

**HAMILTON SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

**STUDENT
PROGRESSION
PLAN**

**2008-2009
School Year**

Approved by Hamilton School Board on 02-09-2009

Phase I	1
General Procedures and Promotion Guidelines for All Students K-12	1
Phase II	8
Preschool, Primary, Elementary, and Middle Grades Education, K-8	8
General Course Requirements for Prekindergarten Through Grade 8.....	8
Promotion Criteria for Kindergarten Through Grade 8	12
General Requirements for Middle Grade Students	20
Reporting Procedures	21
Phase III	23
High School	23
Promotion Criteria for Grade Nine (9) Through Grade Twelve (12)	23
Reporting Procedures	25
Incorporation of Student Performance Standards	26
Substitution of Courses for the Nonelective Courses Required for High School Graduation.....	27
Attendance Requirements for High School Credit	28
Authorized Time for Providing Noninstructional Extracurricular Activities Within the Minimum Period of Instruction	29
Determination of Mastery of Student Performance Standards	29
Participation in Interscholastic Extracurricular Activities	29
Dual Credit.....	30
Remedial or Compensatory Course for Credits	30
Alternatives to Standard High School Graduation.....	31
Adult High School Credits.....	31
Transfer Credits	31
Dual Enrollment Grades 9-12 with Community Colleges or Universities and Accelerated Graduation Options	32
Requirements for Graduation from High School.....	39
Graduation from Early Admission and Advanced Studies Programs	45
Graduation Honors	46
Interinstitutional Articulation Agreements	47
Articulated Acceleration Mechanics	48
Phase IV	51
Administrative Rules	51
Graduation Requirements for Hamilton County Adult Education Program.....	51
High School Equivalency Diploma (GED - General Education Development Test).....	52

Phase V	54
Exceptional Student	54
General Procedures for Student Progression Decisions for Exceptional Student Education	54
Student Performance Goals and Objectives	54
Assessment of Student Performance.....	56
Standards and Promotion Criteria.....	60
Report of Student Progress	61
Graduation Requirements – Standard Diploma	62
Special Diploma for Exceptional Students	64
Course Requirements for Special Diploma	69
Special Diploma Credit Alternatives	72
Special Certificate of Completion.....	74
Course Requirements for Students with Severe Cognitive Disabilities Functioning at Supported or Participatory Levels.....	74
Thirteenth Year Students That Refuse a Certificate of Completion	75
Educational Equity Act.....	75
Research Based Reading.....	75

STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

The 1976 Educational Accountability Act requires a Student Progression Plan for each district.

PHASE I GENERAL PROCEDURES AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES FOR ALL STUDENTS K-12

- A. In the Hamilton County Public Schools, decisions regarding pupil promotion and special placement are primarily the responsibility of professional staff members of the individual school. However, school principals shall review such recommendations with consideration for requirements within the Student Progression Plan.
- B. Pupil promotion is based on evaluation of each pupil's achievement in terms of appropriate instructional goals. Discussions shall be based on results of progress tests, classroom assignments, daily observations, standardized tests, state assessments, ability to function at the next grade or course level and other objective data. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
- C. It is the responsibility of teachers and appropriate support personnel to identify students who appear unable to make satisfactory progress toward district objectives and who fail to meet State Student Performance Standards. The School Board shall provide opportunities to assist school staff members in the implementation of research based reading activities to include various forms of professional development activities.
- D. Report card grades or notations must clearly reflect each student's level of achievement and parents will be notified when students are achieving below the expected level. Report cards for all elementary, middle, and high school students will be issued at the end of each grading period and will clearly depict and grade:
- The student's academic performance in each class or course in grades 1-12 based on examinations as well as written papers, class participation, and other academic performance criteria;
 - The student's conduct and behavior; and
 - The student's attendance, including absences and tardiness
 - The student's final report card for the year shall contain a statement indicating end-of-year status or performance or nonperformance at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, promotion or nonpromotion. Students shall not be exempt from academic performance requirements, such as final exams, based on practices or policies to encourage student attendance. A student's attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement.

- E. The Board recognizes the importance of a student grading system which is clearly identified and meaningful to students, parents, and school personnel. Grades shall be assigned as follows:

Grade Definition	Grade Scale	Grade Point Value
A Outstanding Progress	90-100	4
B Above Average Progress	80-89	3
C Average Progress	70-79	2
D Lowest Acceptable Progress	60-69	1
F Failure	59 and below	0
I Incomplete		
S Satisfactory		
N Needs Improvement		
U Unsatisfactory		

- F. Schools will use district-adopted report cards to report grades at nine week intervals. Grades shall be supported by records which indicate how the teacher arrived at the evaluation. The evaluation of each student's progress must be based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information.

- G. Students who do not meet the specific district levels of performance in reading, writing, science, and mathematics or who do not meet the specific levels of performance on statewide assessments as determined by the Commissioner of Education will be provided remediation through:

- Additional diagnostic assessments determined by the district, to identify the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need; and
- Implementation of an individual academic improvement plan, developed in consultation with a parent or guardian that is designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations of proficiency.
- Parents of exceptional students shall be regularly informed about their child's educational progress, as regularly as parents of nondisabled children are informed of their child's progress.
- Remedial and supplemental instruction resources will be allocated first to students who are deficient in reading by the end of grade 3 and second to students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion consistent with the district school board's plan for student progression. Students not meeting grade level expectations receive increasingly intense instruction / intervention services implemented to support student academic proficiency. Students are matched to the instruction / intervention tier based on screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments.

- H. All students K-12 must participate in the statewide assessment tests as required by state law. Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance in reading, writing, science, and mathematics for each grade level according to the following student performance grade level guidelines, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student’s difficulty and areas of academic need. The areas of academic need and intervention strategies are identified through a problem-solving / response to instruction / intervention process. Multiple tiers of increasingly intense instruction / intervention services are implemented to support student academic proficiency. Students needing remediation or intense instructional support will be matched to a strategic and intensive instruction / interventions based on screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments.
- I. Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who have not received ESOL services from a certified staff member or a staff member seeking ESOL certification for at least one year may not be retained in the student’s current grade level.

Student Performance Grade Level Guidelines for
Remedial or Supplemental Instruction or Progress Monitoring Plan
for Sunshine State Standards

Grade Level	Reading	Writing	Science	Mathematics
1	below 45th percentile on Stanford 10 reading	below 25% proficiency of kdg. grade level expectations for SSS/writing	below 25% proficiency of kdg. grade level expectations for SSS/science	below 51 st percentile on Stanford 9 mathematics
2	below 45th percentile on Stanford 10 reading	below 25% proficiency of grade 1 gle’s for SSS/writing	below 25% proficiency of grade 1 gle’s for SSS/science	below 51 st percentile on Stanford 9 mathematics
3	below 45th percentile on Stanford 10 reading	below 25% proficiency of grade 2 gle’s for SSS/writing	below 25% proficiency of grade 2 gle’s for SSS/science	below 51 st percentile on Stanford 9 mathematics
4	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension or <284 on Grade 3 FCAT SSS reading	below 50% proficiency of grade 3 gle’s for SSS/writing	below 50% proficiency of grade 3 gle’s for SSS/science	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics or <294 on Grade 3 FCAT SSS mathematics

Grade Level	Reading	Writing	Science	Mathematics
5	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension or <299 on Grade 4 FCAT SSS reading	below 3.0 on FCAT writing in Grade 4	below 50% proficiency of grade 4 gle's for SSS/science	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics or <298 on Grade 4 FCAT SSS mathematics
6	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension or <286 on Grade 5 FCAT SSS reading	below 50% proficiency of grade 5 gle's for SSS/writing	below 50% proficiency of grade 5 gle's for SSS/science	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics or <326 on Grade 5 FCAT SSS mathematics
7	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension, <296 on Grade 6 FCAT SSS reading, or <70 in Grade 6 language arts	below 50% proficiency of Grade 6 gle's for SSS/writing	below 50% proficiency of grade 6 gle's for SSS/science	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics, <315 on Grade 6 FCAT SSS mathematics, or <70 in Grade 6 mathematics
8	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension, <300 on Grade 7 FCAT SSS reading, or <70 in Grade 7 language arts	below 50% proficiency of Grade 7 gle's for SSS/writing	below 50% proficiency of Grade 7 gle's for SSS/science	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics, <306 on Grade 7 FCAT SSS mathematics, or <70 in Grade 7 mathematics

Grade Level	Reading	Writing	Science	Mathematics
9	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension, <310 on Grade 8 FCAT SSS reading, or <70 in Grade 8 language arts	below 3.5 on FCAT writing in Grade 8	below 50% proficiency of Grade 8 gle's for SSS/science	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics, <310 on Grade 8 FCAT SSS mathematics, or <70 in Grade 8 mathematics
10	below 50th percentile on NRT reading comprehension, <322 on Grade 9 FCAT SSS reading, or <70 in Grade 9 mathematics	below 3.5 on FCAT writing in Grade 8	<60 in Grade 9 science course	below 50th percentile on NRT mathematics, <296 on Grade 9 FCAT SSS mathematics, or <70 in Grade 9 mathematics
11	<300 on FCAT SSS reading comprehension	below 3.5 on FCAT writing in Grade 10	<60 in Grade 10 science course	<300 on FCAT SSS mathematics
12	<300 on FCAT SSS reading comprehension	below 3.5 on FCAT writing in Grade 10	<60 in Grade 11 science course	<300 on FCAT SSS mathematics

J. The school in which the student is enrolled must develop, in consultation with the student's parent or legal guardian, and must implement an progress monitoring plan (PMP) designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations and proficiency, to provide the school district and the school flexibility in meeting the academic needs of the student, and reduce paperwork. Student's not meeting grade level expectations receive increasingly intense instruction / intervention services to support student academic proficiency. Students will receive a progress monitoring plan (PMP) that identifies instruction / intervention support through a problem-solving / response to instruction / intervention process. Multiple tiers of increasingly intense instruction / interventions services are implemented to support student academic proficiency. Beginning with the 2002–2003 school year, for a student with a deficiency in reading, the PMP shall identify the student's specific area of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. The desired level of performance and the instructional and support services to be used with the student shall also be included on

the PMP and shall be different from the previous year. These students will be monitored on a frequent basis to ensure progress is being made using the outlined plan. Each plan must include the provision of intensive remedial instruction in the areas of weakness. The PMP must clearly identify the specific diagnosed academic needs to be remediated, the success-based intervention strategies to be used, identify a variety of remedial instruction to be provided, and identify the monitoring and reevaluation activities to be employed. Strategies to be used by the school to meet the individual needs of the student may include but not limited to summer school (when available), dropout prevention services, parent tutorial programs, contracted academic services, exceptional education services, modified curriculum, reading instruction, after school instruction and other extended day services, tutoring, mentoring, class size reduction, extended school year, and intensive skills development programs. The school board may require low performing students to attend remediation programs held before or after regular school hours or during summer if transportation is provided. Remedial instruction provided during high school may not be in lieu of English and mathematics required for graduation. Upon subsequent evaluation if a student's documented deficiency has not been remediated in accordance with the academic improvement plan, the student may be retained. If the minimum performance expectations defined by the Commissioner of Education for the statewide assessment tests in reading , writing, science and mathematics are not met, ongoing remedial or supplemental instruction will be provided until expectations are met, the student graduates from high school, or is not subject to compulsory school attendance. The district school board shall assist schools and teachers to implement research based reading activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low performing students.

- K. All grades shall stress a program of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education skills with an emphasis on State Student Performance Standards in reading, writing, science, and mathematics.
- L. A student enrolled in any grade level K-12 shall enroll in a combination of instructional programs for at least one (1) FTE of funded instruction.
- M. Students shall be enrolled on a full time basis. Any exception shall be justified on the basis of medical or personal hardship and must be approved by the Superintendent or be assigned to the Hospitalized and Homebound Program.
- N. The Superintendent shall be responsible for preparation and annual updating of plans and procedures to implement an instructional program which promotes mastery of State Student Performance Standards in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign language. The Student Progression Plan will provide assurance that all students within the Hamilton County Public Schools who have not demonstrated proficiency of performance standards in reading, writing, science, and mathematics shall receive appropriate instruction and that all students who receive a diploma shall have met and or exceed all the requirements mandated by the state of Florida and by the School Board. Proficiency and promotion shall be demonstrated by being promoted to the next grade upon recommendation of the placement committee, by passing the course in which standards are included, or by meeting course requirements

for graduation. Teachers are responsible for assessing proficiency as part of the regular course teaching activities.

- Students will be provided access to enroll in courses available through the Florida Virtual School and award credit for successful completion of such courses. Access shall be available to students during or after the normal school day and through summer school enrollment.
- O. Student progress from one grade to another is partially based on proficiency in reading, writing, science, and mathematics. The district’s comprehensive program for student progression uses assessment data (universal screening and ongoing progress monitoring) to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, identify students needing more intensive instruction support, and monitor the student’s response to implemented instruction / interventions.
- P. The district school board must annually report to the parent of each student the progress of the student towards achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, science and mathematics, including the student’s results on each statewide assessment test. The evaluation of each student’s progress must be based on the student’s classroom work, observations, test, district and state assessments, and other relevant information. Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in a format adopted by the school board.
- Q. The Hamilton School District is committed to the implementation of a Response to Instruction / Intervention framework to integrate / align efforts to improve educational outcomes and meet the academic / behavioral needs of all students. The district will provide high quality instruction / intervention matched to student needs and use learning rate and level of performance to inform instructional decisions – including decisions regarding promotion, acceleration, retention, and remediation. Response to Instruction / Intervention is “data-based decision making” process applied to education. A four-step problem-solving method and the systematic use of data- at the district, school, grade, class, and individual level-will guide decisions about the allocation of resources and intensity of instruction / interventions needed to improve learning and / or behavior.

