such credit shall be given for a course to be taken by all students in either the 9th or 10th grade.

(j) One credit in physical education to include assessment, improvement, and maintenance of 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 competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or better. The competency test on personal fitness must be developed by the Department of Education. A district school board may not require that the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of one semester with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class 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. This one-half credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual educational plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

(k) Eight and one-half elective credits. District school boards may award a maximum of one-half credit in social studies and one-half elective credit for student completion of nonpaid voluntary community or school service work. Students choosing this option must complete a minimum of 75 hours of service in order to earn the one-half credit in either category of instruction. Credit may not be earned for service provided as a result of court action. District school boards that approve the award of credit for student volunteer service shall develop guidelines regarding the award of the credit, and school principals are responsible for approving specific volunteer activities. A course designated in the Course Code Directory as grade 9 through grade 12 that is taken below the 9th grade may be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements or Florida Academic Scholars award requirements as specified in a district school board's student progression plan. A student shall be granted credit toward meeting the

requirements of this subsection for equivalent courses, as identified pursuant to s. 1007.271(6), taken through dual enrollment.

(2) Remedial and compensatory courses taken in grades 9 through 12 may only be counted as elective credit as provided in subsection (1).

(3) Credit for high school graduation may be earned for volunteer activities and nonacademic activities which have been approved for such credit by the State Board of Education.

(4)

(a) A district school board may require specific courses and programs of study within the minimum credit requirements for high school graduation and shall modify basic courses, as necessary, to assure exceptional students the opportunity to meet the graduation requirements for a standard diploma, using one of the following strategies: 1. 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 nonexceptional students in the district school board student progression plan; or 2. Assignment of the exceptional student to a basic education class for instruction that is modified to accommodate the student's exceptionality.

(b) The district school board shall determine which of these strategies to employ based upon an assessment of the student's needs and shall reflect this decision in the student's individual educational plan.

(c) District school boards are authorized and encouraged to establish requirements for high school graduation in excess of the minimum requirements; however, an increase in academic credit or minimum grade point average requirements shall not apply to those students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 at the time the district school board increases the requirements. In addition, any increase in academic credit or minimum grade point average requirements shall not apply to a student who earns credit toward the graduation requirements of this section for equivalent courses taken through dual enrollment.

(5) Each district school board shall establish standards for graduation from its schools, and these standards must include:

(a) Earning passing scores on the FCAT, as defined in s. 1008.22(3)(c).

(b) Completion of all other applicable requirements prescribed by the district school board pursuant to s. 1008.25.

(c) Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 1.5 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, for students entering 9th grade before the 1997-1998 school year; however, these students must earn a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by subsection (1) that are taken after July 1, 1997, or have an overall cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above.

(d) Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by subsection (1), for students entering 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and thereafter.

(e) For purposes of paragraphs (c) and (d): 1. Each district school board shall adopt policies designed to assist students in meeting these requirements. These policies may include, but are not limited to: forgiveness policies, summer school or before or after school attendance, special counseling, volunteer and/or peer tutors, school-sponsored help sessions, homework hotlines, and study skills classes. Beginning in the 2000-2001 school year and each year thereafter, forgiveness policies for required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F," or the equivalent of a grade of "D" or "F," 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. Forgiveness policies for elective courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F," or the equivalent of a grade of "D" or "F," with a grade of "C" or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in another course. Any course grade not replaced according to a district school board forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation. 2. At the end of each semester, the parent of each student in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 who has a cumulative grade point average of less than 0.5 above the cumulative grade point average required for graduation shall be notified that the student is at risk of not meeting the requirements for graduation. The notice shall contain an explanation of the policies the district school board has in place to assist the student in meeting the grade point average requirement. 3. Special assistance to obtain a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to s. 1003.435 may be given only when the student has completed all requirements for graduation except the attainment of the required cumulative grade point average. The standards required in this subsection, and any subsequent modifications, shall be reprinted in the Florida Administrative Code even though not defined as "rules."

