

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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MEMORANDUM

To: District School Superintendents

From: Jim Warford

Date: July 7, 2003

Subject: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MATERIALS RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCELERATED GRADUATION OPTIONS DEFINED IN SENATE BILL 30A

The 2003 Legislature amended several laws related to high school graduation requirements. The purpose of these amendments is to provide students with accelerated high school graduation options, align the number of university admission credits with these accelerated options, and modify the general requirements for high school graduation. Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, high school students will have three options for high school graduation.

JIM WARFORD
K-12 Chancellor

District School Superintendents
July 7, 2003
Page Two

Please find enclosed the technical assistance paper, *High School Graduation Options 2003-2004*, developed by the Department to provide guidance related to the implementation of the graduation options created in Section 1003.429, Florida Statutes. This document provides school and school district personnel with information essential to the implementation of the new legislation for the 2003-2004 school year. The technical assistance paper and related documents include:

- Summary of the legislation, including a question and answer section
- *Graduation Options-Fact Sheet For Districts*
- *Summary of Acceleration Programs for High School Students*
- Sample parent notification letter and chart outlining the three graduation options
- *Accelerated Graduation Options: Relevant sections of Senate Bill 30A Including Section 1003.43, Florida Statutes*

Department staff, representing the K-20 system, collaborated in the development of this technical assistance paper and will continue to develop additional materials to provide guidance for implementing this legislation. We are available to provide technical assistance as you and your staff address these new graduation options.

If you have questions or need additional information regarding K-12 curriculum, instruction, or guidance services, please contact Mary Jo Butler or Mike Tremor. If you have questions regarding career and technical education programs, please contact Rose Raynak. Thank you for your continued commitment for ensuring the highest quality of educational programs and opportunities for Florida's students.

JW:mjbo

Enclosure

cc: Assistant Superintendents for Instruction
Student Services Directors
Guidance Supervisors
Directors of Secondary Education
Middle School Principals
High School Principals
Local Vocational Directors
Adult Education Directors
Occupational Deans
Technical Centers

JIM WARFORD
K - 12 Chancellor

Technical Assistance Paper

High School Graduation Options 2003-2004

BACKGROUND

Senate Bill 30A, passed by the 2003 Florida Legislature, amends several laws related to high school graduation. The purpose of these amendments is to provide students with accelerated high school graduation options and align the number of university admission credits with these new options. Under this new provision, high school students will have three graduation options.

The goal of the Legislature is to provide students and their parents the opportunity to select the graduation option that will most appropriately prepare the student for his or her chosen postsecondary and career path. To that end, the following options have been established:

- A four-year, 24-credit standard program (Sections 1003.429(1)(a) and 1003.43, Florida Statutes)
- A three-year, 18-credit standard college preparatory program (Section 1003.429(1)(b), Florida Statutes)
- A three-year, 18-credit career preparatory program (Section 1003.429(1)(c), Florida Statutes)

THIS LEGISLATION

- amends Section 1003.02, Florida Statutes (District school board operation and control of public K12 education within the school district.—), to require that at the beginning of each school year, each school district must 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

- creates Section 1003.429, Florida Statutes (Accelerated high school graduation options.—), to require that, beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, each district school board must provide each student in grades six through twelve and their parents with the three-year and four-year high school graduation options, including curriculum for students and parents to select the postsecondary education or career plan that best fits their needs; this includes students graduating in 2004

- amends Section 1007.261, Florida Statutes (State universities; admissions of students.—), to require that students must successfully complete a college-preparatory curriculum of 18 credits to meet the minimum academic standards for undergraduate admission to a state university, instead of the current 19 credits.

SUMMARY OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OPTIONS

To graduate with a standard diploma, students must earn passing scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, and successfully complete credits in the required number and distribution, as noted on the following pages.

