

IV. PROMOTION AND PLACEMENT IN THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Academic Achievement

The Secondary School Redesign Act, also known as the “A++ Plan for Education,” was passed by the Florida Legislature and signed into law by the Governor to become effective on July 1, 2006. In order to increase the rigor and relevance of the senior high school experience and to prepare high school students for college and the workplace, the high school instructional program will be changed dramatically.

- Ninth graders who entered high school in the 2007-2008 school year and thereafter are required to earn 16 core academic credits and eight elective credits in order to graduate with a high school diploma. Core requirements consist of four credits in English and mathematics; three credits of science and social science; one credit of fine arts; and one credit of physical education with the integration of health.
- To better engage students in planning and making decisions for their future, they are to select an area of interest as part of their personalized career and education plan. Students are to earn four credits in a major area of interest, similar to college students, which may be in the arts, advanced academic studies, or career preparation. Each school will provide students and their parents with a list of district/state-approved major areas from which a selection may be made. The remaining four elective credits may be used to earn a second major area of interest, a minor, or for other elective courses.

M-DCPS has made a commitment to ensure achievement of high academic standards by all students and to develop students so that they are able to successfully compete in the global economy by preparing students for graduation, employment, postsecondary education, and to become responsible citizens and lifelong learners, as stated in the *Revised District Strategic Plan, 2005-2008*. Students entering the ninth grade and their parents should be active participants in planning a high school program that will assist students in reaching their goals for the future. The wide range of courses and programs available in senior high schools will enable students, simultaneously, to prepare for college admission and learn skills for employment immediately after graduation if they plan effectively.

Before a student graduates from high school, the school shall assess the student's preparation to enter the workforce and provide the student and the student's parent with the results of the assessment. The Florida

Department of Education has determined that since the FCAT assesses certain Educational Goal 3 standards which were developed by the U. S. Secretary of Labor in the report on necessary skills for the workforce, i.e., Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), the FCAT can serve as this assessment.

Opportunities that will assist students in preparing for life after high school graduation include:

- enrolling in career academy and/or magnet programs;
- attending career fairs to learn about employment opportunities and trends and to explore occupations of interest to them;
- learning more about their interests and aptitudes by completing interest and aptitude inventories;
- assessing their readiness for college study by taking the Preliminary SAT (PSAT), Preliminary ACT (PLAN), and/or Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT) in their sophomore year and using the results to increase their skills and knowledge;
- maintaining a career planning portfolio that allows them to reflect on what they have accomplished and plan for the future;
- using software or internet-based computer guidance programs to explore career and college choices and establish personal plans for future course work;
- participating in job shadowing and internship experiences to increase awareness of the skills and tasks involved;
- developing a plan for those involved in special education program to facilitate the smooth transition to postsecondary activities; and
- planning for students with disabilities beginning at age 14, or younger if appropriate, to focus on the student's anticipated course of study in secondary school.

Students and their parents may obtain assistance and direction for postsecondary planning from classroom teachers and student services personnel.

B. Promotion and Placement

Each student is required to have mastered the SSS, which are incorporated in the M-DCPS CBC, in order to be eligible for graduation from M-DCPS. Also incorporated into the CBC are the skills necessary to become successful participants in the workplace.

In order for a student, who is enrolled in the four-year, 24-credit program, to receive a grade 10 grade level designation, he/she shall have earned an annual credit in English/ESOL and/or an annual credit in mathematics. Additionally, the student shall have earned two or three annual credits in remaining courses for a cumulative total of four annual credits. In order for a student to receive a grade 11 designation, the student shall have earned a total of two English/ESOL credits and two mathematics credits and a cumulative total of 10 annual credits. In order for a student to receive grade 12 grade level designation, he/she shall have earned a total of three English/ESOL credits and three mathematics credits and a cumulative total of 16 credits. In order to be graduated, a student must earn a cumulative total of 24 annual credits or 18 annual credits for those students selecting an accelerated graduation option and have met all state/School Board-approved graduation requirements.

GRADES 9-12 GRADE LEVEL PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

END OF GRADE	MINIMUM CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF CREDITS FOR STUDENTS IN THE FOUR-YEAR, 24-CREDIT STANDARD PROGRAM
9	4 (including one English* or one mathematics credit)
10	10 (including two English* and two mathematics credits)
11	16 (including three English* and three mathematics credits)
12	24 (required for graduation)

* English Through ESOL as appropriate.

For each student enrolled in either one of the three-year, 18-credit graduation programs, the student must earn 5 credits by the end of grade 9 and earn 11 credits by the end of grade 10. Students enrolled in the three-year accelerated graduation programs are to be classified as ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students. However, a student who has selected an accelerated program must be allowed to participate during his/her third year in all activities traditionally provided for graduating students, including Talented 20 and Bright Futures.

There are mechanisms which make it possible for students to benefit from the advantages of a semester system without the disadvantages of major rescheduling at mid-year or mid-year promotions and graduation. (See Appendix E)

To the extent that resources are available, each senior high school should create classes in English and/or mathematics of a reduced class size to provide instruction for those senior high students who are having difficulty meeting the standards for a high school diploma.

For each student who does not meet performance levels in reading, writing, mathematics and/or science, the school, in consultation with the student's parent, must implement a school-wide PMP to assist the student in meeting state and district levels for proficiency. Each plan must include provision for intensive remedial instruction through one or more of the following activities: Extended school day (before or after) programs, tutorial programs, Saturday class, referral to the School Support Team and/or suspension of instruction in elective courses.

Students who demonstrate a need for strengthening in either language arts/reading or mathematics or both should enroll in one or more courses to increase their level of functioning. Such courses would count as electives.

An academic preparation course may be required for students entering grade 10 who have not demonstrated the potential to pass the FCAT on the first attempt as grade 10 students. The course will address reading, writing, and/or mathematics skills, reading strategies in content areas, critical thinking, and general study skills appropriate to the senior high school. The student shall take one semester of reading, one semester of mathematics, or a full year of either or both as indicated by area(s) of deficiency. These courses may be available to students during the summer, prior to entry into grade 10, during grade 10, or during the summer prior to entry into grade 11, if the FCAT must be retaken. These courses will not meet the four English and/or the three mathematics credits or the four mathematics credits for students who entered grade 9 in 2007-2008 required for graduation.

An annual credit is a minimum of 135 hours of instruction in a designated course of study which contains performance standards, or the equivalent of six semester hours of college credit. The hourly requirements for one-half credit are one-half the requirements for an annual credit. A student attending a school-sponsored and approved activity directly related to the student's academic program shall be considered as present for instruction.

Schools that want to offer block schedules or that want to combine two courses into one block of time may not meet the 135 hour requirement. Any school that offers a block schedule or that combines courses may do so without a waiver if:

- Performance-based criteria are in place for awarding credit to those students who progress through course standards in less than the 135 hours; and
- Procedures are in place to amend a school master schedule to 135 hours of instruction for students who may need the additional time to meet the course requirements.

When a student with disabilities is determined to be performing below grade level in reading, writing, or mathematics, the IEP team must be convened to revisit the IEP.

It is recognized that some students with disabilities will not access the general education curriculum. For these students, the IEP team will document the reasons and indicate the alternate curriculum by writing IEP goals and benchmarks based upon the student's individual needs.

C. High School Graduation Programs

There are five options for high school graduation, two of which are accelerated programs and two (# 2 and #3) are advanced academic programs for which students may earn college credit. Students and their parents may select from one of the five options. Students selecting one of the two accelerated options (#4 or #5) must declare that option by the end of their 9th year. All of the five options require students to earn a passing score on the FCAT graduation test in order to graduate.

The graduation options are as follows:

1. A four-year, 24-credit standard program;
2. An International Baccalaureate program;
3. An Advanced International Certificate of Education program;
4. A three-year, 18-credit college preparatory program; and
5. A three-year, 18-credit career preparatory program.

