



# **Student Progression Plan**

**2022-2023**

**2022-2023 STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN  
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# **STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN**

## **FOREWORD**

The purpose of the Student Progression Plan for Alachua County Public Schools is to describe School Board procedures for implementing state and district student progression requirements. This plan is prepared in accordance with Section 1008.25, Florida Statutes:

1. Each district school board shall establish a comprehensive program for student progression which shall be based on the student's mastery of the standards in s. 1003.41, specifically English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies standards.
2. The district program for student progression shall be based upon local goals and objectives which are aligned with the state standards. Pertinent factors considered by the teacher before recommending that a student progress from one grade to another shall be prescribed by the district school board in its rules.
3. Each district's comprehensive program for student progression shall reflect an effort to identify students at each grade level in grades 9 through 12 who have attained a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or below. The program shall further include provisions for assisting such students to achieve the 2.0 cumulative grade point average required for graduation pursuant to s.1008.25 F.S.
4. All students are encouraged to obtain a high school diploma. Failure to earn a standard diploma may impact a student's eligibility to receive student financial assistance and pursue post-secondary education.

Promotion, retention, and the specific assignment procedures contained in this plan are designed to ensure that students are placed in instructional programs which challenge them to make substantial academic growth and develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically.

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION**

- A. Student promotion and/or credit are based on evaluation of each student's achievement in terms of established B.E.S.T. standards and state academic standards. The basis for making promotion determinations should include teacher judgment based on classroom work, daily observation, formal and informal assessments, parental input and objective data. The primary responsibility for recommending grade placement for the next year is that of professional staff members, subject to review and approval of the principal and Superintendent.
- B. B.E.S.T. standards and state academic standards will be incorporated into district subject area curricula and highlighted for documentation purposes. Students must receive a passing score on select state assessments as one condition toward receiving a Standard Diploma.
- C. It is the responsibility of teachers to identify students achieving below district or state standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Additional diagnostic assessments of identified students will be performed to determine each student's difficulty. Students achieving below standard should have a progress monitoring process to track student improvement. Student support will be continued until the district and state expectations are met or the student graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory school attendance. District school boards shall assist schools and teachers to implement research-based reading activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students. Parents of K-12 students must be notified when students are failing or their performance has decreased more than one letter grade since the last grading period.
- D. An annual report on the state assessments is provided to parents/guardians regarding the student's proficiency in reading, writing, math, science and social studies.
- E. Parents will be notified when students are achieving below the expected level and when the student continues to achieve below the expected level. Teachers may suggest or parents may request suggestions for additional help for the student. Students who still do not make satisfactory progress in basic skills may be referred to special programs and/or be retained an additional year in the current grade.
- F. Any elementary or middle school student who needs to be considered for assignment to the next higher grade may be assigned to the appropriate higher grade based on reevaluation by the professional staff of the school. The principal will hold a staffing conference including the parent and school professionals. If the determination is made that the student will be able to benefit from instruction at a higher grade, placement may occur at any time in the school year. The school principal is responsible for making the assignment. Grade 5 students moving to grade 6 or grade 8 students moving to grade 9 may be treated on an exception basis and will be moved either during the first three weeks or at the end of the semester. If such an assignment results in the child being transferred to another school, both the sending and receiving principals must approve the placement. When necessary, the Superintendent or his designee may help make a decision. When possible, the pre-placement staffing should include appropriate staff members of the sending as well as the receiving school. Parents/guardians should be consulted or included in this process.

- G. All limited English proficient students will receive a recommended grade placement from the school principal or designee based on age and past educational experiences as verified by student records. Grade placement is not based upon English proficiency. All limited English proficiency students are offered ESOL services pursuant to parent/guardian consent.
- H. With the exception of after-school activities approved by parents, student schedules and course loads shall be appropriate to student needs and will normally be scheduled within the established instructional day. Course loads normally shall not exceed six (6) subjects for middle school students and high school students during the established instructional day.
- I. The Board recognizes the importance of a student grading system which is clearly identified and meaningful to students, parents, and school personnel. The grading system gives each student credit for actual work done and does not compare one student's progress with another. Grades shall be assigned according to School Board Policy.
- J. The Board recognizes the importance of Physical Education in improving the health and fitness of students. Physical Education shall be offered as a regular part of the instructional program in elementary, middle, and high school. The expected outcomes of Physical Education programs are:
- Improved physical fitness
  - Development of healthy eating habits
  - Development of healthy lifestyles. Students may consult their teachers individually about the benefits of physical education.
- K. Each district school board must annually publish on the district website and in the local newspaper the following information on the prior school year:
- The provisions of the law relating to public school student progression and the district's policies and procedures on student retention and promotion.
  - By grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3 through 10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment (1008.25).
  - By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades 3 through 10.
  - Information on the total number of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as specified in 1008.25(6)(b) F.S.
  - Any revisions to the school board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year.

## **REQUIRED INSTRUCTION**

Instructional staff members, subject to Board policy and State Board of Education rules, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required that meet the highest standards for professionalism and historic accuracy, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction, the following: (F.S. 1003.42).

- A. The history and content of the Declaration of Independence, including national sovereignty, natural law, self-evident truth, equality of all persons, limited government, popular sovereignty, and inalienable rights of life, liberty, and property, and how they form the philosophical foundation of our government.
- B. The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States and amendments thereto, with emphasis on each of the ten (10) amendments that make up the Bill of Rights and how the constitution provides the structure of our government.
- C. The arguments in support of adopting our republican form of government as they are embodied in the most important of the Federalist Papers.
- D. Flag education including proper flag display and flag salute.
- E. The elements of civil government, including the primary functions of and interrelationships between the Federal government, the State, and its counties, municipalities, school districts, and special districts.
- F. The history of the United States, including the period of discovery, early colonies, the war for independence, the Civil War, the expansion of the United States to its present boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights movement to the present. American history shall be viewed as factual, not as constructed, shall be viewed as knowable, teachable, and testable, and shall be defined as the creation of a new nation based largely on the universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence.
- G. The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions.
- H. The history of African Americans, including the history of African peoples before the political conflicts that led to the development of slavery, the passage to America, the enslavement experience, abolition, and the contributions of African Americans to society. Instructional materials shall include the contributions of African Americans to American society.
- I. The elementary principles of agriculture.
- J. The true effects of all alcoholic and intoxicating liquors and beverages and narcotics upon the human body and mind.
- K. Kindness to animals.
- L. The history of the State.
- M. The conservation of natural resources.

- N. Comprehensive health education that addresses concepts of community health; consumer health; environmental health; family life, including an awareness of the benefits of sexual abstinence as the expected standard and the consequences of teenage pregnancy; mental and emotional health; injury prevention and safety; Internet safety; nutrition; personal health; prevention and control of disease; and substance use and abuse. The health education curriculum for students in grades 7 through 12 shall include a teen dating violence and abuse component that includes, but is not limited to, the definition of dating violence and abuse, the warning signs of dating violence and abusive behavior, the characteristics of healthy relationships, measures to prevent and stop dating violence and abuse, and community resources available to victims of dating violence and abuse.
- O. Such additional materials, subjects, courses, or fields in such grades as are prescribed by law or by rules of the State Board of Education and the Board in fulfilling the requirements of law.
- P. The study of Hispanic contributions to the United States.
- Q. The study of women's contributions to the United States.
- R. The nature and importance of free enterprise to the United States economy.
- S. A character development program in the elementary schools, similar to Character First or Character Counts, which is secular in nature. The character development program shall be required in kindergarten through grade 12. Each district school board shall develop or adopt a curriculum for the character development program that shall be submitted to the department for approval. The character development curriculum shall stress the qualities of patriotism; responsibility; citizenship; kindness; respect for authority, life, liberty, and personal property; honesty; charity; self-control; racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance; and cooperation. The character development curriculum for grades 9 through 12 shall, at a minimum, include instruction on developing leadership skills, interpersonal skills, organization skills, and research skills; creating a resume; developing and practicing the skills necessary for employment interviews; conflict resolution, workplace ethics, and workplace law; managing stress and expectations; and developing skills that enable students to become more resilient and self-motivated.
- T. In order to encourage patriotism, the sacrifices that veterans and Medal of Honor recipients have made in serving our country and protecting democratic values worldwide. Such instruction must occur on or before Medal of Honor Day, Veterans' Day, and Memorial Day. Members of instructional staff are encouraged to use the assistance of local veterans and Medal of Honor recipients when practicable.

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS/TERMS**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>504 Plan</b> | A written plan for students not classified in Exceptional Student Education, but who have a disability that significantly impacts a major life activity and who may need special accommodations to facilitate academic learning.   |
| <b>ACCEL</b>    | <b>Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning</b><br>Diploma option that requires 18 credits. Includes the same credits as Standard Diploma Option, except that it does not require the PE credit or online course credit and only 3 elective credits are required. |
| <b>AICE</b>     | <b>Advanced International Certificate of Education</b>   |
| <b>BEST</b>     | <b>Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking</b><br>Florida's Standards adopted in 2020. Implementation for English Language Arts begins in the 2021-22 school year for grades K-2.  |
| <b>DEOC</b>     | <b>District End of Course</b>  |
| <b>DOP</b>      | <b>Drop Out Prevention</b><br>A program designed to meet the needs of students who do not perform well in traditional educational programs.  |
| <b>ELL</b>      | <b>English Language Learner</b><br>Students whose native language is not English and who have not yet met state-defined levels of English proficiency.   |
| <b>EPT</b>      | <b>Educational Planning Team</b><br>A team normally comprised of teachers, parents, guidance counselors, and administrators to develop the most appropriate learning environment for non-Exceptional Education students.   |
| <b>ESE</b>      | <b>Exceptional Student Education</b><br>Special education and related services provided to eligible students, including students with disabilities, and gifted students.   |
| <b>ESOL</b>     | <b>English for Speakers of Other Languages</b><br>This program provides support for English language learners.   |
| <b>ESY</b>      | <b>Extended School Year</b><br>Often referred to as Summer School. Designed for students needing remediation or high school students taking courses for credit.  |
| <b>FAPE</b>     | <b>Free Appropriate Public Education</b><br>Special education and related services that are provided at public expense and meet the standards of the State educational agency.   |

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| <b>SSA</b>    | <b>Statewide Science Assessment</b><br>State initiated test that measures student performance in Science as they apply to the benchmarks in the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.                   |
| <b>FSA</b>    | <b>Florida Standards Assessment</b><br>State assessment that measures student performance in reading, writing, and math as they apply to the Florida Standards.   |
| <b>GED</b>    | <b>General Educational Development</b><br>Often referred to as High School Equivalency Diploma  |
| <b>GPA</b>    | <b>Grade Point Average</b><br>Defines and reflects students' academic standing on a 4.0 scale with 0.0 being the lowest ranking and 4.0 being the highest ranking.  |
| <b>H/HB</b>   | <b>Hospital Homebound</b><br>Special education and related services provided to eligible students, including students with disabilities and gifted students.  |
| <b>HRS681</b> | A form provided by the Health Department that exempts students from providing a health certificate based on religious grounds.  |
| <b>IB</b>     | <b>International Baccalaureate</b><br>The IB magnet offers a traditional rigorous college preparatory program.  |
| <b>IDEA</b>   | <b>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</b><br>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act governs the provisions of special education and related services to children with disabilities.       |
| <b>IEP</b>    | <b>Individual Education Plan</b><br>Written plan for each student with a disability, which is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with federal and state rules and regulations.                  |
| <b>JROTC</b>  | <b>Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp</b><br>Students learn leadership fundamentals to prepare them to assume leadership responsibilities within the Cadet Corps., the school and/or the local community. |
| <b>LAFS</b>   | <b>Language Arts Florida Standards</b><br>State standards that define the skills students should attain by grade level.   |
| <b>LEA</b>    | <b>Local Educational Agency</b><br>A public board of education or other public authority within a state for either administrative control or direction of public elementary and secondary schools.          |
| <b>MAFS</b>   | <b>Math Florida Standards</b><br>State standards that define the skills students should attain by grade level.  |

**PMP****Progress Monitoring Plan**

A written plan for students working below grade level in reading, math, writing, or science.

**SPP****Student Performance Plan**

High school students taking a Level I course must have this form filed in their cumulative folder in order for credit to be awarded.

**Title I****Federal Program**

A federally funded program which provides supplemental resources for students in schools based on the percentage of children from low income families.

**Section I**  
**Elementary School**  
**Grades K-5**

## GENERAL EDUCATION: ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS GRADES K-5

### A. Admission and Placement of Students

#### 1. Admissions

- a. Evidence that the student resides in the school's designated zone is required for each student enrolling in the Alachua County school system (e.g., utility bill, bill of sale or deed for the house, lease agreement, rent receipt, homestead exemption receipt, or verification through a home visit by a school official).
- b. A birth certificate or other evidence of age is required for enrollment.
- c. Students entering school for the first time or transferring from out of state must provide an up to date immunization record (DH 680 Form) or a valid certificate of exemption (DH 681 Form).
- d. Students entering school for the first time or transferring from an out-of-state school must present a certification of a school-entry health examination (Section 1033.22, F.S.) performed within one year prior to enrollment or an exemption upon written request of the parent of the child stating objections to the examination on religious grounds.
- e. The parent or guardian must complete student emergency information when enrolling a student and will be asked to provide the student's social security number. Since a parent is not always able to be reached by phone, the number of an available emergency contact is mandatory.

#### 2. Placement

The grade placement of any student new to an elementary school is determined by the principal and staff of the receiving school on the basis of results of tests administered by the school and other appropriate considerations. A principal may request a student to present a report card or other evidence of school attendance to facilitate proper placement of a student in the school.