REFER QUESTIONS TO:

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PAPERS (TAPs) are produced periodically by the Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services to present discussion of current topics. The TAPs may be used for inservice sessions, technical assistance visits, parent organization meetings, or interdisciplinary discussion groups. Topics are identified by state steering committees, district personnel, and individuals, or from program compliance monitoring.

BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUMMARY OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OPTIONS

The four-year, 24-credit graduation option requires:

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in math (must include Algebra I)
- 3 credits in science (two of which must include a lab component)
- 1 credit in American history
- 1 credit in world history
- 1/2 credit in economics
- 1/2 credit in American government
- 1 credit in practical arts/career and technical education or performing fine arts
- 1/2 credit in life management skills
- 1 credit in physical education
- 8 1/2 credits in electives

The three-year, 18-credit standard college preparatory graduation option requires:

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in math (Algebra I or higher)
- 3 credits in natural sciences (two of which must include a lab component)
- 3 credits in social science
- 2 credits in the same foreign language
- 3 credits in electives

The three-year, 18-credit career preparatory graduation option requires:

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in math (must include Algebra I)
- 3 credits in natural sciences (two of which must include a lab component)
- 3 credits in social science
- 2 credits in the same foreign language
- 3 credits in electives

The two new options require fewer credits but concentrate on more academic courses than the current four-year, 24-credit graduation option. Both of the new options require students to remain in high school for three years, reduce the number of elective courses, and require students to take two credits in the same foreign language. The college preparatory program also requires higher-level math courses than are currently required.

The college preparatory program and the career preparatory program are designed for students who are interested in graduating from high school in three years if that will further their academic and career goals. The number of credits within the college preparatory program aligns with the minimum standards for admissions into Florida's state university system, while the career preparatory program requirements are aimed toward entrance into a technical center or community college for career preparation. These new options are designed for students who are clear on their future goals, possess the maturity to leave high school, and feel they are ready to pursue their goals beyond high school in an accelerated manner. Each student and his or her parents must select the graduation option and curriculum that most appropriately prepares the student for his or her postsecondary education or career plan.

The three graduation options are simply options. The selection of a high school graduation option is the exclusive right of the student and his or her parents. They should be encouraged to consider the benefits of other acceleration opportunities, such as dual enrollment, advanced placement, early admission, and the International Baccalaureate. Advanced coursework in high school continues to be the best predictor of student success after high school. Students and parents are encouraged to discuss these plans with their school counselor on a regular basis during 6th through 12th grades.

Senate Bill 30A (Section 1003.02(1)(i), Florida Statutes) also requires that at the beginning of each school year, parents of students in or entering high school are notified of the opportunity and benefits of the following acceleration programs:

- advanced placement (AP)
- International Baccalaureate
- Advanced International Certificate of Education
- dual enrollment
- Florida Virtual High School

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

General

Q1. What is the timeline for implementation of the new graduation options?

A1. All public schools, including charter schools, must provide all three options to students and parents beginning in the 2003-2004 school year, including 12th grade students scheduled to graduate in 2004.

Q2. Must district student progression plans be updated to reflect the new graduation options?

A2. Yes. Student progression plans must be updated to reflect these options for the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year.

Q3. May high school credits awarded before 9th grade be counted among the required credits for the 18- or 24-credit options?

A3. Yes. However, for both of the 18-credit options, students must be enrolled in high school for three years. Also, high school credits earned before ninth grade are not counted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) toward a student's NCAA eligibility.

Notice and Selection of Graduation Options

Q4. When must students and parents be given information regarding the graduation options?

A4. Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, each district school board must provide each student in grades six through twelve and their parents with information regarding all three graduation options, including curriculum, so that students and their parents can select the postsecondary education or career plan that best fits their needs.

Q5. When must a student and his or her parents select the student's graduation option and will they be given an opportunity to revisit their decision on a graduation option subsequent to selecting an option?