Prior to selecting one of the two accelerated graduation programs the following requirements must be met:

1. In grade 9, designated school personnel shall meet with the student and the student's parent to give an explanation of the relative requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of each graduation option.
2. The student shall submit to the high school principal and guidance counselor a signed parental consent form, the Graduation Options Contract (FM-6911), to enroll in the three-year accelerated graduation program.

The requirements for the two accelerated graduation options were amended by the 2004 Legislature and were further amended by the 2006 Legislature with the new requirements effective for students entering grade 9 in the 2006-2007 school year and enrolling in an accelerated program.

In order to enroll in an accelerated program, students and their parents are to receive information relative to the accelerated graduation options in grade 9 and make a selection with a written parental consent form no later than the end of ninth grade. However, this deadline shall be extended to the end of the first semester of grade 10 for students who entered after grade 9 upon transfer from a private school or another state or who were prevented from choosing an accelerated graduation option due to illness during grade 9.

If a student at the end of grade 10 is not on track to meet the credit, assessment, or GPA requirements of an accelerated program, the school shall notify the student and parent of the following:

- The requirements the student is not currently meeting.
- The specific performance necessary in grade 11 for the student to meet the accelerated graduation requirements.
- The right of the student to change to the four-year, 24-credit standard program.

A student who has selected one of the three-year accelerated graduation options, shall automatically move to the four-year, 24-credit standard program if the student:

- Exercises his/her right to change to the four-year, 24-credit standard program.

- Fails to earn 5 credits by the end of grade 9 or fails to earn 11 credits by the end of grade 10.
- Does not achieve a score of 3 or higher on the grade 10 FCAT Writing assessment.
- By the end of grade 11 does not meet the course requirements, does not attain the required GPA, and does not earn passing scores on the FCAT graduation test or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT, if applicable.

D. Requirements for Graduation

The following chart represents the requirements for students who entered 9th grade in 2007-2008 and thereafter. For requirements for those students who entered 9th grade prior to the 2007-2008 school year refer to the chart below titled Explanatory Notes. In order to graduate from high school and earn a diploma, students must successfully complete the required credits, earn the required grade point average (GPA), and earn a passing score on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) graduation test.

1. Graduation Options

	24 CREDIT OPTION	18 CREDIT COLLEGE PREPARATORY OPTION	18 CREDIT CAREER PREPARATORY OPTION
ENGLISH/ESOL	4 credits (major concentration in composition & literature and reading for information)	4 credits (major concentration in composition & literature and reading for information)	4 credits (major concentration in composition & literature and reading for information)
MATHEMATICS	4 credits (Algebra I, Geometry, & 2 courses at the Algebra I level or higher)	3 credits (Algebra I, Geometry, & a course at the Algebra I level or higher)	3 credits (Algebra I, Geometry, & a course at the Algebra I level or higher)
SCIENCE	3 credits (Earth/Space Science, Biology, & Chemistry, Physical Science, and any one of the following two courses: Physics or Integrated Science III)	3 credits (Earth/Space Science, Biology, & Chemistry, Physical Science, and any one of the following two courses: Physics or Integrated Science III)	3 credits (Earth/Space Science, Biology, & Chemistry, Physical Science, and any one of the following two courses: Physics or Integrated Science III)

SOCIAL SCIENCE	3 credits (World History, American History, American Government, & Economics)	3 credits (World History, American History, American Government, & Economics)	3 credits (World History, American History, American Government, & Economics)
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	Not required (foreign language credit is required for admission to state universities)	2 credits in the same language or demonstrated proficiency	Not required
PERFORMING/FINE ARTS/PRACTICAL ARTS/CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION	1 credit in performing/ fine arts or a practical arts course that incorporates artistic content and techniques of creativity, interpretation, and imagination.	Not required	3 credits in a single career/technical education program, 3 credits in career/ technical dual enrollment courses, or 5 credits in career/ technical education courses
PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ HEALTH	1 credit	Not required	Not required
ELECTIVES	8 credits (4 credits must be in the student's major area of interest; remaining credits may be used for another major, minor, elective courses, or intensive reading or mathematics courses)	3 credits	2 credits unless earning 5 credits in career/ technical education
GRADE POINT AVERAGE(GPA)	2.0	3.5 (beginning with students who entered 9 th grade in 2006-2007 and thereafter; for students who entered 9 th grade prior to 2006-2007, required GPA is 3.0)	3.0
MINIMUM GRADE TO EARN COURSE CREDIT	"D"	"B" (weighted or unweighted)	"C" (weighted or unweighted)

ANTICIPATED TIME TO COMPLETION	4 years	3 years - At least six (6) of the 18 credits must be dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, or Level 3 courses. Honors courses are not included in these six credits.	3 years
TESTING	Students must earn a passing score on the Reading and Mathematics sections of the FCAT graduation test.	Students must earn a passing score on the Reading and Mathematics sections of the FCAT graduation test.	Students must earn a passing score on the Reading and Mathematics sections of the FCAT graduation test.
COMMUNITY SERVICE	Required (see Explanatory Notes chart)	Not required	Not required

2. Explanatory Notes

ENGLISH/ LANGUAGE ARTS	English I, II, III, & IV or English I-IV Through ESOL are required to meet the English/language arts graduation requirement. This requirement applies to all three graduation options. Developmental Language Arts Through ESOL is required for each year that a student is classified as ELL. It should be noted that grade 9 and 10 students who scored at Levels 1 and 2 on the most recent administration of the FCAT reading test as well as grade 11 and 12 retakers will be required to take an intensive reading course in lieu of an elective and in addition to the required English course. The district's K-12 CRRP requires each school to conduct a screening and diagnostic process to identify appropriate placement of Level 1 students in reading classes to be completed prior to the end of the school year. The K-12 CRRP also requires a daily double block for all Level 1 FCAT reading students who have reading deficiencies in decoding and fluency (Intensive Reading Plus). Some FCAT Level 2 students as per the Comprehensive Research-based Reading Plan (CRRP) may attend either an Intensive Reading or a homogeneously grouped language arts course, in which the language arts teacher instructs the reading course, while infusing the language arts benchmarks into the course.
MATHEMATICS	For the 24 credit option for students who entered 9 th grade prior to 2006-2007, 3 credits of mathematics are required to graduate; for students who entered 9 th grade in 2007-2008 and thereafter, 4 credits of mathematics are required to graduate. For the 18 credit options students must earn 3 credits. A four-year recommended sequence includes Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, & Analysis of Functions. Informal Geometry meets the high school graduation requirement, but does not meet the minimum entrance requirement for the Florida University System.

<p>SCIENCE</p>	<p>For students selecting any one of the three graduation options, the required courses include Earth/Space Science, completed by 9th grade; Biology, completed by 10th grade; and Chemistry, Physical Science, Physics, or Integrated Science III completed by 11th grade. Integrated Science will also meet the requirement for graduation and admission into the State University System by taking Integrated Science I, II, & III or by taking Integrated Science I, Biology, and a Physical Science course.</p>
<p>SOCIAL SCIENCE</p>	<p>For students selecting any one of the three graduation options, the required courses include World History - 1 credit, American History - 1 credit, American Government - .5 credit, & Economics - .5 credit.</p>
<p>FOREIGN LANGUAGE</p>	<p>For students selecting the college preparatory option, they are to complete any two sequential courses in the same foreign language, including American Sign Language, or demonstrate foreign language proficiency at a level equivalent to two years of high school foreign language. This proficiency must be documented by the student's school. Students enrolled in the other two options are not required to earn foreign language credit.</p>
<p>PERFORMING/FINE ARTS/PRACTICAL ARTS/CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION</p>	<p>For students in the 24 credit option who entered 9th grade prior to 2006-2007, they are to earn .5 credit in performing/fine arts (art, dance, theatre, music, speech, or debate) and .5 credit in practical arts (any career/technical education course or a district-approved annual computer or journalism course). They also must earn .5 credit in Life Management Skills. For students in the 24 credit option who entered 9th grade in 2007-2008 and thereafter, they must earn 1 credit in performing/fine arts or practical arts (see details in Graduation Options chart above). Students enrolled in the college preparatory program do not have to meet any requirement in this area. Students in the career preparatory program must meet the requirements listed in the chart above.</p>