The parent of siblings who are assigned to the same grade level and school may request that the school place the siblings in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. This request must be made no later than five (5) days before the first day of school each school year or five (5) days after the first day of attendance of the students if the students are enrolled in school after the school year commences. The school is not required to meet the request if there is factual evidence indicating a specific placement is better for the student than that requested by the parent. (1003.06 F.S.)

#### a. Kindergarten Admission Criteria: (1003.21 F.S.)

Regular entry age for kindergarten is five years of age on or before September 1. Each kindergarten student will be screened for school readiness strengths and weaknesses using a standardized process during the first 30 school days. Based on results, interventions will be planned and assessed throughout the school year. All school districts are required to administer the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener implemented by the Department of Education to each kindergarten student in the district upon the student's entry into kindergarten.

b. Grade 1 Admission Criteria: (1003.21 F.S.)

Students must be 6 years old on or before September 1 and have been enrolled in a public school or satisfactorily completed the requirements for kindergarten in a nonpublic school. Students meeting these requirements may enter grade 1 at any time during the school year.

c. Enrollment

To be enrolled in school, students must register for and attend a complete schedule of classes at the school unless they are home education students attending a regularly scheduled class period at the zoned school or participating in one of the district's approved educational options.

**B. Student Promotion and Retention**

1. Student promotion is based on evaluation of each student's achievement in regard to the Florida's B.E.S.T. Standards and the state academic standards. Each student's progression from one grade to another is based, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, science, mathematics and social studies (1008.25 F.S.). All students must participate in the statewide assessments (1008.22 F.S.). The basis for making promotion decisions includes objective data and teacher judgment based on classroom performance, daily observation, formal and informal assessments, and parental input. The primary responsibility for recommending grade placement for the next year is that of professional staff members, subject to review and approval of the principal and the Superintendent.

Any student failing to attain the specified district or state levels of performance for student progression on designated district or state assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, science, or social studies must receive remediation or be retained. Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in reading, writing, science, mathematics, and social studies for each grade level, or who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the commission on statewide assessments at selected grade levels, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need.

The parent of any K-3 student who exhibits a substantial reading deficiency must be immediately notified of the student's deficiency with a description, understandable to the parent, of the exact nature of the deficiency and the intensive interventions which will be provided. The parent must be informed that the student will be given intensive reading instruction until the deficiency is corrected. A read at home plan that includes multisensory strategies must also be provided. Evaluation of progress must be based on the student's class work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information, as provided in 1008.25 F.S. If a student is retained, it must be in an intensive program different from the previous year's setting.

Educational Planning Team conferences or Individual Educational Planning conferences will be held for students experiencing learning difficulties. Conferences will include qualified professionals knowledgeable about the student. Intervention strategies will be identified, implemented, and monitored.

Progress monitoring is required for any student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on statewide assessments in Reading or Mathematics.

A student who is not meeting proficiency in reading and/or mathematics shall be covered by one of the following plans to target instruction and identify ways to improve his/her academic achievement:

- a federally required plan such as an IEP
- a school-wide system of progress monitoring for all students
- an individualized progress monitoring plan

Indicators of the student's proficiency include teacher assessment, norm-referenced tests, criterion referenced tests, diagnostic assessments, statewide tests, and the student's instructional level in reading, mathematics, writing, and/or science.

If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading, the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan shall include instructional and support services to meet the desired levels of proficiency.

Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated the student may be retained. (1008.25 (4) (b) F.S.)

## 2. Reading Deficiency and Parental Notification

Any student in kindergarten through grade 3 who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading based upon screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring or assessment data; statewide assessments; or teacher observations must be provided intensive, explicit, systematic and multisensory reading interventions immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency. A school may not wait for a student to receive a failing grade at the end of a grading period to identify the student was having a substantial reading deficiency and initiate intensive reading interventions. In addition, a school may not wait until an evaluation conducted pursuant to s. 1003.57, F.S., is completed to provide appropriate, evidence-based interventions for a student whose parent submits documentation from a professional which demonstrates that the student has been diagnosed with dyslexia. Such interventions must be initiated upon receipt of the documentation and based on the student's specific areas of difficulty as identified by the licensed professional. A student who has a substantial reading deficiency must be covered by a federally required student plan, such as an individual education plan or an individualized progress monitoring plan, or both, as necessary. The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading based upon screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, assessment data, statewide assessments or teacher observations, must be notified in writing of the following:

- a. That his or her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading, including a description and explanation of the exact nature of the student's difficulty in learning and lack of achievement in reading.
- b. A description of the current services that are provided to the child.
- c. A description of the proposed intensive interventions and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.
- d. If the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.
- e. Strategies, including multisensory strategies, through a read-at-home plan the parent can use in helping his or her child succeed in reading.

- f. The statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment is not the sole determiner of promotion and that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion.
- g. The district's specific criteria and policies for student portfolios and the evidence required for a student to demonstrate mastery of Florida's academic standards for English Language Arts. A school must immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio when a student in grade 3 is identified as being at risk of retention or upon the request of the parent, whichever occurs first.
- h. The district's specific criteria and policies for mid-year promotion. Mid-year promotion means promotion of a retained student at any time during the year of retention once the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.
- i. Information about the student's eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative under and information on parent training modules and other reading engagement resources available through the initiative.

After initial notification, the school shall apprise the parent at least monthly of the student's progress in response to the intensive interventions and supports. Such communications must be in writing and must explain any additional interventions or supports that will be implemented to accelerate the student's progress if the interventions and supports already being implemented have not resulted in improvement.

### 3. Retention Criteria:

Any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, based upon locally determined or statewide assessments conducted in kindergarten or grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3, or through teacher observations, must be given intensive reading instruction immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency. The student's reading proficiency must be reassessed by locally determined assessments or through teacher observation at the beginning of the grade following the intensive reading instruction. The student must continue to be provided with intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.

If the student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring a Level 2 or higher on statewide assessments in Reading, the student must be retained, unless the student meets specific guidelines for good cause promotion.

The school must provide written notification to the parent of any third grade retained student explaining that the child has not met the proficiency levels required for promotion and the reasons that the child is not eligible for a good cause promotion.

The notification must comply with the provisions of 1008.25(5) and include a description of proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.

Students retained in grade 3 must be provided with a highly effective teacher as determined by the teacher's performance evaluation, and the teacher must also be certified or endorsed in reading.

Retained students must be provided with intensive interventions in reading to address the student's specific reading deficiency as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment.

Intensive intervention must include:

- Evidence-based, explicit, systematic, and multisensory reading instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and other strategies
- Participation in summer reading camp which incorporates the strategies listed above

The school must review the progress monitoring plans of each retained third grade student. The review must address the additional supports and services needed to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.

The school must provide retained third grade students with intensive instructional services and supports to remediate identified areas of reading deficiency including a minimum of 90 minutes of daily uninterrupted reading instruction using a scientifically research-based program, and other strategies prescribed by the school district which may include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinated integration of content-rich texts in science and civic literacy within the 90 minute block.
- Small group instruction
- Reduced teacher-student ratio
- More frequent progress monitoring, tutoring, or mentoring
- Transition classes containing 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students
- Extended school day, week, or year

In addition, the school must provide parents of retained third grade students with at least one of the following options:

- Supplemental tutoring in scientifically research-based services in addition to the regular reading instruction
- A Read-at-Home plan
- A mentor or tutor with specialized reading training

Each school must establish, where applicable, an Intensive Acceleration Class for retained third grade students who had been previously retained in earlier grades as well.

4. The Intensive Acceleration class must:

- Be provided to any student retained in grade 3 who had been previously retained in an earlier grade.
- Have a reduced student-teacher ratio.
- Provide uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of the student contact time each day.
- Incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 statewide academic standards in other core subject areas.
- Provide intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientifically research-based program including use of a speech language therapist.

- Use explicit, systematic and multisensory reading interventions, including intensive language, phonics, and vocabulary instruction and the use of a speech-language therapist, if necessary, that have proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year.
  - Include a read-at-home plan.
5. Promotion/retention decisions are made at the end of the regular 180-day school year. The options for each K-5 student are as follows:
- a. Promote to next grade level.
  - b. Remediate before the next school year and promote.
  - c. Promote for good cause as specified by law and remediate during the following year with more intensive intervention and remediation strategies (Good cause promotions apply to third grade students only.)
  - d. Retain and remediate in a different program.
6. Promotion for Good Cause. The district school board may only exempt students from mandatory retentions, as provided in 1008.25 (6) (b) F.S. for good cause. Good Cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:
- a. Limited English proficient students who have had less than 2 years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program based on the initial date of entry into a school in the United States.
  - b. A student with disabilities whose individual education plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment is more appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule.
  - c. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
  - d. Students who demonstrate, through a student assessment portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the Florida State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the statewide assessment.
  - e. Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide assessment and who have an individual education plan (IEP) or a Section 504 plan that reflects that, although the student still demonstrates a deficiency in reading, he/she has received intensive remediation as required in reading for more than 2 years and was previously retained in grades K-3.
  - f. Students who have received the intensive remediation in reading as required but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in grades K-3 for a total of 2 years. A student may not be retained more than once in third grade. Intensive reading instruction for students so promoted must include an altered instructional day based upon a progress monitoring plan that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies for each student. (1008.25(6) (b) 6 F.S.)

## Documentation for Good Cause Promotions:

Requests for good cause exemptions for students from the mandatory retention requirements shall be made consistent with the following:

- Documentation shall be submitted from the student's teacher to the school principal that indicates the promotion of the student is appropriate and is based upon the student's academic record. In order to minimize paperwork requirements, such documentation shall consist only of the existing progress monitoring plan, student portfolio, ELL Plan, or Standardized Achievement Test Score.
- The school principal shall review and discuss such recommendation with the teacher and make the determination as to whether the student should be promoted or retained.
- If the school principal determines that the student should be promoted, the school principal shall make such recommendation in writing to the district school superintendent.

The district school superintendent shall accept or reject the principal's recommendation in writing. (1008.25 (6) (c) F.S.)

District school boards are required to adopt and implement a policy for the mid-year promotion of any student retained in third grade due to a reading deficiency, as required by section 1008.25(5)(b) Florida Statutes. Such mid-year promotions of retained third grade students should occur during the first semester of the academic year.

- a. To be eligible for mid-year promotion, a student must demonstrate that he / she:
  - 1) Is a successful and independent reader as demonstrated by reading at or above grade level;
  - 2) Has progressed sufficiently to master appropriate fourth-grade reading skills; and
  - 3) Has met any additional requirements, such as satisfactory achievement in other curriculum areas, as determined by the policies of the District School Board.
- b. Standards that provide a reasonable expectation that the student has met the requirements for mid-year promotion are:
  - 1) Successful completion of portfolio elements that meet state criteria, or
  - 2) Satisfactory performance on a locally-selected standardized assessment.
- c. To promote a student mid-year using a student portfolio, there must be evidence of the student's mastery of third-grade Language Arts Florida Standards and beginning mastery of the Florida Standards for fourth grade. The student portfolio must meet the following requirements:
  - 1) Be selected by the student's teacher;
  - 2) Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and include only student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
  - 3) Include evidence of mastery of the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 Reading statewide assessment, as required by Rule 6A-1.094221, FAC;

- 4) Include evidence of beginning mastery of fourth grade benchmarks that are assessed by the grade 4 Reading statewide assessment. This includes multiple choice items, and passages that are approximately 60% literary text and 40% information text, and that are between 100 words with an average of 500 words. Such evidence could include chapter, unit, or benchmark tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum or teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the Florida Standards. For each benchmark, there must be three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a score of 70% or better; and
  - 5) Signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.
- d. To promote a student mid-year using a locally-selected standardized assessment, there must be evidence that the student scored at or above grade level in reading comprehension, as demonstrated by standard scores or percentiles. Students promoted during the school year after November 1 must demonstrate proficiency above that required to score on Level 2 on the grade 3 statewide assessment in Reading, as determined by the State Board of Education.
  - e. The progress monitoring plan, PMP, for any retained third-grade student who has been promoted mid-year to fourth grade must continue to be implemented for the entire academic year.
  - f. Schools shall review the progress monitoring plans for all students who scored Level 1 on the statewide assessment in reading and were not promoted for good cause. The review shall address additional supports and services needed to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency. The school district shall require a student portfolio to be completed for each such student. Districts shall provide a student who has been retained in grade 3 and has received intensive instructional services but is still not ready for grade promotion, as determined by the school district, the option of being placed in a transitional setting designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency.
7. Parents or guardians may appeal a promotion or retention decision made by the school at the end of the current school year to the Deputy Superintendent. This appeal process shall be completed before the start of the Extended School Year program.

No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

The allocation of remedial and supplemental instruction resources for students shall occur in the following priority:

- Students who are deficient in reading by the end of grade 3
- Students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion consistent with the district's plan for student progression. (1008.25 F.S.)

Districts shall report to the State Board of Education, as requested, on the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented at the school level. The Commissioner of Education shall annually prescribe the required components of requested reports.