A5. The student and his or her parent must receive information regarding graduation options at the beginning of every school year between grades six and twelve. Students and parents should make an initial selection during the student's eighth grade year, prior to the beginning of the student's first year of high school. It would be appropriate to allow the student and his or her parent to revisit this selection during the spring of each subsequent year that the student is enrolled, as the student determines his or her class schedule for the following year. Districts are encouraged to establish a regular schedule of opportunities for the student and his or her parent to revisit the selection of the student's graduation option.

Q6. What happens if a student and his or her parents do not select one of the three graduation options?

A6. If the student and parent do not select a graduation option, the student is considered to have selected the four-year standard graduation program that requires a minimum of 24 credits to graduate.

Q7. Can school districts establish regulations or restrictions on which students can exercise the new graduation options?

A7. No. The selection of a graduation option is the exclusive right of the student and his or her parents. School counselors and career specialists must use this opportunity to provide comprehensive information regarding the three graduation options and the acceleration programs. This will enable students and their parents to consider the educational benefits and programs that most appropriately prepare the student for his or her postsecondary education or career plan.

Q8. How will student choice of a graduation option be documented?

A8. Student and parent choice of a graduation option should be documented on a form that both the student and parent are required to sign.

Class of 2004

Q9. Will 12th grade students expected to graduate in 2004 be eligible to select one of the new graduation options?

A9. Yes. All students scheduled to graduate in 2004 and thereafter may select any of the three graduation options provided for in Section 1003.429, Florida Statutes. Given the impact of this opportunity for "early graduation" for 12th graders, it is important that students and their parents are informed of the critical deadlines for postsecondary admissions, financial assistance, scholarships, housing, and intercollegiate athletic eligibility.

Q10. Can 12th grade students expected to graduate in 2004 choose one of the 18-credit options, meet the requirements, and graduate mid-year?

A10. Yes. Students who complete the requirements for their chosen option mid-year may graduate as soon as they complete the requirements. Twelfth grade students returning to school who expected to graduate in 2004 and who have already met the requirements for graduation through one of the 18-credit

options must be given the opportunity to choose from among the three options. If the student and his or her parents select one of the 18-credit options, the student should graduate immediately. Consistent with Section 1003.433, Florida Statutes, out-of-state or out-of-country students who transfer to a Florida school district in 11th or 12th grade must also be provided with these options.

24-Credit Option

Q11. Is a district prohibited from requiring more than 24 credits for the four-year graduation option outlined in Section 1003.43, Florida Statutes?

A11. No. The district school board may continue to require completion of additional requirements to the four-year 24-credit standard graduation option. However, the new legislation does suggest reducing graduation requirements as a class-size reduction option to be considered by school districts (see Section 1003.03(3)(c)1, Florida Statutes).

18-Credit Option

Q12. Can a district establish additional requirements to the three-year graduation options to require more than 18 credits?

A12. No. Districts may not establish additional requirements for the three-year options (see Section 1003.429(4), Florida Statutes).

Q13. When are students who choose and meet all of the graduation requirements of one of the 18-credit options eligible to graduate?

A13. Students should graduate as soon as they have completed three years of high school and all of the requirements for their chosen 18-credit option, including passing scores on the 10th grade FCAT and a 2.0 cumulative grade point average. The district may elect to have a mid-year graduation ceremony for those students who complete graduation requirements at the end of the first semester, or they may choose to recognize these students during their annual end-of-year graduation ceremony.

Q14. Will a student who has chosen one of the 18-credit options and earned the required credits, but failed to pass one or both sections of the FCAT or maintain a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale, be given a Certificate of Completion?

A14. No. A student who has not completed all requirements for the three-year options, including earning passing scores on the FCAT and achieving the required grade point average, must be required to meet the 24-credit option and would attend high school for a fourth year. The awarding of a Certificate of Completion is limited to students choosing the 24-credit option who have not earned passing scores on the 10th grade FCAT, or completed other district requirements for graduation, or maintained a 2.0 grade point average (see Section 1003.43(9), Florida Statutes).

Q15. Can students who choose one of the 18-credit options remain for a fourth year in order to continue eligibility to participate in high school athletics after they have met the graduation requirements for their chosen option?

