

Okeechobee County School District

Student Progression Plan

October 2008

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General Information

Sunshine State Standards

The Sunshine State Standards were first approved by the State Board of Education in 1996 as a means of identifying academic expectations for student achievement in Florida. These original standards were written in seven subject areas and were divided into four separate grade clusters. The standards were further defined with specific “Grade Level Expectations” added over time. The Department of Education recognized the need for a systematic approach to review and revise all of the academic standards and adopted a six year cycle for review and revision of the standards in 2006.

Reading and Language Arts Standards were reviewed and revised in 2005 and 2006. Those standards have been approved by the State Board and are being implemented in classrooms across Florida. In addition to revising the content that was already in the standards, a commitment was made to address the needs of the twenty-first century. As a result Technology and Information Literacy were added to the 2006 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

Revision to the Mathematics Standards began in September 2006. The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in Mathematics are organized by grade level for grades K-8 and by Bodies of Knowledge for grades 9-12.

The set of standards for each grade level in K-8 consists of three Big Ideas and varying numbers of Supporting Ideas. At the high school level, the standards are arranged into the following Bodies of Knowledge: Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, Probability, Statistics, Discrete Mathematics, and Financial Literacy. The new standards have been approved by the State Board and are being introduced in classrooms.

The revised Science Standards were approved by the State Board in February 2008. The Next Generation Science Standards are organized around four bodies of knowledge. The Bodies of Knowledge are The Nature of Science, Earth and Space Science, Physical Science, and Life Science. There are eighteen Big Ideas divided among the bodies of knowledge.

The Department of Education has a plan for revising the remaining Sunshine State Standards. In time the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards will be aligned with instructional materials and will be assessed by the FCAT. More information on the standards can be found at www.flstandards.org.

School Improvement

Each school in Okeechobee County has a School Improvement Plan. This plan outlines goals which address the needs of the school which are determined after analyzing student achievement data, results of climate surveys, and input from all stakeholders. The plan is a collaborative effort of the school personnel and the School Advisory Council. Each school’s plan must be approved by the School Advisory Council and then submitted for approval by the School Board.

Each school has School Advisory Council (SAC) which includes representation from all stakeholders: teachers, parents, administrators, students (in some cases), business partners, and community representatives. The majority of the members of each school’s SAC may not be employed by the School Board. Funds allocated to each SAC must be spent to address needs outlined in the School Improvement Plan and must be recorded in the minutes of a SAC meeting.

The process for writing and implementing School Improvement Plans is facilitated and monitored by the Director of Assessment and Accountability.

Student Statewide Assessment

Each student must participate in the statewide assessment tests required by s. 1008.22.

Remedial Instruction and Reporting Requirements

In accordance with FS 1008.25 each student's progression from one grade to another is determined, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, science and mathematics. Each student and his (or) her parent will be informed of the student's academic progress.

Comprehensive Program

The Okeechobee County School Board has established the following comprehensive program for student progression:

- Evidence of a student's performance will be reflected by grades assigned in accordance with the district adopted grading policy.
- Students scoring at Level 1 on the FCAT in reading and math and below a score of 3 on FCAT writing in any grade where there is such a test must receive remediation.
- If a student is retained, the retention must be for placement within an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and that takes into account the student's learning style.
- The plan must provide for appropriate alternative placement for a student who has been retained 2 or more years.

Assessment

- Each student must participate in statewide assessment tests.
- Each elementary school must regularly assess the reading ability of each K-3 student.
- Students who fail to meet performance expectations must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty.
- Students must continue to be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until expectations are met.
- If a student has a deficiency in reading, the remedial or supplemental instruction must address:
 - the student's specific areas of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary
 - the desired levels of performance in these areas
- Schools must also provide frequent monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance.
- Districts must assist schools and teachers in implementing research-based reading activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students.
- Remedial instruction provided during high school may not be in lieu of English and mathematics credits required for graduation.
- Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated, the student may be retained. Each student who does not meet minimum performance expectations defined by the Commissioner for the statewide assessment tests in reading, writing, science and mathematics must continue to be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until expectations are met or the student graduates or is not subject to compulsory attendance.