**PHASE II
PRESCHOOL, PRIMARY, ELEMENTARY, AND
MIDDLE GRADES EDUCATION, K-8**

I. GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 8

- A. Students enrolled in the prekindergarten program shall be engaged in a developmentally appropriate program of active learning. Each student's progress will be individually assessed through teacher observation.
- B. Students in kindergarten and grades 1-3 shall be enrolled in a program designed to meet their individual needs and develop their maximum potential. The statewide kindergarten screening must be administered to each kindergarten student within the first thirty (30) days of each school year. The statewide kindergarten screening assesses the readiness of each student for kindergarten based upon the performance standards adopted by the DOE under S. 1002.67(1), F.S., for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program. Basic programs in the following areas of learning shall be provided these students: language arts, mathematics, art, music, physical education, science, social studies, computer literacy, and health education. A minimum of thirty (30) instructional hours must be provided annually at each grade level in comprehensive health education which shall include alcohol and substance abuse prevention and HIV/AIDS prevention.
- C. Students in grades 4 and 5 shall be provided a program which provides for the regularly scheduled study of:
 - 1. Language Arts to include reading, English, creative writing, spelling, and handwriting
 - 2. Mathematics
 - 3. Science
 - 4. Social Studies to include units in the Holocaust, flag education, and African-American history
 - 5. Computer literacy
 - 6. Art
 - 7. Music
 - 8. Health education to include a minimum of thirty (30) instructional hours in alcohol and substance prevention and HIV/AIDS prevention
 - 9. Physical Education Program: The physical education program is designed to stress physical fitness and encourage healthy, active lifestyles. The

physical education program shall consist of physical activities of at least moderate intensity and for a duration that is sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing abilities of students. Instruction shall be aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and shall include instruction to improve motor skills, promote positive social skill development and encourage cognitive as well as physical development. Participation shall be required for all students in kindergarten through grade five for a minimum of 150 minutes.

10. Critical thinking skills and other related skills shall be taught in the context of the subjects of mathematics, science, language arts, reading, and social studies.

D. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 shall receive instruction as follows:

1. Three years in mathematics
2. Three years in language arts which shall be defined to include experiences in reading, English, creative writing, spelling, and handwriting
3. Three years in science which shall include a comprehensive study in general, physical, life, and earth science to be taught in equal increments of each over a three year period
4. Three years in social studies shall include the study of world history, American history, and world geography as well as units of study in the Holocaust, African-American history and flag education. Civics will be provided as a year long course in grade 6.
5. Computer literacy, critical thinking skills, and other related skills shall be taught in the context of the academic subjects specified in subparagraphs 1-4 of this section. A semester course in career education to include the completion of an online career plan (ePEP) must be successfully completed by a student in grade 7 or 8.
6. Physical education:

Grade 6:-- Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, all elementary students will receive a minimum of 30 minutes a day at least 3 days per week of physical education taught by a certified physical education specialist. The physical education program shall stress physical fitness and encourage a healthy, active lifestyle. All elementary students will be expected to participate in physical education activities to meet state standards and program outcomes. Physical education specialists will work cooperatively with parents, physicians, guidance counselors, and administrators to design/adapt physical activities to meet the needs of all students.

Grades 7-8: -- Physical education will be offered for one semester with health offered the other semester. Any variation from this plan requires the approval from the Superintendent of Schools or the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Services. All grade 7 and 8 students will be expected to participate in physical education activities to meet state standards and program outcomes. Physical education teachers will work cooperatively with parents, physicians, guidance counselors, and administrators to design/adapt physical activities to meet the needs of all students.

7. A minimum of thirty (30) instructional hours at each grade level in comprehensive health education to include alcohol, substance abuse prevention, and HIV/AIDS prevention.

E. Students entering the 6th grade shall receive instruction in grades 6 through 8 in the following subjects:

1. Mathematics: Those testing at Level 1 or 2 on mathematics on the FCAT will have an AIP developed with the student and parent and will serve as notice of deficiency. Students scoring Level 1 & 2 must receive remediation. At least one course for high school credit will be offered (Algebra IA).
2. Language Arts/Reading: This shall be defined to include experiences in reading (including technical text), writing and speaking. Each principal of a school with grades 6, 7, or 8 shall designate a certified staff member to develop and administer an AIP for each 6th grade student who scored below level 3 in reading on the most recent administration of FCAT. The AIP must be developed in collaboration with the student and the parents and will notice the parents of the deficiency. The AIP must be implemented until the student completes grade 8 or score level 3 or above in reading on the FCAT. The AIP must identify educational goals and intermediate benchmarks for the student in the core curriculum areas and the five areas of reading; be based upon academic performance data, identify the student's strengths and weaknesses, academic intervention strategies with frequent progress monitoring, provide innovative methods including flexible scheduling, tutoring, focus on core curriculum online instruction, alternative learning environment and other intervention shown to accelerate the learning process.
3. Science: Which shall include instruction in life, earth and physical science.
4. Social Studies: Which shall include the study of geography, civics and Florida History.
5. Career and education planning in a one semester course for career exploration, CHOICE & development of an ePEP.

6. As resources are available, computer literacy, critical thinking skills, and related skills will be taught in the context of basic skills.
 7. Student promotion/progress will be assessed using the Hamilton County School District Promotion Requirements. Students not making progress will have an Academic Improvement Plan implemented and retention will be strongly considered (See Appendix A). Students retained must have an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and take into account the student's learning style until the expectations are met or the student graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory school attendance. The AIP will be updated each nine weeks and a copy sent home to the parent/guardian with the report card each grading period.
 8. Physical Education Program. The physical education program is designed to stress physical fitness and encourage healthy, active lifestyles. The physical education program shall consist of physical activities of at least moderate intensity and for a duration that is sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing abilities of students. Instruction shall be aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and shall include instruction to improve motor skills, promote positive social skill development and encourage cognitive as well as physical development. Activities promoting physical education shall be regularly scheduled for students in grades six through eight, and may be provided through formal physical education courses, regular scheduled intramural activities, and/or regularly scheduled school-wide activities.
 9. High School Credit Courses in Middle Schools. When a sufficient number of middle school students have successfully completed the final available middle school course of a subject area and have met the requirements for entrance to a high school course, the middle school principal at the site may determine that such a course will be taught with the approval of the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.
 - a. High school credit in middle school will be awarded for Algebra IA and IB.
 - b. Students will be screened to determine readiness for Algebra in middle school using an appropriate assessment and district-set criteria.
 - c. High school credit courses will apply to the student's promotion requirements in middle school.
- F. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 shall be provided experiences which may be selected from, but not limited to, the following: art, music, foreign languages, exploratory vocational education, computer literacy, technology education, and health.

- G. Courses of study for grades K-8 in the subjects of language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign language and computer literacy shall promote mastery of the Sunshine State Standards and curriculum frameworks developed by the Florida Department of Education.

II. **PROMOTION CRITERIA FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 8**

- A. Promotion of students is based upon an evaluation of each student's progress as determined by classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information. The classroom teacher(s) will recommend promotion or retention of students, subject to review and approval of the principal. Criteria for promotion are as follows:
 - 1. Progress toward mastery of performance standards approved by the State Board of Education which are, at a minimum, the Sunshine State Standards for reading, writing, and mathematics.
 - 2. Minimum achievement rate of 60% on district established performance standards in reading, writing, and mathematics for each grade level, including levels of performance on statewide assessments.
 - 3. Students who do not meet the specific district levels of performance in reading, writing, and mathematics or who do not meet the specific level of performance on statewide assessments as determined by the Commissioner of Education will be provided remediation through:
 - a. Additional diagnostic assessments, determined by the district, to identify the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need; and
 - b. Implementation of an individual -- Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP).
 - 4. The individual Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) will provide for intensive remedial instruction in the areas of weakness through one or more of the following activities:
 - a. Implementation of programs or grade level configuration as prescribed by the principal and school staff
 - b. Summer school course work
 - c. Extended day services
 - d. Parent/volunteer tutorial program
 - e. Contracted academic services

- f. Exceptional student services
 - g. Suspension of curriculum other than reading, writing, and mathematics or any subject area included in statewide testing
5. Any student who has not met minimum state requirements on state assessments must continue remedial instruction until state expectations are met and documented.
 6. Students in grades K-3 will be regularly assessed for reading proficiency using the reading comprehension scores on a district approved standardized test or statewide assessment. If any K-3 student exhibits a reading deficiency, the parent shall be immediately notified of the student's deficiency with a description and explanation, in terms understandable to the parent, of the exact nature of the student's difficulty in learning and lack of achievement in reading; shall be consulted in the development of a detailed, progress monitoring plan (PMP), and shall be informed that the student will be given intensive reading instruction until the deficiency is corrected. The parent notification must also include the notice that his or her child has a substantial deficiency in reading, a description of the specific services that are provided to the child, a description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency, that if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3 the child must be retained unless exempt from mandatory retention for good cause, and strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency. The student must be given intensive reading instruction immediately following the identification of the reading proficiency. The student's reading proficiency will be reassessed at the beginning of the grade following the intensive reading instruction using a local assessment or teacher observation. The student will continue to be assessed and given intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.
 7. If a student scores below the district established levels of performance on state assessments in both reading (at or below the 25th percentile on reading comprehension) and writing (score of 2 or below) in grade 4, the student may be retained.
 8. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, if a student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at level 2 or higher on the grade 3 reading portion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), the student *must* be retained, unless exempted from mandatory retention for good cause. Students who are retained, and students needing remediation or intensive instructional support, will be matched to strategic and intensive instruction / interventions based on screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments.

9. The school district may exempt students in grade 3 who demonstrate a continued deficiency in reading from mandatory retention only for good cause. Requests for good cause exemptions for students from the mandatory retention requirement shall be made consistent with the following procedure. Documentation shall be submitted from the student's teacher to the school principal that indicates that the promotion of the student is appropriate and is based upon the student's academic record. In order to minimize paperwork requirements, such documentation shall consist only of the existing progress monitoring plan, individual education plan, if applicable, report card, or student portfolio. The principal shall review and discuss the recommendation with the teacher make the determination as to whether the student should be retained or promoted. If the school principal determines that the student should be promoted, the principal shall make such recommendation in writing to the district school superintendent. The superintendent shall accept or reject the principal's recommendation in writing. The good cause exemptions are now specified in state statute and are limited to the following:
- a. English language learners (ELLs) / limited English proficient students who have had less than two years of instruction in English for Speakers of Other Languages program.
 - b. students with disabilities, whose individual educational plan (IEP) indicates that participation in statewide assessment is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule.
 - c. students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education. For the 2006-2007 school year, the acceptable levels of performance on alternative assessments include a score on the 45th percentile or above on the NRT portion of the FCAT or a score on the 45th percentile or above on the parallel form of the SAT 10. If the SAT 9 is used as the alternative assessment, the cut score remains at or above the 51st percentile. There must be at least 30 days between administrations of the SAT 9 or SAT 10.
 - d. students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on FCAT. To be accepted as meeting the portfolio option for demonstrating mastery of the required reading skills, the student portfolio contents must contain a minimum of 5 reading assessments provided by the state on each of the benchmarks assessed by the Sunshine State Standard portion of the

grade 3 FCAT reading test and demonstrate proficiency by obtaining a grade of “c” or above on five (5) assessments for each benchmark. The student must also take the alternative reading assessment for use in determination of student progress. The portfolio will only be considered after the student has taken the alternative assessment given at the end of the summer reading camp. The student portfolio must meet the following requirements:

1. Be selected by the student’s teacher.
 2. Be an accurate picture of the student’s ability and include only student work that has been independently produced in the classroom.
 3. Include evidence of mastery of the benchmarks assessed by the Grade 3 Reading FCAT.
 4. Include evidence of beginning mastery of Grade 4 benchmarks that are assessed by the Grade 4 Reading FCAT. This includes multiple choice, short response, and extended response items and passages that are approximately 50% literary text and 50% percent information text and that are between 100 and 900 words with an average of 375 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district’s adopted core reading program or teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards. For each benchmark, there must be two examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of “C” or better.
 5. Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.
- e. students with disabilities who participate in FCAT and who have an individual educational plan or a Section 504 plan that reflects that they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and were previously retained in grades K, 1, 2, or 3.
- f. Third-grade students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but still have deficiency in reading and were previously retained in K, grade 1, or grade 2 for a total of two years. If promoted under this exemption, intensive reading instruction must include an altered instructional day based on an PMP that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies.

Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, (paragraphs g – o)

- g. The school district shall provide written notification to the parent of any third grade student who is retained that his or her child has not met requirement for promotion and the reasons the child is not eligible for a good cause exemption. The notification must comply with the provisions of s.1002.20(14) and must include a description of a proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.
- h. The district shall establish a Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative in order to prevent retention and to offer intensive accelerated reading instruction to grade 3 or grade 3+ students who failed to meet standards for promotion to grade 4, and to each K-3 student who is assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency. The READ Initiative shall: Be provided to all K-3 students at risk of retention as identified by an assessment system used in Reading First Schools that measures phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; be provided during regular school hours in addition to the regular reading instruction; and use a state-identified reading curriculum that has been reviewed by the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University and meets, at a minimum, the following specifications: Assists students assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency in developing the ability to read at grade level, provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, provides scientifically based and reliable assessment, provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress, is implemented during regular school hours, and provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in maintaining or meeting proficiency levels for the appropriate grade in all academic subjects.
- i. Third grade students who are retained must be provided intensive interventions in reading to ameliorate the specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment. The intensive interventions must include: effective instructional practices; participation in the district's summer reading camp; and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist those students in becoming successful readers, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the next grade.
- j. The school district shall conduct a review of PMP's for all retained third grade students who did not score above Level 1 on the FCAT Reading and did not meet one of the good cause exemptions, and shall address additional supports and services needed to remediate

the deficiency. The school district shall require a student portfolio to be completed for each retained third grade student.

- k. Retained third grade students must be provided with intensive instructional services and supports to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency including a minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically research-based reading instruction and other strategies, which may include, but are not limited to small group instruction; reduced teacher-student ratios; more frequent progress monitoring; tutoring or mentoring; transition classes containing 3rd and 4th grade students; extended school day, week, or year; and/or summer reading camps.
- l. A policy for the mid year promotion of any retained third grade student who can demonstrate that he or she is a successful and independent reader, reading at or above grade level, and is ready for promotion to grade 4 shall be established. Reevaluating any retained third grade student may include subsequent assessments, alternative assessments, and portfolio reviews in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. Students promoted during the school year after November 1 must demonstrate mastery of reading skills consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade as presented in the scope and sequence of the school district's core reading program. To promote a student mid-year using a student portfolio, there must be evidence of the student's mastery of third grade Sunshine State Standards for language arts and beginning mastery of the benchmarks for fourth grade. To promote a student mid-year using a locally selected standardized assessment, there must be evidence that the student scored at or above grade level in reading comprehension as demonstrated by standard scores or percentiles consistent with the month of promotion. Districts shall provide retained third grade students a high-performing teacher as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals.