(6) The Legislature recognizes that adult learners are unique in situation and needs. The following graduation requirements are therefore instituted for students enrolled in adult general education in accordance with s. 1004.93 in pursuit of a high school diploma:

(a) The one credit in physical education required for graduation, pursuant to subsection (1), is not required for graduation and shall be substituted with elective credit keeping the total credits needed for graduation consistent with subsection (1).

(b) Each district school board may waive the laboratory component of the science requirement expressed in subsection (1) when such facilities are inaccessible or do not exist.

(c) Any course listed within the Department of Education Course Code Directory in the areas of art, dance, drama, or music may be undertaken by adult secondary education students. Enrollment and satisfactory completion of such a course shall

satisfy the credit in performing fine arts required for high school graduation pursuant to subsection (1).

(7) No student may be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in the following courses or programs:

(a) More than a total of nine elective credits in remedial programs.

(b) More than one credit in exploratory career education courses as defined in s. 1003.01(4)(a).

(c) More than three credits in practical arts family and consumer sciences classes as defined in s. 1003.01(4)(a).

(d) Any Level I course unless the student's assessment indicates that a more rigorous course of study would be inappropriate, in which case a written assessment of the need must be included in the student's individual educational plan or in a student performance plan, signed by the principal, the guidance counselor, and the parent of the student, or the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

(8) The State Board of Education, after a public hearing and consideration, shall make provision for appropriate modification of testing instruments and procedures for students with identified handicaps or disabilities in order to ensure that the results of the testing represent the student's achievement, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, speaking, or psychological process skills.

(9) A student who meets all requirements prescribed in subsections (1), (4), and (5) shall be awarded a standard diploma in a form prescribed by the State Board of Education. A district school board may attach the Florida gold seal career and technical endorsement to a standard diploma or, instead of the standard diploma, award differentiated diplomas to those exceeding the prescribed minimums. A student who completes the minimum number of credits and other requirements prescribed by subsections (1) and (4), but who is unable to meet the standards of paragraph (5)(a), paragraph (5)(b), or paragraph (5)(c), shall be awarded a certificate of completion in a form prescribed by the State Board of Education. However, any student who is otherwise entitled to 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 1 additional year and receive special instruction designed to remedy his or her identified deficiencies.

(10) The public hearing and consideration required in subsection (8) shall not be construed to amend or nullify the requirements of security relating to the contents of examinations or assessment instruments and related materials or data as prescribed in s. 1008.23.

(11) The Commissioner of Education may award a standard high school diploma to honorably discharged veterans who started high school between 1937 and 1946 and were scheduled to graduate between 1941 and 1950 but were inducted into the United

States Armed Forces between September 16, 1940, and December 31, 1946, prior to completing the necessary high school graduation requirements. Upon the recommendation of the commissioner, the State Board of Education may develop criteria and guidelines for awarding such diplomas.

(12)The Commissioner of Education may award a standard high school diploma to honorably discharged veterans who started high school between 1946 and 1950 and were scheduled to graduate between 1950 and 1954, but were inducted into the United States Armed Forces between June 1950 and January 1954, and served during the Korean War prior to completing the necessary high school graduation requirements. Upon the recommendation of the commissioner, the State Board of Education may develop criteria and guidelines for awarding such diplomas.

History

s. 1, ch. 2002-278; s. 132, ch. 2002-387.

**Section 12.** Section 1003.429, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

1003.429 Accelerated high school graduation options.--

(1) Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, all students scheduled to graduate in 2004 and thereafter may select one of the following three high school graduation options:

(a) Completion of the general requirements for high school graduation pursuant to s. 1003.43;

(b) Completion of a 3-year standard college preparatory program requiring successful completion of a minimum of 18 academic credits in grades 9 through 12. The 18 credits shall be primary requirements and shall be distributed as follows:

1. Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature;

2. Three credits in mathematics at the Algebra I level or higher from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission;

3. Three credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component;

4. Three credits in social sciences;

5. Two credits in the same second language unless the student is a native speaker of or can otherwise demonstrate competency in a language other than English. If the student demonstrates competency in another language, the student may replace the language requirement with two credits in other academic courses; and