**C. Grading System for K-5**

The Board recognizes the importance of a student achievement grading system that is meaningful to students, parents, and school personnel. This grading system gives students credit for actual work they have done. It does not compare their progress with others. Grades shall be assigned as follows:

**Grading Scale**

| <u>Grades K-2</u>       | <u>Grades 3-5</u>          |                     |                       |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
|                         | <u>Percent Achievement</u> | <u>Grade Points</u> | <u>Progress Level</u> |
| E = Excellent           | A = 90-100                 | 4.0                 | Outstanding           |
| S+ = Above Satisfactory | B+ = 87-89                 | 3.0                 |                       |
| S = Satisfactory        | B = 80 – 86                | 3.0                 | Above Average         |
| N =Needs Improvement    | C+ = 77-79                 | 2.0                 |                       |
| U = Unsatisfactory      | C = 70-76                  | 2.0                 | Average               |
|                         | D+ = 67-69                 | 1.0                 |                       |
|                         | D = 60-66                  | 1.0                 | Lowest Acceptable     |
|                         | F = 0-59                   | 0.0                 | Failure               |

*(Note: Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number)*

Grades for English language learner students will be based upon their demonstrated knowledge of the appropriate subject area regardless of their level of English proficiency.

No national origin minority or English language learner student shall be subjected to any disciplinary action solely because of their use of a language other than English. This does not abrogate any rules, standards, or guidelines as specified in the School Board of Alachua County Code of Student Conduct.

**Reporting to Parents**

Parents or guardians will be notified annually regarding the student's progress toward achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in English Language Arts, mathematics, and science. The district school board must report to the parent the student's result on each statewide assessment test. Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format adapted by the district school board. Schools shall use district-adopted report cards to report grades at nine-week intervals in elementary schools. Interval grades shall be based upon assignments and tests, class participation, research, and other activities. Grades shall be supported by records which indicate how the teacher arrived at the evaluation.

The final report card for a school year shall indicate end-of-year status regarding performance or nonperformance at grade level, and attendance, and promotion or non-promotion. (1003.33 (1) F.S.)

**D. Instructional Program Requirements**

Kindergarten, First, and Second grade teachers will teach the B.E.S.T. Standards in English Language Arts, the Florida Standards in Math, and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in all other subjects. Third through Fifth grade teachers will teach the Florida Standards in English Language Arts and Math and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in all other subjects.

Instruction will include age-appropriate study of the history and content of the Declaration of Independence, including national sovereignty, natural law, self-evident truth, equality of all persons, limited government, popular sovereignty, and inalienable rights of life, liberty, and property and how they form the philosophical foundation of our government.

Instruction will also include the United States Constitution, flag education (proper flag display and flag salute), elements of civil government, the history of the Holocaust, African–American history, the history of the state, the study of Hispanic contributions to the United States, the study of women’s contributions to the United States, character education, Veteran’s Day, free enterprise and consumer education the requirements of Celebrate Freedom Week, and civics education as established by the Sandra Day O’Connor Act.

**Additional Information:**

1. Students may not be exempted from academic performance requirements based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance. A student’s attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement. (1003.33 (2) F.S.)
2. Participation in statewide assessments is mandatory for all students attending public school, except as otherwise prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Each student must participate in the statewide assessment tests required by 1008.22 F.S. If a student does not participate in the statewide assessment, the district must notify the student’s parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation. If modifications are made in the student’s instruction to provide accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessment tests, the district must notify the student’s parent of the implications of such instructional modifications. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations. (1008.22(3)(c) 3b F.S.)

Each public school is prohibited from suspending a regular program of curricula for purposes of administering practice tests or engaging in other test-preparation activities for statewide assessments. However, schools may engage in the following test-preparation activities:

- Distributing to students the sample test books and answer keys published by the Department of Education.
- Providing individualized instruction in test-taking strategies, without suspending the school’s regular program of curricula, for a student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on a prior administration of statewide assessments.
- Providing individualized instruction in the content knowledge and skills assessed, without suspending the school’s regular program of curricula, for a student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on a prior administration of statewide assessments or a student who, through a diagnostic assessment administered by the school district, is identified as having a deficiency in the content knowledge and skills assessed.
- Incorporating test-taking exercises and strategies into curricula for intensive reading and intensive mathematics intervention courses.

- Administering a practice test or engaging in other test-preparation activities for statewide assessments which are determined necessary to familiarize students with the organization of the assessments the format of the test items, and the test directions, or which are otherwise necessary for the valid and reliable administration of the assessments as set forth in State Board of Education rule.
3. Elementary magnet programs are offered in the following schools:
- STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math – Stephen Foster Elementary
- STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math – Metcalfe Elementary
- Dual Language Immersion: Terwilliger Elementary
- Gifted Magnet Program– Williams Elementary
- Gifted and Talented Magnet – Archer Community
- Fine Arts Magnet –Marjorie K. Rawlings Center for Fine Arts
- Some magnet programs have entrance requirements and enrollment caps. Selection criteria is available on the ACPS website. Priority for admission will be given to students currently enrolled in district-run Alachua County Public Schools.
4. Alachua County offers a full-time virtual school option for eligible students in grades K-5. To be eligible for Alachua eSchool, a student must meet one of the following criteria:
- a. The student spent the prior school year in attendance at a public school in Florida and was enrolled and reported by a public school district for funding during the preceding October and February for purposes of the FTE survey;
  - b. The student is a dependent child of a member of the US Armed Forces who was transferred within the last 12 months to this state from another state or from a foreign country pursuant to the parent’s permanent change of station orders;
  - c. The student was enrolled during the prior school year in a virtual instruction program under 1002.45 F.S., the K-8 Virtual School Program under 1002.415 F.S., or a full-time Florida Virtual School program under 1002.37(8)(a) F.S.;
  - d. The student has a sibling who is currently enrolled in a virtual instruction program and the sibling was enrolled in that program at the end of the prior school year;
  - e. The student is eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade; or
  - f. The student is eligible to enter grades 2 through 5 and is enrolled full-time in a school district virtual instruction program, virtual charter school, or the Florida Virtual School.

Enrollment information is available on the ACPS website ([www.sbac.edu](http://www.sbac.edu)) If necessary, students on free or reduced lunch may be provided a computer, printer and internet access by the virtual school vendor.

**E. Extended School Year**

The Board may sponsor an extended school year program.

## **Exceptional Student Education** **Elementary School**

### **A. Student Rights for Instruction**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 states that students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible: Modifications to the general curriculum occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that mastery of the general curriculum with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. In addition, IDEA ensures that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living. The needs and services of the student are documented on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **B. Promotion and Placement**

Grade placement for students with identified disabilities is first determined by the same criteria for promotion and placement as for all students, with some additional considerations. A student with a disability who does not meet criteria for promotion may be exempted from mandatory retention after considering the procedures for good cause exemption that apply to all students with the following additional options.

- Students with disabilities whose IEP indicates participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment is more appropriate, may be considered for good cause exemption from mandatory retention when all state criteria for good cause for students enrolled in access courses is met
- Students with disabilities who take statewide assessments and have an IEP that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than 2 years but still has a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade may be considered for good cause exemption from mandatory retention.

### **C. Reporting Student Progress**

#### **1. Report Cards/Grading Procedures**

Report card grades for students with disabilities are first determined by the same criteria as grades for all students, with some additional considerations. Students with disabilities may receive report card grades in special education classes that are based on instructional level rather than grade placement if determined appropriate by the IEP team. Accommodations/Modifications to the general curriculum are documented on the student's IEP as appropriate.

#### **2. Parent Notification of Student Progress**

Parents of students with disabilities will be regularly informed as to their child's measured progress toward the annual goals of the IEP and the extent to which the progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goals by the end of the annual IEP year. Progress towards goals and likelihood of attainment is sent home with the report card or at a more frequent interval that is designated on the annual goal(s) of the IEP.

## **D. Guidelines for Determining Appropriate Accommodations/Modifications for Students With Disabilities**

### **1. Accommodations to the General Curriculum**

Consistent with the accountability requirements of *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), the vast majority of students with disabilities in Florida are expected to: demonstrate mastery of the Florida's B.E.S.T. and state academic Standards, participate in statewide assessments, and graduate high school with a standard diploma. In order to achieve these expectations, students with disabilities must be provided access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible with appropriately designed instruction and accommodations. Any accommodations are intended for those students who would be denied meaningful participation in instruction and assessment because of their disability. Accommodations allow a student with a disability the same access to instruction and assessment as students without disabilities. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are determined at IEP meetings and indicated on the student's IEP.

Appropriate accommodations for state and district assessments are determined for each student at the IEP meeting.

The following guidelines will be considered when making individual accommodation decisions:

- Accommodations are adjustments made to the way skills and concepts are taught and assessed but do not affect the expected outcomes in relation to Florida's B.E.S.T. and state academic standards.
- Accommodations should facilitate an accurate demonstration of what the student knows or can do.
- Accommodations should remove or neutralize the limiting effects of the student's disability by altering the presentation, response, schedule, setting, use of assistive devices, or test administration in appropriate ways.
- Accommodations should not change the intent of the test; i.e., the educational goal or skill measured by the test.
- Accommodations should not be used to compensate for lack of achievement.
- Accommodations should not provide the student with an unfair advantage or interfere with the validity of the test. They must not change the underlying skills that are being measured by the test.
- Test accommodations must be the same or nearly the same as accommodations used by the student in completing the classroom instructional and assessment activities.
- Accommodations must be necessary to allow the student to demonstrate knowledge, ability, skill, or mastery required by the assessment.

## 2. Testing Accommodations

Rule [6A-1.0943, FAC] permits test accommodations for any student with a disability who has a current IEP or 504 Plan. Expanded accommodations on state/district assessments are authorized for students with disabilities through executive order. Allowable accommodations are detailed in the test administration manuals under the following categories:

- Flexible Presentation
- Flexible Responding
- Flexible Scheduling
- Flexible Setting
- Use of Assistive Technology

## 3. Parent Notification of Testing Accommodations/Modifications

A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations and/or modifications that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations and/or modifications.

## 4. Modifications to the General Curriculum

Modifications to the general curriculum are changes in expected outcomes and core curricular standards. When students are unable to meet the expectations of the general curriculum, the expectations may be modified through enrollment in access courses. Modifications to the curriculum are used in coordination with an assessment that is compatible with the modified expectations. The decision by the IEP team to use a modified curriculum is written in the student's IEP.

The following guidelines shall be considered when enrolling students with disabilities in modified courses:

- Curricular modifications should be considered only after all types of accommodations have been exhausted.
- A student's priority educational needs may be different from the core curriculum specific to Florida's B.E.S.T. and state academic standards. Students who require modified standards must meet the criteria for participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment as outlined in Florida statute and rule.

## **E. Guidelines for Participation of Selected Students in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment**

Individual educational plan (IEP) teams are responsible for determining whether students with disabilities will be assessed with the general statewide assessment or with the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment. The IEP team should consider the student's present level of educational performance and the eligibility requirements for participation in access courses as outlined in Florida Statute (6A-1.0943), or as outlined in the DOE approved district specific procedures for extraordinary circumstances. The general state content standards are the foundation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all students. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities utilize Access Points to access the general curriculum. Access Points consist of foundation skills that are clearly linked to the general education content. They reflect the intent of the standards that apply to all students in the same grade level, but at a reduced level of complexity.

In order to facilitate informed and equitable decision making, IEP teams should answer each of the following questions when determining the appropriate assessment:

- Does the student receive exceptional student education services as identified through a current IEP, and has the student been enrolled in the appropriate and aligned courses using alternative achievement standards for two consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment?
- Even after documented evidence of exhausting all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, does the student require modification to the general education curriculum standards?
- Even after documented evidence of accessing various supplementary instructional materials, does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards?
- Even with documented evidence of the provision and use of assistive technology, does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards?
- Was the assessment instrument used to measure the student's global level of cognitive functioning selected to limit the adverse impact of already identified limitations and impairment (e.g. language acquisition, mode of communication, culture, hearing, vision, orthopedic functioning, hypersensitivities, distractibility)?
- Does the student have a most significant cognitive impairment that adversely impacts multiple areas of functioning across many settings and is a result of a congenital, acquired, or traumatic brain injury or syndrome that is verified as outlined in Rule 6A1 0943(5)(c)11. F.A.C.?

For students currently on General Standards, questions must be answered by the IEP team as outlined in Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c) F.A.C.

A student may not participate in the access courses or the Florida Alternate Assessment if they meet any of the descriptions below.

- Is the student identified as a student with a specific learning disability or as gifted?
- Is the student identified only as a student eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a visual impairment, a dual sensory impairment, an emotional or behavioral disability, a language impairment, or an orthopedic impairment?
- Has the student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered according to Section 1008.22(3)?

## **F. Extended School Year**

The need for extended school year services is determined by an IEP committee.

For students eligible for Exceptional Student Education, the need for Extended School Year (ESY) services is determined at an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) conference and documented on the IEP. Multiple criteria for eligibility for ESY services, as defined by DOE, may include but are not limited to: consideration of the likelihood of regression/recoupment, critical points of instruction, emerging skills, nature or severity of disability, interfering behaviors, rate of progress, or special circumstances.