Procedures for Remediation

State Student Performance Standards in reading, writing, and mathematics shall be remediated by classroom teachers and/or such other school personnel as designated by the principal. The elementary schools have developed a coordinated program to meet the needs of all students. A period of time has been set aside during the school day for three types of activities to ensure the progress of all students as follows:

Remediation – for students scoring at level one on FCAT Reading or Mathematics tests, scoring less than 3.0 on FCAT Writing, or performing below grade level. The student may be placed at this level based on teacher recommendation.

The same students will not necessarily require remediation or acceleration in both the Reading/Writing and Mathematics. Students who do not need remediation will be engaged in activities to enhance and expand their knowledge in many areas such as science, social studies, mathematics, literature, writing, organization, computer usage, and others.

Remediation strategies may include, but will not be limited to:

- Extended-Day Instruction
- Tutorial programs
- Contracted academic services
- Exceptional Education services

If a parent/guardian indicates non-acceptance of a student's assignment to attend the Okeechobee County extended school day or year, he/she will be contacted by the school requesting a conference for further discussion.

If the documented deficiency has not been remediated the **student may be retained**. Each student who does not meet the minimum performance expectations must continue to be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the expectations are met or the student graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

According to FS 1008.25 (4) (b), the Okeechobee County School Board will assist schools and teachers to implement research-based reading activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students.

Allocation of Resources

According to FS 1008.25 (3) (a-b), Okeechobee County School Board shall allocate remedial and supplemental instructional resources to students in the following priority:

- Students who are deficient in reading by the end of grade 3.
- Students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion consistent with the district school board's plan for student progression required in paragraph (2)(b).

Reading Deficiency and Parental Notification

Parental Notification

- The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading must be notified in writing of the following:
 - that the child has a substantial reading deficiency.
 - a description of current and proposed supplemental instructional services provided to the child to remediate the reading deficiency
 - that if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.
 - strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed

Parental Notification K-3

- The parental notification requirements in s.1008.25, F.S., are reinforced as a parent and student right, requiring that the parent of any *K-3 student* who exhibits a reading deficiency must be *immediately* notified of the student's deficiency with a description, understandable to the parent, of the exact *nature of the difficulty*.
- The parent must be informed that the student will be given intensive reading instruction until the deficiency is corrected.

Parental Notification – All Students, All Grades

- Each school board must *annually* report in writing to the parent of each student the progress of the student in achieving proficiency expectations in reading, writing, science and mathematics.
- The report must include the student's results on each statewide assessment test.
- 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.
- Progress reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format adopted by the district school board.

Parental Notification – All Grades

- In addition to the previous notification requirements to the parents of a child with a reading deficiency, the district must also now inform the parent:
 - that FCAT is not the sole determiner of promotion
 - that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews and assessments are available to assist parents and the district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion;
 - of the district's *specific* criteria and policies for mid-year promotion.

Parental Notification – Retained Third Graders

- The district will provide written notification to the parent of any third grade retained student:
 - that the child has not met the proficiency level required for promotion
 - the reasons the child is not eligible for a good cause exemption
- The notification must comply with the new provisions of s.1002.20 (14), F.S., and must include a description of proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.

Reporting Requirements

Annual Reports:

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:
- Policies/procedures on retention/promotion.
- Number/percent of students in grades 3 – 10 scoring at Levels 1 and 2 on FCAT reading by grade.
- Number/percent of retained 3 – 10 grade students by grade.
- Number of third grade students promoted for good cause by each category.
- Revisions to policy on retention/promotion from prior year

The district must report to the:

- Department of Education, in the prescribed manner, the progress of students in Intensive Acceleration Classes at the end of the first semester.
- State Board of Education, upon request, the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented at the school district level.

Elimination of Social Promotion

- No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
- The district school board may only exempt students from mandatory retention at grade 3 for good cause. **Good cause** exemptions shall be limited to the following:
 - 1) Limited English proficient students who have had less than 2 years of instruction in an English Language Learner program.
 - 2) Students with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule.
 - 3) Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
 - 4) Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that the student is 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 the FCAT.
 - 5) Students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT and who have an individual education plan or a Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received the intensive remediation in reading for more than 2 years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in K-3.

- 6) Students who have received the intensive remediation in reading for 2 or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in K-3 for a total of 2 years. Intensive reading instruction for students so promoted must include an altered instructional day based upon an academic improvement plan that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies for each student.
- In accordance with FS 1008.25 (6) (b), the Okeechobee County School Board will assist schools and teachers to implement reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in improving reading among low performing readers.