Mid Year Promotion of Retained Third Graders

A student who is retained in third grade due to a reading deficiency, as required by Florida Statute 1008.25 (5) (b), may be promoted prior to the end of the first semester if he or she can demonstrate that:

1. He or she is a successful and independent reader as demonstrated by reading at or above grade level,
2. Has progressed sufficiently to master appropriate fourth grade reading skills, and

3. Has met all other requirements outlined in the district student progression plan.

Standards that provide a reasonable expectation that the student has met requirements of subparagraphs A-C of this policy include the mastery of reading skills, consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade, as presented in the scope and sequence of the district's core reading program. Evidence of mastery include the following:

1. Successful completion of portfolio elements (to be used in conjunction with other indicators of the student's reading level), or
 2. Satisfactory performance on a locally-selected standardized assessment.
- m. The school district shall, in addition to required reading enhancement and accelerated strategies, provide parents of a student to be retained at least one of the following instructional options: supplemental tutoring in research-based reading services; supplemental tutoring in scientifically research based reading services in addition to the regular reading block, a "Read at Home" plan outlined in a parental contract, including participation in "Families Building Better Readers Workshops" and regular parent-guided home reading; and/or a mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.
- n. The district shall establish at each applicable school an Intensive Acceleration Class (IAC) provided to any student in grade 3 who scored at Level 1 on the reading portion of the FCAT and who was retained in grade 3 in the prior year. The IAC must: have a reduced teacher-student ratio; provide uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of student contact time each day and incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 Sunshine State Standards in other core subject areas; use a reading program that is scientifically research-based and has proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year; provide research-based intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientifically research based program including use of a speech language therapist; and weekly progress monitoring measures to ensure progress is being made. The district shall report to the Department of Education, in the manner described by the department, the progress of students in the class at the end of the first semester.
- o. Retained third grade students who have received intensive instructional services but are still not ready for grade promotion

must be offered the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such a setting shall specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency.

- p. Student progression decisions consider the student's response to evidence-based instruction / interventions implemented with fidelity.
10. A student in grades other than the third grade may be exempted from retention by the Superintendent for good cause based on a recommendation from the student's principal. This exemption may include provisions for ESE, ESOL, prior retention, or other good cause.
 11. No student may spend more than six (6) years in grades K-3. Any student who has been retained for two or more years shall receive an appropriate alternative placement for the purpose of offering an accelerated curriculum and alternate learning strategies.
 12. The school district shall report to the State Board of Education, as requested, on the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented at the school district level. The Commissioner of Education shall annually prescribe the required components of requested reports.
 13. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
- B. Promotion Standards for kindergarten through grade five (5) shall include passing grades in at least four (4) subjects to include reading/language arts and mathematics. The reading/language arts requirement shall be determined by an average of all reading and language arts courses taken by a student.
- C. Promotion Standards for grades six (6), seven (7) and eight (8).
1. Passing grade in at least four (4) subjects, two (2) of which shall be language arts and mathematics and one (1) which shall be either science or social studies. A student whose Progress Monitoring Plan requires the suspension of required subject areas to provide intensive instruction in reading, writing, or mathematics may substitute the remedial course for the science or social studies requirement. Beginning with the 2007-08 school year, sixth and seventh grade students must successfully complete a minimum of 3 of the 4 academic courses to be promoted to the next grade level. Pending available funding, summer school credit recovery opportunities will be provided to help students meet this requirement.
 2. A course designated in the Florida Course Code Directory as grade 9-12 which is taken in grades 7-8 may be used to satisfy high school graduation

requirements or Florida Academic Scholars award requirements. The course shall also meet the annual standard requirement for promotion.

3. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who fail to meet the promotional requirements will be given the opportunity to attend summer school pending available funding. Resources for remedial and supplemental instruction will be allocated first to those students who are deficient in reading at the end of Grade 3 and then to those students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion.

III. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MIDDLE GRADE STUDENTS

- A. Beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2006–2007 school year, promotion from the eighth grade requires that the student must successfully complete academic courses as follows:
 1. Three (3) middle school or higher courses in English which emphasize literature, composition, and technical text.
 2. Three (3) middle school or higher courses in mathematics. Middle school students will have access to high school level mathematics courses while in grades 7 and 8.
 3. Three (3) middle school or higher courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.
 4. Three (3) middle school or higher courses in science.
 5. One course in career and education planning to be completed in 7th or 8th grade. The course may be taught by any member of the instructional staff. It must include career exploration using CHOICES for the 21st Century or a comparable cost-effective program and must include educational planning using the online student advising system known as Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS.ORG) and shall result in the completion of a personalized academic and career plan signed by the student's guidance counselor or academic advisor and the student's parent.
 6. Each elementary school in the district will hold a parent meeting either in the evening or on a weekend to inform parents about the course curriculum and activities.
- B. 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. Placement of Level 2 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be determined by diagnosis of reading needs. The reading courses shall be designed and offered

pursuant to the comprehensive reading program for the district. Reading intervention placement and progress monitoring three times per year must occur following the guidelines established in State Board Rule.

- C. For each year in which a student scores 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.
- D. Students in grade 6, 7, or 8 who are not enrolled in schools with a middle grades configuration are subject to the promotion requirements of this section.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

- A. The district will report annually to the parents or guardians of each student the student's progress toward achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics and the student's results on each statewide assessment test. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, the parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading will be notified in writing that his or her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading. The notice will also include the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports and the current services being used with the student. A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services that will be provided to the child that are designated to remediate the area of reading deficiency will also be included. The parent notice will include a notice that if the student's deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child will be retained unless he or she meets one of the good cause exemptions. Parents will be sent a list of strategies to use in helping their child reach reading proficiency and that the FCAT is not the sole determiner of promotion. Additional evaluations, assessments, and portfolio review may be used to determine if the student is reading at or above grade level. A copy of the district's mid year promotion policy including specific criteria will also be included in this notice.
- B. Parents shall be notified in writing at least by the beginning of the final grading period if it is apparent that the student may be retained. The opportunity for a conference with the teacher(s) or principal must be provided the parents of any child who may be retained.
- C. Parents will be informed at the mid-point of each nine (9) weeks grading period concerning the academic progress of the student in each subject area. Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format adopted by the district school board.
- D. The final decision concerning placement of students rests with the principal. The decision regarding retention or promotion of a student must be made at the end of the school year. Parents may appeal the decision through appropriate communication channels by contacting the office of the superintendent.

- E. The district school board must report to the parent the student's results on each statewide assessment test.

- F. Beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, the district school board must annually publish in the local newspaper, and report in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year, the following information on the prior school year:
 - 1. The provisions of this section related to public school student progression and the district school boards policies and procedures on student retention and promotion;
 - 2. By grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3 through 10 performing at levels 1 and 2 on the reading portion of the FCAT;
 - 3. By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades 3 through 10;
 - 4. Information on the total number of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category, of good cause as specified in state law;
 - 5. Any revisions to the district school board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year.

**PHASE III
HIGH SCHOOL**

**I. PROMOTION CRITERIA FOR GRADE NINE (9) THROUGH GRADE
TWELVE (12)**

- A. All ninth grade students must take the maximum number of subjects offered during the school day. Ninth grade students must take English, mathematics, science, and social studies. To achieve tenth grade status, a student must have accumulated five (5) credits and have a yearly 1.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
- B. All tenth grade students must take the maximum number of subjects offered during the school day. To achieve eleventh grade status, a student must have accumulated eleven (11) credits and have a yearly or a cumulative grade point average of 1.75 or above on a 4.0 scale.
- C. Eleventh grade students must take the maximum number of subjects offered during the school day. To achieve twelfth grade status, a student must have accumulated seventeen (17) credits including a minimum of two English, two mathematics, two science, and two social studies credits. Students must also have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale for courses taken in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. A final decision on promotion to the twelfth grade for those students who do not meet the stated requirements rests with the high school principal.
- D. Twelfth grade students should take the maximum number of subjects offered during the school day. To graduate, a student must earn a minimum of 24 credits as indicated in the chart below. A cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, for the credits required, is necessary for high school graduation. Students must earn a passing score on the grade 10 FCAT as defined in state statute or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT as defined by state statute.
- E. The district will assist students in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency. This assistance may include but is not limited to forgiveness policies, summer school, special counseling, volunteer and/or peer tutors, school-sponsored help sessions, homework hotlines, and study skills classes.
- F. Students who have made a grade of “D” or “F” in a **required** course may replace the grade with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. Students who have made a grade of “D” or “F” in an **elective** course may replace the grade with a grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently by retaking the same or comparable course or another course. Credit recovery programs may be used for this purpose. The only exception to this forgiveness policy shall be made for a student in the middle grades who takes any course for high school credit and earns a grade of “C”, “D”, or “F”. In such cases, the policy will allow the replacement of the grade with a grade of “C” or above earned

subsequently in the same or comparable course. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student's grade point average. **Any course grade not replaced according to this policy must be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation.** These provisions apply to those students entering grade nine in the 2000-2001 school year and each year thereafter. All forgiven courses and grades must be included on a student's transcript as an accurate reflection of the student's record of achievement.

- G. A certificate of completion will be awarded to a student who completes the minimum number of credits and other requirements set forth in Florida Statutes but who is unable to earn passing scores on the FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT, or complete all requirements in a student progression and remedial instruction, or achieve a cumulative grade point average of a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent. Any student who is entitled to a certificate of completion may elect to remain in the secondary school either as a full-time or part-time student for up to one (1) additional year and receive special instruction designed to remedy his or her identified deficiencies. A student who has received a certificate of completion who subsequently meets the requirements for a standard high school diploma shall be awarded a standard diploma whenever the requirements are completed. The awarding of a certificate of completion is limited to those students choosing the 24-credit general high school graduation program and is not applicable to the three-year graduation programs.
- H. Students in grades 9-12 must achieve at least 60% mastery of State Student Performance Standards for each academic course for which credit is awarded. Courses for credit must be listed in the State Course Code Directory. The school district maintains a one-half credit earned system that includes courses provided on a full year basis. One half credit shall be awarded if the student successfully completes either the first or the second half of a full year course but fails to successfully complete the other half. If the student successfully completes either the first or second half of a full-year course and the averaging of the grades in each half would result in a passing grade, the student must also meet the attendance requirement for the course.
- I. The 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. Exceptional students shall be afforded 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 performance standards as those required by non-exceptional students, or

2. Assignment of the exceptional student to a basic education class for instruction which is modified to accommodate the student's exceptionality.
3. The determination of which of these strategies to employ shall be based upon an assessment of the student's needs and shall be included in the student's individual education plan.
4. Modifications to courses shall not include modifications to the curriculum frameworks or student performance standards. Modifications to courses in exceptional student classes or in regular classes may include any of the following:
 - a. The instructional time may be increased or decreased.
 - b. Instructional strategies may be varied.
 - c. Special communication systems may be used by the teacher of the students.
 - d. Classroom and district test administration procedures and other evaluation procedures may be modified as specified in Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, to accommodate the student's disability.
5. A student may be awarded credit for less than 135 hours of instruction if he or she has demonstrated mastery of the course requirements and Sunshine State Standards as provided in the student progression plan. This includes awarding credit for courses taken in summer school, through performance based instruction, block scheduling, or course modifications that combine courses. The district school board must establish policies for these nontraditional programs and must verify student achievement of the course requirements in accordance with the state high school grading system. If a school combines two courses for multiple credit during a single instructional period, it is recommended that the combination be approved by the school board after analysis of the course modifications and assurance that the course requirements and appropriate Sunshine State Standards for each of the courses integrated are included in the combination and that the combined course is taught by instructors with appropriate certification.

II. REPORTING PROCEDURES

- A. Progress reports will be issued at mid-term of each grading period. Grade reports will be issued at the end of the grading period for each subject on a student's schedule. These will serve as notice of student performance in each subject area. Additionally, these reports shall serve as notification to the parent or guardian of each student in grades 9-12 who has a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of less than 0.5 above the cumulative GPA required for graduation that the student is

at risk of not meeting the requirements for graduation. These notices shall contain an explanation of the policies the district has in place to assist the student in meeting the GPA requirement. Parents shall contact the school for a conference in the event of unsatisfactory grades.

- B. 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 FCAT can serve as the assessment to meet this requirement.

III. INCORPORATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

District adopted student performance standards shall be utilized for all secondary credit courses as required by state statute. No student shall be granted credit unless he/she has mastered at least 60% of the student performance standards and satisfied other district and state requirements.

IV. SUBSTITUTION OF COURSES FOR THE NONELECTIVE COURSES REQUIRED FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

A. Vocational

1. A student in grades 9-12 who enrolls in and satisfactorily completes a job preparatory program may substitute credit for a portion of the required four (4) credits in English, three (3) credits in mathematics, and three (3) credits in science. The vocational credit substituted for preparatory program shall be on a curriculum equivalency basis as provided for in the Florida Course Code Directory and upon the school board's adoption of student performance standards and the course(s).
2. Vocational course(s) substitutes shall not exceed two (2) credits in each of the required academic subject areas of English, mathematics, and science. A vocational course which has been used as a substitute for a required academic credit in one subject area may not be used as a substitute for any other subject area.

B. Basic Education

1. Practical Arts. The practical arts graduation requirement may be fulfilled by any secondary or eligible postsecondary course in the Vocational Section of the Florida Course Code Directory, or by substituting one of the basic Computer Education courses or Journalism. Upon completion of the AFJROTC Program students may substitute on a curriculum equivalency basis one credit to satisfy the Practical Arts graduation requirement.
2. Science and Air Force JROTC. Upon completion of the JROTC Aerospace Science Program, including Aerospace Science I, II, and III, students may substitute on a curriculum equivalency basis one JROTC credit for Physical Science to satisfy one of the three requirements needed for graduation. The two other JROTC credits will be used to satisfy elective requirements. JROTC credits may only be substituted for either the practical arts or science requirement. A maximum of three (3) credits may be awarded for completion of the JROTC program.
3. Health and Air Force JROTC. Students who complete Leadership Education I (1800400) and Leadership Education II (1800410) may substitute one JROTC credit for 0.5 credits of Health-Life Management Skills (0800300) to satisfy the Life Management Skills requirement needed for graduation.

V. ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

- A. Attendance is required until a student's sixteenth birthday.

No student may be awarded credit if he/she has not been in class(es) for instruction for a minimum of 135 hours unless the student has demonstrated mastery of the student performance standards and has adhered to the high school attendance policy and procedures. This mastery includes courses taken in summer school through performance based instruction, block scheduling, or course modifications that combine courses.

- B. Excused absences as determined by the district school board and as carried out by the secondary school principal shall not be counted against the 135 hours minimum requirement.

Guidelines for excused absences include:

1. Verified medical excuses (doctor's notes, hospital stays, etc.)
2. Six days of absences excused with a parent's note per semester
3. Excused absences for all approved pre-arranged days out of school. This includes family trips and religious holidays.
4. Excused absences for death of immediate family members as documented by obituary, funeral programs, etc.

All notes from doctors, parents, hospital stays, and funeral notices must be turned in prior to the end of the nine weeks in which the absence occurs.

- C. When a student in grades 7-12 accumulates over 10 unexcused absences in a course within a semester, credit shall be withheld. Parents will be notified when the student accumulates 5 unexcused absences in a semester. The student will receive a grade of 50 for the semester. The report card will show current absences, first semester, and second semester absences. In a year long course, if a student fails a semester because of attendance but passes the other semester, then the two semesters will be averaged to determine if credit for the course will be awarded for the entire year.
- D. If extended illnesses will be in excess of three weeks, parents must notify guidance in order to apply for homebound instruction.
- E. Work students must be in attendance in order to receive work hours' credit for that day.
- F. A student who has 15 unexcused absences within any 90 calendar days shall be considered truant and reported to proper authorities. The Department of Highway Safety may not issue and shall suspend any previously issued driver's license or learner's license for any such minor student.

- G. Any work missed by a student because of any unexcused absence may be made up for 75% credit. Out-of-school suspension absences will be considered unexcused. Students shall make up work at the teacher's discretion. Students will have the same period of time to submit make up work for an unexcused absence as for an excused absence.
- H. Students are not counted absent due to in-school-suspension or school sponsored activities.
- I. The School Board is authorized to establish requirements for high school graduation in excess of the minimum requirements. An increase in the academic credit or minimum grade point average requirements shall not apply to students in grades 9–12 at the time of the increase. Any increase in academic credit or minimum grade point average requirements must not apply to a student who earns credit toward graduation requirements for equivalent courses taken through dual enrollment.

VI. AUTHORIZED TIME FOR PROVIDING NONINSTRUCTIONAL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MINIMUM PERIOD OF INSTRUCTION

At the discretion of the secondary principal, the 15 hours, which is the difference between the 150 full credit definition and the 135 hour minimum requirement, may be used for noninstructional extracurricular activities. These may include, but not limited to, such activities as pep rallies, non-academic activities, special events, etc., that are approved by the secondary principal.

Should make-up work be required, students shall comply with the school's procedures for making up missed work.

VII. DETERMINATION OF MASTERY OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

A student will have demonstrated mastery of the student performance standards for a district approved course when through a combination of teacher observations, classroom assignments, and/or student assessment, it has been determined that a student has attained at least a passing score/grade of 60 percent for the course.

VIII. PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular student activities, a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 unweighted scale through the end of the previous semester as required by Florida Law. For sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, a participant must have been regularly promoted from the previous grade, carry a normal class load, do satisfactory classroom work, and maintain a satisfactory conduct record.

All students who participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities must maintain satisfactory conduct, and, if a student is convicted of, or is found to have committed a felony or a delinquent act which would have been a felony if committed by an adult, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld, the student's participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities is contingent upon established school board policy. Students must meet such other requirements for participation as may be established by the school district and the Florida High School Activities Association (FHSAA).

IX. DUAL CREDIT

- A. Students who satisfactorily complete approved college level dual enrollment courses listed in the *Florida Course Code Directory* shall receive both high school and college credit.
- B. High school courses taken in grade 8 and below and that are designated in the *Florida Course Code Directory* as grade 9-12 may be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements. The course shall also meet the annual requirements for promotion.

X. REMEDIAL OR COMPENSATORY COURSE FOR CREDITS

- A. The district will attempt to identify students in grades 9-12 who are earning grade point averages less than that required for graduation and to provide assistance to these students.
- B. Up to nine (9) remedial/compensatory courses listed in the *Florida Course Code Directory* may be used as elective credit for meeting graduation requirements. No more than one credit in exploratory vocational courses or three credits in practical arts family and consumer science classes may be granted toward high school graduation.
- C. Remedial and compensatory courses taken in grades 9–12 may only be counted as elective credit.
- D. No level 1 course may be used to meet graduation requirements unless the student's assessment indicates a more rigorous course would be inappropriate, in which case a written assessment of the need must be included in the individual education plan or student performance plan and signed by the principal, guidance counselor, and the parent if the student is not 18 years of age or older. The statement of appropriateness of the level 1 course may be placed in a progress monitoring plan (PMP) or in the student's cumulative folder to meet this requirement.

XI. ALTERNATIVES TO STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

- A. Students failing the FCAT will be remediated and/or retested at the same time designated by the state during the eleventh or twelfth grade or the summer following the twelfth grade. Seniors who have the required credits and GPA for graduation but do not have a passing score on the FCAT have the option to take either the ACT or SAT and obtain the required state passing scores. A student who elects to not take these alternative assessments or does not obtain the required scores may participate in graduation exercises and receive a certificate of completion. These students would be eligible to attend summer school and re-take the FCAT. Upon receipt of a passing score, the student could exchange the certificate for a high school diploma and would be allowed to participate in the next year's graduation program. No special notation will be used in the graduation program to designate students who receive a certificate of completion.
- B. The GED Exit Option is available to students whose class or the group with whom they entered kindergarten is graduating or has graduated, who have passed FCAT as a requirement for graduation, and demonstrated probability for success on the GED test may take the GED. Students who pass the GED will receive the State of Florida GED Diploma or the standard high school diploma.

XII. ADULT HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS

Eleventh and twelfth grade students will be allowed to earn up to two (2) credits toward graduation in the night school program. Adult high school credit is awarded on a pass ("C"/2.0) basis.

XIII. TRANSFER CREDITS

- A. All evidence of work or credits earned at another school, community college, or university offered for acceptance shall be based on an official transcript authenticated by the high school guidance department.
- B. Work or credits from another school, community college, or university shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if deemed necessary.
- C. Transfer credits from non-accredited private schools or from a home school program will only be accepted upon review by the high school principal to determine if the coursework matches a course in the State Course Code Directory. Evidence of student mastery must be provided in a portfolio which includes samples of student work, tests, or other materials used during the course.
- D. Requirements of the school shall not be retroactive for transfer students provided the student has met all requirements of the school district or state from which he or she is transferring. Students who enter a Florida public school at the eleventh or twelfth grade from out-of-state or from a foreign country shall not be required to spend additional time in a Florida public school in order to meet the high school course requirements for the school district, state, or country from which he

or she is transferring. Such students who are not proficient in English should receive immediate and intensive instruction in English language acquisition. However, to receive a standard high school diploma, a transfer student must earn a 2.0 grade point average and pass the grade 10 FCAT or alternative assessment as specified in state statute.

1. Students who have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the grade 10 FCAT or an alternative assessment by the end of grade 12 must be provided the opportunity to participate in an accelerated high school equivalency diploma preparation during the summer, upon receipt of a certificate of completion be allowed to take the Common Placement Test (CPT) and be admitted to the remedial or credit courses at a state community college as appropriate, or participation (if available) in an adult general education program as provided in state statute for such time as the student requires to master English, reading, mathematics, or any other subject required for high school graduation. Students attending adult basic, adult secondary, or vocational-preparatory instruction are exempt from any requirement for payment of tuition and fees, including lab fees. A student attending an adult general education program shall have the opportunity to take the grade 10 FCAT an unlimited number of times in order to receive a standard high school diploma.
2. Students who have been enrolled in an ESOL program for less than two school years and have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the grade 10 FCAT or alternative assessment may receive immersion English language instruction during the summer following the senior year. Students receiving such instruction are eligible to take the FCAT or alternate assessment and receive a standard high school diploma upon passage of the grade 10 FCAT or the alternate assessment. This shall be implemented to the extent funding is provided in the General Appropriations Act.
3. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for notifying all students of the consequences of failure to receive a standard diploma, including the potential ineligibility for financial assistance at postsecondary educational institutions.

XIV. DUAL ENROLLMENT GRADES 9-12 WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES AND ACCELERATED GRADUATION OPTIONS

- A. At the beginning of each school year parents of students in or entering high school must be notified of the opportunity and benefits of advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, dual enrollment, and Florida Virtual School Courses when the program is available within the district. The dual enrollment program is defined as the enrollment of an eligible secondary student or home education student in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and a career and technical

certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree. An eligible secondary student is a student who is enrolled in a Florida public secondary school or in a Florida private secondary school which is in compliance with state statute. Students enrolled in postsecondary instruction that is not creditable toward the high school diploma shall not be classified as dual enrollments. Students who are eligible for dual enrollment shall be permitted to enroll in dual enrollment courses conducted during school hours, after school hours, and during the summer term. Vocational-preparatory instruction, college-preparatory instruction, and other forms of precollegiate instruction, as well as physical education courses that focus on the physical execution of a skill rather than the intellectual attributes of the activity, are ineligible for the inclusion in the dual enrollment program. Recreation and leisure studies courses shall be evaluated individually in the same manner as physical education courses for potential inclusion in the program.

- B. Students in grades 9-12 who are dually enrolled in approved college level courses may earn credit toward both a high school diploma and an associate or baccalaureate degree. Students must be awarded credit toward high school graduation requirements for courses taken through dual enrollment as identified in state statute. All dual enrollment courses will receive weighting equivalent to advanced placement courses when calculating GPA unless otherwise mandated by state guidelines.
- C. No student receiving instruction under the provision of dual enrollment shall be charged registration, matriculation, textbook, or tuition fees. An entrance examination score is required by colleges and universities.
- D. For admission of 9-12 students into the dual enrollment program, the administration of the program and implementation of the program shall comply with state statute and the terms of the agreement between the Hamilton County School Board and the community college or university.
- E. All students making application for dual enrollment programs must have prior approval of the principal or his/her designee.
- F. The following guidelines are the conditions for dual enrollment in the program as adopted by the State Board of Education:
 - 1. Student qualifications to be enrolled in dual enrollment courses include the demonstration of a readiness for college-level coursework if the student is enrolled in college courses, readiness for career-level coursework if the student is to be enrolled in career courses, and in addition to the common placement examination scores necessary for enrollment in dual enrollment courses the student must have a 3.0 unweighted GPA for college credit and a 2.0 unweighted GPA for career certificate dual enrollment courses. Any other qualifications required by the community college must be included in the interinstitutional articulation agreement developed to ensure student readiness for postsecondary instruction. These additional requirements shall not arbitrarily prohibit students who have demonstrated

the ability to master advanced courses from participating in dual enrollment courses.

2. A student must clear community college courses for dual enrollment credit in advance with the Hamilton County High School guidance department chairperson. Prerequisite courses in English and mathematics may be required. ACT minimum test scores of 17 in English, 18 in reading, and 19 in mathematics, or a minimum score of 440 on both the verbal and mathematics portions of the SAT are required for admittance into the dual enrollment program. If the student takes the CPT (College Placement Test), he or she must score a minimum of 83 on the reading and English sections and 72 on the mathematics section of the test.
3. A student will reduce his/her high school course load to correspond with the number of college level courses taken. Students are required to take a minimum of one (1) block/period on the high school campus with an additional (1) block/period given for travel. The total weekly hours of instruction must be a minimum of 25 hours combined between the college and high school.
4. A student is required to exit campus at times when he/she is not in an assigned class at Hamilton County High School unless prior agreement is made with the principal or his/her designee.
5. All Hamilton County High School rules, policies, and procedures are in effect for courses taken in the dual enrollment program.
6. The enrollment form must be signed by the student, parent, guidance department chairperson, and principal.
7. Career dual enrollment shall be provided as a curricular option for secondary students to pursue in order to earn a series of elective credits toward the high school diploma. Career dual enrollment shall be available for secondary students seeking a degree or certificate from a complete career-preparatory program and shall not be used to enroll students in isolated career courses.
8. All secondary school students shall be informed of dual enrollment as an educational option and mechanism for acceleration. Students shall be informed of eligibility criteria, the option for taking dual enrollment courses beyond the regular school year, and the minimum academic credits required for graduation. The demand of dual enrollment and other advanced courses shall be annually assessed and the school board shall consider strategies and programs to meet the demand and include access to dual enrollment on the high school campus whenever possible. Alternative grade calculation, weighted systems, or information regarding student education options which discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.