**Section II**  
**Middle School**  
**Grades 6-8**

## **GENERAL EDUCATION: MIDDLE SCHOOL** **GRADES 6-8**

### **A. Admission and Placement of Students**

1. Admissions
  - a. Evidence that the student resides in the school's designated zone is required for each student enrolling in the Alachua County school system (e.g., utility bill, bill of sale or deed for the house, lease agreement, rent receipt, homestead exemption receipt, or verification through a home visit by a school official).
  - b. A birth certificate or other evidence of age is required for enrollment.
  - c. Students transferring from an out-of-state school must provide a certificate of immunization or a valid certificate of exemption.
  - d. Students transferring from an out-of-state school must provide a health certificate completed within twelve (12) months prior to enrollment or HRS Form 681 completed by the parent or guardian requesting exemption on religious grounds.
  - e. The parent or guardian must complete student emergency information when enrolling a student and will be asked to provide the student's social security number. Since a parent is not always able to be reached by phone, the number of an available emergency contact is mandatory.
2. The grade placement of any student new to a middle school is determined by the principal and staff on the basis of results of tests administered by the school and other appropriate considerations. A principal may request a student to present a report card or other evidence of school attendance to facilitate proper placement of a student in the school.
3. The parent of siblings who are assigned to the same grade level and school may request that the school place the siblings in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. This request must be made no later than five (5) days before the first day of school each school year or five (5) days after the first day of attendance of the students if the students are enrolled in school after the school year commences. The school is not required to meet the request if there is factual evidence indicating a specific placement is better for the student than that requested by the parent. (1003.06 F.S.)
4. To be enrolled in middle school, students must register for and attend a complete schedule of classes at the school unless they are home education students attending a regularly scheduled class period at the zoned school or are participating in one of the district's approved educational options.

### **B. Course of Study Requirements and Offerings**

1. Regular Program Requirements:
  - Language Arts
  - Reading
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies
  - Physical Education

2. Electives:
  - Career and Technical Education
  - Computer Education
  - Fine Arts
  - World Languages

3. Magnet Programs:

The district offers academic magnet programs at the middle school level. Admission is by application only. Selection criteria is available on the ACPS website. Priority for admission will be given to students currently enrolled in district-run Alachua County Public Schools.

4. Teachers will teach the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for Science and Social Studies, and the B.E.S.T standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics as established by the State of Florida.

See *General Procedures for Promotion* section.

5. Alachua County Public Schools will offer full-time virtual options for all students in grades 6-8. To participate in a virtual option, a student must meet the requirements set forth in F.S. 1002.45(6).

Enrollment information is available on the ACPS website ([www.sbac.edu](http://www.sbac.edu)). If necessary, students on free or reduced lunch may be provided a computer.

### **C. Student Promotion and Retention**

Student promotion is based on evaluation of each student's achievement of the B.E.S.T. standards and state academic standards. Each student's progression from one grade to another is based, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, science, social studies and mathematics. Parents must be informed of their students' progress in meeting academic standards. (1008.25(1) F.S.) Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in reading, writing, science, social studies and mathematics for each grade level, or who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the commissioner on statewide assessments at selected grade levels, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need.

1. Promotion from middle school to high school requires that all students successfully complete the following academic courses:
  - Three middle school or higher courses in English Language Arts. These courses shall emphasize literature, composition, and technical text.
  - Three middle school or higher courses in Mathematics.
  - Three middle school or higher courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.

A middle grades student who transfers into the state's public school system from out of country, out of state, a private school, or a home education program after the beginning of the second term of grade 8 is not required to meet the civics education requirement for promotion from the middle grades if the student's

transcript documents passage of three courses in social studies or two year-long courses in social studies that include coverage of civics education 1003.4156(1)(c)).

- Three middle school or higher courses in science.

Evaluation of proficiency of the state academic standards in Science and Social Studies, and the B.E.S.T. standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics includes scores on district and statewide assessments, classroom performance, daily observations, and formal and informal assessments of competency in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The primary responsibility for recommending grade placement for the next year is that of professional staff members, subject to review and approval of the principal and Superintendent.

Participation in statewide assessments is mandatory for all students attending public school, except as otherwise prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Each student must participate in the statewide assessment tests required by 1008.22 F.S. If a student does not participate in the statewide assessment, the district must notify the student's parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation. If accommodations and/or modifications are made in the student's instruction that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments, the district must notify the student's parent of the implications of such instructional accommodations and/or modifications. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations and/or modifications that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations. (1008.22 (3) (c) 3b F.S.)

Each public school is prohibited from suspending a regular program of curricula for purposes of administering practice assessments or engaging in other assessment-preparation activities for statewide assessments. However, schools may engage in the following assessment-preparation activities:

- Distributing to students the sample assessment books and answer keys published by the Department of Education
- Providing individualized instruction in assessment-taking strategies, without suspending the school's regular program of curricula, for a student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on a prior administration of an assessment.
- Providing individualized instruction in the content knowledge and skills assessed, without suspending the school's regular program of curricula, for a student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on a prior administration of an assessment or a student who, through a diagnostic assessment administered by the school district, is identified as having a deficiency in the content knowledge and skills assessed.
- Administering a practice assessment or engaging in other assessment-preparation activities that are determined necessary to familiarize students with the organization of assessment, the format of the assessment items, and the assessment directions, or which are otherwise necessary for the valid and reliable administration of the assessment as set forth in State Board of Education rule.

2. Section 1008.25 F.S. requires each student who does not achieve a Level 3 (satisfactory) or above on a statewide, standardized assessment be evaluated to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for providing academic support to improve the student's performance. A student who is not meeting the school or district requirements for satisfactory performance must be covered by one of the following plans:

- A federally required plan such as an IEP;
  - A school wide system of progress monitoring for all students, except a student who scores level 4 or above in the specific subject area statewide assessment may be exempted from participation by the principal; or
  - An individualized progress monitoring plan
- a. Indicators of the student's proficiency include teacher assessment, norm-referenced tests, statewide tests, diagnostic assessment, and grade point average (GPA).
  - b. Remediation options may include strategies within the regular class, tutorial support, extended school year, extended day activities, home strategies, contracted academic services, drop-out prevention coursework, and intensive math, science, reading, writing/language arts courses.
  - c. The progress monitoring plan must be designed to assist the student in meeting expectations for proficiency.

If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading, the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan shall include instructional and support services to meet the desired levels of performance.

The district may require low-performing students to attend remediation programs held before school, after school, or during the summer if transportation is provided.

3. Reading Requirement:

For each year in which the student scores a Level 1 on the statewide English Language Arts assessment, the student may be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year.

A student who scores Level 2 on the statewide reading assessment may be placed in an Intensive Reading class or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered, as determined by a diagnosis of the student's reading needs.

Student progress toward increased reading achievement must be reported three times per year. The school shall use research-based reading activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students.

4. High School Credit:

Each middle school must offer at least one high-school level mathematics course for which students may earn high school credit. Middle schools may offer additional high-school level courses for credit with approval from the Deputy Superintendent.

Middle school students taking high school level math courses, such as Algebra 1, Algebra 1 Honors, or Geometry Honors, will be required to participate in state End of Course Assessments.

Students must pass the State Algebra 1 End of Course Assessment in order to receive a high school diploma. Beginning with students entering ninth grade in the 2013-2014 school year the Algebra 1 and Geometry EOCs each count as 30% of a student's course grade. If the student passes Algebra 1 (regardless of the EOC score), Geometry or Algebra II, the course may count as one of the three math courses required for promotion to high school. The Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra II course grades will be used as part of the high school GPA. If a student does not pass the Algebra 1 EOC, the student must retake the EOC and achieve a passing score to earn a high school diploma.

5. Middle school students taking high school courses for high school credit who get a grade of C, D, or F, may retake the same or comparable course and replace their original grade with a grade of C or higher. Only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student's grade point average.
6. Students in grade 6 who are enrolled in a school that contains one or more elementary grades shall be provided 150 minutes each week of physical education (at least 30 consecutive minutes per day on any day when physical education is conducted).

The equivalent of one class period day of physical education for one semester of each year is required for students enrolled in grades 6-8.

The requirement for physical education shall be waived for any student who meets one of the following criteria:

- a. The student is enrolled in a remedial course
- b. The student's parent indicates annually in writing to the school that:
  - The parent requests the student enroll in another course from among those courses offered as options.
  - The student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirements.

Each school shall notify the student's parents of the options available before scheduling the student to participate in physical education.

7. Retention Criteria:

Middle school students may be retained for one or more of the following reasons:

- a. Scoring Level 1 on the statewide assessment in ELA and/or Math
  - b. Receiving failing grades in two or more academic subjects
  - c. Achieving less than a 2.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale)
  - d. Missing more than fifteen days per semester (students may be retained for lack of attendance unless a medical excuse is presented to the principal from a competent medical authority to excuse absences in excess of fifteen days; or there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal based on recommendations of teachers, counselors, or Student Services personnel.)
8. Parents or guardians may appeal a promotion or retention decision made by the school at the end of the current school year to the Deputy Superintendent. This appeal process shall be completed before the start of the Extended School Year program.

9. No Limited English Proficient (LEP) student will be retained based solely on his/her language proficiency in English.
10. Promotion/retention decisions are made at the end of the regular 180-day school year. The options for each 6 – 8 student are as follows:
  - a. Promote to next grade level.
  - b. Remediate before the beginning of the next school year and promote.
  - c. Promote for good cause, and remediate during the following school year with more intensive intervention and remediation strategies specified in a revised progress monitoring plan.
  - d. Retain and remediate in a different program.
11. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
12. Resource Allocation:  
The allocation of remedial and supplemental resources for students shall occur in the following priority:
  - Students who are deficient in reading at the end of grade 3.
  - Students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion consistent with the district’s plan for student progression.
13. Graduation Options:  
The district school board shall provide each student in grades 6-8 and their parents with information concerning both the 18 credit and 24 credit graduation options.

**D. Grading System for Grades 6-8**

The following scale is used to convert quantifiable achievement to alphabetic symbols in middle school courses. Grades will be calculated mathematically for each term.

| <u>% Achievement of Course Objectives</u> | <u>Grade Points</u> | <u>Progress Level</u> |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|
| A = 90-100                                | 4.0                 | Outstanding           |
| B+ = 87-89                                | 3.0                 |                       |
| B = 80-86                                 | 3.0                 | Above Average         |
| C+ = 77-79                                | 2.0                 |                       |
| C = 70-76                                 | 2.0                 | Average               |
| D+ = 67-69                                | 1.0                 |                       |
| D = 60-66                                 | 1.0                 | Lowest Acceptable     |
| F = 0-59                                  | 0.0                 | Failure               |
| I = 0 0.0                                 | Incomplete          |                       |

*(Note: Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number)*

Students may not be exempted from academic performance requirements based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance. A student’s attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement. (1003.33 (2) F.S.)

**E. Class Conduct Grades 6-8**

The following symbols are used to denote class conduct in grades 6-8:

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

No national origin minority or limited English proficient student shall be subjected to any disciplinary action solely because of his/her use of a language other than English. This does not abrogate any rules, standards, or guidelines as specified in the Alachua County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct.

**F. Report Cards and Student Progress Reports to Parents**

The district school board must report to the parent the student's results on each statewide assessment. The final report card for a school year shall indicate end-of-year status regarding performance or nonperformance at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, and promotion or non-promotion. (1003.33 (1) F.S.) Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format adapted by the district school board. Progress reports will be issued to students during each marking period.

**G. Extended School Year**

The board may sponsor an extended school year program. Low-performing students may be required to attend extended school year programs if transportation is provided.

## **Exceptional Student Education** **Middle School**

### **A. Student Rights for Instruction**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 states that students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible. Modifications to the general curriculum occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that mastery of the general curriculum with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education, related services, and accommodations or modifications designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living. The needs and services of the student are documented on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **B. Promotion and Placement**

Grade placement for students with identified disabilities is first determined by the same criteria for promotion and placement as for all students, with some additional considerations. When enrolled in general education courses, whether taught in a general education class or a special education class, students with disabilities will be required to master the content to the same extent required of students without disabilities, with the understanding that certain teaching accommodations may be utilized. Acceptable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- An increase or decrease in the instructional time.
- Variations of instructional strategies.
- Teacher instruction or student response through special communication systems.
- Classroom and district test administration procedures and other evaluation procedures may be accommodated as specified to accommodate the student's disability. (Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C.)

### **C. Reporting Student Progress**

#### **1. Report Cards/Grading Procedures**

Report card grades for students with disabilities are determined by the same criteria as grades for all students. Accommodations/Modifications to the general curriculum are documented on the student's IEP as appropriate.

#### **2. Parent Notification of Student Progress**

Parents of students with disabilities will be regularly informed as to their child's measured progress toward the annual goals of the IEP and the extent to which the progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goals by the end of the annual IEP year. Progress towards goals and likelihood of attainment is sent home with the report card or at a more frequent interval that is designated on the annual goal(s) of the IEP.

## **D. Guidelines for Determining Appropriate Accommodations/Modifications for Students with Disabilities**

### **1. Accommodations to the General Curriculum**

Consistent with the accountability requirements of ESSA (*Every Student Succeeds Act*) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), the vast majority of students with disabilities in Florida are expected to; demonstrate mastery of the general curriculum state academic standards and B.E.S.T. standards, participate in general statewide assessments, and graduate high school with a standard diploma. In order to achieve these expectations, students with disabilities must be provided access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible with appropriately designed instruction and accommodations. Any accommodations are intended for students who would be denied meaningful participation in instruction and assessment because of their disability. Accommodations allow a student with a disability the same access to instruction and assessment as students without disabilities. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are determined at IEP meetings and indicated on the student's IEP.

Appropriate accommodations for state and district assessment are determined for each student at the IEP meeting.

The following guidelines will be considered when making individual accommodation decisions:

- Accommodations are adjustments made to the way skills and concepts are taught and assessed but do not affect the expected outcomes in relation to the Florida state standards and B.E.S.T. Standards.
- Accommodations should facilitate an accurate demonstration of what the student knows or can do.
- Accommodations should remove or neutralize the limiting effects of the student's disability by altering the presentation, response, schedule, setting, use of assistive devices, or test administration in appropriate ways.
- Accommodations should not change the intent of the test; i.e.: the educational goal or skill measured by the test.
- Accommodations should not be used to compensate for lack of achievement.
- Accommodations should not provide the student with an unfair advantage or interfere with the validity of the test. They must not change the underlying skills that are being measured by the test.
- Test accommodations must be the same or nearly the same as accommodations used by the student in completing the classroom instructional and assessment activities.
- Accommodations must be necessary to allow the student to demonstrate knowledge, ability, skill, or mastery required by the assessment.