<p>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</p>	<p>For students in the 24 credit option who entered 9th grade prior to 2007-2008, this requirement is met by successful completion of Personal Fitness or Adaptive Physical Education and any other approved physical education semester course. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level, for two full seasons, and obtaining a passing score of “C” or higher on a competency test on personal fitness shall satisfy the one credit physical education requirement. If the student satisfies the physical education graduation requirement through the interscholastic sport option, the student must earn one additional elective credit since no credit is granted for an interscholastic junior or senior varsity sport. Completion of one semester with a grade of “C” or better in a marching band class, in a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a Reserve Officers Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class with a significant component of drills, shall satisfy the one-half physical education elective requirement, but the student must still complete the Personal Fitness or the Adaptive Physical Education course. It should be noted that state statute provides for three methods by which high school students enrolled in the four-year, 24-credit, standard program can meet the Performing Fine Arts/Practical Arts graduation requirement. M-DCPS students are to earn 0.5 credit in Performing Fine Arts and 0.5 credit in Practical Arts. However, students transferring to M-DCPS from another Florida school district can meet the Performing Fine Arts and Practical Arts graduation requirement if they have met one of the other two methods provided in state statute, i. e., 1.0 credit in Performing Fine Arts or 1.0 credit in Practical Arts.</p> <p>For students who entered 9th grade in 2007-2008 and thereafter, this requirement is met by successful completion of Personal Fitness or Adaptive Physical Education and any other approved physical education semester course. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons shall satisfy the one credit physical education requirement if the student passes a competency test on personal fitness with a score of “C” or higher. If the student satisfies the physical education graduation requirement through the interscholastic sport option, the student must earn one additional elective credit since no credit is granted for an interscholastic junior or senior varsity sport. Completion of one semester with a grade of “C” or higher in a marching band class, in a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a dance class shall satisfy one-half credit in physical education or one-half credit in performing/fine arts. Students must still successfully complete the Personal Fitness course or the Adaptive Physical Education course. Completion of two years of a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class with a significant component in drill and taking the one-half credit Personal Fitness course or, if appropriate, the Adaptive Physical Education course, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing fine arts.</p> <p>Students enrolled in either of the two 18 credit options are not required to take physical education.</p>
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<p>ELECTIVES</p>	<p>For students in the 24 credit option who entered 9th grade prior to 2006-2007, 8.5 elective credits are required. Students enrolled in the college preparatory are required to take 3 credits and those students in the career preparatory program are required to take 2 credits unless they select the 5-credit career/technical option.</p> <p>For students in the 24 credit option who entered 9th grade in 2007-2008 and thereafter, they are required to complete 4 credits in a major area of interest, such as sequential courses in a career/technical program, fine and performing arts, or academic content area, selected by the student as part of the student's ePEP. Students are also required to take 4 credits in elective courses as part of the student's ePEP, which include a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest, elective courses, or intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses.</p> <p>For students enrolled in the College Preparatory program at least six (6) of the 18 credits must be dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, or Level 3 courses. Honors courses are not included in these six credits.</p>
<p>COMMUNITY SERVICE</p>	<p>For students in the 24 credit option, the completion of a community service project is an additional graduation requirement regardless of their date of entry into 9th grade. Students in either one of the 18 credit options are not required to complete a community service project. However, one of the requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program's Academic Scholars Award is 75 hours of community service.</p>

For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 on FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year, with exception to ELL students who are required to enroll in the Developmental Language Arts Through ESOL course.

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

Any course listed in the current *Florida Course Code Directory* which is appropriate for grades 9 or above may fulfill an elective credit for graduation except Study Hall and other courses identified as noncredit (NC), Adult Basic Education, and GED Preparation. In selecting their electives, students shall consider a specific career course plan.

Students will not be granted credit toward high school graduation for any Level I course, as designated in the *Florida Course Code Directory and Curriculum Bulletin-I*, unless the student's assessment indicates a more rigorous course of study would be inappropriate, in which case a written assessment of the need must be included in a student's IEP signed by the principal, the guidance counselor, and the parent of the student. Level I courses may be taken for credit toward a standard diploma if they are approved and listed in an IEP. Remedial and compensatory courses can

be counted only as elective credit toward a standard diploma.

Other Areas of Study - Human Growth and Development and units in HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and Substance Abuse education are required at each grade.

The history of the Holocaust; African American history, culture, and experiences; the study of Hispanic and women's contributions to the United States; and in order to encourage patriotism, the sacrifices made by veterans to protect democratic values worldwide are to be incorporated throughout the curriculum as appropriate. Multicultural education and character education are to be incorporated throughout the curriculum as appropriate. In addition, School-To-Career strategies are to be infused throughout the curriculum.

Career and Technical Education Course substitutions are permitted for students completing job preparation programs as specified in *Curriculum Bulletin-1* and Florida Board of Education rule. However, substitutions may not exceed two credits in each of the required academic areas of English, mathematics, and science, and may apply to only one area.

Adult Education Program Credit - A student who is eligible may, with prior written approval of the high school principal and acceptance into the adult education high school credit program, earn credits from the adult education program to apply toward graduation requirements for a high school diploma (FM-4269). It should be noted that adult education high school courses taken through the regular adult education program are not recognized by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) as meeting eligibility requirements to participate in college athletics.

Senior high school students may not withdraw from a senior high school class and enroll in the same or equivalent class for graduation credit through adult education in the same academic year except for extenuating circumstances and only by permission of the principal.

A "Credit Certification for Adult Education" form should be completed for each student who will transfer credits earned in an adult education program to his/her high school transcript. This form should also be used when the student is no longer enrolled in senior high school, but will use the adult education credit(s) to earn his/her diploma.

Students should be encouraged to enroll in honors, Advanced Placement, and dual enrollment language arts, social science, mathematics, and science courses whenever appropriate. Students should start the sequence of courses early in order to enable them to take the higher level courses. Students should not be restricted from taking multiple numbers of Advanced

Placement courses; however, it is the school's responsibility to advise and caution students regarding an excessive workload.

Students who encounter difficulties in language arts, social science, mathematics, and science courses should be provided assistance through peer tutoring, teacher tutoring, mentoring, before/after school programs, and Saturday school, where available.

Individual senior high schools may establish graduation requirements greater than the prescribed district requirements for students enrolled in the four-year, 24-credit standard program, subject to the approval of the Regional Superintendent and the Superintendent of Schools, or designee. In each instance, the senior high school shall establish school-level procedures for waiving such requirements for students with a demonstrated educational need. If approved, an increase of academic credit shall not apply to students enrolled in grades 9 -12 at the time of the increase. Any increase in academic credit does not apply to a student who earns credit toward graduation requirements for equivalent courses taken through dual enrollment. Graduation requirements approved by the School Board may be waived only by the School Board. Additionally, students enrolled in the standard four-year, 24-credit or the two accelerated three-year, 18-credit programs may earn more than the 24 or 18 credits required for graduation.

E. Testing Requirements for Graduation

FCAT Test Requirements

In addition to other requirements, to graduate from a Miami-Dade County public senior high school or adult-center, students who select any one of the five graduation options must also meet student performance requirements as measured by the FCAT graduation test. The first opportunity students have to meet this requirement is through the Grade 10 FCAT SSS assessments in reading and mathematics. Subsequent opportunities are provided as FCAT Retake administrations. Students who fail one or both sections of the FCAT graduation test are not eligible for a standard diploma.

Students must earn a passing score on the FCAT graduation test in Reading and Mathematics in order to meet the graduation test requirement. Passing scores are 300 in Reading (1926 on the developmental scale) and 300 in Mathematics (1889 on the developmental scale).

