



GRADUATION OPTIONS—FACT SHEET FOR DISTRICTS

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

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

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

This Legislation

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

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

Summary of High School Graduation Options

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

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

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

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

Three-year career preparatory program (18 credits):

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

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

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

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

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