6. Three credits in electives; or

(c) Completion of a 3-year career preparatory program requiring successful completion of a minimum of 18 academic credits in grades 9 through 12. The 18 credits shall be primary requirements and shall be distributed as follows:

1. Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature;

2. Three credits in mathematics, one of which must be Algebra I;

3. Three credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component;

4. Three credits in social sciences;

5. Two credits in the same second language unless the student is a native speaker of or can otherwise demonstrate competency in a language other than English. If the student demonstrates competency in another language, the student may replace the language requirement with two credits in other academic courses; and

6. Three credits in electives.

(2) Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, each district school board shall provide each student in grades 6 through 12 and their parents with the 3-year and 4-year high school graduation options listed in subsection (1) with curriculum for the students and parents to select the postsecondary education or career plan that best fits their needs. The options shall include a timeframe for achieving each graduation option.

(3) Selection of one of the graduation options listed in subsection (1) is exclusively up to the student and parent. If the student and parent fail to select a graduation option, the student shall be considered to have selected the general requirements for high school graduation pursuant to paragraph (1)(a).

(4) District school boards shall not establish requirements for accelerated 3-year high school graduation options in excess of the requirements in paragraphs (1)(b) and (1)(c).

5) Students pursuing accelerated 3-year high school graduation options pursuant to paragraph (1)(b) or paragraph (1)(c) are required to:

(a) Earn passing scores on the FCAT as defined in s. 1008.22(3)(c).

(b) Achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by the chosen accelerated 3-year high school graduation option pursuant to paragraph (1)(b) or paragraph (1)(c).

(6) A student who meets all requirements prescribed in subsections (1) and (5) shall be awarded a standard diploma in a form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

**Section 13.** Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (1) and subsection (2) of section 1007.261, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1007.261 State universities; admissions of students.--Each university board of trustees is authorized to adopt rules governing the admission of students, subject to this section and rules of the State Board of Education.

(1) Minimum academic standards for undergraduate admission to a university include:

(a) Each student must have received a high school diploma pursuant to s. 1003.429 or s. 1003.43, or its equivalent, except as provided in s. 1007.271(2)-(5) or completed a home education program according to s. 1002.41.

(b) Each student must have successfully completed a college-preparatory curriculum of 18 19 credits, which shall include, but not be limited to, four credits in

English, with major concentration in composition and literature; three credits in mathematics; three credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component; three credits in social sciences; and two credits in the same second language as defined in rules of the State Board of Education, including at least 2 credits of sequential foreign language at the secondary level or the equivalent of such instruction at the postsecondary level. A student who completes a home education program according to s. 1002.41 is not required to document completion of the 18 ~~19~~ credits required by this paragraph. A student whose native language is not English is exempt from the foreign language requirement, provided that the student demonstrates proficiency in the native language. If a standardized test is not available in the student's native language for the demonstration of proficiency, the university may provide an alternative method of assessment. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for the articulation of foreign language competency and equivalency between secondary and postsecondary institutions. A student who received an associate in arts degree prior to September 1, 1989, or who enrolled in a program of studies leading to an associate degree from a community college prior to August 1, 1989, and maintains continuous enrollment shall be exempt from this admissions requirement.

(2) The minimum admission standards adopted by the State Board of Education or a university board of trustees must permit a student to earn at least 3 ~~4~~ of the 18 ~~19~~ credits constituting the college-preparatory curriculum required for admission as electives in any one of the following manners:

(a) Successful completion of any course identified in the Department of Education course code directory as level two or higher in one or more of the following subject areas: English, mathematics, natural science, social science, and foreign language;

(b) Successful completion of any course identified in the Department of Education course code directory as level three in the same or related disciplines;

(c) Any combination of the courses identified in paragraphs (a) and (b); or

(d) Successful completion of two credits from the courses identified in paragraph (a), plus no more than two total credits from the following categories of courses:

1. Courses identified in the Department of Education course code directory as ROTC and military training;

2. Courses identified in the Department of Education course code directory as level two in art-visual arts, dance, drama-theatre arts, language arts, or music; or

3. Any additional courses determined to be equivalent by the Department of Education.