The original passing scores of 287 in reading and 295 in mathematics which were established for the 2001 administrations, will still apply to the following eligible students:

- Students who were in grade 9 in 1999-2000.
- Students who were classified as grade 12 or 13th year students for the March 2003 FCAT administration.
- Students who took the FCAT graduation test in Reading, Mathematics, or both subjects, in either March 2001 or October 2001.
- Students who were seniors in the graduating class of 2003.
- Eligibility must be verified by the Student Assessment and Educational Testing on a case-by-case basis.

Students classified as ELL, regardless of the number of years in an ESOL program, must take and pass both sections of the FCAT graduation test in order to meet the testing requirement for a standard diploma.

Special Considerations for Students Eligible for the HSCT:

A small number of continuously enrolled students who were enrolled in grade 9 in 1998-99, or prior years, remain eligible to use the HSCT as the graduation test requirement.

Eligible students who do not pass both sections prior to the sunset of the HSCT will be required to take and pass the applicable section or sections of the FCAT in order to meet the graduation test requirement.

Test Exemptions for Students with Disabilities:

Participation in the statewide testing program (FCAT) is mandatory for all students, including students with disabilities, except as described on page 2 of IEP Insert D, FM-6132.

For students with disabilities, the decision regarding whether a student will be exempted or tested with or without accommodation is made by the student's IEP team and recorded on the IEP.

Students with disabilities who are excluded from the standard state assessment program will be assessed through the Florida Alternate Assessment as documented on the IEP. Alternate assessment results are to be reported to the parent and used to plan the student's IEP, report mastery of annual goals, and plan the instruction for the next

year. Students with such disabilities in grades other than those tested through the state assessment program will be assessed through alternative assessment procedures identified by the IEP team and documented on the IEP.

When determining whether or not a student with disabilities should participate in the FCAT, the IEP team should consider the questions and the exemption criteria as stated on page two of IEP Insert D, FM-6132.

Generally, all students with disabilities, including LEP students with disabilities whose instructional program incorporates the general education objectives and competencies, should participate in the state assessment program. Students placed exclusively in programs for the Speech Impaired, Homebound or Hospitalized, Visually Impaired, or Gifted must participate in the state assessment program.

In many instances, students with disabilities will require accommodations and support in order to demonstrate proficiency on state or district assessments. These accommodations and support should be documented on the IEP. The document provided by the Florida Department of Education, *Accommodations: Assisting Students with Disabilities-A Guide for Educators*, lists many examples of accommodations.

Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

- Facilitate an accurate demonstration of what the student knows or can do.
- Do not provide the student with an unfair advantage or interfere with the validity of the test.
- Are the same accommodations used by the student in classroom instruction and assessment.
- Are necessary for enabling the student to demonstrate knowledge, ability, skill or mastery.
- Are permitted by the testing protocol for each specific district and/or state assessment.

Parental Rights Regarding the FCAT for Students with Disabilities:

The 2002 Legislature mandated regulations for Florida public schools

regarding student assessment and accommodations. The state regulations mandate that parents must:

- be notified and provided with information regarding the implication of non-participation, should their child not participate in the assessment;
- be informed when their child is being provided with accommodations in the classroom that are not permitted on the FCAT;
- sign consent in order for their child to receive accommodations in the classroom that would not be permitted on the FCAT;
- acknowledge in writing that they understand the implications of their child receiving accommodations in the classroom that are not permitted on the FCAT; and
- be informed of the potential impact on their child's ability to meet expected proficiency levels in reading, writing, and math when students are provided with accommodations in the classroom that are not permitted on the FCAT.

These regulations must be addressed at every IEP meeting. Insert D of the IEP, (FM-6132), is designed to address the requirements of these regulations.

Graduation Test Requirement Waivers for Students with Disabilities:

- IEP teams have the authority to waive passing the FCAT as a requirement for graduation with a standard high school diploma for students with disabilities whose abilities cannot accurately be measured by the FCAT. (See Appendix I).
- For certain students with disabilities, under specific circumstances, a request may be made to the Commissioner of Education for an exemption from the graduation test requirement for students with disabilities seeking a standard diploma. (See Appendix J for a checklist of procedures for this request.)
- In order to be considered for the waiver from the FCAT graduation requirement, the student must: 1) be identified as a student with a disability; 2) have an IEP; 3) be a senior or student with disabilities who remains enrolled seeking a

standard diploma for whom the FCAT is the required graduation test; 4) have demonstrated mastery of the grade 10 SSS; 5) have taken the FCAT graduation test with appropriate, allowable accommodations at least twice (to include March of the senior year), or if not continuously enrolled in public school in Florida, at least once during each year of enrollment in grades 10, 11, or 12 including March of the senior year; 6) have participated in intensive remediation for FCAT Reading and/or FCAT Mathematics, if passing scores were not earned; and 7) be progressing toward meeting the state's 24 credit/course and 2.0 cumulative GPA requirements and any other district requirements for graduation with a standard diploma.

Concordant Scores for the FCAT Graduation Test:

Beginning with the graduating class of 2003-2004 and thereafter, twelfth grade students, who have failed to earn a passing score on the FCAT graduation test after three (3) attempts and who have attained the SAT or ACT scores concordant with the FCAT passing scores, applicable to their graduating class, shall satisfy the assessment requirement for a standard high school diploma. This requirement does not apply to a student who is a new student in the Florida Public School System in grade 12.

Concordant Scores for Class of 2004 & Thereafter			
Reading		Math	
FCAT	300 (1926)	FCAT	300 (1889)
SAT	410	SAT	370
ACT	15	ACT	15

F. Grade Point Average Required for Graduation

Graduation Requirement - A cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale is needed for the 24 credits used to meet graduation requirements for students who select the standard four-year graduation program. Students who select the three-year college preparatory program must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and also receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points in order to earn course credit. Beginning with students entering grade 9 in 2006-2007 and enrolling in the college preparatory program, they must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.

Students who select the three-year career preparatory program must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, as well as receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points in order to earn course credit. This would require the inclusion of all high school courses taken in the student's educational program, except those courses to which a forgiveness policy has been applied. For details see School Board Rule 6Gx13-5B-1.061, Rank in Class - Grade Point Average. A student who has not achieved the required GPA may remain in the secondary school either as a full-time student or a part-time student for up to one additional year and receive special instruction designed to remedy his/her identified deficiencies.

Students are to be counseled regarding increases in the graduation requirements well in advance of the time such changes impact them. Additionally, students in the standard four-year graduation program, who have attained a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or below, are to be identified and provided assistance, e.g., counseling, academic review, forgiveness policy, summer school, schedule adjustments, and/or tutoring, to help them in achieving and maintaining a GPA that meets or exceeds the requirements for graduation.

G. Community Service

A community service project, which is described in *Community Service Implementation Guidelines*, is required for graduation for those students who select the four-year, 24-credit standard program. A community service project is not a graduation requirement for students enrolled in either one of the three-year, 18-credit accelerated programs. However, it should be noted that the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship's Florida Academic Scholars Award requires 75 hours of community service. In the implementation of the project, the student is to identify a social problem of interest, develop a plan for personal involvement in addressing the problem, and, through papers or presentations, evaluate and reflect upon the experience. No specific number of hours are required for graduation.

H. Computer Literacy

A student must successfully complete a computer education course, or a business technology course, or otherwise demonstrate mastery of basic computer literacy skills. This will no longer be a requirement for students who entered grade 9 in 2007-2008.

I. Diplomas/Certificates

The district will provide for the awarding of a variety of diplomas and certificates. A student completing the senior high school or adult program

may earn either a standard diploma, a certificate of completion, a Superintendent's Diploma of Distinction, an International Baccalaureate diploma, a special diploma, or a special certificate of completion. For students entering eighth grade in 2008-2009 there are four new diploma designations described on pages 97-98.