- G. The school district, community college, or state university may conduct advanced placement instruction within dual enrollment courses. Each joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course shall be incorporated within and subject to the provisions of the district interinstitutional articulation agreement. The agreement shall certify that each joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course integrates, at a minimum, the course structure recommended by the College Board and the structure that corresponds to the common course number. Students enrolled in a joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course may be funded either by dual enrollment or advanced placement formula but not both. The postsecondary credit for a joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course shall be awarded as either dual enrollment or advanced placement credit, based on student preference. An award of advanced placement credit must be limited to students who score a minimum of 3 on a 5-point scale on the Advanced Placement Examination. No student shall claim double credit based on the completion of a single joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course, nor shall any student be required to complete the Advanced Placement Examination.
- H. Students who enter grade 9 in the 2006-2007 school year and thereafter may select, upon consent required by this section, one of the three graduation options listed in the following sections:
1. Completion of the general 24 credits for high school graduation as specified in Florida State Statute.
 2. Completion of a three-year college preparatory program requiring successful completion of a minimum of 18 academic credits in grades 9 through 12. For students who chose this option in 2004-2005 or 2005-2006 school years, at least 6 of the 18 credits required for completion of this program must be received in classes that are honors, dual enrollment, advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, specifically listed or identified by the Department of Education as rigorous or weighted by the district school board for ranking purposes. For students who choose this option in the 2006-2007 school year and thereafter, at least 6 of the 18 credits required for completion of this program must be received in classes that are in the International Baccalaureate Program, the Advanced Placement Program, dual enrollment, Advanced International Certificate of Education, or specifically listed or identified by the Department of Education as rigorous pursuant to state statute. The 18 primary credits required for completion of this program shall be distributed as follows:
 - 4 credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature
 - 3 credits in mathematics at Algebra I level or higher from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission

- 3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component
 - 3 credits in social sciences which must include one credit in American history, one credit in world history, one-half credit in American government, and one-half credit in economics
 - 2 credits in the same second language unless the student is a native speaker of or can otherwise demonstrate competency in a language other than English. If the student demonstrates competency in another language, the student may replace the language requirement with two credits in other academic courses
 - 3 credits in electives (All 18 credits required for the three year college preparatory program, including three electives, must satisfy the course distribution requirements for state university admissions)
3. Completion of three-year career preparatory program requiring successful completion of a minimum of 18 academic credits in grades 9 through 12. The 18 primary credit requirements shall be distributed as follows:
- 4 credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature
 - 3 credits in mathematics, one of which must be Algebra I
 - 3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component
 - 3 credits in social sciences, which must include one credit in American history, one credit in world history, one-half credit in American government, and one-half credit in economics
 - 3 credits in a single vocational or career education program, 3 credits in career and technical certificate dual enrollment courses, or 5 credits in vocational or career education courses
 - 2 credits in electives unless 5 credits are earned pursuant to state statute. Any student who selected an accelerated graduation program before July 1, 2004, may continue that program, and all statutory requirements that were applicable when the student made the program choice shall remain applicable to the student as long as the student continues that program.

- I. Students pursuing accelerated three-year high school graduation options, college or career preparatory programs, are required to earn passing scores on the FCAT as defined in state statute and achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by the chosen accelerated three-year high school graduation option.
- J. Students who chose an accelerated graduation option in 2006-2007 and thereafter must prior to selecting an option meet along with their parent(s) with designated school personnel to receive an explanation of the relative requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of each program option, and the school must also receive written consent from the student's parent.
- K. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, the school district shall provide each student in grades 6-9 and their parents with information concerning the three-year and four-year high school options including the respective curriculum requirements for those options, so that the students and their parents may select the program that best fits their needs. This information shall include a timeframe for achieving each graduation option.
- L. The selection of one of the graduation options must be completed by the student prior to the end of grade 9 and is exclusively up to the student and parent, subject to the requirements of state statute. If a student enters the public school system after grade 9 upon transfer from a private school or another state or who was prevented from choosing a graduation option due to illness shall have until the end of the first semester of grade 10 to choose an option. If the student and parent fail to select a graduation option, the student shall be considered to have selected the 24 general requirements for high school graduation.
- M. The Hamilton School District shall not establish requirements for accelerated three-year high school graduation options in excess of the requirements of state statute for the three-year standard college preparatory program or three-year career preparatory program.
- N. Students that are pursuing accelerated three-year high school graduation options (college or career) are required to meet the following guidelines:
 - 1. Earn passing scores on the FCAT as defined in state statute or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on FCAT as defined in state statute.
 - 2. Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale (for students entering ninth grade in 2006-2007) or its equivalent in the courses required for the college preparatory accelerated three-year high school graduation option.
 - 3. Achieve a cumulative grade point average 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent in the courses required for the career preparatory accelerated three-year high school graduation option.

4. The GPA for a three-year graduation plan is calculated on the specific eighteen credits required to graduate. Students who chose the college preparatory accelerated graduation program in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
5. Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points or its equivalent to earn credit toward the 18 credits required for the college preparatory accelerated three-year program.
6. Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points, or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the career preparatory accelerated three-year program.
7. At the end of grade 10 if a student is not on track to meet the credit, assessment, or grade point average requirements of the accelerated graduation option selected, the school shall notify the parent of the requirements the student is not currently meeting, the specific performance necessary in grade 11 for the student to meet the accelerated graduation requirements, and the right of the student to change to the four-year program defined above.
8. A student who has selected one of the accelerated three-year programs shall automatically move to the four-year program if the student exercises his or her right to change to the four-year program, fails to earn five 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, or by the end of grade 11 does not meet the requirements of the accelerated graduation option selected.
9. A student who meets all requirements of an accelerated graduation option shall be awarded a standard diploma in a form prescribed by the State Board of Education. Students selecting one of the three-year graduation options shall have the same opportunities as students graduating in the four-year program including eligibility for valedictorian, salutatorian, Talented 20, and Bright Futures. However, if a student in a three-year program qualifies for valedictorian or salutatorian, they will be recognized in addition to the valedictorian or salutatorian of the four-year program.

XV. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL

- A. No student may be issued a regular diploma who has not met the requirements for graduation as herein prescribed:

Class of	Eng.	Math	Sci.	Soc. Stud.	PE	Fine Arts Voc.	Health	Electives	Total Credits for Grad.
2006-2010	4	3	3	3	1	1	.5	8.5	24
2011-	4	4	3	3	1	1 Fine Arts or approved Practical Arts Class	0	8 credits in Major and Minor Electives	24

1. A minimum of twenty four (24) academic credits shall be earned in grades 9-12 through applied, integrated, and combined courses approved by the Department of Education.

2. The following courses or subjects shall be required:

Sixteen (16) core curriculum credits:

- a. English
 - 4 credits (with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature)
- b. Mathematics
 - 4 credits (one of the four required credits must be in Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics course) Incoming 9th graders prior to the 2007-08 school year will be required to have three (3) credits in Mathematics.
- c. Science
 - 3 credits (2 of which must have a laboratory component. Agriscience Foundations I may count as 1 of the science credits)
- d. Social Studies

- 3 credits (to consist of 1 credit in American History, including the study of African-American history, the Holocaust, flag education, and other requirements as specified by F.S. 233.061; 1 credit in World History, including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major political systems; 0.5 credit in American Government, with curriculum including the study of the Constitution of the United States, Florida government, the State Constitution, the three branches of state government, and municipal and county government; 0.5 credit in Economics, including a comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major economic systems)
- e. Practical / Performing Fine Arts
- Beginning with students entering their first year of high school in the 2007-08 school year, one credit in performing or fine arts, speech and debate, or a practical arts course that incorporates artistic content and techniques of creativity, interpretation, and imagination. Eligible practical arts courses shall be identified through the Course Code Directory.
- f. Physical Education, Life Management Skills or Health
- 0.5 credit in life management skills to include consumer education, positive emotional development, marriage and relationship skill-based education, nutrition, parenting skill, 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, CPR, drug education, and the hazards of smoking.– Beginning with incoming 9th graders for the 2007-08 school year, the ½ credit in Life Management will no longer be required..
 - One credit in physical education to include integration of health. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons will be required to satisfy the one credit requirement of physical education if the student passes a competency test on personal fitness with a “C” or better grade. The competency test will be developed by the Department of Education.

- Students shall not be required to take one credit in physical education during the ninth grade year. The only approved waiver from the State of Florida for the state required elective half-credit in physical education is by completing, with a grade of "C" or better, a band course or physical activity course 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 arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under and individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Completion of 2 years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class, a significant component of which is drills, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under and individual education plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan.
- Fine Arts – 1 Credit --Incoming 9th grade students will be required to have one (1) credit in Fine Arts i.e. Drama, Art, Music.

g. Electives

- 8.5 credits for the Classes of 2005, 2006, and thereafter one (1) full credit is required for graduation. All credits counted as elective credit must be listed in the *Florida Course Code Directory*.
- The School Board may award a maximum of one-half credit in social studies and one-half credit elective for student completion of nonpaid voluntary community or school service work. Students must complete a minimum of 75 hours of service in either category. Credit may not be awarded for service provided as a result of court action. The high school principal is responsible for approving specific volunteer activities. Credit for high school graduation may be earned for volunteer activities and nonacademic activities that have been approved by the State Board of Education.

3. Successful completion of academic credit or curriculum requirements of Florida Statutes including:

- a. Earning passing scores on the FCAT, as defined by state statute or on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT;

2005-2008 Concordant Scores

Assessment	Reading	Mathematics
FCAT	1926	1889
SAT	410	370
ACT	15	15

- b. Completion of all other applicable requirements prescribed by the district school board as specified in Florida statute;
- c. Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent in the courses required in this section:
 - Indicates that a student who meets all requirements prescribed in the above section shall be awarded a standard diploma in a form prescribed by the school board as prescribed by the State Board of Education.

B. Beginning with students entering their first year of high school in the 2007-2008 school year, graduation requires the successful completion of a minimum of 24 credits, an International Baccalaureate curriculum, or an Advanced International Certificate of Education certificate. Students will be advised of their eligibility requirements for state scholarship programs and postsecondary admissions. The 24 credits may be earned through applied, integrated, and combined courses approved by the Department of Education and shall be distributed as follows:

1. Sixteen (16) core curriculum credits to include:
 - a. Four (4) credits in English, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature.
 - b. Four (4) credits in mathematics, one of which must be Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics course.
 - c. Three (3) credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component.
 - d. Three (3) credits in social studies as follows: one credit in American history; one credit in world history; one-half credit in economics; and one-half credit in American government.

- e. One (1) credit in performing fine arts, speech and debate, or a practical arts course that incorporates artistic content and techniques of creativity, interpretation, and imagination. Eligible practical arts courses shall be identified through the Course Code Directory.

- f. One (1) credit in physical education to include integration of health. 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. The district may not require that one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of one semester with a grade of “C” or better in a marching band class, 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 arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for the adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Completion of 2 years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class, a significant component of which is drills, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under and individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

2. Eight (8) credits in majors, minors, or electives to include:
 - a. Four (4) credits in a major area of interest, such as sequential courses in a career and technical program, fine and performing arts, or academic content area selected by the student as part of their educational plan. Students may revise major areas of interest each year as a part of annual course registration processes and should update their educational plan to reflect such revisions. Changing a major area of interest during an academic year does not obligate the district to change a student's schedule for the current school year. Annually by October 1, the district school board shall approve major areas of interest and submit the list of majors to the Commissioner of Education for approval. Each major area or interest shall be deemed approved unless specifically rejected by the commissioner within 60 days. Upon approval, each district's major areas of interest shall be available for use by all school districts and shall be posted on the Department's Web site. Beginning with the 2007-08 school year, all ninth grade students will be required to complete an ePEP (electronic Personal Education Planner). Students will update the ePEP at least annually until graduation.
 - b. Four (4) credits in elective courses selected by the student as part of their educational plan. These credits may combine to allow a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest, elective courses, intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses, or credit recovery courses. Minor areas of interest composed of three (3) credits selected by the student as part of their educational plan. Elective courses are selected by the student in order to pursue a complete education program and to meet eligibility requirements for scholarships. For each year in which a student scores Level 1 on FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year. Placement of Level 2 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be determined by diagnosis of reading needs. Reading courses shall be designed and offered pursuant to the comprehensive reading plan for the district. Reading intervention placement and progress monitoring three times per year must occur following the guidelines established in State Board Rule. For each year in which a student scores Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year. These courses may be taught through applied, integrated, or combined courses and are subject to approval by the State Department of Education for inclusion in the Course Code Directory. Credit recovery courses shall be offered so that students can simultaneously earn an elective credit and the recovered credit.

- C. The Superintendent shall file with the Florida Department of Education the school board's duly adopted requirements for graduation from high school.
- D. In the event of the death of a member of the high school senior class, the high school principal is authorized to award an honorary diploma or certificate of completion posthumously to said senior's family. The awarding of an honorary diploma or certificate of completion under these conditions may be accomplished during the regular graduation exercises or any time thereafter.
- E. In order for an honorary diploma to be awarded posthumously, the following conditions must have been met:
 - 1. The senior must have passed the required state assessment test.
 - 2. The senior must have been maintaining a passing grade in locally required courses for graduation.
- F. In order for a certificate of completion to be awarded posthumously, the senior must have been maintaining a passing grade in all locally required courses for graduation.

XVI. GRADUATION FROM EARLY ADMISSION AND ADVANCED STUDIES PROGRAMS

- A. Any student recommended for admission to the early admission and advanced studies program, as provided in Section 6A-1.095(2) of State Board of Education Regulations, shall have a superior academic record of B or better (3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale) and shall be recommended by the principal, guidance department chairperson, and the superintendent for admission to such program. No student shall be admitted to the advanced studies program without the approval of the school board in formal session.
- B. The student must have been accepted by a postsecondary institution authorized by Florida Law or accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools after satisfactory completion of twenty (20) credits after having passed the FCAT (HSCT).
- C. When the above stated conditions have been met, the student may be awarded a diploma of graduation with his or her regular class or at a time convenient to the principal, provided that:
 - 1. The student has completed two (2) college semesters or equivalent with normal class load and maintained at least a C average or equivalent, or
 - 2. The student has earned sufficient college credits to fulfill graduation requirements as specified by the school board.

XVII. GRADUATION HONORS

- A. Honors, foreign languages, pre-calculus, and calculus courses will receive a weighted evaluation for the grade point average to determine class rank. Weighted classes will be given an additional quality point if the course is passed (A - 5 points, B - 4 points, C - 3 points, and D - 2 points). Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses will receive 2 additional quality points if the course is passed. The dual enrollment change to an additional quality point will become effective with dual enrollment courses earned by students in the class of 2010 and thereafter.
- B. Honor graduates will be chosen for class rank on a four or five (weighted classes) quality point scale from all courses taken in grades 9-12. The rank will be calculated after the third nine weeks grades are issued and will include all dual enrollment final grades for the second semester and third nine weeks grades. Honor graduates will be announced at honors night. The Talented 20 designations will be given to those students whose cumulative GPA ranks in the top twenty percent of qualified students.
- C. Students with a grade point average of 4.0 or above will graduate summa cum laude; 3.5 to 3.999 magna cum laude; and 3.3 to 3.499 cum laude. Students selected to participate in graduation exercises will be the top ten with a minimum of 3.5 to be included in this group. If more than 10 students have a GPA of 4.0 or above, all of these students will be included on the program. A valedictorian and salutatorian will be identified by the highest and second highest weighted grade point average. To qualify for either of these two honors, a student must be enrolled at Hamilton County High School in the senior class for the entire year.
- D. Beginning with the Class of 2004, for a student to be considered for the summa cum laude and magna cum laude honors, he/she must take the academic courses to be considered for the Florida Scholars' awards. These include the following:
- 4 English (3 with substantial writing)
 - 3 Mathematics (Algebra I and above)
 - 3 Natural Science (2 with substantial lab)
 - 3 Social Science
 - 2 Foreign Languages (in the same language)

Students must also earn the minimum score on each subsection of the CPT, SAT, or ACT. Minimum scores are:

CPT: Reading 83	SAT: Verbal 440	ACT: English 17
Sentence Skills 83	Math 440	Reading 18
Algebra 72		Math 19

Students who do not meet the requirements to be considered for summa cum laude or magna cum laude honors will be recognized as cum laude graduates.