## 2. Testing Accommodations

Rule [6A-1.0943, FAC] permits test accommodations for any student with a disability who has a current IEP. Expanded accommodations on state/district assessment are authorized for students with disabilities through executive order. Allowable accommodations are detailed in the test administration manuals under the following categories:

- Flexible Presentation
- Flexible Responding
- Flexible Scheduling
- Flexible Setting
- Use of Assistive Technology

## 3. Parent Notification of Testing Accommodations/Modifications

A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations and/or modifications that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations and/or modifications.

## 4. Modifications to the General Curriculum

Modifications to the general curriculum are changes in expected outcomes and core curriculum standards. When students are unable to meet the expectations of the general education curriculum, the expectations may be modified through enrollment in access courses. Modifications to the curriculum are used in coordination with an assessment that is compatible with the modified expectations. The decision by the IEP team to use a modified curriculum is written in the student's IEP.

The following guidelines shall be considered when enrolling students with disabilities in access courses:

- Curricular modifications should be considered only after all types of accommodations have been exhausted.
- A student's priority educational needs may be different from the core curriculum specific to the state academic standards and the B.E.S.T. standards for general education courses for the academic subject areas. Students who require modified standards must meet the criteria for participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment.

## **E. Guidelines for Participation of Selected Students in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment**

IEP teams are responsible for determining whether students with disabilities will be assessed with the general statewide assessment or with the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment. The IEP team should consider the student's present level of educational performance and the eligibility requirements for participation in access courses as outlined in Florida Statute (6A-1.0943) or as outlined in the DOE approved district specific procedures for extraordinary circumstances. The general state content standards are the foundation of curriculum, instruction and assessment for all students. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities utilize Access Points to access the general curriculum. Access Points consist of

foundation skills that are clearly linked to the general education content. They reflect the intent of the standards that apply to all students in the same grade level, but at a reduced level of complexity.

In order to facilitate informed and equitable decision making, IEP teams should answer each of the following questions when determining the appropriate assessment:

- Does the student receive exceptional student education services as identified through a current IEP, and has the student been enrolled in the appropriate and aligned courses using alternative achievement standards for two consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment?
- Even after documented evidence of exhausting all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, does the student require modification to the general education curriculum standards?
- Even after documented evidence of accessing various supplementary instructional materials, does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards?
- Even with documented evidence of the provision and use of assistive technology, does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards?
- Was the assessment instrument used to measure the student's global level of cognitive functioning selected to limit the adverse impact of already identified limitations and impairment (e.g. language acquisition, mode of communication, culture, hearing, vision, orthopedic functioning, hypersensitivities, distractibility)?
- Does the student have a most significant cognitive impairment that adversely impacts multiple areas of functioning across many settings and is a result of a congenital, acquired, or traumatic brain injury or syndrome that is verified as outlined in Rule 6A1 0943(5)(c)11. F.A.C.?

For students currently on General Standards, questions must be answered by the IEP team as outlined in Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c) F.A.C.

A student may not participate in the access courses or the Florida Alternate Assessment if they meet any of the descriptions below

- Is the student identified as a student with a specific learning disability or as gifted?
- Is the student identified only as a student eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a visual impairment, a dual sensory impairment, an emotional or behavioral disability, a language impairment, or an orthopedic impairment?
- Has the student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered according to Section 1008.22(3)?

#### **F. Extended School Year**

The need for extended school year (ESY) services is determined by an IEP committee.

For ESY services is determined at an IEP conference and documented on the IEP. Multiple criteria for eligibility for ESY services, as defined by DOE, may include but are not limited to: consideration of the likelihood of regression/recoupment, critical points of instruction, emerging skills, nature or severity of disability, interfering behaviors, rate of progress, or special circumstances.

**Section III**  
**High School**  
**Grades 9-12**

## GENERAL EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOLS

### A. Admission and Placement of Students

#### 1. Admissions

- a. Evidence that the parent resides in the school's designated zone is required for each student enrolling in the Alachua County school system (e.g., utility bill, bill of sale or deed for house, lease agreement, rent receipt, homestead exemption receipt, or verification through a home visit by a school official). Students who move away from their parents' residence shall be assigned to the school attendance zone in which their parents reside unless a legal guardianship has been awarded to an adult with whom the student resides.
- b. A birth certificate or other evidence of age is required for enrollment.
- c. Students transferring from an out-of-state school must provide a certificate of immunization or a valid certificate of exemption.
- d. Students transferring from an out-of-state school must provide a health certificate completed within the twelve (12) months just prior to enrollment or HRS Form 680.
- e. The parent or guardian must complete student emergency information when enrolling a student and will be asked to provide the student's social security number. Since it is not always possible to reach a parent by phone, the number of an available emergency contact is mandatory.

#### 2. Placement and Classification in High School

##### a. Placement in Grade 9

Placement in grade 9 is dependent upon successful completion of required middle school courses. Specific requirements are given in Section II, Promotion and Placement within the Middle Schools, of the Student Progression Plan. However, the following exceptions may be made:

Middle school students who make a "C" (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) or below in a high school course in middle school are encouraged to confer with their parents and high school personnel before going on to the next level course. Middle school students taking high school courses for high school credit who get a grade of C, D, or F may replace that grade with a grade of C or higher by retaking the course or a comparable course.

##### b. Classifying of students in grades 10, 11, and 12

The classification of students in grades 10, 11, and 12 is based upon the number of credits earned in high school, as follows:

| <u>Classification</u> | <u>Credits Earned</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Grade 10              | 4                     |
| Grade 11              | 10                    |
| Grade 12              | 16                    |
| Graduation            | 24                    |

Students may be promoted from one grade classification to the next at the semester if credit requirements are met.

Section 1008.22 requires each student who does not achieve a Level 3 (satisfactory) or above on a statewide, standardized assessment be evaluated to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for providing academic support to improve the student's performance. A student who is not meeting the school or district requirements for satisfactory performance must be covered by one of the following plans:

- A federally required plan such as an IEP; or
  - A school wide system of progress monitoring for all students, except a student who scores Level 4 or above in the specific subject area statewide assessment may be exempted from participation by the principal; or
  - An individualized progress monitoring plan.
- \* Students entering a school from a school system whose graduation credit requirement and/or school day is different from the school of entry may be placed in a grade by the principal and given an individually prescribed program designed for completion of credits.

c. Student Promotion and Retention

Student promotion is based on evaluation of each student's achievement of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards or the Florida Standards. Each student's progression from one grade to another is based, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, science, social studies and mathematics. Parents must be informed of their students' progress in meeting academic standards. Evaluation of proficiency on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards or the Florida Standards include classroom performance, daily observation, and formal and informal assessments of competency in reading, writing, science, social studies, and mathematics. Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in reading, writing, science, social studies, and mathematics for each grade level, or who does not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the commissioner on statewide assessments at selected grade levels, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need.

If a student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading, the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan shall include instructional and support services to meet the desired levels of performance.

A student who scores Level 1 or 2 on the statewide assessment in ELA may be enrolled in an intensive reading course the following year.

For each year in which a student scores Level 1 or Level 2 on the statewide assessment in Mathematics, the student may be enrolled in and complete a remedial course or a content area course in which remediation strategies are incorporated into course content delivery.

Indicators of the student's proficiency include teacher assessment, norm-referenced tests, statewide tests, diagnostic assessment, and grade point average (GPA).

Remediation options may include strategies within the regular class, tutorial support, extended school year, extended day activities, home strategies, contracted academic services, drop-out prevention coursework, and intensive mathematics, reading, writing/language arts courses.

The allocation of remedial and supplemental instruction resources for students shall occur in the following priority:

- Students who are deficient in reading by grade 3
- Students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion consistent with the district's plan for student progression.

d. Compulsory Attendance

Students may not be exempted from academic performance requirements based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance. A student's attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement. (1003.33 (2) F.S.)

A student who reaches the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board.

The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the student and the student's parent. The school district must notify the student's parent of receipt of the student's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment. (1003.21(1) (c) F.S.)

The student's school counselor or other school personnel must conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. The student must be informed of opportunities to continue his/her education in a different environment, including, but not limited to, adult education and GED test preparation. Additionally, the student must complete a survey in a format prescribed by the Department of Education to provide data on student reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled.

e. Maximum Age for High School Students

High school students pursuing a regular high school diploma must be able to graduate from school prior to their 19th birthday, unless the student has an IEP. Permission for students to attend high school to pursue a regular high school diploma after their birthday will be made on an individual basis by the high school principal and the superintendent designee.

## **B. Graduation Requirements**

To be enrolled in high school in the 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grades, students must register for and attend a complete schedule of classes unless they are participating in an approved Dual Enrollment program, are home education students attending a regularly scheduled class period at the zoned school, or are students who have earned a certificate of completion and are entitled to return to school for remediation. Seniors who will meet or exceed the graduation requirements for their cohort and do not wish to attend full time, must have approval of the school principal or administrative designee.

For high school graduation, students shall earn a minimum of 24 credits in grades 9 through 12 or earn the 18 required credits to meet the accelerated graduation option or CTE Pathway option. No student may be required to take more than the maximum number of credits. Students may elect to take additional credits in any area.

Students will have access to enroll in courses available through the Alachua eSchool or Florida Virtual School (See Section IV). Credit will be awarded for successful completion of these courses. (1001.42 (23) F.S.)

Participation in statewide assessments is mandatory for all students attending public school, except as otherwise prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Each student must participate in the statewide assessment tests as required by 1008.22 F.S. If a student does not participate in the statewide assessment, the district must notify the student's parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation. If accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessment tests are provided for student instruction, the district must notify the student's parent of the implications of such instructional accommodations. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations. (1008.22(3)(c) 3.b. F.S.)

Each public school is prohibited from suspending a regular program of curricula for purposes of administering practice tests or engaging in other test-preparation activities for statewide assessments.

However, schools may engage in the following test-preparation activities:

- Distributing to students the sample test books and answer keys published by the Department of Education.
- Providing individualized instruction in test-taking strategies, without suspending the school's regular program of curricula, for a student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on a prior administration of statewide assessments.
- Providing individualized instruction in the content knowledge and skills assessed, without suspending the school's regular program of curricula, for a student who scores Level 1 or Level 2 on a prior administration of a statewide assessment, or a student who, through a diagnostic assessment administered by the school district, is identified as having a deficiency in the content knowledge and skills assessed.

Administering a practice assessment or engaging in other assessment preparation activities which are determined necessary to familiarize students with the organization of the assessment, the format of the assessment items, and the assessment directions, or that are otherwise necessary for the valid and reliable administration of the assessment as set forth in rules adopted by the State Board of Education with specific reference to this paragraph.

A dependent child of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces who enters a public school from out-of-state or from a foreign country and provides satisfactory proof of attaining a score on an approved alternative assessment that is concordant to a passing score on the required statewide assessments shall satisfy the assessment requirements for a standard high school diploma. Specific courses required for graduation shall be waived if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed in another LEA (Local Educational Agency) or reasonable justification for denial will be provided. Transfers during senior year will be considered for graduation based on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. (1000.36 F.S.)

No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion. (1008.25 F.S.)

Remedial instruction provided during high school may not be in lieu of English and Mathematics credits required for graduation.

Beginning with the 2013 – 2014 school year:

No student may be granted credit toward a standard high school diploma for enrollment in any Level 1 course.

Students must earn a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale to meet graduation requirements. Students may earn more than 24 high school course credits.

1. Definition of Credit

For graduation requirements, one full credit means a minimum of 135 hours of bona fide instruction in a designated course of study that contains student performance standards. Failure to attend the minimum number of hours may result in a loss of credit.

A failing grade of “F”, or below average passing grade of “D”, for a given course will not be used in calculating the final grade point average if the student repeated the course and received a higher passing grade. For the purpose of graduation, grade averaging of the two semesters for a yearlong course will be permitted when one is a failing grade and the other grade is “C” or higher.

A student enrolled in a full-year course shall receive one-half credit if the student successfully completes either the first half or the second half of a full-year course but fails to successfully complete the other half of the course and the averaging of the grades obtained in each half would not result in a passing grade.

A student enrolled in a full-year course shall receive a full credit if the student successfully completes either the first half or the second half of a full-year course but fails to successfully complete the other half and the averaging of the grades obtained in each half would result in a passing grade, provided that the student meets district policies for class attendance, homework, participation, and other indicators of performance, such as a passing grade on the final exam. (1003.436 F.S.)

2. Grade Forgiveness

Students must include any course grade not replaced according to the district forgiveness policy in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average. All courses taken must be included in the grade point average calculation unless the grade has been forgiven by retake. Required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F” with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently in the *same* or *comparable* course.

Elective courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F” with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently by retaking the same or comparable course or *another* course. Middle school students taking high school courses for high school credit who get a grade of C, D, or F may replace that grade with a grade of C or higher by retaking the course or a comparable course. Any course grade not replaced according to a district forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA required for graduation.

3. Graduation Requirement Charts and Standard Diploma Requirements

Under the new B.E.S.T. recommendations, all seniors will be required to take the Civics Literacy Test beginning in 2020-21. A passing score will not be required for graduation; however, if a student passes the exam while in high school, they will receive credit for meeting the civic literacy postsecondary assessment requirement in Section 1007.25(4), F.S., before admission to a state college or university.