1. Standard Diploma

A standard diploma will be awarded if the student has met the requirements outlined in the above chart, Graduation Options. The purpose of the standard diploma is to certify satisfactory completion of the high school program and to certify that the student has met all district and state standards required for graduation.

The conditions under which a standard diploma may be awarded to a student with disabilities are:

- The student has taken a course with non-exceptional students and has passed the course, or the student has taken a special education course which is equivalent in content and/or aligned with the SSS to a course which is applicable to a standard diploma.
- Students may switch from a special diploma to a standard diploma and receive elective credit toward a standard diploma for passing special education courses. Elective credits may be counted toward graduation requirements for a standard diploma.
- Course accommodations for students with disabilities which shall be available, based upon assessment of student need, and specified on the student's IEP in both basic (general education) and special education courses include:
 - an increase or decrease in instructional time;
 - variations of instructional strategies;
 - teacher instruction or student response through special communication systems;
 - accommodation of content where specific sensory or motor functioning is severely impaired; and
 - accommodation of test administration procedures and other evaluation systems to accommodate the student's disability permitted by the testing protocol for each specific district and/or state assessment.

M-DCPS provides students with disabilities certain modifications to basic education or vocational courses and programs of study to ensure students with disabilities the opportunity to meet graduation requirements for a standard or a special diploma. Modifications to basic courses shall not include modifications to the curriculum frameworks or student performance standards. When modifying vocational courses, the particular outcomes and student performance standards which a student must master to earn credit must be specified on the student's IEP. Allowable adaptations to basic or vocational courses may include any of the following:

- the instructional time may be increased or decreased;
- instructional methodology/strategies may be varied;
- special communications systems may be used by the teacher or the student; and
- classroom and district test administration procedures and other evaluation procedures may be adapted to accommodate the student's disability.

The time required to complete grades 9-12 will depend upon the time necessary for the student to earn the required number of credits for the selected diploma option and fulfill other requirements for graduation. Promotion is based upon the same criteria as that of the general education population. Students with disabilities may remain in school until they meet graduation requirements or, if they do not meet standard diploma graduation requirements, until the end of the school year in which they turn 22 years of age.

All students with disabilities may be given the opportunity to meet the requirements for a standard diploma. Exceptional students placed exclusively in programs for the Visually Impaired, Speech Impaired or Gifted, as well as students exclusively in the Homebound or Hospitalized Program, must pursue a standard diploma. For a student with disabilities, graduation with a standard diploma is considered a change in placement. As such, the parent must be notified of this change. To meet this requirement, FM-4877, Informed Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Change Evaluation, Identification, Educational Placement, or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), must be completed.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) requires that students with disabilities whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a standard diploma or due to exceeding the age of eligibility for free appropriate public education are to be provided with a document that summarizes the

student's academic achievement and functional performance. To meet this requirement, FM-6969, Summary of Performance (SOP) must be completed.

Students who have been enrolled in an ESOL program for less than two school years and have met all the requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the FCAT graduation test or alternate assessment, may receive immersion English instruction during the summer following their senior year, if funding is available. Students receiving such instruction are eligible to take the FCAT or alternate assessment and receive a standard high school diploma upon passage of the FCAT graduation test or the alternate assessment.

2. Superintendent's Diploma of Distinction

This diploma will be awarded to students who meet the requirements of the standard diploma and:

- Complete an academically rigorous program of study, including at least four honors, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), International Studies (IS), and/or dual enrollment courses;
- Complete a 75-hour community service project; and
- Earn a 3.5 weighted GPA by the end of the first semester of the senior year with no final grades reflected on the transcript less than a "C."

3. Superintendent's Honors Diploma of Distinction (The student must meet all criteria elements)

This diploma will be awarded to students entering eighth grade in 2008-2009 who meet the requirements of the standard diploma and:

- Earn a 3.5 weighted GPA
- Complete a minimum of six high school credits in honors, AP, IB, AICE, IS, and/or dual enrollment courses
- Perform 75 hours of community service
- Earn 970 on the SAT and/or 20 on the ACT
- Complete a minimum of two years of a foreign language

4. Superintendent's Global Diploma of Distinction

(The student must meet all criteria elements)

This diploma will be awarded to students entering eighth grade in 2008-2009 who meet the requirements of the standard diploma and:

- Earn a 4.0 weighted GPA
- Complete a minimum of twelve high school credits in honors, AP, IB, AICE, IS, and/or dual enrollment courses
- Perform 100 hours of community service
- Earn 1270 on the SAT and/or 28 on the ACT
- Complete a minimum of three years of the same foreign language
- Complete a research project

5. Professional Academic Diploma

This diploma will be awarded to students entering eighth grade in 2008-2009 who meet the requirements of the standard diploma and complete any two of the following criteria elements:

- An Internship (Career Executive Opportunity [CEO], or Career Technical Education [CTE], or Executive Honors Program, or On the Job Training [OJT], or Summer Magnet Internships)
- Capstone Project
- Qualify for Gold Seal
- Pass Industry Certification

6. Professional Career Education Diploma

This diploma will be awarded to students entering eighth grade in 2008-2009 who meet the requirements of the standard diploma and complete all of the following criteria elements:

- College entry-level placement test (CPT) or an equivalent test identified by the FLDOE
- Minimum of one Occupational Completion Point (OCP) in an industry-certified career program or two courses in a technology education program
- 1.0 credit course addressing workplace readiness skills
- Work-based learning experience as defined by State Board Rule
- Capstone Project

7. International Baccalaureate Diploma/Advanced International Certificate of Education/International Studies Certificate

Students who complete an International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) or, International Studies (IS) curriculum, pass the FCAT, complete the community service requirement, demonstrate computer literacy, and meet high school graduation requirements, shall receive a standard diploma, and may be eligible for the Superintendent's Diploma of Distinction.

8. Certificate of Completion

A student who has met all requirements for graduation except passing the FCAT graduation test or earning the GPA required for graduation may be awarded a certificate of completion. A student may make further attempts to pass the FCAT or earn the GPA required for graduation, and meet the requirements for a standard diploma. Any student interested may remain in senior high school either as a full-time student or a part-time student for up to one additional year and receive special instruction designed to remedy his/her identified deficiencies and earn FTE funding, including for the summer session between the 12th and 13th year.

Students who receive a certificate of completion from a senior high school and subsequently pass the applicable graduation test in an adult education program should be given their diplomas by the senior high school.

A student with disabilities who has met all requirements for graduation with a standard diploma except the state assessment program requirements shall be awarded a certificate of completion, unless the graduation requirement has been waived by the IEP team or Commissioner of Education. Students with disabilities awarded a certificate of completion may elect to continue to participate in school and receive services until they earn a standard diploma or through the year in which the student becomes 22 years of age.

9. CPT-Eligible Certificate of Completion

Students who earn the 24 required credits and achieve a GPA of 2.0 or higher, but do not pass the FCAT graduation test, are eligible to receive the College Placement Test (CPT)-Eligible Certificate of Completion.

Students who receive a CPT-Eligible Certificate of Completion may enroll directly into a Florida community college or postsecondary career and technical education program. Based upon the score the student receives on the CPT, the student may enroll in remedial or credit courses at the community college.

10. Special Diploma

Two special diploma options are available for students with disabilities. If a student with disabilities is pursuing a special diploma, it must be reflected on the student's current IEP.

Students identified with the following disabilities, who have been properly classified with rules established by the Florida Board of Education, may be given the opportunity to pursue a special diploma.

Educable Mentally Handicapped	(EMH)
Trainable Mentally Handicapped	(TMH)
Specific Learning Disabled	(SLD)
Physically Impaired	(PI)
Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities	(E/BD)
Profoundly Mentally Handicapped	(PMH)
Dual Sensory Impaired	(DSI)
Autism Spectrum Disorder	(ASD)
Language Impaired	(LI)
Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing	(HI)

Students with disabilities enrolled exclusively in programs for the Visually Impaired, Speech Impaired, Gifted, or Homebound or Hospitalized program are not eligible for a special diploma.