A15. No. For more information regarding athletic eligibility, districts may contact the Florida High School Athletic Association at (352) 372-9551 or visit their website at www.fhsaa.org.

Q16. Will students who choose one of the 18-credit options be eligible to receive a Bright Futures scholarship?

A16. Yes, if they meet all of the requirements for a Bright Futures scholarship.

Q17. Will schools and school districts be required to provide instruction during the regular school day in courses normally taken during the student's fourth year (e.g., English IV) for third-year students who have selected one of the 18-credit options or offer classes this fall that may not currently be on their master schedules in order to accommodate 12th grade students choosing one of the 18-credit options and wishing to earn the credits by December 2003?

A17. Districts are strongly encouraged to maximize schedule flexibility to provide students with access to the classes that they need to graduate via their "chosen" graduation option.

Q18. Will students who have chosen one of the 18-credit options be eligible to participate in dual enrollment programs?

A18. Yes. All dual enrollment courses must be taken prior to the completion of the 18 required credits. Dual enrollment eligibility criteria must be specified in the district.



GRADUATION OPTIONS—FACT SHEET FOR DISTRICTS

In the Background: Senate Bill 30A, passed by the 2003 Florida Legislature, amends several laws related to high school graduation. The purpose of these amendments is to provide students with high school graduation options and align the number of credits required for university admissions with these options. Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, high school students will have three graduation options. These high school graduation options must be included in each school district's 2003-2004 student progression plan.

In the Foreground—Graduation Options: The goal of the Legislature is to provide students, with guidance from their parents or guardians, the opportunity to select the graduation option that will most appropriately prepare them for their chosen postsecondary path. To that end, the following options have been established:

- a four-year, 24-credit standard program
- a three-year, 18-credit standard college preparatory program
- a three-year, 18-credit career preparatory program.

This Legislation

- amends Section 1003.02, Florida Statutes (District school board operation and control of public K12 education within the school district.--), to require that at the beginning of each school year, each school district must 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
- creates Section 1003.429, Florida Statutes (Accelerated high school graduation options.--), to require that, beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, each district school board must provide students in grades six through twelve and their parents with the three-year and four-year high school graduation options, including curriculum for students and parents to select the postsecondary education or career plan that best fits their needs
- amends Section 1007.261, Florida Statutes (State universities; admissions of students.--), to require that students must successfully complete a college-preparatory curriculum of 18 credits to meet the minimum academic standards for undergraduate admission to a state university, instead of the current 19 credits.

To graduate with a standard diploma, students must earn passing scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, and successfully complete credits in the required number and distribution, as noted below.

Summary of High School Graduation Options

Four-year standard graduation requirements (24 credits – no change from current requirements including flexibility for completion of additional requirements prescribed by district school board):

- 4 credits in English
- 3 credits in math including Algebra I
- 3 credits in science (two labs)
- 1 credit in American history
- 1 credit in world history
- 1/2 credit in economics
- 1/2 credit in American government
- 1 credit in practical arts career and technical education or performing fine arts
- 1/2 credit in life management skills
- 1 credit in physical education
- 8 1/2 credits in electives

Three-year standard college preparatory program (18 credits):

- 4 credits in English
- 3 credits in math (Algebra I or higher)
- 3 credits in science (two labs)
- 3 credits in social sciences
- 2 credits in same second language
- 3 credits in electives

Three-year career preparatory program (18 credits):

- 4 credits in English
- 3 credits in math including Algebra I
- 3 credits in science (two labs)
- 3 credits in social sciences
- 2 credits in same second language
- 3 credits in electives

The two new options reduce the number of elective courses and require students to take two credits in foreign language. The college preparatory program also requires higher-level math courses than are currently required. In addition, districts cannot add extra requirements to either of the three-year, 18-credit programs. Students may continue to take these courses within the four-year standard graduation option. University admission requirements may be found in the *Counseling for Future Education Handbook*. This document is located at www.fldoe.org.