Procedures for Good Cause Exemptions to Third Grade Retention

Requests for good cause exemptions from mandatory 3rd grade retention must be made consistent with the following:

- Documentation that indicates the promotion is appropriate and based upon the student's academic record is submitted from the teacher to the school principal. In order to minimize paperwork, documentation need only consist of the IEP, report card or student portfolio.
- The principal must review and discuss such recommendations with the teacher and determine if the student should be promoted. If the school principal determines that the student should be promoted, the principal must recommend it in writing to the district superintendent.
- The district superintendent must accept or reject in writing the school principal's recommendation.

Progress Monitoring and Promotion

Schoolwide Progress Monitoring Systems must continue to include Federal required student plans, and

1. Include schoolwide, classroomwide, and individual progress monitoring on student proficiency on grade level sunshine state standards (SSS) for ALL students, and/or
2. An individual student progress monitoring plan

Components that must be included in a schoolwide progress monitoring system include:

1. Student progress data reported a minimum of three times per year (If a D or F graded school within the last three years this requirement is monthly) available to the district.
 - reading,
 - mathematics,
 - science, and
 - strongly encouraged for social studies.
2. Progress data must include:
 - student reading progress monitoring through the PMRN or Automated Student Data Base system,
 - student proficiency on grade level SSS (including access points for students with significant cognitive disabilities or English Language Learner (ELL) students).
 - classroom proficiency on grade level SSS, and
 - school proficiency on grade level SSS.
3. Progress data must be used to:
 - evaluate and revise classroom instruction,
 - determine individual student remediation needs,
 - evaluate and revise implementation of the school improvement plan,
 - evaluate and revise teacher professional development plans,
 - evaluate and revise the district assistance and intervention plan,
 - evaluate the fidelity of the implementation of the district K-12 reading plan, and
 - evaluate teacher performance.

Promotion/Retention Issues

The criteria for Student Progression and possible retention or placement also applies to a student entering Okeechobee County Schools during the second semester. However, due to the late enrollment of such students, decisions and subsequent contact with parents regarding the progression of the student may not fit

the established timeline and procedures. Each of these situations must be dealt with individually by the school staff. Notification to parents of possible retention should be made as early as possible.

Students are to be retained in the present grade level when they have not met the district and Sunshine State Standards grade level benchmarks and/or credits.

All students who experience unusual difficulty meeting promotion requirements should be evaluated by the professional staff to determine the possible need for an exceptional education program. Any student in elementary or middle school who has been retained one year and is recommended for retention a second year, will be referred for an evaluation by appropriate specialists; e.g., psychologists.

A parental request for retention will be reviewed by the school staff, and every effort will be made to reach a mutually acceptable decision. The final decision as to grade placement is the responsibility of the principal.

Any student retained in grades K-7 may be assigned at any time during the school year to the next higher grade if the principal determines standards have been met and that the student will be able to benefit from instruction at the higher grade. Students in the eighth grade can receive mid-year assignments to the ninth grade at the end of the first semester of school.

Elementary:

The classroom teacher shall be responsible for identifying those students who do not appear able to make satisfactory progress. Teachers will discuss with their principal any child who is performing below grade level in reading writing or mathematics at the end of the second grading period.

Retention decisions for elementary students are based on one or more of the following considerations:

1. The student is making D's or F's in Reading or Mathematics
2. The student is reading below the grade level.
3. The student scores at level one on the FCAT Reading or Mathematics Test
4. The student is not making adequate progress after a year of remedial instruction
5. Exceptional student educational progress is based on the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP).
6. The kindergarten student has mastered less than 90% of letters, sounds, and sight words. This assessment must be completed by May 1.

Middle School:

Promotion decisions for middle school students are based on the following considerations:

1. The student must pass 5 out of 6 courses. In order to pass a course the student must earn a passing grade in three of the four grading periods.
2. Final retention decisions shall be made by the principal.

Middle School Requirements (for students who entered 6th grade in 2006-07 and subsequent years). To be promoted from middle school a student must successfully complete:

- 3 middle school or higher, year-long courses in English;
- 3 middle school or higher, year-long courses in Mathematics;
- 3 middle school or higher, year-long courses in Science;
- 3 middle school or higher, year-long courses in Social Studies; and
- 1 course in career and education planning to be completed in 7th or 8th grade, which can be a stand-alone course or instruction integrated into an existing course or courses.