Students with disabilities who are awarded a special diploma may elect to continue participating in school and receive services until they earn a standard diploma or through the end of the year in which the student turns 22 years of age.

A student may switch from a standard diploma to a special diploma and receive credit toward a special diploma for passing basic (general) education courses.

Special Diploma Option 1

Students with disabilities may be awarded a special diploma that certifies mastery of the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma and specified district course/credit requirements. The skills listed in

the document, *Florida Course Descriptions Exceptional Student Education, Grades 6-12*, must be incorporated into the instructional program for students with disabilities. The document, *Florida Course Descriptions Grades 6-12/Adult Basic Education*, should be incorporated when appropriate. A 2.0 GPA will determine mastery of standards for a special diploma for students with disabilities.

To be awarded a special diploma upon graduation from high school, the student with disabilities must complete one of the course/credit requirement options listed below and demonstrate mastery of prescribed *Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma*:

- Completion of the course and credit requirements for a standard diploma as prescribed in this *Student Progression Plan*, but failure to complete one or more of the other graduation requirements as prescribed in this Plan.
- Specific course/credit requirements for a special diploma for mildly handicapped students (such as, learning disabled, deaf or hard-of-hearing, physically impaired, emotional/behavioral disabilities, or educable mentally handicapped):

English or Reading	4 Annual Credits
Mathematics	3 Annual Credits
Social Science	1 Annual Credit
Science	1 Annual Credit
Career Preparation	1 Annual Credit
Life Management and Transition*	1 Annual Credit
Physical Education**	1 Annual Credit
Career and Technical Education	4 Annual Credits
Electives***	8 Annual Credits
Total	24 Annual Credits

* This requirement is waived for students who receive credit in the regular education Health/Life Management course.

** One-half credit in Physical Education may be replaced with a half-credit elective.

*** Electives are determined at the IEP conference and should include career and technical education courses, whenever appropriate to the needs of the students.

Credit requirements may be fulfilled by earning credit in special education courses, basic education courses, and career and technical education courses, as appropriate to the individual needs of the student.

- Specific course/credit requirements for a special diploma for students functioning at moderately handicapped levels (such as the Trainable Mentally Handicapped and selected Educable

Mentally Handicapped, Physically Impaired, and Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing students):

Academic Skills for Functional Living	4 Annual Credits
Communication Skills For Functional Living	4 Annual Credits
Personal Home and Living Skills for Functional	2 Annual Credits
Leisure and Recreation Skills	2 Annual Credits
Career and Technical Education	4 Annual Credits
Electives*	8 Annual Credits
Total	24 Annual Credits

* Electives are determined at the IEP conference and should include unique skills courses and career and technical education courses, whenever appropriate to the needs of the student.

- Twenty-four credits are required for students enrolled in programs for the Profoundly Handicapped, i. e., Autism Spectrum Disorder, Dual Sensory Impaired, Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities, and Profoundly Mentally Handicapped, consistent with the requirements for the Educable Mentally Handicapped, Trainable Mentally Handicapped, or Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing. The required courses shall be specified by the IEP team after consideration of each student's *Individual Transition Plan*.
- Proficiency at the independent, supported, or participatory level for each of the *Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma* will be implemented and will be a graduation requirement for students who entered ninth grade in the 1999-2000 school year or thereafter.

Special Diploma Option 2:

Students with disabilities may be awarded a special diploma that certifies mastery of employment and community competencies. The specific goals and competencies required for each student are planned by the transition IEP team and are identified on the *Graduation Training Plan (GTP)*. Documented mastery of employment and community competencies listed in the GTP must be verified by the student's employer, job coach, and/or instructor.

When Option 2 is selected, the following must occur:

- document decision on the transition IEP;
- develop relevant measurable annual goals and

- objectives/benchmarks; and
- develop the GTP.

To be awarded a special diploma (through option 2) upon graduation from high school, the student with disabilities must:

- have completed a minimum of two semesters in a high school level program prior to selecting Special Diploma Option 2;
- be at least 16 years of age;
- have a GTP, developed by the student, the student's employer, parent, and instructor, that specifies competencies to be mastered;
- have mastered all of the employment and community competencies specified on the GTP*;
- achieved all annual goals and short term objectives/benchmarks related to employment and community identified on the transition IEP;
- be successfully employed full-time** (based upon industry standards) for 200 days, earning at or above minimum wage; and
- have earned a minimum of 3 credits including 1 credit in Career Preparation and 1 credit in Social/Personal Skills or 1 credit in a job preparatory course in which employability skills and social/personal skills training has been incorporated.

* Transition IEP committee members must verify that the student has met all criteria outlined in the student's GTP by completing the assurance section of the GTP prior to awarding the student an Option 2 Special Diploma. (FS 1003.438)

** The transition IEP committee may modify the full-time employment standard by decreasing the number of hours per week to be worked for an individual special education student if it is determined that the modification would be in the best interest of the student. The modification must be recorded on the student's Transition IEP.

Students must be employed in the community at a site where the employer:

- has a Federal Employer Identification number;
- provides opportunities for the student to interact with non-disabled co-workers;
- adheres to child labor laws; and
- provides an opportunity for advancement.

The GTP must contain the following:

- specify employment and community competencies (exit skills, behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge for success beyond high school);
- address the criteria for determination and certifying mastery of competencies (teacher observation, student product, performance assessments;
- include the work schedule and the minimum number of hours to be worked; and
- provide a description of the supervision to be provided by school personnel (frequency and type).

Required written documentation:

- evidence that the student is reporting to the community or employment site as required in the GTP;
- evidence that the student is safely performing required tasks;
- evidence that the student is meeting the employer's expectation; and
- evidence that the student is making appropriate progress.

Documentation of work schedules and hours:

- must comply with labor laws;
- must validate 200 days of employment; and
- must include copies of time cards or other employment records.

11. Special Certificate of Completion

A special certificate of completion is awarded to the student with disabilities who meets the annual credit requirements as specified for a special diploma, but who fails to master the specified Student Performance Standards for Exceptional Students, appropriate to the student's exceptionality.

Students with disabilities who have been properly classified as Profoundly Handicapped, i.e., Profoundly Mentally Handicapped, Dual Sensory Impaired, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities, may be awarded a special certificate of completion providing the following requirements have been met:

1. attained the age of 18 and have been enrolled in the exceptional student education program for at least two years immediately prior to being considered for the special certificate of completion; and
2. demonstrated mastery of IEP goals and benchmarks.

Students with disabilities awarded a special certificate of completion may elect to continue participating in school and receive services until they earn a standard diploma or through the end of the year in which the student turns 22 years of age.

J. Student Performance Standards

The district-established student performance standards and the specified performance levels as measured by district indicators and state assessments are listed in the following chart. Students must meet at least one (1) or more of the district indicators in each subject and grade, or students must meet the specified level of performance on the state assessments at selected grades.

Reading/Writing	Grade "C" or better in the core English/ESOL course; or GPA of 2.0 or better; or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing score on the FCAT graduation test Reading; or • FCAT NRT Reading score at or above the 25th percentile (grades 9-10); or • FCAT SSS Reading Achievement Level 2 or higher (grades 9-10); or FCAT • Writing essay score of 3.0 or higher (grade 10).
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade "C" or better in the core mathematics course; or • GPA of 2.0 or better; or • Passing score on the FCAT graduation test Mathematics; or • FCAT NRT Mathematics score at or above the 25th percentile (grades 9-10); or • FCAT Mathematics Achievement Level 2 or higher (grades 9-10).
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCAT SSS Science Achievement Level 2 or higher (grade 11)

K. Scheduling of Students

Each student in senior high school must be scheduled for a minimum of six annual credits per year. Florida Virtual School and Miami-Dade Virtual School courses can be applied toward the six annual credits per year requirement. (For a listing of Florida Virtual School and Miami-Dade Virtual School courses, see Appendix K). The approval of the parent is also required. Additionally, a senior needing five credits or less to graduate may be scheduled for only five periods upon approval by the principal and Regional Superintendent, or

designee. This requirement may be waived for a student with disabilities if a shortened school day has been included in the student's IEP and if the resultant schedule is in accordance with relevant Florida statutes and Florida Board of Education (FBE) rules.