*[See Standard Diploma Requirements on the following pages.]*

## Standard Diploma Requirements

### Academic Advisement – What Students and Parents Need to Know

What are the diploma options?

Students must successfully complete one of the following diploma options:

- 24-credit standard diploma
- 18-credit Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL)
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma curriculum

What are the state assessment requirements?

Students must pass the following statewide assessments:

- Grade 10 English Language Arts (ELA) or a concordant score
- Algebra 1 end of course (EOC) or a comparative score

Refer to [Graduation Requirements for Florida's Statewide Assessments](#) for concordant and comparative scores.

Students enrolled in the following courses must participate in the corresponding EOC assessment, which constitutes 30 percent of the final course grade:

- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- Biology 1
- U.S. History

\*Special note: Thirty percent not applicable if not enrolled in the course but passed the EOC (credit acceleration program [CAP]).

What is the difference between the 18-credit ACCEL option and the 24-credit option?

- 3 elective credits instead of 8
- Physical Education is not required
- Online course is not required

What is the difference between the CTE Pathway option and the 24-credit option?

- At least 18 credits are required
- 4 elective credits instead of 8
  - 2 credits in CTE courses, must result in completion and industry certification
  - 2 credits in work-based learning programs or up to 2 elective credits including financial literacy
- Physical Education is not required
- Fine and Performing Arts, Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts is not required
- Online course is not required

24 Credit Standard Diploma

| 4 Credits ELA  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA 1, 2, 3, 4</li> <li>• ELA honors, Advanced Placement (AP), AICE, IB and dual enrollment courses may satisfy this requirement</li> </ul>   |
| 4 Credits Mathematics*   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of which must be Algebra 1 and one of which must be Geometry</li> <li>• Industry Certifications that lead to college credit may substitute for up to two mathematics credits (except for Algebra 1 and Geometry)</li> <li>• An identified computer science** credit may substitute for up to one mathematics credit (except for Algebra 1 and Geometry)</li> </ul>  |
| 3 Credits Science  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of which must be Biology 1, two of which must be equally rigorous science courses</li> <li>• Two of the three required course credits must have a laboratory component</li> <li>• Industry Certifications that lead to college credit may substitute for up to one science credit (except for Biology 1)</li> <li>• An identified computer science** credit may substitute for up to one science credit (except for Biology 1)</li> </ul> |
| 3 Credits Social Studies   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 credit in World History</li> <li>• 1 credit in U.S. History</li> <li>• 0.5 credit in U.S. Government</li> <li>• 0.5 credit in Economics</li> </ul>  |
| 1 Credit Fine and Performing Arts, Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts*   |
| 1 Credit Physical Education*   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To include the integration of health</li> </ul>   |
| 8 Elective Credits   |
| 1 Online Course  |
| <p>Students must earn a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale for all cohort years and pass statewide, standardized assessments unless a waiver of assessment results is granted by the IEP team for students with disabilities.</p>  |

\* Eligible courses are specified in the [Florida Course Code Directory](#).

\*\*A computer science credit may not be used to substitute for both a mathematics and science credit.

### Scholar Diploma Designation

In addition to meeting the 24-credit standard high school diploma requirements, a student must meet all of the following requirements:

- Earn 1 credit in Algebra 2 or an equally rigorous course
- Pass the Geometry EOC
- Earn 1 credit in Statistics or an equally rigorous mathematics course
- Pass the Biology 1 EOC\*
- Earn 1 credit in Chemistry or Physics
- Earn 1 credit in a course equally rigorous to Chemistry or Physics
- Pass the U.S. History EOC\*
- Earn 2 credits in the same World Language
- Earn at least 1 credit in an AP, IB, AICE or a dual enrollment course

\*A student is exempt from the Biology 1 or U.S. History EOC assessment if the student is enrolled in an AP, IB or AICE Biology 1 or U.S. History course; takes the respective AP, IB or AICE assessment; and earns the minimum score to earn college credit.

### Merit Diploma Designation

- Meet the standard high school diploma requirements
- Attain one or more [industry certifications](#) from the list established (per s. 1003.492, F.S.)

#### What are the additional graduation options for students with [disabilities](#)?

Two additional options are available only to students with disabilities. Both allow students to substitute a CTE course with related content for one credit in ELA 4, mathematics, science and social studies (excluding Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology 1 and U.S. History). The two options are as follows:

- Students with significant cognitive disabilities may earn credits via access courses and be assessed via an alternate assessment.
- Students who choose the academic and employment option must earn at least 0.5 credit via paid employment.

#### What is the CAP?

The CAP allows a student to earn high school credit if the student passes an AP examination, a College Level Examination Program (CLEP) or a statewide course assessment without enrollment in the course. The courses include:

- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- Biology 1
- U.S. History



### State University System (SUS)

Admission into Florida's public universities is competitive. Prospective students should complete a rigorous course of study in high school and apply to more than one university to increase their chance for acceptance. To qualify to enter one of Florida's public universities, a first-time-in-college student must meet the following minimum requirements (credit earned by industry certification does not count for SUS admission):

- High school graduation with a standard diploma, a minimum of a 2.5 GPA, and admission test scores meeting minimum college-ready test scores per Board of Governors (BOG) Regulation 6.008
- 16 credits of approved college preparatory academic courses per BOG Regulation 6.002
- 4 English (3 with substantial writing)
- 4 Mathematics (Algebra 1 level and above)
- 3 Natural Science (2 with substantial lab)
- 3 Social Science
- 2 World Language (sequential, in the same language or other equivalents)
- 2 approved electives

[State University System of Florida](#)

### The Florida College System

The 28 colleges of the Florida College System serve nearly 800,000 students. Colleges offer affordable and stackable workforce credentials including certificate programs, associate in science degrees and associate in arts degrees, which transfer to a bachelor's degree program. Many colleges also offer workforce bachelor's degree programs in areas of high demand. All Florida College System institutions have open-door admissions for students who earned a standard high school diploma or an equivalent diploma or successfully earned college credit.

[Florida College System](#)

### Career and Technical Colleges and Centers

Florida also offers students 49 accredited career and technical colleges or centers throughout the state, which provide the education and certification necessary to work in a particular career or technical field. Programs are flexible for students and provide industry-specific education and training for a wide variety of occupations.

[Career and Technical Education Directors](#)

#### Where is information on financial aid located?

The Florida Department of Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance administers a variety of postsecondary educational state-funded grants and scholarships.

[Office of Student Financial Assistance](#)

#### 4. Waivers

Although the waiver itself does not generate a credit towards graduation, students may receive a waiver for their Physical Education requirement in the following ways:

- Participation in two full seasons of interscholastic sports at the junior varsity or varsity level No credit will be earned with satisfying the Physical Education requirement through interscholastic sports participation.
- Completion of one semester with a grade of “C” or better in a marching band class, physical activity class with marching band activities or dance shall satisfy .50 credit requirement in Physical Education or .50 credit in Performing Arts. This .50 credit shall not be used to satisfy the Personal Fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan.
- Completion of two years of ROTC shall satisfy the 1.0 credit requirement in Physical Education (HOPE) and the 1.0 credit requirement in Performing Arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the Personal Fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

Students must also satisfy these additional requirements for a standard diploma:

1.0 credit in Fine Arts and Performing Arts,

Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts\*

8.0 credits in Electives

One online course

\*Upon completion of the JROTC program (Air Force, Navy) students may substitute, on a curriculum equivalency basis, one JROTC credit to satisfy the Practical Arts graduation requirement.

#### 5. Diploma Options

At the beginning of each school year, parents of students in or entering high school must be notified of the opportunity and benefits of placement in IB, AP, AICE, Dual Enrollment, Alachua eSchool and Florida Virtual School courses.

##### a. International Baccalaureate Diploma

The International Baccalaureate Diploma curriculum may be substituted to meet state graduation requirements. (1003.4282 F.S.)

##### b. Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)

The AICE Diploma may be substituted to meet state graduation requirements.

##### c. Accelerated Graduation Option

Designated school personnel shall meet with the student and student’s parents to explain the relative requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of the 18 credit ACCEL graduation option. A student must have written consent of the parent to select the accelerated option.

The district may not establish requirements for the accelerated graduation options in excess of those required by statute.

d. Requirements for the Three Year, 18 Credit ACCEL Program

- Physical education is not required
- 3 elective credits
- Online course is not required
- All other graduation requirements for a standard diploma must be met (1003.4282(3)(a)-(e) F.S.)

Each district school board shall provide each student in grades 6-12 and their parents with the 3-year and 4-year graduation options. Selection of one of the graduation options 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 24-credit graduation requirement.

Students selecting the three-year program must be treated equally with students graduating via the 24-credit program in all ways including eligibility for valedictorian, salutatorian, Talented 20, and Bright Futures.

e. Career and Technical Education Graduation Pathway Option

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, a student may earn a standard high school diploma through the Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway option.

To earn a standard high school diploma through this pathway option, a student must:

- Successfully complete a minimum of 18 credits.
- Have a minimum, cumulative GPA of at least a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Meet the requirements of
  - 4 English credits (including the statewide grade 10 Reading assessment or the grade 10 ELA assessment, or earn a concordant score)
  - 4 Math credits (including the statewide Algebra I EOC assessment, or earn a comparative score)
  - 3 Science credits
  - 3 Social studies credits
- Complete two credits in career and technical education. The courses must result in a program completion and an industry certification.
- Complete two credits in work-based learning programs. A student may substitute up to two credits of electives, including one-half credit in financial literacy, for work-based learning program courses to fulfill this requirement.

For comprehensive information on High School Graduation Requirements for CTE Pathway options, please visit the Florida Department of Education's website at <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-tech-edu/pathways-option.shtml>. Under the "Support Documents" section you will find a list of:

- a. courses that fulfill the work-based learning component;
- b. programs and associated courses that fulfill the program component; and
- c. eligible industry certifications that fulfill the industry certification component.

f. Certificate of Completion

A student who earns the required 24 credits, or the required 18 credits for the ACCEL option, but fails to pass the assessments required or achieve a 2.0 GPA shall be awarded a certificate of completion.

Any student who is 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/her identified deficiencies.

C. Grading System 9 – 12

The following scale is used to convert quantifiable achievement to alphabetic symbols in middle and high school level courses. Grade points will be used to calculate grades for each marking period.

| <u>Percent Achievement of Course Objectives</u> | <u>Grade Points</u> | <u>Progress Level</u> |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|
| A = 90-100                                      | 4.0                 | Outstanding           |
| B+ = 87-89                                      | 3.0                 |                       |
| B = 80-86                                       | 3.0                 | Above Average         |
| C+ = 77-79                                      | 2.0                 |                       |
| C = 70-76                                       | 2.0                 | Average               |
| D+ = 67-69                                      | 1.0                 | Acceptable            |
| D = 60-66                                       | 1.0                 | Lowest                |
| F = 0-59  | 0.0                 | Failure               |
| I = 0   | 0.0                 | Incomplete            |

*(Note: Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number)*

D. Class Conduct Grades 9 – 12

The following symbols are used to denote class conduct:

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

No national origin minority or limited English proficient student shall be subjected to any disciplinary action solely because of his/her use of a language other than English. This does not abrogate any rules, standards, or guidelines as specified in the School Board of Alachua County Code of Student Conduct.

E. Report Cards and Student Progress Reports to Parents

The district school board must report to the parent the student's results on each statewide assessment. Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format adopted by the district school board. The final report card for a school year shall indicate end-of-year status regarding performance or nonperformance at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, and promotion or non-promotion. (1003.33(1) F.S.)

Progress reports will be issued to students during each marking period.

All high schools will establish a procedure to notify parents and students of the student's graduation status for any student planning to graduate at the end of the current school year. Such notification will be issued after the first nine-week grading period is completed. Schools will provide documentation of this procedure to the district.

**F. Class Ranking**

A numerical ranking of students by class on the basis of academic achievement is permitted only at the high school level. Ranking shall be determined on the basis of grade point average, awarded as follows:

|    |   |   |              |
|----|---|---|--------------|
| A  | = | 4 | grade points |
| B+ | = | 3 | grade points |
| B  | = | 3 | grade points |
| C+ | = | 2 | grade points |
| C  | = | 2 | grade points |
| D+ | = | 1 | grade point  |
| D  | = | 1 | grade point  |
| F  | = | 0 | grade point  |

An additional weighted ranking and grade point average shall be computed. This weighted ranking by class shall be calculated on the basis of a grade point average determined by courses designated as honors, advanced, Advanced Placement, college-level Dual Enrollment, Pre-International Baccalaureate, and International Baccalaureate, and AICE, Pre-AICE, Pre-AP weighted ranking are as follows:

|    |   |     |              |
|----|---|-----|--------------|
| A  | = | 5   | grade points |
| B+ | = | 4.5 | grade points |
| B  | = | 4   | grade points |
| C+ | = | 3.5 | grade points |
| C  | = | 3   | grade points |
| D+ | = | 2.5 | grade points |
| D  | = | 2.0 | grade point  |
| F  | = | 0   | grade point  |

**G. Summer School/Extended School Year**

If eligible, students may attend school beyond the 180-day term to:

- Earn credit for a course previously failed if graduation requirements have not been met.
- Retake a course for grade forgiveness in which a D was previously earned.
- Participate in a program indicated in the IEP for students with disabilities.

The principal, or designee at a given school, shall determine student eligibility for attendance at the summer session. The district shall determine specific program offerings for the extended school year.