- E. Beginning with the Class of 2004, the following scale will be used to designate honor graduates:

Summa Cum Laude	4.0 GPA and above
Magna Cum Laude	3.75 - 3.999 GPA
Cum Laude	3.50 - 3.749 GPA

Grade point averages will be calculated by the MIS system in use by the Hamilton School District to four (4) decimal places with no rounding.

XVIII INTERINSTITUTIONAL ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

- A. The Superintendent and President of North Florida Community College shall jointly develop and implement a comprehensive articulated acceleration program for district students enrolled in the community college's program. An articulation committee shall be established for the purpose of developing this agreement.
- B. The district interinstitutional articulation must be completed before the high school registration for the fall term of the following school year. The agreement must include, but is not limited to the following:
1. Ratification of all existing articulation agreements
 2. Delineation of courses and programs available to students eligible to participate in dual enrollment. This delineation must include a plan for the community college to provide guidance services to participating students on the selection of courses in the dual enrollment program. The plan must assure that each dual enrollment student is encouraged to identify a postsecondary education objective with which to guide the course selection. At a minimum, each student's plan should include a list of courses that will result in the Applied Technology Diploma, An Associate in Science degree, or an Associate in Arts degree. If the student identifies a baccalaureate degree as the objective, the plan must include courses that will meet the general education requirements and any prerequisite requirements for entrance into a selected baccalaureate degree program.
 3. Delineation of the process by which students and their parents are informed about opportunities to participate in articulated acceleration programs
 4. Process by which students and their parents exercise their option to participate in an articulated acceleration program

5. High school credits earned for completion of dual enrollment course
6. Postsecondary courses that meet the criteria for inclusion in the district articulated acceleration program to be counted toward meeting graduation requirements of state statute.
7. Eligibility criteria for student participation in dual enrollment courses and programs
8. Institutional responsibilities regarding student screening prior to enrollment and monitoring student performance subsequent to enrollment in dual enrollment courses and programs
9. Identify the instructional quality criteria dual enrollment courses and programs that are to be judged and a delineation of institutional responsibilities for the maintenance of instructional quality
10. Delineate instructional responsibilities for assuming the cost of dual enrollment courses and programs including responsibilities for student instructional materials
11. Responsibility for providing student transportation of the dual enrollment is conducted at a facility other than the high school campus
12. Process for converting college credit hours earned through dual enrollment and early admission programs to high school credit based on mastery of course outcomes

XIX ARTICULATED ACCELERATION MECHANISMS

- A. The articulated acceleration shall be available and will serve to shorten the time necessary for a student to complete the requirements associated with a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree, broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, or increase the depth of study available for a particular subject. This shall include but not be limited to dual enrollment, early admission, advanced placement, credit by examination, the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, and the Advanced International Certificate of Education Program. Credit earned through the Florida Virtual School shall provide additional opportunities for early graduation and acceleration.
- B. Home education students may participate in dual enrollment, career and technical dual enrollment, early admission, and credit by association. Credit earned by home education students through dual enrollment shall apply toward the completion of a home education program that meets the requirements of state statute.

- C. Early admission shall be in the form of dual enrollment through which eligible secondary students enroll in a postsecondary institution in courses that are creditable toward the high school diploma and the associate or baccalaureate degree. Students enrolled are exempt from the payment of registration, matriculation, and lab fees.
- D. Advanced placement (AP) is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student in a course offered by the Advanced Placement Program administered by the College Board. Postsecondary credit for an AP course shall be awarded to students who score a minimum of 3 on a 5-point scale on the corresponding AP exam. Students shall be exempt from the payment of any fees for administration of the examination regardless of whether or not the student achieves a passing score on the examination.
- E. Credit by examination shall be the program through which postsecondary credit is earned based on the receipt of a specified minimum score on nationally standardized general or subject area examinations. The State Board of Education states minimum scores required for an award of credit in the statewide articulation agreement.
- F. International Baccalaureate (IB) is the curriculum whereby students are enrolled in a program of studies offered through the IB Program administered by the IB office. The State Board of Education has established rules that specify the cutoff scores and IB Examination that will be used to grant postsecondary credit at community colleges and universities. Students shall be awarded a maximum of 30 semester credit hours. Students shall be exempt from payment of any fees for administration of the examinations regardless of whether or not the student achieves a passing score on the examination.
- G. The Advanced International Certificate of Education Program (AICE) and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (pre-AICE) Program shall be the curricula in which eligible secondary students are enrolled in programs of study offered through the AICE Program or the pre-AICE Program administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. The State Board of Education shall establish rules, which specify the cutoff scores and the AICE examinations which will be used to grant postsecondary credit, shall apply to students taking AICE examinations after such rules are adopted by the State Board of Education. Any such rules, which have the effect of raising the required cutoff score or changing the AICE examinations which will be used to grant postsecondary credit, shall apply to students taking AICE examinations after such rules are adopted by the State Board of Education. Students shall be awarded a maximum of 30 semester credit hours. The specific course for which a student receives such credit shall be determined by the community college or university that accepts the student for admission. Students enrolled in either program of study shall be exempt from the payment of any fees for administration of the examinations regardless of whether the student achieves a passing score on the examination.

- H. Any student who earns 9 or more credits from one or more of the acceleration mechanisms provided for in this section is exempt from any requirement of a public postsecondary educational institution mandating enrollment during a summer term.

**PHASE IV
ADULT SCHOOL**

I. ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

- A. Adult students shall complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) credits and shall pass the FCAT. Students failing the FCAT shall be provided remediation until the FCAT is passed or a certificate of completion is issued.
- B. Student progression shall be measured either via satisfactory completion of course work requirements or by satisfactory meeting the criteria prescribed by 6A-6.021, SBER, to qualify for a state high school equivalency diploma. Sunshine State Standards for Florida schools in reading, writing, and mathematics will serve as course standards for adult school.
- C. No student may be graduated at an earlier date than on which he would normally have been graduated through regular attendance in the high school.
- D. No student may be awarded credit if he/she has not been in class(es) for instruction for a minimum of 135 hours unless the student has demonstrated mastery of the student performance standards for the course of study.

II. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR HAMILTON COUNTY ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

- A. Successful completion of a minimum of twenty-four (24) credits in grades 9 through 12 shall be required for graduation. These requirements shall be in effect as long as Florida law mandates. The course requirements shall be distributed as follows:

Course	Credits	
English	4.0	(major concentration in composition and literature)
Mathematics	3.0	
Science	3.0	(two of which must have a lab component – may be waived if facilities are not available)
American History	1.0	
American Government	0.5	
World History	1.0	
Economics	0.5	
Practical Arts or Exploratory Vocational	0.5	
Performing Fine Arts	0.5	(Any course listed within the Course Code Directory in the areas of art, drama, dance or music may be taken to satisfy the

	credit in performing arts required for high school graduation)
Life Management Skills	0.5
Physical Education or Elective	0.5
Elective/Other Credits	9.0
Total	24.0

B. In addition to granting credit for completing prescribed course requirements for graduation from adult high school, credit may be granted to students in the adult high school for the following educational experiences in the armed forces of the United States:

1. Two (2) units of elective subject, recorded as military training, may be granted to any individual who has service in the U.S. armed forces. No person who has received an unfavorable discharge from the armed services shall be eligible for such credit.
2. Correspondence courses in high school subjects taken under the auspices of the United States Armed Forces Institute will be accepted for credit provided bona fide certificates of course completion are presented showing the necessary information for the proper evaluation of the credit to be awarded.
3. Organized courses of instruction completed in special schools operated by the armed forces will be accepted for credit provided that documentary evidence of course completion is submitted and provided further that the amount of credit awarded in each case shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the American Council of Education.

C. All graduation requirements set forth by Florida Statutes and State Board Regulations shall be adhered to including mastery of the performance standards for each course, and of state student performance standards assessment testing, and any restrictions or additions relating to curriculum requirements.

III. HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA (GED - GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT TEST)

A. As provided by Florida law, candidates for a high school equivalency diploma shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age on the date of the examination except under extraordinary circumstances sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) year olds may be permitted to take the GED.

1. Extraordinary circumstances wherein sixteen and seventeen year olds may be permitted to take the GED are defined as follows:

- a. Need for full-time employment due to serious illness or death of a family member who provided economic support
 - b. Marriage
 - c. Pregnancy
 - d. Immediate need for high school diploma for exceptional employment or academic opportunity
 - e. Military service
 - f. A sixteen or seventeen year old who has been counseled along with the parents or guardian and still refuses to attend regular high school and withdraws may be permitted to take the GED test provided he or she enrolls in the adult education program and takes the GED Review and High School Review Courses.
2. Candidates who are sixteen or seventeen years old shall reside or attend school in the district in which the examination is administered unless permission is granted by the superintendent of schools in the candidate's district of residence.
 3. The sixteen or seventeen year old candidate and the parent or guardian shall agree to attend a career conference with the high school guidance counselor.
 4. The final approval for sixteen or seventeen year olds to take the test shall be made by the superintendent or his designee.
- B. Students sixteen years of age or older who are enrolled in the regular day program of the high school may be eligible for the GED Exit Option program.
 - C. The adult education director or such person as the superintendent may designate may administer the GED in accordance with Florida Statutes.
 - D. The GED test shall be administered two-four times based on demand each school year if the district is an approved testing site. Students will be given information concerning area testing sites including times and dates for testing.
 - E. A candidate who fails to attain the required minimum scores on the initial GED testing may retake the tests at any subsequent testing session. After the second testing, a candidate shall be eligible to retake the tests at any subsequent session if an overall minimum standard score is achieved as set by the GED Testing Program. A candidate who fails to meet the minimum standard score shall not be eligible to retake the tests for a period of six (6) months.

**PHASE V
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT**

I. GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT PROGRESSION DECISIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

- A. Diploma Competencies. This plan will ensure that students in special education who receive a standard diploma will attain equivalent minimum competencies prescribed for regular education students and that students receiving other than a standard diploma or certificate of completion will attain an acceptable level of competency.

This document applies only to those students who have met the criteria and have been staffed into an Exceptional Student Education Program. Placement into an Exceptional Student Education Program is in accordance with State Statute 230.23, State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.03411, and local rules and procedures as reflected in the Special Program and Procedures Document for Hamilton County.

- B. Categorical Exceptional Student Education Programs
- Mentally Handicapped (*Educable Mentally Handicapped, Trainable Mentally Handicapped, Profoundly Mentally Handicapped*)
 - Emotionally Handicapped
 - Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - Physically Impaired (*orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, traumatic brain injury*)
 - Speech Impaired/Language Impaired
 - Specific Learning Disabilities
 - Profoundly Handicapped (*Profoundly Mentally Handicapped, Autistic, Dual Sensory Impaired, Severely Emotionally Disturbed*)
 - Homebound or Hospitalized
 - Visually Impaired

II. STUDENT PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

- A. Individual Educational Plan

Each student placed into an exceptional student program shall have an Individual Educational Plan, which is reviewed and updated at least annually. “The term ‘individual educational plan’ or ‘IEP’ means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section and that includes

1. A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance, including
 - a. How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum, or
 - b. For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities;
2. A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to
 - a. Meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum; and
 - b. Meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;
3. A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child
 - a. To advance appropriately toward attaining annual goals;
 - b. To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with clause (1) and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
 - c. To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non-disabled children in the activities described in this paragraph;
4. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in clause (3);
5. A statement of any individual accommodations in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and
 - a. If the IEP Team determines that the child will not participate in a particular State or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), a statement of
 1. Why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and

2. How the child will be assessed

6. Additional requirements related to IEP development may be found in Rule 6A-6.03028, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).
- B. To the maximum extent possible exceptional students' instructional objectives in basic skills and content areas indicated for students in basic programs, shall be included in the general curriculum with goals and objectives addressing their access needs. For exceptional education students who need an alternative curriculum, Community Based Instruction and employability programs will be available. Goals and objectives will be geared toward facilitating students' participation in employment and community life.
- C. The annual goals and objectives for exceptional students are stated in the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each student. Each year an IEP review conference is held to which parents are invited and encouraged to attend. The purpose of this conference is to review student achievement and to formulate goals and objectives for the following year.

III. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The general expectation of state and district assessment systems is that all students participate in assessment for accountability purposes.

The decision to include or exclude a student with disabilities in state and district testing shall be made annually by the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) team. Students must be afforded the appropriate accommodations for assessment. Testing should result in an accurate reflection of the individual's educational achievement. However, a student's disability may be such that alternative assessment measures would be more meaningful and appropriate than participating with accommodations in assessments provided by the state or district.

This decision should be guided by past performance of the student, and whether the student is pursuing a course of study to obtain a regular high school diploma. Given these considerations, students who require a differentiated curriculum as outlined on the IEP may be exempted from participating in regularly scheduled state and district assessments. Students exempted from statewide testing must be provided an alternative assessment to reflect student achievement. If a student does not participate in the statewide assessment, the district must notify the student's parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation. If modifications are made in the student's instruction to provide accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessment tests, the district must notify the student's parent of the implications of such instructional modifications. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional modifications that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations

A. State and District Assessment

Modification of the State Student Assessment Test Instruments and Procedures for Exceptional Students, and Other Eligible Handicapped Students - State Board Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC provides the basis for accommodations to Florida's statewide assessment system for students with disabilities who have an IEP.

The Division of Public Schools shall develop the modified test instruments required herein and provide technical assistance to school districts in the implementation of the modified test instruments and procedures.

Each school board shall implement appropriate modifications of the test instruments and test procedures established for issuance of a standard or special high school diploma, pursuant to Rules 6A-1.0942, 6A-1.095, and 6A-1.0995, FAC., within the limits prescribed herein.