Grades earned through Florida Virtual School and Miami-Dade Virtual School will be entered into the students permanent record. WF (Withdrawal/Failing) and CF (Complete/Failing) are recorded as "F" grades.

Students may not withdraw from a course in progress and enroll in the same or equivalent course through Florida Virtual School or Miami-Dade Virtual School except for extenuating circumstances.

L. Provisions for Acceleration

In addition to the two accelerated graduation programs, i.e., college preparatory program and career preparatory program, there are several provisions whereby students may accelerate their graduation or take additional courses prior to graduation. These include:

- **Middle School Option.** Up to six credits may be earned with parental permission in grades 6, 7, and/or 8, which may be applied toward the total credits needed for graduation or Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements. The decision to accept or reject the earned credit will be made at the beginning of the student's ninth grade year, for those high school credit courses taken prior to the 2007-2008 school year. (See details in Appendix L)

These procedures will make it possible for selected high performing grade 6, 7, and 8 students to take additional courses during senior high school or to accelerate entry into postsecondary institutions or into careers of their choice. During the time a student in grade 6, 7, or 8 is enrolled in a designated senior high school course, the student is considered for that class period (or periods) to be a grade 9 student.

- **Optional Seventh Period.** With prior approval of the high school principal, credits earned in an adult education optional seventh period may be applied to graduation requirements for a senior high school program. The optional seventh period classes funded through the adult education program are considered an extension of the senior high school program and

are not counted in the four course limit for transferrable adult education credits.

- **Career Pathway.** Career Pathway is a senior high school transition initiative that allows students to obtain a sequential program of study which leads to a postsecondary career. Career Pathway students typically select general programs of study; show interest in career technical fields; transition on to a two-year certificate program; or pursue an associate or baccalaureate degree. The Career Pathway program of study provides students with skills and knowledge through a variety of curriculum choices and college credits. The list of authorized Career Pathway courses is included in *Curriculum Bulletin - I*.
- **Dual Enrollment.** Dual enrollment is an articulated acceleration mechanism open to students attending public high school. To enroll in dual enrollment academic programs, students must demonstrate a readiness to successfully complete college-level course work and have attained a qualifying grade point average. Six semester credit hours of college and university instruction which are earned through dual enrollment equal one full secondary school credit unless determined otherwise by the State Articulating Coordinating Committee. The district must weigh college-level dual enrollment courses the same as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Advanced International Certification of Education courses when grade point averages are calculated. The list of currently active and authorized courses for dual enrollment is printed in *Curriculum Bulletin-I*, which is published annually.
- **Advanced Placement.** Advanced Placement (AP) is the enrollment of eligible students in courses offered by the Advanced Placement Program administered by the College Board. Postsecondary credit for an AP course may be awarded to students who score a minimum of a 3 on a 5 point scale on the corresponding AP exam. Advanced Placement instruction may be conducted within dual enrollment courses. The district will use either the funding formula for advanced placement or dual enrollment credit and credit will be awarded in one of the two programs.

- **International Baccalaureate/Advanced International Certificate of Education/International Studies Programs.** The International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, the Advanced International Certificate of Education Program (AICE), and the International Studies (IS) are programs for which eligible high school students earn credit toward graduation and may receive postsecondary credit at community colleges and universities.
- **Credit by Examination.** Credit by examination is a method by which postsecondary credit is earned based on the receipt of a specified minimum score on a nationally standardized general or subject area examination.
- **Early Admission.** Early admission is a form of dual enrollment through which eligible secondary students may enroll in a college or university on a full-time basis in courses that are creditable toward a high school diploma and the associate or baccalaureate degree.
- **Career and Technical Education.** Any career education course authorized for grades 13 or higher may be taken for credit by students in grades 9-12, based on the career objectives of the students. M-DCPS adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in requirements for admission to and graduation from programs offered at postsecondary area technical centers operated by the district. The district will provide (on a case-by-case basis), waivers, accommodations, and reasonable substitutions in meeting the admission and graduation requirements for students with disabilities at postsecondary area technical centers. (See Appendix M)
- **Florida Virtual School.** Secondary students are eligible to enroll in the Florida Virtual School. The courses offered are teacher-facilitated and are available throughout the state. Courses are based upon the SSS or the requirements of The College Board. The courses have been assigned *Florida Course Code Directory* numbers and generate full middle and/or high school credit upon successful completion. Schools may view student enrollment online at Florida Virtual School's web site at <http://www.flvs.net> through a school account. A complete list of courses is available through Florida Virtual School's web site or Appendix K. For high school courses that may be available to middle school students, refer to the list of senior high school courses on page 73 that may be taken by

students in middle school. Parents have the right to choose the Florida Virtual School option for their children. A student's full-time school may not deny access to courses offered by Florida Virtual School assuming that the desired online course(s) is an appropriate course placement based on the student's academic history, grade level, and age. These courses can be scheduled as part of or in addition to the student's regular school day.

- **Miami-Dade Virtual School.** Secondary students are eligible to enroll in Miami-Dade Virtual School. Miami-Dade Virtual School courses are franchised from the Florida Virtual School. The courses generate full high school credit upon successful completion. Schools may view student enrollment online at Miami-Dade Virtual School's web site at <http://mdvs.dadeschools.net> through a school account. Schools may use the same account information as provided by Florida Virtual School to access student enrollment information. A complete list of courses is available through Miami-Dade Virtual School's web site. For high school courses that may be available to middle school students, refer to the list of senior high school courses on page 73 that may be taken by students in middle school.

M. The Adult High School Credit Program

Grades 9-12 (or equivalent) students in adult high school credit programs must meet essentially the same standards for graduation as those in the four-year, 24-credit standard program. The two accelerated graduation options are not available to students in the adult high school credit program.

The one credit in physical education is not required and may be substituted with elective credit, keeping the total credits required for graduation the same. Any course listed within the *Florida Course Code Directory* in the areas of art, drama, dance, music, or speech may be taken by adult secondary education students to satisfy the one-half required credit in performing arts. The science lab component may be waived when facilities are not available. The community service graduation requirement is encouraged, but it is not a requirement to earn a standard diploma in the adult education program. However, students must attain an unweighted cumulative GPA of 2.0. A minimum of 24 credits is required to earn a standard high school diploma in addition to mastering the SSS. Instructional credits and additional provisions as applied toward a diploma in this program are defined as follows:

- Credits are earned by successful completion of course requirements and attainment of a satisfactory grade on an end-of-course exam.
- One annual credit is the equivalent of two semester credits.
- Students may be assigned to a high school basic skills class as determined by counseling. This class may not be offered as a part of an adult basic education program. A student shall earn only elective credit toward graduation for high school remedial language arts and high school remedial mathematics classes. A maximum of two such credits may be earned.
- Elective credits for documented military experiences may be earned by adult students. A maximum of two elective credits may be earned for military training.
- The courses or subjects specified below are the minimum required for graduation through the adult education program.
- Eligible adult high school program students who had previously earned passing HSCT scores may apply these scores toward the graduation requirement.

Students who enrolled in an adult high school credit program and completed six credits prior to fall 1999, and, who remain continuously enrolled until the required number of credits for high school graduation have been earned may continue to take the HSCT as long as it is offered to meet the graduation test requirement. Students who do not meet both of these requirements will have to pass both the reading, and the mathematics.