**H. Transfer of Credits**

The Board shall recognize high school credits awarded by accredited public and private day schools, public and private boarding schools, the Florida Virtual School, the University of Florida and Santa Fe College. The principal has the authority to grant credits awarded by other institutions, agencies, or individuals and they will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Credits earned in nonpublic schools which are not accredited by a recognized state or regional agency shall be validated by the principal. The State Uniform Transfer of High School Credits Rule states that credits and grades earned and offered for credit shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation required by receiving school's accreditation. If the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, credits (not grades) shall be validated through performance during the first semester. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and to receive credit should have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 at the end of the first grading period.

Alternative validation procedures must be used when the student does not meet the 2.0 GPA scholastic performance standard at the end of the first semester.

Alternative Validation Procedures:

- Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee.
- Written recommendation by a Florida certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal.
- Satisfactory performance in courses taken in Dual Enrollment or at other public or private schools.
- Satisfactory performance on nationally-normed standardized subject area assessments. Students must be allowed at least 90 days from the date of transfer to prepare for this assessment.
- Satisfactory performance on statewide standardized assessments. Students must be allowed at least 90 days from the date of transfer to prepare for this assessment.
- Written review of the criteria used for a given subject provided by the former school.

Validation procedures must be determined and agreed upon by the teacher, principal, and parent. Students must be allowed all of the options listed under validation procedures.

A school has until the end of the first semester to validate an official transcript, and then all credits and grades are to be accepted at face value. For students who do not have an official transcript or are from a home education program, the credits will be validated and granted at the end of the first semester based on scholastic performance.

If a student transfers from out of country, out of state, a private school or a home education program, and the student's transcript shows a credit in Algebra 1, the student must pass the statewide standardized Algebra 1 EOC assessment in order to earn a standard high school diploma unless the student earned a concordant score, passed the statewide assessment in Algebra 1 administered by the transferring entity, or passed the statewide mathematics assessment the transferring entity used to satisfy the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 6301. 1003.4282 (8), F.S.

If a transfer student's transcript shows a final course grade and course credit in Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology 1, or United States History the transferring course final grade and credit shall be honored without the student taking the requisite statewide, standardized EOC assessment and without the assessment results constituting 30% of the student's final course grade. 1003.4282 (8), F.S.

If a student's transcript shows a credit in high school reading or English Language Arts II or III, in order to earn a standard high school diploma, the student must take and pass the statewide, standardized, grade 10 ELA assessment, or earn a concordant score. 1003.4282 (8), F.S.

Students who enter a Florida public school at the eleventh or twelfth grade from out of state or from a foreign country shall not be required to spend additional time in a Florida public school in order to meet the high school course requirements if the student has met all requirements of the school district, state, or country from which he or she is transferring. Such students who are not proficient in English should receive immediate and intensive instruction in English language acquisition. However, to receive a standard high school diploma, a transfer student must earn a 2.0 grade point average and pass statewide assessments as required in 1008.22(3) F.S. or an alternate assessment as described in s. 1008.22(7) F.S.

Grades for home schooling may be awarded if a certified teacher having voluntarily examined a portfolio of the student's work in the course and, if appropriate, having administered a district approved end of year assessment, attests (with the principal's approval) that the course standards have been met and awards a grade for the course.

Students have access to courses available through Florida Virtual School. The district accepts credit for the successful completion of these courses.

Students who have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passing required statewide assessments or an alternate assessment by the end of grade 12 must be provided the following opportunity:

- Participation in an adult general education program for such time as the student requires to master English, reading, mathematics, or any other subject required for high school graduation. A student attending an adult general education program shall have the opportunity to take required statewide assessments an unlimited number of times in order to receive a standard high school diploma.

The school district must notify students and parents, in writing, of the requirements for a standard high school diploma, available designations, and the eligibility requirements for state scholarship programs and post-secondary admissions.

## **I. Program Options**

### **1. Career and Technical Education**

The School Board of Alachua County offers a variety of career and technical education programs that prepare students for employment in specific occupations and enrollment in post-secondary education. High school students are eligible to enroll in specific programs as part of their planned sequence of coursework leading to a high school diploma.

Program offerings vary among high schools and include the career clusters of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources; Architecture & Construction; Arts, A/V Technology & Communication; Business Management & Administration; Education & Training; Engineering and Technology Education; Finance; Health Science; Hospitality & Tourism; Information Technology; Law, Public Safety, & Service; Manufacturing; Marketing, Sales & Service; Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics. Career employability skills instruction is incorporated in all Career and Technical courses.

## Guide for Career Pathway programs of study.

### a. Career Pathways

Career Pathways is an articulated Career and Technical Education program to post-secondary institutions. The School Board of Alachua County cooperates with Santa Fe College and The School Board of Bradford County as a Career Pathways Consortium. These programs outline a jointly approved pathway for students to articulate from high school programs to the college level in a variety of career related programs. Students completing these programs may be eligible to receive advanced program and/or credit standing based upon successful completion of the high school course sequence and a competency exam given by the college or by earning specific industry certifications. Further information regarding Career Pathways is available through the office of Career and Technical Education.

### b. Career Magnet Academies

Magnet Career and Technical Academies are also provided at specific high schools. Students in Alachua County may apply for admission to these academies and begin enrollment in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Specific admission criteria have been set for each academy and admission is by application only. The academies provide opportunities for students to prepare for specific careers through school and work-based learning experiences.

Specific academy information is found on the Career and Technical Education Department web page.

### c. Industry Certification Substitution Information for Mathematics and Science

Based on State Statute 1003.4282 – (Requirements for a standard high school diploma) a student is required to earn 4 math credits and 3 science credits for graduation. A student is permitted to substitute up to two math credits and one science credit with an industry certification:

- A student who earns an industry certification for which there is a statewide college credit articulation agreement approved by the State Board of Education may substitute the certification for one mathematics credit. Substitution may occur for up to two mathematics credits, except for Algebra I and Geometry.
- A student who earns an industry certification for which there is a statewide college credit articulation agreement approved by the State Board of Education may substitute the certification for one science credit, except for Biology I.

This option requires that the courses substituted for do NOT include Algebra 1, Geometry or Biology. In addition, only industry certifications that are on the Gold Standard Statewide Articulation list are approved to fulfill this requirement. Course substitutions may not count towards college, Bright Futures, or state university admissions requirements. It is imperative that parents and students considering this option meet with a school counselor or administrator to determine if this is the best option for them.

Course code waiver numbers have been added to the CCD for student transcript purposes. The Industry Certification Mathematics Waiver numbers are 1200998 and 1200999; the Industry Certification Science Waiver number is 2000999 (see Section 3 of the CCD.)

For a list of applicable industry certifications, please visit:

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/industry-certification.stml>

Course substitutions may not count towards college, Bright Futures, or state university admissions requirements.

d. Industry Certifications

In many Career and Technical Education courses, students have the opportunity to earn industry certifications. These certifications may earn college credits through local articulation agreements with Santa Fe College and/or through the Gold Standard Career Pathways Industry Certification Articulation Agreement:

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/>

Merit Designation – Students earning an industry certification from the list established under s. 1003.492 earn a Merit Designation on their diploma per section 1003.4285 (1)(b) F.S. (Information is available on the student transcript.)

The Online Graduation requirement can be met by earning specific Industry Certifications -- Completion of a course in which a student earns a nationally recognized industry certification in “Information Technology” that is identified on the Career and Professional Education Act (CAPE) Industry Certification Funding List (s. 1008.44, F.S.) or passage of the information technology certification examination without enrollment in or completion of the corresponding courses. (Eligible certifications can be verified by the Career and Technical Education Department.)

2. Dual Enrollment

Students shall be informed annually of the Dual Enrollment Program as an educational option and a mechanism for acceleration. The Dual Enrollment Program is an opportunity to take challenging courses and accelerate educational opportunities. Students who successfully complete Dual Enrollment courses will save time toward their college degree and save money with free tuition and textbooks that are loaned free of charge. Students should understand, however, that Dual Enrollment courses are college courses and the amount of work necessary to succeed in Dual Enrollment courses may be much greater than in high school courses. In addition, Dual Enrollment courses become a part of a student’s permanent college transcript and are calculated into a student’s permanent post-secondary GPA. Poor performance as a Dual Enrollment student can negatively impact a student’s postsecondary career, including academic standing and financial aid eligibility.

The Academic Dual Enrollment Program allows eligible high school students to take college-level courses and receive college credit as well as credit towards a high school diploma. Students are not charged for registration, matriculation or tuition fees by Santa Fe College, and the University of Florida.

Santa Fe College's High School Dual Enrollment Program offers three programs which are Academic Dual Enrollment, Career and Technical Education Dual Enrollment and Fine Arts Dual Enrollment.

The Santa Fe College Academic Dual Enrollment Program allows juniors and seniors who qualify through the PERT, SAT or ACT to take college-level courses on Santa Fe College's campus. A student's academic record is reviewed prior to admission. Tuition is free and textbooks are loaned free of charge to public school students.

The Dual Enrollment option is available to juniors and seniors. Students apply to the Dual Enrollment Program and, if accepted, take their career related as well as academic courses (high school or college level) on Santa Fe College's campus. High School classes are offered on Santa Fe's campus in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies for students who do not score at the college level.

Acceptance into the Career and Technical Education Dual Enrollment Program is contingent upon pre-admission test scores and academic history which indicates the student's ability to succeed in the required course work.

The Fine Arts Dual Enrollment Program allows eligible high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to take college music, dance, theatre, and studio arts classes on the Santa Fe College campus. Students may also take their academic courses (high school or college level) on Santa Fe's campus. Students receive both high school and college credit.

Part-time Dual Enrollment is available to students in Career and Technical Education Programs through Santa Fe College, as well as Academic and Fine Arts. Students must meet the college's requirements for enrollment.

All credits earned are transferred back to the local high school from which the student graduates. College courses taken while in the program also remain on the student's permanent college transcript.

The State Board of Education shall determine the number of post-secondary credit hours earned through Dual Enrollment pursuant to 1007.271 F.S. that satisfy the requirements of a district's Dual Enrollment Articulation Agreement according to 1007.271(21) F.S. and that equal one full credit of the equivalent high school course identified pursuant to 1007.271 (6) F.S.

In the absence of determination by the State Board of Education, Dual Enrollment students will earn .50 credit for each 3-hour course completed.

### 3. Advanced Placement College Courses

When enrollment is sufficient, high schools provide Advanced Placement courses for qualified students and offer students the option of participation in the Advanced Placement Examination Program. Many colleges recognize passing scores for college credit and/or advanced standing.

No student shall be reported for Advanced Placement funding who fails to meet the examination requirement for such funding.

An award of Advanced Placement credit, within the Advanced Placement Program, shall be limited to students who score a minimum of 3, on a 5-point scale, on the Advanced Placement Exam.

No student shall claim double credit based on the completion of a single joint Dual Enrollment and advanced placement course, nor shall any student enrolled be required to complete the Advanced Placement Exam. Students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses shall be exempt from the payment of any fees for the examinations.

4. International Baccalaureate Program

The International Baccalaureate Program, offered under the auspices of the IB Organization, is available as a magnet program at Eastside High School. The IB offers a traditional rigorous college preparatory program that culminates in an IB Diploma. Many colleges and universities recognize the IB Diploma for college credit and/or advanced standing. Students may apply for the pre-IB program during the high school registration process. Application to the pre-IB program is done during the spring registration process.

Students enrolled in IB courses shall be exempt from paying examination fees for the IB examinations.

5. Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)

The Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), offered under the auspices of Cambridge University, is a magnet program at Gainesville High School. The AICE program is a rigorous, internationally recognized course of study for academically talented students that culminates in the AICE Diploma. Many colleges and universities recognize the AICE diploma for college credit and/or advanced standing. Application to the AICE program is done during the spring registration process.

Students enrolled in AICE courses shall be exempt from paying examination fees for AICE examinations.

6. Travel Study

The Board shall neither sponsor nor recognize student travel study for credit toward promotion or graduation.

7. Home Education

Home education students may participate in all forms of Dual Enrollment, Early Admission, and credit by examination. Credit earned by home education students through Dual Enrollment shall apply toward the completion of a home education program that meets the requirements of 1002.41 F.S.

8. Adult Education

Students who are 16 years of age or older and have discontinued high school are eligible to enroll in the Adult Education Program. Block tuition of \$30 per semester is required. Students entering adult high school and whose 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort has not graduated must meet the graduation requirements based on the year that the student entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Students entering adult high school after their 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort has graduated, or who are not part of a 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort, must meet the current 12<sup>th</sup> grade cohort graduation requirements that are in effect the year they enter adult high school. (Rule 6A-6.020, F.A.C.) The fine/performing arts credit and the physical education credit are not required and elective credits may be substituted. The laboratory component of the science graduation requirement is waived.

In addition, students, grades 9 – 12, may take Adult Education classes as co-enrolled students. Co-enrolled students may not take Adult Ed courses for first time credit. Co-enrolled adult education students are limited to 2 courses per year. Courses must be core curricula courses for credit recovery or dropout prevention. Students enrolled in the co-enrollment program are exempt from payment of block tuition.

Students who have been expelled from the regular school program are not eligible to enroll in the Adult Education Program during the period of expulsion. Students who withdraw from the regular school program and enter the Adult Education Program must have specific Board approval to re-enter the regular school program. The Board may delegate this responsibility to a district level administrator. Veterans enrolled in the Adult Education Program may be granted two (2) elective credits for one (1) year or more of honorable military service.

9. Credit by Examination

Secondary students may generate postsecondary credit by receipt of a specified minimum score on nationally standardized general or subject area examinations. These examinations and the corresponding minimum scores required for an award of credit shall be delineated by the State Board of Education in a statewide articulation agreement. (1007.27 (6) F.S.)