High School

Progression at the high school level is based on credits earned. For more details please refer to the High School section of the plan.

Grading Policy

Grades are to provide the student and/or the student's parents with an evaluation that is as objective as possible of the student's scholastic achievement.

Unless otherwise indicated herein, student grades shall be based on the attainment of the instructional and performance objectives assigned the student. The degree to which the student has attained these objectives will be determined by performance on assessment measures (including, but not limited to, tests).

Kindergarten

- A group conference will be held within a month of the beginning of the school year to orient parents to the nature, objectives, and format of the program.
- An individual conference will be offered within the first grading period with the parents of each child to evaluate the child's progress. A checklist or narrative report will be provided.
- Students will receive an academic grade of E, S, N, or U in reading and mathematics.
 - E = Excellent Progress
 - S = Satisfactory Progress
 - N = Needs to improve
 - U = Unsatisfactory
- Students will receive an effort grade of E, S, N, or U in writing, science, and social studies.
 - E = Excellent Effort
 - S = Satisfactory Effort
 - N = Needs to improve
 - U = Unsatisfactory
- Students will receive a conduct grade of S, N, or U.
- An addition to grades, information will be given to parents at the end of each grading period detailing the progress of his/her child. The teacher or a parent may request a conference to discuss the child's progress.

Grades One and Two

Achievement grades will be assigned in the areas of reading, and mathematics. Effort grades will be assigned in other areas. The following scales will be used:

	<u>Achievement</u>	<u>Effort</u>
A = 90 - 100%	A = Excellent Progress	E = Excellent
B = 80 - 89 %	B = Above Average Progress	S = Satisfactory
C = 70 - 79 %	C = Satisfactory Progress	N = Needs Improvement
D = 60 - 69 %	D = Lowest Acceptable Progress	U = Unsatisfactory
F = 0 - 59	F = Unsatisfactory Progress	
I = 0%	I = Incomplete	
	NA = Not Applicable this period	

When averaging grades, calculation will be made to the nearest whole number (round X.5 and above to the next whole number. Example: 89.5% rounds to 90%)

Science and Social Studies

The science and social studies grades will be assessed as E, S, N or U. The determination of the grade is based on the teacher's knowledge of the students' understanding of the concept. Teachers are encouraged to use their judgment based on oral assessments, student work, information obtained from writing passages or whatever alternative the teacher deems necessary to fairly assess understanding.

In grade 2, the percentage scale for A-F grades will be used when appropriate, along with alternate evidence of content mastery.

Grades Three - Five

The A-F scale (see 6-8 section) will be used for academic subjects. The E, S, N, U scale (see 1 & 2 section) will be used for music and PE. The grades for music and PE will be based upon effort.

In grade 3, the percentage scale for A-F grades will be used when appropriate, along with alternate evidence of content mastery.

In grades 4 & 5, use of the percentage scale to determine A-F grades is required.

Writing Information

The Okeechobee School District has developed a writing rubric based on FCAT Writing. Grades will be computed according to the following rubric chart.

GRADING SCALES

Kindergarten		First & Second Grades		Third – Fifth Grades	
4.1 – 6.0	S+	4.1 – 6.0	E	4.6 – 6.0	A
2.0 – 4.0	S	2.0 – 4.0	S	3.6 – 4.5	B
1.0 – 1.9	N	1.0 – 1.9	N	2.6 – 3.5	C
0.0 – 0.9	U	0.0 – 0.9	U	1.0 – 2.5	D
				0.0 – 0.9	F

Grades Six - Eight

The following scale shall be used for all students in all classes:

G.P.A. Value**

- A = 90 - 100% 4 = Outstanding Progress
- B = 80 - 89 % 3 = Above Average Progress
- C = 70 - 79 % 2 = Average Progress
- D = 60 - 69 % 1 = Lowest Acceptable Progress
- F = 0 - 59 % 0 = Failure
- I = 0% I = Incomplete

When averaging grades, calculation will be made to the nearest whole number (round X.5 and above to the next whole number. Example: 89.5% rounds to 90%)

**Grades for eighth grade courses which receive high school credit will be based upon GPA value for grades nine through twelve.