Graduation Requirements Prior to the 2007-2008 School Year

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF CREDITS
English or English Through ESOL as appropriate	4.0
Mathematics	3.0
Science	3.0
World History	1.0
American History	1.0
Economics	0.5
American Government	0.5
Fine Arts	0.5
Practical Arts	0.5
Physical Education or Elective	1.0

Life Management Skills	0.5
Electives	8.5
TOTAL NUMBER OF REQUIRED CREDITS	24.0

Note: Students who entered ninth grade in 2007-2008 will follow the new graduation requirements. (Refer to page 82-87)

N. General Educational Development (GED) Program

Upon successful completion of the official GED Test, a candidate shall be awarded a State of Florida High School Diploma and shall be considered a high school graduate.

Age Rule (GED). Any candidate shall be at least 18 years of age on the date of the examination. Exceptions may be granted by the Superintendent of Schools or designee in extraordinary circumstances such as health problems, family financial problems, or other such instances of hardship. These exceptions apply only if the candidate resides in Miami-Dade County or attends school in Miami-Dade County and if said candidate has reached the age.

Procedures for Exceptions to Age Rule (GED). To be allowed to take the GED Test, students under the age of 18 who are enrolled in the K-12 program and who are considering withdrawal from the program must have written parental approval citing extraordinary circumstances which represent extreme hardship. These students may choose one of the following options:

- Remain in school and take the Official GED Practice Test (OPT) at an adult education center to determine readiness to complete the official GED Test successfully. If scores are indicative of success on the OPT, students will then withdraw from the K-12 program and register for the GED Test. If GED Test readiness is not indicated, students may choose to remain in the K-12 program.
- Withdraw from the K-12 program and take the OPT at an adult education center. If scores are indicative of success on the GED Test, students will follow procedures as outlined below for out-of-school youth. If GED Test readiness is not indicated, students may enroll in a GED preparation class at an adult education center.

Both options require students and their parents to complete a "Request for GED Age Waiver" form that includes appropriate administrative approvals.

In the event that out-of-school youths between the ages of 16 and 18 request GED age waivers from high school principals, they are to be directed to adult

education centers for testing and recommendation by adult principals and approval by the Regional Administrative Director, or designee. They may also apply directly, in writing, with parental approval, to the Regional Administrative Director, who will direct them to an adult education center. The center will administer the Official GED Practice Test to determine the student's readiness to complete the GED test successfully. Upon recommendation by the adult principal, the request will be forwarded to the Regional Administrative Director for approval.

Procedures for Retaking the GED Test. A candidate who fails to attain the required minimum scores on the initial GED testing may retake the tests at any subsequent testing session.

Procedures for a Student Participating in the GED Exit Option Model. Through an agreement between the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) and the American Council on Education, currently enrolled high school students at risk of dropping out or of not graduating with their cohort group are eligible to take the GED Test. If students pass the GED Test *and* the FCAT, they are eligible to graduate receiving a district high school diploma in addition to a State of Florida High School Diploma. Students may only access this alternate graduation route through the GED Exit Option Model if they meet the following eligibility requirements:

- are 16 years old and currently enrolled in a Pre-K-12 program;
- are enrolled in courses that meet the high school graduation requirements;
- are over-age for grade, behind in credits, below the 2.0 GPA, and are in jeopardy of not graduating with their cohort group;
- have demonstrated a probability for success on the GED Test as documented by the OPT;
- have passed the FCAT or earned an applicable concordant score;
- have maintained enrollment through their prescribed graduation date;
- have not graduated before the commencement date of the class with whom they entered kindergarten; and
- have achieved a minimum grade - 9 reading level as measured by a reading test.

O. State University Entrance Requirements

State University entrance requirements include:

- **English.** Three of the four credits must have included substantial writing requirements.

- **Mathematics.** The three credits must be at the Algebra I and above levels, excluding Informal Geometry.
- **Science.** Two of the three credits must include a substantial laboratory component. Integrated Science courses will meet the science requirement for graduation and for admission to the Florida State University System by taking Integrated Science I, II, and III or by taking Integrated Science I and two additional science courses.
- **Social Science.** The three credits must include study related to history, political science, economics, sociology, psychology, and geography.
- **Foreign Language.** The two credits must be sequential courses in the same language, including American Sign language, or foreign language proficiency at a level equal to two years of a high school foreign language course.
- **Electives.** The three courses used for electives will vary with the student's date of entry in grade 9. Appendix N lists specific courses that meet the requirement.

P. Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Act established a program consisting of three types of awards: the Florida Academic Scholars Award, the Florida Medallion Scholars Award, and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award. Students seeking a scholarship award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program will receive a 0.5 bonus point for grades earned in Advanced Placement, pre-International Baccalaureate, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, International General Certificate of Secondary Education, and academic dual enrollment annual courses. Grades received in level 3 annual courses in English, mathematics, science, and social science also receive a 0.5 bonus point. A 0.25 bonus point will be awarded for any of the above courses which are semester courses.

Students who select any one of the three graduation options are eligible to apply for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program awards. Each of the three scholarship awards within the Bright Futures Scholarship Program has specific criteria described in Appendix L, that must be met. However, to be eligible for an initial award from any of the three types of scholarships, a student must:

- complete the online Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) for the Florida State Student Financial Assistance Database (SSFAD) prior to his/her graduation;
- be a Florida resident and a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen;
- earn a Florida standard high school diploma or its equivalent;
- be accepted by and enrolled in an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary education institution;
- be enrolled for at least six semester credit hours or the equivalent;
- not have been found guilty of, nor pled no contest to, a felony charge; and
- begin using the award within three years of high school graduation.

The Florida Academic/Medallion Scholars Awards require:

- **English.** Three of the four credits must have included substantial writing requirements.
- **Mathematics.** The three credits must be at the Algebra I and above levels, excluding Informal Geometry.
- **Science.** Two of the three credits must have included a substantial laboratory component. Integrated Science courses will meet the science requirement for graduation and for admission to Florida State universities by taking Integrated Science I, II, and III or by taking Integrated Science I and two additional science courses.
- **Social Science.** The three credits must include any combination of the Academic Core Courses in Social Science as listed in the *Florida Counseling for Future Education Handbook*.
- **Foreign Language.** Two sequential credits in the same language, including American Sign language, or foreign language proficiency at a level equal to two years of a high school foreign language course.
- **Electives.** Up to three additional credits from courses in the academic courses listed above and/ or Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Advanced International Certificate of Education fine arts courses to raise the GPA.

Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award. Within the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award recognizes and rewards academic achievement and CTE preparation by high school students, and an award is used to inform potential employers of the quality of a student's academic and CTE preparation. Student eligibility criteria for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational

Scholars Award are identified in the Guidelines and Procedures for Implementing the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award. (See Appendix L)

M-DCPS will provide on a case-by-case basis, waivers, accommodations, and reasonable substitutions in meeting postsecondary career technical center admission and graduation requirements for students with disabilities. (See Appendix M for procedures.)

The Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award requires:

- **English.** Of the four credits, English I, II, III, and IV Through ESOL may be used to meet this requirement. Additional ESOL credits may be applied toward elective credits.
- **Mathematics.** Of the three credits, Algebra I, which is to be successfully completed by the end of grade 9, is the lowest level mathematics course acceptable to meet this requirement.
- **Science.** Two of the three credits must include a laboratory component.
- **Social Science.** The three credits must include one credit in world history, one credit in American history, one-half credit in American government, and one-half credit in economics.
- **Performing Arts.** Any 0.5 credit in art, dance, debate, drama, music, or speech course classified as performing fine arts meets the requirement.
- **Practical Arts.** Any .05 credit in career and technical education course, any district-approved annual computer education course, or Journalism I, II, III, or IV meet the requirement.
- **Life Management.** The 0.5 credit life management course should be taken in grade 9 or 10.
- **Physical Education.** 1.0 credit must be earned.
- **Career and Technical Education.** A minimum of three credits in a sequential program of study in CTE is required.