10. High School Equivalency Diploma (GED)

The High School Equivalency Diploma is awarded in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0201, FAC, which states that the District Superintendent may award State High School Equivalency Diplomas based on successful testing under the following conditions:

- a. The qualifying of individuals and the administration of the program shall be under the direction of the supervisor of the Adult Education Program.
- b. A candidate shall be at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in a regular day school (including private, charter, or home school).
- c. Individuals who are 16-17 years old may apply to take the GED if they are officially withdrawn from school and meet the district's GED underage testing policy. Contact the Adult Education Program for more information.
- d. Candidates will pay the GED test fee as established by the Florida Department of Education.

**J. Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program**

The Bright Futures Scholarship Program consists of four types of awards:

1. Florida Academic Scholarship
2. The Florida Medallion Scholarship
3. The Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship
4. Gold Seal CAPE Scholars (GSC)

Students and parents should consult with their school counselors for specific information about qualifying for the Florida Academic Scholars Award, Florida Medallion Scholars Award, the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship, and the Gold Seal CAPE Scholars.

Students and parents may also obtain eligibility information at the following website:  
<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>

## **Exceptional Student Education** **High School**

### **A. Student Rights for Instruction**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) states that students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible. Modifications to the general curriculum occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that mastery of the general curriculum with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education, related services, and accommodations or modifications designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living. The needs and services of the student are documented on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **B. Promotion and Placement**

Grade placement for students with disabilities is first determined by the same criteria for promotion and placement as for all students and is based on credits earned. All promotion and grade placement requirements for general education students also apply to students with disabilities who may earn credits while in special education, general education, or vocational education courses.

When enrolled in basic education courses, whether taught in a general education class or a special education class, students with disabilities will be required to master the content to the same extent required of students without disabilities, with the understanding that certain teaching accommodations may be utilized. Acceptable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- An increase or decrease in the instructional time.
- Variations of instructional strategies.
- Teacher instruction or student response through special communication systems.
- Classroom and district test administration procedures and other evaluation procedures may be accommodated as specified to accommodate the student's disability. (Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C.)

To assure students with disabilities have the opportunity to meet graduation requirements, accommodations are chosen based upon an assessment of the student's needs and reflected in the student's IEP. (1003.4282 F.S.)

Courses designated as exceptional student education courses may be used for elective credit for a general education standard diploma or credit toward an Access Point course diploma. Some exceptional student courses, Access Point courses, reflect modifications to the core curriculum standards.

### **C. Diploma Options**

Florida offers all students options as to the course of study leading to a high school diploma. For students with disabilities, the diploma option decision occurs through the IEP process prior to the student's fourteenth birthday. The student is invited to participate in this meeting. The team should select the diploma option that best prepares the student for educational and career goals after high school. The diploma option decision is revisited at each annual IEP meeting.

## 1. Standard Diploma

The standard diploma is the high school diploma earned by most students with disabilities who graduate from a Florida high school. To earn a standard diploma, students with disabilities must meet the graduation requirements set by the State of Florida and the local school district. These requirements are detailed in the general education section of the Student Progression Plan with the following additional considerations:

Students with disabilities can earn a standard high school diploma using any high school graduation option that is available to all students, including those described in sections 1003.4282(1)-(9) and 1002.3105(5) F.S. The majority of students with disabilities will earn their diploma this way. Two additional high school graduation options, available only to students with disabilities, are provided in s. 1003.4282(11) F.S., and further described in Rule 6A-1.09963(3) and (4), F.A.C.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom the IEP team has determined that participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment is the most appropriate measure of the student's skills, in accordance with 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., and instruction in the Access Points is the most appropriate means of providing the student access to the general curriculum must meet the graduation requirements specified in Section 1003.4282(1)-(9) or 1002.3105(5), F.S., through the access course specified for each required core course, or through core academic courses (1003.4282 (11)(b)1. F.S.)

Students with disabilities for whom the IEP team has determined that mastery of both academic and employment competencies is the most appropriate way for the student to demonstrate his or her skills must meet all of the graduation requirements specified in Section 1003.4282(1)-(9) or 1002.3105(5), F.S. (1003.4282 (11)(b)2. F.S.)

State Standardized Assessment Waiver (including End-of-Course Tests):

For certain students with disabilities a waiver of the statewide assessment requirement can be considered. A waiver can be granted if the IEP team determines that the statewide assessment does not accurately measure a student's ability, even with allowable accommodations. Students may be eligible for a statewide assessment waiver. To be considered for a statewide assessment graduation requirement waiver, the student must:

- Be identified as having a disability under IDEA.
- Have an IEP.
- Have taken the statewide, standardized assessment with appropriate allowable accommodations at least once.
- In accordance with 1008.22(3)(c)2., F.S., have an IEP team make a determination of whether the statewide standardized assessment accurately measures the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Be progressing toward meeting the state's credit/course and cumulative GPA requirements and any other district requirements for graduation with a standard diploma.
- Demonstrate mastery of the required standards, documented through classroom performance and course assessments.

Students with a disability who transfer to Florida from another state in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade are eligible to be considered for the waiver. However, students must be provided with every opportunity to take and pass statewide assessments.

Students eligible for a statewide assessment waiver includes those students with either/or a:

- Intellectual disability.
- Hearing impairment, including deafness.
- Speech or language impairment.
- Visual impairment, including blindness.
- Emotional or behavioral disability.
- Orthopedic or other health impairment.
- Autism spectrum disorder.
- Traumatic brain injury.
- Specific learning disability, including, but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, or developmental aphasia.

To consider the waiver, the members of the IEP team must convene a formal meeting to document whether or not the student meets the criteria to be granted the waiver. The IEP team must complete the required district form with documentation to be included in the student's cumulative record.

Options available for students who do not pass the required statewide assessments and do not receive a waiver are:

- Opting to receive a special high school diploma (available only for students with disabilities who entered 9th grade in 2013-2014 or prior years).
- Returning to high school with ESE services to continue working toward passing the required statewide assessment until the semester the student reaches the age of 22.
- Accessing statewide assessment remediation through adult education.
- Preparing for the GED test through adult education.
- Receiving a score comparable to the required statewide assessment passing score on the ACT or SAT.
- Receiving a certificate of completion (1003.4282 (7) (c), F.S.).

## 2. Certificate of Completion

A regular certificate of completion is available to any student who passes the required courses in high school but does not achieve the required 2.0 GPA and the required statewide assessment scores or EOC scores, needed for graduation.

## 3. Movement Between Diploma Options

A student with a disability may move between the various diploma options. The decision regarding a student's course of study leading to a Standard Diploma is reviewed annually in an IEP meeting. Any change in diploma options must be approved by the parent/guardian or adult student and the IEP committee must meet and revise the IEP to reflect the change of diploma option.

**D. Reporting Student Progress**

1. Report Cards/Grading Procedures

Report card grades for students with disabilities are first determined by the same criteria as grades for all students. Accommodations/modifications to the general curriculum are documented on the student's IEP as appropriate.

2. Parent Notification of Student Progress

Parents of students with disabilities will be regularly informed as to their child's measured progress toward the annual goals of the IEP and the extent to which the progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goals by the end of the annual IEP year. Progress towards goals and likelihood of attainment is sent home with the report card or at a more frequent interval that is designated on the annual goal(s) of the IEP.

**E. Guidelines for Determining Appropriate Accommodations/Modifications for Students With Disabilities**

1. Accommodations to the General Curriculum

Consistent with the accountability requirements of ESSA and the IDEA, the vast majority of students with disabilities in Florida are expected to; demonstrate mastery of the B.E.S.T. standards and the state academic standards, participate in statewide assessments, and graduate high school with a standard diploma. In order to achieve these expectations, students with disabilities must be provided access to the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible with appropriately designed instruction and accommodations. Any accommodations are intended for students who would be denied meaningful participation in instruction and assessment because of their disability. Accommodations allow a student with a disability the same access to instruction and assessment as students without disabilities. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are determined at the IEP meeting and indicated on the student's IEP.

Appropriate accommodations for state and district assessment are determined for each student at the IEP meeting.

The following guidelines will be considered when making individual accommodations decisions:

- Accommodations are adjustments made to the way skills and concepts are taught and assessed but do not affect the expected outcomes in relation to the B.E.S.T. standards and state academic standards.
- Accommodations should facilitate an accurate demonstration of what the student knows or can do.

- Accommodations should remove or neutralize the limiting effects of the student’s disability by altering the presentation, response, schedule, setting, use of assistive devices, or test administration in appropriate ways.
- Accommodations should not change the intent of the test; i.e., the educational goal or skill measured by the test.
- Accommodations should not be used to compensate for lack of achievement.
- Accommodations should not provide the student with an unfair advantage or interfere with the validity of the test. They must not change the underlying skills that are being measured by the test.
- Test accommodations must be the same or nearly the same as accommodations used by the student in completing the classroom instructional and assessment activities.
- Accommodations must be necessary to allow the student to demonstrate knowledge, ability, skill, or mastery required by the assessment.

2. Testing Accommodations

Rule [6A-1.0943, F.A.C.] permits test accommodations for any student with a disability who has a current IEP or 504 plan. Expanded accommodations on state/district assessments are authorized for students with disabilities through executive order. Allowable accommodations are detailed in the test administration manuals under the following categories:

- Flexible Presentation
- Flexible Responding
- Flexible Scheduling
- Flexible Setting
- Use of Assistive Technology

3. Parent Notification of Testing Accommodations/Modifications

A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations and/or modifications that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations and/or modifications.

4. Modifications to the General Curriculum

Modifications to the general curriculum are changes in expected outcomes and core curriculum standards. When students are unable to meet the expectations of the general curriculum, the expectations may be modified through enrollment in special education access courses according to the criteria outlined in Florida Statute 6A-1.0943. Modifications to the curriculum are used in coordination with an assessment that is compatible with the modified expectations. The decision by the IEP team to use a modified curriculum is written in the student’s IEP.

The following guidelines should be considered when enrolling students with disabilities in modified courses:

- Curricular modifications should be considered only after all types of accommodations have been exhausted.

- A student's priority educational needs may be different from the core curriculum specific to the B.E.S.T. standards and the state academic standards. Students who require modified standards must meet the criteria for participation in the Florida Alternate Assessment as outlined in Florida statute and rule.
- Students who require modified standards must meet the criteria for participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment.

**F. Guidelines for Participation of Selected Students in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment**

IEP teams are responsible for determining whether students with disabilities will be assessed with the general statewide assessment or with the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment. The IEP team should consider the student's present level of educational performance in reference to the B.E.S.T. standards and the state academic standards. The IEP team should also be knowledgeable of guidelines and the use of appropriate testing accommodations.

In order to facilitate informed and equitable decision making, IEP teams shall answer each of the following questions when determining the appropriate assessment.

- Does the student receive exceptional student education services as identified through a current IEP, and has the student been enrolled in the appropriate and aligned courses using alternative achievement standards for two consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment?
- Even after documented evidence of exhausting all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, does the student require modification to the general education curriculum standards?
- Even after documented evidence of accessing various supplementary instructional materials, does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards?
- Even with documented evidence of the provision and use of assistive technology, does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards?
- Was the assessment instrument used to measure the student's global level of cognitive functioning selected to limit the adverse impact of already identified limitations and impairment (e.g. language acquisition, mode of communication, culture, hearing, vision, orthopedic functioning, hypersensitivities, distractibility)?
- Does the student have a most significant cognitive impairment that adversely impacts multiple areas of functioning across many settings and is a result of a congenital, acquired, or traumatic brain injury or syndrome that is verified as outlined in Rule 6A1 0943(5)(c)11. F.A.C.?

For students currently on General Standards, questions must be answered by the IEP team as outlined in Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c) F.A.C.

A student may not participate in the access courses or the Florida Alternate Assessment if they meet any of the descriptions below

- Is the student identified as a student with a specific learning disability or as gifted?
- Is the student identified only as a student eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a visual impairment, a dual sensory impairment, an emotional or behavioral disability, a language impairment, or an orthopedic impairment?

- Has the student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered according to Section 1008.22(3)?

**G. Extended School Year**

The need for extended school year services is determined by an IEP committee.

For students eligible for Exceptional Student Education, the need for Extended School Year (ESY) services is determined at an IEP conference and documented on the IEP. Multiple criteria for eligibility for ESY services, as defined by DOE, may include but are not limited to: consideration of the likelihood of regression/recoupment, critical points of instruction, emerging skills, nature or severity of disability, interfering behaviors, rate of progress, or special circumstances.

**Section IV**  
**Virtual Education**  
**Grades K- 12**

## **VIRTUAL EDUCATION K-12**

As stipulated by the Florida K-20 Education Code, parents or legal guardians have the right to choose online (virtual) educational options for their children. (1002.20, (6) F.S.)

The School Board shall provide Alachua County Schools' students with access to enroll in virtual courses and award credit for successful completion of such courses. The student's full-time school may not deny access to a student choosing enrollment in an online provider as long as the enrollment meets statutory requirements. Access may be available to students during the normal school day. Students may not be placed in the same course concurrently at a district school and a virtual school.

### **A. Virtual School Options**

Online learning options available to Alachua County Students include, but are not limited to:

Alachua eSchool Elementary/Secondary Program

Marion Virtual School (K-12)

Pasco eSchool (K-12)

Florida Virtual School

### **B. Virtual School Enrollment Eligibility Requirements**

Students who enroll in one of the above Virtual School options must meet the participation criteria specified in F.S. 1002.455(6).