It is critical to note that these graduation options are simply options. The selection of a high school graduation option is the exclusive right of the student and his or her parent(s). If the student and his or her parent(s) do not select an option, the student shall be considered to have selected the four-year, 24-credit program.

For more information on this or other new requirements for high school graduation, please contact the following Florida Department of Education personnel:

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SUMMARY OF ACCELERATION PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

(excerpts from *Florida's Counseling for Future Education Handbook*)

Florida provides many ways for students to earn college credit for materials learned in high school, such as advanced placement, dual enrollment, credits by examination, and the International Baccalaureate Program. Most of these programs are available free or at minimal cost to the students. School counselors help students by encouraging them to take advantage of these programs, and they work with district leaders to expand programs and opportunities for students enrolled in their school district. More information regarding these and other opportunities is available in the *Florida's Counseling for Future Education Handbook* online at www.FACTS.org under the category Advising Resources.

Advanced Placement Program

The College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) program is a nationwide program consisting of over 30 college-level courses and exams in subjects ranging from art to statistics offered at participating high schools. Students earning a "qualifying" grade on an AP exam can earn credit or advanced placement for their efforts. According to the College Board, ". . . More than 2,900 universities and colleges worldwide grant credit, advanced placement, or both to students who have performed satisfactorily on the exams, and approximately 1,400 institutions grant sophomore standing to students who have demonstrated their competence in three or more of these exams." (College Board 2000) Studies have shown that students, who complete a solid academic core, including advanced courses, are more likely to be successful in college. Many school counselors have found that AP courses provide the challenging content necessary to engage all types of learners.

International Baccalaureate Program

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program is a rigorous pre-university course of study, leading to internationally standardized examinations. The program is designed as a comprehensive two-year curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of many different nations' education systems. As with the AP and dual enrollment programs, students completing IB courses and exams are eligible for postsecondary education credit. The award of credit is based on scores achieved on IB exams. Students can earn up to 30 postsecondary semester credits by participating in this program at the high school level. Approximately 40 Florida high schools currently participate in the IB program, with the students participating at no cost. For more information on the IB program, visit the International Baccalaureate Organization at www.ibo.org.

Advanced International Certificate of Education Program

Like the International Baccalaureate program, the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) program is an international curriculum and examination program modeled on the British precollege curriculum and "A-Level" exams. Several public schools in Florida have begun offering AICE courses and exams and public postsecondary institutions around the state provide college credit for successfully passed exams. For more information on AICE, visit www.cie.org.uk and click on "Qualifications and Awards."

Dual Enrollment and Early Admission

Dual enrollment allows eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses for which the student earns credit towards high school graduation while at the same time earning credit toward a college degree or vocational certificate. Participating students are exempt from the payment of registration, matriculation, and laboratory fees. Students are permitted to enroll in dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Early admission programs are similar to dual enrollment except that students enroll in postsecondary courses full-time on college campuses and earn credits simultaneously toward a college degree and high school graduation. All 28 public community colleges in Florida participate in dual enrollment. The dual enrollment program serves a broad range of high achieving students, not just the top academic performers in a school.

The State Board of Education, based on the recommendations of the Articulation Coordinating Committee, recently identified the specific dual enrollment courses that meet high school graduation requirements and assigned a specific amount of high school credit that must be granted for each dual enrollment course. These courses must be accepted by all high schools in Florida in accordance with the State Board of Education list. In addition, school districts offering dual enrollment through a local articulation agreement must provide information regarding postsecondary dual enrollment courses that meet high school graduation requirements.