Grades Nine - Twelve

The following scale shall be used for all students in all classes:

G.P.A. value

- A = 90 - 100% 5 4 Outstanding Progress
- B = 80 - 89 % 4 3 Above Average Progress
- C = 70 - 79 % 3 2 Average Progress
- D = 60 - 69 % 2 1 Lowest Acceptable Progress
- F = 0 - 59 % 0 0 Failure
- I = 0% 0 0 Incomplete

When averaging grades, calculation will be made to the nearest whole number (round X.5 and above to the next whole number. Example: 89.5% rounds to 90%)

Honors, Dual Enrollment, and Advanced Placement courses are weighted on a five-point scale. All other courses are based on a four-point scale. Weighting is for class rank purposes only. For college application purposes and for interscholastic activities purposes all courses are based on a four-point scale.

*For students entering 9th grade in 2006-07, Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses are weighted on a five-point scale.

Semester Grades/Annual Grades

Semester grades (for high school students) and annual grades (K-8 students) will be determined by a method approved by the Superintendent of Schools, which provides for consistency of calculation.

No Academic Exceptions Based on Attendance

Schools shall not exempt students from academic performance requirements, such as final exams, based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance.

A student's attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement.

Interim Progress Report

An interim progress report will be sent to the parents of all students at the midpoint of the nine-week grading period. The format for these reports will be approved by the Superintendent or his designee.

Exceptional Student Education Grades

In Exceptional Student Education programs, the evaluation of student progress by teachers and specialists will be based on the attainment of the I.E.P. objectives.

Grades from Exceptional Student Education or other special program classes should not be averaged in with regular classroom grades.

Inclusion Grades: Exceptional Student Education and English Language Learners

When an Exceptional Student Education Kindergarten - eighth grade student is included in a regular class, the district grading policy should be applied for each subject in which the student's achievement grade is "D" or better. If the student is not performing on grade level in the subject area, but is working to his/her potential the student should receive an effort grade of E (excellent), S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), or U (unsatisfactory). If the student is working at grade level in that subject area, yet unable to earn a "D" or better, the teacher in consultation with the Exceptional Student Education teacher, should assign effort grades of E, S, N, or U as defined above for the time in the regular classroom. In the event an Exceptional Education Student has had appropriate accommodations in the general curriculum and is failing a course, due to non-compliance, an "F" can be given after collaboration with the Exceptional Student Education Teacher and a review of the Individual Educational Plan. An eighth grade Exceptional Education student enrolled in a high-school level course may not receive an effort grade for the course.

For ELL (LY – Students who are English Language Learners and are being served as ESOL) Kindergarten - eighth grade students in regular classrooms, the district grading policy should be applied for each subject in which the student's achievement grade is "D" or better. If the student is not performing on grade level in the subject area, the student should receive an effort grade of E (excellent), S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), or U (unsatisfactory). If the student is working at grade level in that subject area, yet unable to earn a "D" or better, the student should receive an effort grade of E, S, N, or U as defined above. An eighth grade LY student enrolled in a high-school level course may not receive an effort grade for the course.

Student's Decrease in Grade

A conference with the parent should be held when there is a marked difference in student achievement from the previous reporting period, such as a decrease of more than one letter grade. Conferencing with parents is encouraged beyond the minimum conferencing provisions of this policy.

Students or parents have the right and responsibility to be informed of student grades at all times. Teachers shall be given reasonable time to respond to the student or parent.

The classroom or subject teacher has the initial and primary authority to assign grades.

Guidelines to review, modify, or to appeal a grade are listed below:

Step 1: Parents, student or both will request a conference with the teacher who assigned the grade. The teacher will explain how the grade was assigned.

Step 2: In the event satisfaction is not reached at step one, by all parties, they may appeal to the principal. Parents, student and teacher will present all information to the principal. After hearing all sides, the principal will make a decision.

Step 3: In the event satisfaction is not reached at step two by all parties, they may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. The process in step two will be repeated. The superintendent will make a decision. The superintendent's decision will be final.

The individual classroom teacher is responsible for the final design of assessment instruments, except for the common semester exams used at the secondary level.

Each teacher is charged with the responsibility of using valid and reliable assessment techniques, instruments and grading procedures.