The modifications are authorized, when determined appropriate by the school district superintendent or designee, for any student who has been determined to be an eligible exceptional student pursuant to Rules 6A-6.0301 and 6A-6.0331, FAC., and has a current individual educational plan, or who has been determined to be a handicapped person pursuant to Rule 6A-19.001(6), FAC. Students classified solely as gifted shall not receive any special test modifications. Satisfaction of the requirements of Rule 6A-1.0942, FAC., by any of the above modifications shall have no bearing upon the type of diploma or certificate issued to the student for completing school.

In no case shall the modifications/accommodations authorized herein be interpreted or construed as an authorization to provide a student with assistance in determining the answer to any test item.

- Accommodations should facilitate an accurate demonstration of what the student knows or can do.
- Accommodations should not provide the student with an unfair advantage or interfere with the validity of a test; they must not change the underlying skills that are being measured by the test.
- Accommodations must be the same or nearly the same as adaptations used by the student in completing classroom instruction and assessment activities.
- Accommodations must be necessary for enabling the student to demonstrate knowledge, ability, skill or mastery.

B. Allowable Assessment Accommodations

Test manuals generally provide a listing of allowable accommodations that can be used for all students, including students with disabilities. Accommodations for students with disabilities currently allowable for statewide testing that could be provided for district testing include the following:

1. Presentation. The student may be administered any statewide assessment through the following presentation formats:
 - a. Regular print versions of the test may be enlarged through mechanical or electronic means.
 - b. The district test coordinator may request large print versions.
 - c. Braille versions may be requested for students who use Braille materials. Some test items may be altered in format for Braille versions of the test authorized by the Department of Education. Test items that have no application for the Braille reader will be deleted as authorized by the Department of Education. Student performance standards that cannot be assessed in the Braille format will be deleted from the requirements of s.299.57, F.S..
 - d. Signed or oral presentation may be provided for all directions and items other than reading items. Reading items must be read by the students through visual or tactile means.
 - e. The student may use means to maintain or enhance visual attention to test items.
 - f. Presentation formats not covered by this rule may be requested through the Department of Education and will be provided, as appropriate, upon approval from the Commissioner of Education.
2. Responding. The student may use varied methods to respond to the test, including written, signed, and verbal response. Written responses may include the use of mechanical and electronic devices. A test administrator or proctor may transcribe student responses to the format required by the test. Transcribed responses must accurately reflect the response of the student, without addition or edification by the test administrator or proctor.
3. Scheduling. The student may be administered a test during several brief sessions, allowing frequent breaks during the testing sessions, within specifications of the test administration manual. Students may be provided additional time for the administration of the test.
4. Setting. The student may be administered a test individually or in a small group setting, and may be provided with adaptive or special furniture, lighting, or acoustics.
5. Assistive devices. The student may use the following assistive devices typically used in classroom instruction.
 - a. If the purpose of the assessment requires complex computation, calculators may be used as authorized in the test administration

manual. A calculator may not be used on assessments of basic computation as specified in the test administration manual.

- b. Visual magnification and auditory amplification devices may be used. For students with visual impairments, an abacus may be used.
- c. Technology may be used without accessing spelling or grammar checking applications for writing assessments and without using speech output programs for reading items assessed. Other assistive technology typically used by the student in classroom instruction may be used provided the purpose of testing is not violated. Implementation of assistive devices must assure that test responses are the independent work of the student. Unusual circumstances of accommodations through assistive devices must be approved by the Department of Education before use.

PLEASE NOTE: The items in the Mathematics Section are the ONLY items that may be read to students who are eligible to receive special testing accommodations. In the Communications Section ALL items are reading items that must be read by the student as part of the skill tested. NONE of these items may be read to students who are eligible to receive special testing accommodations according to State Board Rules.

State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0996(2)(b) requires that nothing shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of a student with a disability solely to a Special Diploma. The IEP committee shall document whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading toward a Standard or Special Diploma on the IEP developed during the student's eighth grade year, or the IEP developed during the school year of the fourteenth birthday, whichever occurs first.

C. Alternate Assessment Guidelines

The use of an alternate assessment is an individual decision for students who have been excluded from taking the statewide or district assessments and have cognitive disabilities that limit their ability to achieve the Sunshine State Standards. Alternate assessment for students in exceptional education will mirror the assessments of students participating in district and state assessment programs at each grade level by subject area. The following standards will be assessed at the appropriate grade levels:

Functional Academics:

- Standard 1: The student locates, interprets, and uses oral print, or visual information for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 2: The student expresses information effectively using oral, print, or visual formats for a variety of purposes.

Standard 3: The student identifies and applies mathematical concepts and processes to solve problems.

Standard 4: The student uses systematic approaches when solving problems; and

Communicating with Others:

Standard 1: The student effectively communicates with others.

- An alternate assessment or a combination of alternate assessments that will address the above standards at the level of the student (independent, supported, participatory) will be given.
- The alternate assessment will include scoring criteria that clearly identify how the student's performance is to be judged.
- Documentation of the alternate assessment will include: student name, date of assessment, person conducting assessment, score(s) received by student or descriptions(s) of behavior observed and description of activities and scoring criteria used to judge student performance.

The alternate assessment results will be reported to the parent around the same time period as FCAT reports are sent out. Alternate assessment results will also be used to plan the student's IEP, report progress toward mastery of annual goals, and plan the instructional program for the next year.

- D. State Board of Education Exemption - Upon receipt of a written request from the superintendent, the Commissioner may exempt an exceptional student or one who has been determined to be a person with a disability pursuant to Rule 6A-19.001(6), FAC, from meeting specific requirements for graduation, due to extraordinary circumstances which would cause the results of the testing to not represent the student's achievements, but rather reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual, speaking or psychological process skills. The written request must document the specific extraordinary circumstances, which prevents the students from meeting the requirements of Rules 6A-1.0942 and 6A-1.095(4), FAC.

IV. STANDARDS AND PROMOTION CRITERIA

For students enrolled in exceptional student education programs, promotion or movement between grades and levels (primary, intermediate, secondary) will be a reflection of successful completion of IEP goals and objectives, mastery of Sunshine State Standards, Special Performance Standards, Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma or Community Employment competencies, (whichever is applicable), chronological age, or social-emotional maturity.

- A. Students with disabilities must meet the school district proficiency levels unless the student's IEP indicates that the disabling condition impacts the student's progress in the general curriculum.
- B. Decisions to promote are made by the principal based on the recommendation of the IEP Team. Participation in the regular state assessment program shall be available to all exceptional students. Articulation staffings shall be held on students moving from school to school (ex. PK-K, Elementary-Middle, Middle-High).

The School Board may only exempt students with disabilities from mandatory grade three retention for good cause. For students with disabilities, good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

- A. Students with disabilities whose individual educational plan indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule.
- B. Students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT and who have an individual educational plan or a Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received the intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, or grade 2, or grade 3.

V. REPORT OF STUDENT PROGRESS

A. Class/Course Reports

- 1. Students enrolled in ESE classes should receive grades based on achievement of work presented at their ability level rather than grade level.
- 2. Parents will be informed of their student's progress through the student's IEP, each report card, conferences, and other communication between teacher and parent. In making decisions about promotion/retention for a student, all factors should be considered.

B. IEP Goals and Objective Progress and Reports

The IEP must include a statement of how the child's progress toward the annual goals or benchmarks will be measured and how the child's parents will be regularly informed at least as often as parents of non-disabled children are informed of their progress by such means as progress reports and report cards.

The child's parents will be informed of their child's progress (*on a quarterly basis*) toward meeting the annual goals and short-term objectives, or benchmarks and the extent to which the progress will enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.

VI. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – STANDARD DIPLOMA

A standard high school diploma will be awarded to students who meet the requirements as referenced in the secondary education section of this Student Progression Plan and demonstrate mastery of the Sunshine State Standards that apply and pass such demonstrated test. In Rule 6A-6.0312, FAC, school boards shall provide accommodations to basic courses, as necessary, to assure exceptional students the opportunity to meet the graduation requirements for a standard diploma. School boards shall modify vocational courses and programs of study, as necessary, to assure exceptional students the opportunity to meet graduation requirements for a standard or a special diploma.

- A. Accommodations 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 individual educational plan.
- B. Accommodations to basic or vocational courses may include any of the following:
 - 1. The instructional time may be increased or decreased. Instructional methodology may be varied.
 - 2. Special communications systems may be used by the teacher or the student.
 - 3. Classroom and district test administration procedures and other evaluation procedures may be adjusted as specified in Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC., to accommodate the student's disability.
- C. When making accommodations to basic courses, the school board shall use 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 student progression plan, or
 - 2. Assignment of the exceptional student to a basic education class for instruction, which accommodates the student's exceptionality.
- D. The IEP team shall determine which of these strategies to employ based on an assessment of the student's needs and shall reflect this decision in the student's individual educational plan.

- E. Exceptional students enrolled in basic courses utilizing the strategy described in Rule 6-A.0312(3)(a), FAC., shall be counted at exceptional student special program cost factors only if the class is being taught in a special program for exceptional students, by a qualified teacher in accordance with Rule 6A-1.0503, FAC.
- F. The school board's provisions for course accommodations shall be incorporated in the district's student progression plan. Course accommodations shall be determined by the IEP team at the IEP meeting and will be used to facilitate student participation in the general curriculum to the extent possible. At least one regular education teacher will be involved in IEP development and the determination of course accommodations.
- G. Students failing the FCAT will be remediated and/or retested at the time designated by the state during the eleventh or twelfth grade. Seniors not passing the FCAT, but having successfully completed courses that meet standard diploma graduation requirements will meet eligibility requirements to receive a Special Diploma.
- H. Students may select and move between courses of study leading to Standard or Special Diplomas as appropriate. (Rule 6-1.0996(2) FAC)
- I. The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Waiver for Students with Disabilities

The FCAT Waiver for students with disabilities is an additional option passed by the 2003 Florida Legislature for students with disabilities who have an individual educational plan (IEP) and who have not passed the FCAT but meet all other graduation requirements, i.e., earn a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9-12, have a cumulative academic grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, and any additional district requirements. This new provision gives the IEP team the authority to waive passage of the FCAT as a requirement for graduation with a standard diploma in the traditional 24-minimum-credit graduation program. This waiver option became available for 2003 graduates.

In order for the FCAT graduation requirement to be waived, the IEP team must meet during the student's senior year to determine whether or not the FCAT can accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration allowable accommodations.

If there is sufficient evidence that the student has mastered the applicable Sunshine State Standards and the IEP team determines that the FCAT is not an accurate measure of the student's ability, even with allowable accommodations, the FCAT requirement may be waived and the student may graduate with a standard diploma.

To be considered for the waiver, a student must meet the following requirements:

- be identified as a student with a disability, as defined in section 1007.02(2), Florida Statutes
- have an individual educational plan (IEP)
- be a senior or a student with disabilities who remains enrolled seeking a standard diploma for whom the FCAT is the graduation test
- have demonstrated mastery of the grade 10 Sunshine State Standards
- have taken the Grade 10 FCAT with appropriate, allowable accommodations at least twice (for example, once in grade 10 and once in grade 11) or, if not continuously enrolled in public school in Florida, at least once during each year of enrollment in grades 10, 11, or 12
- have participated in intensive remediation for the FCAT Reading and/or FCAT Mathematics, if passing scores were not earned, and have participated in the March FCAT administration during the senior year
- be progressing toward meeting the state's 24-credit/course and 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) requirements and any other district requirements for graduation with a standard diploma.

Should the IEP team determine that the FCAT does accurately measure the student's ability and the test should not be waived, then the student may

- remain in school until the age of 22 or until the student earns a standard diploma, whichever occurs first
- exit with a certificate of completion
- graduate with a special diploma.

**VII. SPECIAL DIPLOMA FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS (RULE 6-1.0996, FAC)
SPECIAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS.**

Students who have been properly classified in accordance with rules established by the state board as educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, hearing impaired, specific learning disabled, emotionally handicapped, profoundly handicapped (*profoundly mentally handicapped, autistic, severely emotionally disturbed or dual sensory impaired*), physically impaired, or language impaired shall not be required to meet all requirements for a standard diploma and shall, upon meeting all applicable requirements for a special diploma, be awarded a special diploma in a form prescribed by the state board rule. Students may use basic, vocational, and exceptional student education courses as appropriate for meeting graduation requirements. Students may select and move between the Special Diploma options, and between courses of study leading to Standard or Special Diploma, as appropriate. Nothing contained in this rule shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of an exceptional student solely to a Special Diploma. Hamilton School Board shall award Special Diplomas based on two (2) options:

- A. Option 1 for ESE students entering ninth grade in or before 1998-1999 school year. Option 1 includes procedures for determining and certifying mastery of student performance standards for a special diploma for students who enter ninth grade in or before school year 1998-1999 as prescribed in subsections (3)-(11) of Rule 6-1.0996, FAC, and minimum number of course credits as specified in the course credit section of the Hamilton School Board Student Progression Plan. Mastery of student performance standards is determined by the student's teacher through the use of formal assessments, teacher made tests or teacher observation. Documentation of mastery shall become a part of the student's cumulative record.
1. Educable Mentally Handicapped. Student performance standards for students identified as educable mentally handicapped shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level IV; Writing, Level V; Language, Level V; Mathematics, Level V; and Social and Personal, Level V as adopted by Rule 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of the minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for students identified as educable mentally handicapped.
 2. Trainable Mentally Handicapped. Student performance standards for students identified as trainable mentally handicapped shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level III; Writing, Level IV; Language, Level III; Mathematics, Level III, and Social and Personal, Level II as adopted by Rule 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of the minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for students identified as trainable mentally handicapped.
 3. Hearing Impaired. Student performance standards for students identified as hearing impaired shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level V; Writing, Level V; Language, Level IV; Mathematics, Level V; and Social and Personal, Level V as adopted by Rule 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of the minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for students identified as hearing impaired.