Florida Virtual High School

With support from the Florida Department of Education, Florida Virtual School was established in 1997 to create and make available quality on-line high school curriculum, including Advanced Placement courses. Florida Virtual School can be a great resource for students with limited access to AP offerings in their traditional schools. To learn how to access AP courses through the on-line Florida High School, visit www.flvs.net. Adult Education-Many district school boards offer adult education program course credit opportunities to high school students which may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to school board policies.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Students with strong content background in a subject area can earn credit through an examination program administered by the college they attend. One such program is the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Students participating in the CLEP are awarded credit on the basis of scores achieved on an examination. Candidates for the CLEP may include students who have completed an AP course, but did not take or earn a qualifying score on the AP exam. Other students who may have had several high school courses in one particular area may wish to take a CLEP exam. CLEP offers another option for students to earn postsecondary credit for their efforts at the high school level.

Dear Parent:

Beginning this fall, students entering grades six through twelve will have new opportunities. New high school graduation options in Florida present students with three ways to graduate from high school.

While students may choose to participate in the current four-year, 24-credit standard program, there are two new options available so that students can graduate in three years with 18 credits. You should consider all of these options with your child to determine which will most benefit his or her future. The two new options, the **College Preparatory Program** and the **Career Preparatory Program**, were created for students who are interested in graduating from high school in three years if it will further their academic or career goals. Each option, including the standard, four-year graduation program, should carefully be considered to determine what is best for your child.

The number of credits within the College Preparatory Program aligns with the minimum standards for admission into Florida's state university system, while the Career Preparatory Program requirements are aimed toward entrance into a technical center or community college for the career choice your child makes with your guidance and support. Students may still pursue a college preparatory program or career preparatory program within the four-year, 24-credit standard program. Regardless of which graduation option you and your child choose, your child must also earn passing scores on the 10th grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale in order to earn a standard diploma.

While fulfilling the requirements for any of these options, students will be encouraged to take advantage of other available programs such as advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, dual enrollment, and Florida Virtual School courses. Advanced coursework in high school continues to be the best predictor of student success in postsecondary school endeavors. One or more of Florida's acceleration programs are available to all students regardless of which graduation option is chosen.

You play a very important role in planning your child's educational program so that it best advances their college or career choices. We encourage you to contact your child's school guidance counselor or career specialist to get additional information on all graduation options, financial aid opportunities, accelerated programs, and college or career plans to help you and your child make these important decisions. More specific information regarding the three graduation options is provided on the back of this letter.

Sincerely



FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OPTIONS

Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, all students scheduled to graduate in 2004 and thereafter may select one of the three graduation options listed below. Students are encouraged to consider their postsecondary education or career plan goals when selecting an option. For more information, please contact your school counselor.

Courses	General Requirements For High School Graduation (4-year)	Standard College Preparatory Program (3-year)	Career Preparatory Program (3-year)
English	4 credits (major concentration in composition and literature)	4 credits (major concentration in composition and literature)	4 credits (major concentration in composition and literature)
Mathematics	3 credits (one of which must be Algebra I or its equivalent)	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)
Science	3 credits (two must have a laboratory component)	3 credits in natural science (two must have a laboratory component)	3 credits in natural science (two must have a laboratory component)
Social Sciences	1 credit world history 1 credit American history 1/2 credit American government 1/2 credit economics	3 credits	3 credits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign Language 	not required for high school graduation; required for admission into state universities	2 credits or demonstrated proficiency in same second language	2 credits or demonstrated proficiency in same second language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical Arts/Performing Fine Arts 	1 credit practical arts career education or exploratory career education <i>or</i> 1 credit performing fine arts <i>or</i> 1/2 credit in practical arts and 1/2 credit in performing fine arts		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life Management Skills 	1/2 credit		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Education 	1 credit (including 1/2 credit of Personal Fitness and 1/2 credit physical education elective)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electives 	8 1/2 credits	3 credits	3 credits
Total	24 credits	18 credits	18 credits
State Assessment Requirements	earn passing scores on the FCAT (grade 10)	earn passing scores on the FCAT (grade 10)	earn passing scores on the FCAT (grade 10)
Grade Point Average Requirements (GPA)	earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale	earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale	earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale



**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.