

Florida Statutes—Life Skills for High School Graduation

[Title XVI](#)

EDUCATION Compulsory School Attendance; Child Welfare

[Chapter 232](#)

[View Entire](#)

[Chapter](#)

232.246 General requirements for high school graduation.--

- (1) Graduation requires successful completion of either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits shall be distributed as follows:
- (a) Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature.
 - (b) Three credits in mathematics. Effective for students entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and thereafter, one of these credits must be Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics course.
 - (c) Three credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component. The State Board of Education may grant an annual waiver of the laboratory requirement to a school district that certifies that its laboratory facilities are inadequate, provided the district submits a capital outlay plan to provide adequate facilities and makes the funding of this plan a priority of the school board.
 - (d) One credit in American history.
 - (e) One credit in world history, including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major political systems.
 - (f) One-half credit in economics, including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major economic systems. The Florida Council on Economic Education shall provide technical assistance to the department and local school boards in developing curriculum materials for the study of economics.
 - (g) One-half credit in American government, including study of the Constitution of the United States. For students entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and thereafter, the study of Florida government, including study of the State Constitution, the three branches of state government, and municipal and county government, shall be included as part of the required study of American government.
 - (h)1. One credit in practical arts career education or exploratory career education. Any vocational course as defined in s. [228.041\(22\)](#) may be taken to satisfy the high school graduation requirement for one credit in practical arts or exploratory career education provided in this subparagraph;
2. One credit in performing fine arts to be selected from music, dance, drama, painting, or sculpture. A course in any art form, in addition to painting or

sculpture, that requires manual dexterity, or a course in speech and debate, may be taken to satisfy the high school graduation requirement for one credit in performing arts pursuant to this subparagraph; or

3. One-half credit each in practical arts career education or exploratory career education and performing fine arts, as defined in this paragraph.

Such credit for practical arts career education or exploratory career education or for performing fine arts shall be made available in the 9th grade, and students shall be scheduled into a 9th grade course as a priority.

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

(j) One credit in physical education to include assessment, improvement, and maintenance of personal fitness. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level, for two full seasons, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education if the student passes a competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or better. The competency test on personal fitness must be developed by the Department of Education. A school board may not require that the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year.

(k) Eight and one-half elective credits.

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

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

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

(4)(a) A district school board may require specific courses and programs of study within the minimum credit requirements for high school graduation and

shall modify basic courses, as necessary, to assure exceptional students the opportunity to meet the graduation requirements for a standard diploma, using one of the following strategies:

1. Assignment of the exceptional student to an exceptional education class for instruction in a basic course with the same student performance standards as those required of nonexceptional students in the district pupil progression plan;
or

2. Assignment of the exceptional student to a basic education class for instruction which is modified to accommodate the student's exceptionality.

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

(c) District school boards are authorized and encouraged to establish requirements for high school graduation in excess of the minimum requirements; however, an increase in academic credit or minimum grade point average requirements shall not apply to those students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 at the time the district school board increases the requirements.

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

(a) Earning passing scores on the high school competency test or FCAT, as defined in s. [229.57\(3\)\(c\)](#).

(b) Completion of all other applicable requirements prescribed by the district school board pursuant to s. [232.245](#).

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

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

(e) For purposes of paragraphs (c) and (d):

1. Each district shall adopt policies designed to assist students in meeting these requirements. These policies may include, but are not limited to: forgiveness policies, summer school attendance, special counseling, volunteer and/or peer tutors, school-sponsored help sessions, homework hotlines, and study skills classes.

2. At the end of each semester, the parent or guardian of each student in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 who has a cumulative grade point average of less than 0.5 above the cumulative grade point average required for graduation shall be

notified that the student is at risk of not meeting the requirements for graduation. The notice shall contain an explanation of the policies the district has in place to assist the student in meeting the grade point average requirement.

3. Special assistance to obtain a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to s. [229.814](#) may be given only when the student has completed all requirements for graduation except the attainment of the required cumulative grade point average.

The standards required in this subsection, and any subsequent modifications, shall be reprinted in the Florida Administrative Code even though not defined as "rules."

(6) The Legislature recognizes that adult learners are unique in situation and needs. The following graduation requirements are therefore instituted for students enrolled in adult general education in accordance with s. [239.301](#) in pursuit of a high school diploma:

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

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

(c) Any course listed within the Department of Education Course Code Directory in the areas of art, dance, drama, or music may be undertaken by adult secondary education students. Enrollment and satisfactory completion of such a course shall satisfy the credit in performing fine arts required for high school graduation pursuant to subsection (1).

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

(a) More than a total of nine elective credits in remedial programs as provided for in s. [236.0841](#).

(b) More than one credit in exploratory vocational courses as defined in s. [228.041\(22\)\(a\)](#).

(c) More than three credits in practical arts family and consumer sciences classes as defined in s. [228.041\(22\)\(a\)](#).

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

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

(9) A student who meets all requirements prescribed in subsections (1), (4), and (5) shall be awarded a standard diploma in a form prescribed by the state board. A school board may attach the Florida gold seal vocational endorsement to a standard diploma or, instead of the standard diploma, award differentiated diplomas to those exceeding the prescribed minimums. A student who completes the minimum number of credits and other requirements prescribed by subsections (1) and (4), but who is unable to meet the standards of paragraph (5)(a), paragraph (5)(b), or paragraph (5)(c), shall be awarded a certificate of completion in a form prescribed by the state board. However, any student who is otherwise entitled to a certificate of completion may elect to remain in the secondary school either as a full-time student or a part-time student for up to 1 additional year and receive special instruction designed to remedy his or her identified deficiencies. This special instruction shall be funded from the state compensatory education funds of the district.

(10) The public hearing and consideration required in subsection (8) shall not be construed to amend or nullify the requirements of security relating to the contents of examinations or assessment instruments and related materials or data as prescribed in s. [232.248](#).

History.--s. 1, ch. 78-424; s. 2, ch. 79-20; s. 2, ch. 79-74; s. 4, ch. 79-213; s. 1, ch. 83-324; s. 1, ch. 83-348; s. 5, ch. 84-222; s. 29, ch. 84-317; ss. 4, 6, 22, 80, ch. 84-336; s. 4, ch. 85-109; s. 29, ch. 86-156; ss. 4, 49, ch. 87-329; s. 5, ch. 88-317; s. 14, ch. 88-380; s. 5, ch. 89-302; s. 18, ch. 89-379; s. 8, ch. 90-99; s. 1, ch. 90-356; s. 35, ch. 91-105; s. 44, ch. 92-136; s. 1, ch. 93-210; s. 18, ch. 93-260; s. 62, ch. 94-232; s. 1542, ch. 95-147; s. 1, ch. 95-180; s. 7, ch. 97-2; s. 13, ch. 97-77; s. 21, ch. 97-246; s. 3, ch. 98-403; s. 40, ch. 98-421; s. 101, ch. 99-2; s. 7, ch. 99-5; s. 35, ch. 99-398.

¹**Note.**--Section 35, ch. 99-398, reenacted and amended paragraphs (5)(a) and (b), without publishing the flush left language at the end of subsection (5). Absent affirmative evidence of legislative intent to repeal it, the flush left language is published here, pending clarification by the Legislature.