4. Physically Impaired. Student performance standards for students identified as physically impaired shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level V; Writing, Level V; Language, Level III; Mathematics, Level V, and Social and Personal, Level V as adopted by Rule 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of the minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for students identified as physically impaired.
5. Language Impaired. Student performance standards for students identified as language impaired shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level V; Writing, Level V; Language, Level III; Mathematics, Level V; and Social and Personal, Level VI as adopted by Rule 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of the minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for students identified as language impaired.
6. Emotionally Handicapped. Student performance standards for students identified as emotionally handicapped shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level V; Writing, Level V; Language, Level V; Mathematics, Level V; and Social and Personal, Level IV as adopted by Rule 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of the minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for students identified as emotionally handicapped.
7. Specific Learning Disabilities. Student performance standards for students identified as specific learning disabled shall include:
 - a. Mastery of the following student performance standards at the levels of Reading, Level V; Writing, Level V; Language, Level VI; Mathematics, Level V; and Social and Personal, Level V as adopted by Rules 6A-1.0941, FAC; and
 - b. Completion of minimum number of course credits prescribed by the school board for student identified as specific learning disabled.
8. Profoundly Handicapped. Student performance standards for Students identified as profoundly handicapped.

- a. Students with profound handicaps shall include students identified as profoundly mentally handicapped, dual-sensory impaired, autistic, or severely emotionally disturbed as defined by Rule 6A-6.03021, FAC., and;
 - b. The determination of the requirements for a special Diploma for students identified as profoundly handicapped shall be consistent with the requirements for any other students identified in this rule and shall be specified in the student's IEP.
 9. Eleventh grade student performance standards. For student defined in this rule, mastery of the eleventh grade, student performance standards, through successful completion of courses, as defined in Rule 6A-.0941(1), FAC., shall be accepted in lieu of mastery of the student performance standards noted above for awarding of a special diploma.
- B. Special Diploma Option 1 for ESE students entering ninth grade in or after 1999-2000 is based on student mastery of state-prescribed standards and accumulation of the minimum number of course credits specified in the course credit section of the Hamilton School Board Student Progression Plan.
1. The Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma are 14 high school exit standards set by the State of Florida that students with disabilities must achieve in order to be awarded a Special Diploma under Option 1.
 2. The purpose of the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma is to reflect high levels of expectations in the curriculum areas appropriate for students with disabilities. These standards support the attainment of the desired post-school outcomes of students with disabilities and the adaptations to content that may be necessary to meet the other educational needs that result from their individual disability.
 3. Mastery of Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma at the level of proficiency as determined in the Transition Individual Education Plan by the Transition IEP Team annually.
 4. Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma
 - a. are exit standards
 - b. may change annually
 - c. may have different expected levels of proficiency/expected levels of functioning for each of the standards
 5. Mastery of Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma will be determined by successful completion of courses that address the relevant benchmarks or the use of alternate assessment procedures.

**Expected Levels of Functioning
Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma**

Curriculum and Learning Environment	Independent	Supported	Participatory
1. The student participates and makes progress in the Sunshine State Standards as appropriate for the individual student.			
2. The student locates, interprets, and uses oral, print, or visual information for a variety of purposes.			
3. The student expresses information effectively using oral, print or visual formats for a variety of purposes.			
4. The student identifies and applies mathematical concepts and processes to solve problems.			
5. The student uses systematic approaches when solving problems.			
6. The student recognizes opportunities and Responsibilities in the workplace.			
7. The student demonstrates skills and competencies needed for employment.			
Independent Functioning			
8. The student engages in productive and leisure activities in the home and community.			
9. The student accesses and uses community resources and services.			
10. The student manages personal, career, and other life decisions.			
11. The student demonstrates conduct that complies with social and environmental expectations.			
Social and Emotional Behavior			
12. The student contributes to the overall effort of the group.			
13. The student uses acceptable interpersonal skills when interacting with others.			
Communication			
14. The student effectively communicates with others.			

Independent Level – Students are expected to be able to perform the behaviors identified for each benchmark *on their own* once they have master the knowledge and skills.

Supported Level – Students are expected to be able to perform the behaviors identified for each benchmark *with guidance and support*; physical, verbal, and visual prompt, assistive technology and supervision.

Participatory Level – Students are expected *to participate with assistance* in the performance of the behavior: personal physical assistance and assistive technology.

6. Documentation of mastery shall become a part of the student’s cumulative record.
7. The awarding of a special diploma or special certificate of completion does not prevent a student with disabilities from pursuing a standard diploma or from receiving a free appropriate public education through the school year the student reaches age 22.

C. Special Diploma – Option 2.

Special Diploma Option 2 is based on mastery of employment and community competencies. Students may enter a course of study leading to graduation under Option 2 at the beginning of the 9th grade or later as determined by the transition IEP committee.

1. Employment and community competencies. The school board's requirements for demonstration of mastery of specified employment and community competencies shall ensure:
 - a. The student has achieved all the annual goals and short-term objectives, which were specified on the IEP, related to the employment and community competencies.
 - b. The student is employed in a community-based job, for the number of hours per week specified in the student's training plan, for the equivalent of one (1) semester, and paid a minimum wage in compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
 - c. The student has mastered the employment and community competencies specified in a training plan. The training plan shall be developed and signed by the student, parent, teacher, and employer prior to placement in employment and shall identify the following:
 1. The expected employment and community competencies;
 2. The criteria for determining and certifying mastery of the competencies;
 3. The work schedule and the minimum number of hours to be worked per week; and
 4. A description of the supervision to be provided by school district staff.

VIII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL DIPLOMA

In order to receive full credit for a course a student must have mastered 70% of all student performance standards selected by the teacher. A student who earns the required number of credits, but who does not master the student performance standards or Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma, will receive a Special Certificate of Completion.

A. Schedule

1. Language Arts/Reading, 4 credits
2. Math, 3 credits
3. Science, 1 credit

4. Social Studies, 1 credit
5. Vocational, 4 credits
6. Life Management and Transition, .5 credit
7. Physical Education, .5 credit
8. Electives
 - a. 8 credits for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 school years, or
 - b. 10 credits for 2004-2005 school year and thereafter
 - c. Three credits from one or more of the following: Career Preparation, Career Experiences, Career Placement, and Supportive Competitive Employment. (Courses with similar content may be substituted with approval of the ESE Coordinator)

B. Schedule Affecting Students with Severe Cognitive Disabilities

The schedule affecting the student with severe cognitive disabilities functioning at the supported or participatory level for whom the transition IEP team determines the cumulative credit requirement would be restrictive must have 16 credit hours in courses appropriate for the student's level of functioning to obtain a special diploma.

C. Special Diploma, Option 2 (based on Community Competencies and Employment Requirements)

Option 2 is an individually designed, flexible option based on mastery of employment and community competencies. Under this option, students will be successfully employed in paid jobs in the community as a requirement for graduation.

1. Basic Requirements - In order for a student to receive a special diploma under this option, a student must:
 - a. Achieve all annual goals and short-term objectives related to employment and community competencies specified on the Transition IEP
 - b. Be successfully employed in the same community-based job for a minimum of one semester, at or above minimum wage in compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
 - c. Demonstrate mastery of competencies specified in the individual graduation plan.
2. Components of the Graduation Plan
 - a. The plan must be developed and signed by the student, student's parent, teachers, school-based administrator or designee, and employer prior to the student's placement on the job.

- b. The plan identifies the competencies the student is expected to demonstrate related to employment.
 - c. The plan identifies the competencies needed by the student related to living in the community.
 - d. The plan identifies the work schedule and the number of hours to be worked per week (the student is expected to work full time, i.e., more than twenty hours per week unless physically or emotionally incapable as a consequence of the student's disability).
 - e. Includes a description of the frequency and type of supervision to be provided by school district personnel for the student.
3. Students must be enrolled in courses identified in the Course Code Directory in order to earn course credit and be counted for FTE funding. A variety of exceptional student education and vocational education courses may meet the needs of Option 2 students.

To graduate under Option 2 a student must minimally complete one semester course from the Community Competencies section and the Employment Competencies section listed below. (i.e., #7960010 and #7980130)

4. Community Competencies
- a. Life Management and Transition – Certification: exceptional student education (#7960010)
 - b. Community and Social Skills for Functional Living – Certification: exceptional student education (#37961050)
 - c. Preparation for Post School Adult Living – Certification: student education (#7963010)
 - d. Unique Skills – Certification: exceptional student education (#7963130)

(Courses with similar content may be substituted with approval of the ESE Coordinator)

5. Employment Competencies
- a. Diversified Education – Certification: any diversified education (#7980060)
 - b. Career Placement – Certification: any vocational field or coverage or exceptional student education (#7980130)

- c. Supported Competitive Employment – Certification: any field (#7980150)

(Courses with similar content may be substituted with approval of the ESE Coordinator).

6. Types of Certificates

- a. Certificate of Completion. A student who has met all requirements for graduation with a standard diploma with the exception of passing the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) shall be awarded a Certificate of Completion.
- b. Special Certificate of Completion. A student who has met the credit requirements as specified for a special diploma, but fails to master the specified state student performance standards appropriate to the student’s exceptionality, the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma, or requirements for Option 2 (as applicable) shall be awarded a Special Certificate of Completion.

IX. SPECIAL DIPLOMA CREDIT ALTERNATIVES

A. Transfer Credit

- 1. All evidence of work or credits earned at another school, community college or university offered for acceptance shall be based on an official transcript authenticated by the high school guidance department.
- 2. Work or credits from another school, community school or university shall be accepted at face value, subject to validation if deemed necessary.
- 3. Requirements of the school shall not be retroactive for transfer students provided the student has met all requirements of the school district or state from which he or she is transferring.

B. Dual Enrollment Grades 9-12 with Community Colleges or Vocational/Technical Centers

- 1. Students in grades 11-12 who are dually enrolled in approved certificate courses may earn credit toward a special diploma and/or standard diploma and post-secondary certificate or degree
- 2. No student receiving instruction under the provision of dual enrollment shall be charged registration, matriculation, or tuition fees. TABE testing is required; no fees will be directly charged to the student.

3. For admission of grades 11-12 students into the dual enrollment program, the administration of the program and implementation of the program shall comply with Florida Law and the terms of the agreement between the Hamilton School Board and the community college or vocational/technical center.
4. All students making application for dual enrollment programs must have prior approval of the principal or his designee.
5. The following guidelines are the conditions for dual enrollment in the program.
 - a. Student must have a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 in academic courses as identified by Hamilton County High School
 - b. Student must clear courses for dual enrollment credit in advance with Hamilton County High School guidance counselor. (Prerequisite courses in English and mathematics and minimum test scores on the TABE may be required.
 - c. Student must successfully complete one semester of course work in order to receive one credit toward high school graduation.
 - d. Student would reduce his/her high school course load to correspond with number of vocational level courses taken. Contingent upon vocational schedule students may not attend high school courses.
 - e. All Hamilton County High School rules and policies are in effect as to schedule change, discipline, etc.
 - f. The enrollment form must be signed by the student, parent, guidance counselor and principal.
6. Dual credit – Students who satisfactorily complete approved vocational level dual enrollment courses listed in the State Course Code Directory shall receive both high school and vocational credit.

C. GED Exit Option

1. Students age 16 and older who are enrolled in an exceptional student education program who have not passed the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and demonstrate probability for success on the GED test may take the GED. Students who pass the GED will receive the State of Florida GED diploma.
2. Students who have passed FCAT may take the GED and will receive the State of Florida GED diploma, or the standard high school diploma.

- D. Adult High School Credits - The eleventh and twelfth grade student will be allowed to earn up to two (2) credits per year toward graduation in the night school program.

X. SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

- A. For students entering ninth grade prior to 1998–1999 - to receive a Special Certificate of Completion a student must meet all special requirements of the District for his or her exceptionality, but be unable to meet the appropriate student performance standards.
- B. For students entering ninth grade on or after 1999-2000 - to receive a Special Certificate of Completion a student must meet credit requirements and grade point average, but be unable to meet the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma or requirements for Option 2.
- C. Diploma procedures – Students may select and move between two Special Diploma options and between courses of study leading to Standard or Special Diplomas, as appropriate.
 - 1. The individual educational plan (IEP) committee shall document whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading toward a Standard or Special Diploma on the IEP developed during the student’s eighth grade year, or the IEP developed during the year of the student’s fourteenth birthday, whichever occurs first. This decision shall be reviewed annually. Students may move between both Special Diploma Option 1 and 2. The decision is determined by the Transition IEP committee.
 - 2. Nothing contained in this plan shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of an exceptional student solely to a Special Diploma. The parents of each exceptional student eligible for a Special Diploma for exceptional students shall be notified in writing of the options available under this rule no later than the eighth grade year or the IEP developed during the year the student turns age 14.

XI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH SEVERE COGNITIVE DISABILITIES FUNCTIONING AT SUPPORTED OR PARTICIPATORY LEVELS

- A. Special Diploma Credit Requirements

A student with severe cognitive disabilities for whom the Transition IEP team determines the 24 credit requirement would be restrictive must have sixteen (16) credit hours in courses appropriate for his/her level of functioning and at least four years of full time attendance in grades 9 – 12.

B. Special Certificate of Completion

A student who earns the required number of credits, but who does not master the student performance standards or Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma, will receive a Special Certificate of Completion.

XII. THIRTEENTH YEAR STUDENTS THAT REFUSE A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

A. A student may select to remain in the high school for up to one additional year in lieu of accepting a certificate of completion by enrolling in the appropriate classes or any other class recommended by the principal or guidance counselor F.S. 232.246(4).

B. A student refusing the Certificate of Completion may enroll in the Hamilton County Adult School for FCAT preparation and take the FCAT Test during the June testing date at the Hamilton County Adult School. The student's regular school principal must notify the Hamilton County Adult School that this will occur during the month of May. Other testing can only occur after remediation instruction has taken place after the last FCAT Test in which the student participated. If the student passes the FCAT, he or she will be entitled to a regular academic diploma if all other requirements have also been fulfilled. This diploma shall be from the high school in which he or she was enrolled during the 13th year, he or she shall receive a Hamilton County Adult School Diploma.

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ACT

The Hamilton County School Board is committed to ensuring that equal educational opportunities are available to all individuals within the county. Educational programs and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap or marital status. In addition, employment opportunities are offered without regard to age.

The Equal Equity Coordinator is:

Mrs. Doris Morgalo
Hamilton County School District
4280 S.W. County Road 152
Jasper, FL 32052.

RESEARCH BASED READING

The Hamilton County School Board will assist teachers and principals with the selection of research based instructional materials, strategies, and activities by providing professional development on the research based programs and strategies and developing a checklist for instructional materials selection.