Teachers should assess outcomes beyond the routine recall of facts.

Students must be informed of the general objectives of each course or unit and of the basis upon which their performance will be evaluated.

Achievement grades shall not be adjusted due to personality factors, social achievement or department. Work-study habits are considered only as they are germane to the achievement of the defined objectives of the course or subject.

Conduct Grade

Conduct grades shall be reported as S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement) or U (unsatisfactory). Each student will receive a conduct grade from each teacher for each class for which he/she is enrolled.

The conduct grade will be recorded on the report card for each grading period.

In order to assign a conduct grade of U (unsatisfactory) to a student, the teacher must document interventions as approved by the principal.

Late Work

Late work shall not be granted full credit. For assignments other than homework and practice class work, late work shall be accepted for one week from the due date and the student will receive no less than one-half of the earned credit for the assignment.

Homework

Homework assignments shall contribute no more than 10 percent of the achievement grade for each grading period. The combination of homework and practice class work shall contribute no more than 30 percent of the achievement grade for each grading period.

The expectation is that a student will receive a grade for a minimum of one homework/practice class work item per week.

Absences

- Excused Absence
Students may make up work following excused absences and receive full credit.
- Unexcused Absence
Students may make up work following an unexcused absence and receive no less than 75% earned credit for the work.
- Suspension
 - All students who are suspended from school may take unit tests, nine week or semester exams for full credit following the period of suspension.
 - Students who are suspended from school and complete and return the assignment packet assigned by the school administrator may complete assignments missed during the suspension for 75% credit.

All make-up work should be completed within one week following return from absence. This deadline may be extended with the approval of the teacher or principal.

Creative Works and Other Data

All significant, creative works, (such as essays, term papers and art projects) are the property of the student. An exception shall be made when a required materials fee has not been paid.

Under no circumstances shall grades be withheld from students due to lack of payment of fees.

Teachers should set intermediate deadlines and conduct assessments at intermediate stages of long-term projects if needed to meet the requirements of this policy.

Plus and minus symbols shall not be used on report cards or cumulative records.

The principal shall review each teacher's individual grading system prior to use or implementation of changes.

Teachers will gain approval from the principal prior to making adjustments to grades that deviate from their grading system.

When unusually large numbers of low grades are noted in the distribution of grades for a class section, the instructional program should be reexamined immediately to find ways of improving the learning experiences of students who are not achieving.

When unusually large numbers of high grades are noted in the distribution of grades for a class section, the instructional program should be reexamined immediately to determine whether a reasonable standard of performance has been required.

Report Cards

Report cards are the primary means of providing information to parents and students regarding school progress. The following functions are served by the reporting system:

- To provide information concerning a student's academic progress in grades 1 – 12 which must be based upon examinations as well as written papers, class participation, other academic performance criteria, and must include the student's performance or nonperformance at his or her grade level.
- To provide information concerning attendance.
- To provide information concerning student conduct.
- To provide a vehicle for communication between home and school with the goal of establishing mutual effort and maximum cooperation toward helping the child to reach his or her maximum potential.

Report cards are an important tool in education. As such, information provided by report cards should be as complete, accurate and timely as possible.

All schools shall use a standard report card appropriate for the school level. Supplemental reporting methods may be used at the discretion of the principal and with the approval of the School Board. **Report cards are to be issued for all students four times a year.**

Parents must assume the ultimate responsibility for becoming informed about the progress being made by their children.

Accelerated Placement Procedure

The assignment of a student in grades K-8 to a higher grade resulting in the student skipping a grade or part of a grade, will be made on the basis of exceptional achievement by the student and evidence that the student will benefit more from the instructional program at the advanced grade level. The probable long-range academic, social, and emotional effect of the decision should be considered. The principal has the responsibility for making such assignments. The Superintendent of Schools must approve any assignment that results in a student's skipping more than one grade level. A student will not be accelerated without parental consent. Assignment of students classified as exceptional shall be consistent with district procedures for Exceptional Education students.

Students who transfer in and are much older than those in their grade level may be accelerated based on consideration of physical, social, and emotional factors.

Parents will be notified by the principal, in writing, that their child is receiving an accelerated grade placement to the next higher grade. A copy of this notification will be placed in the cumulative guidance record.

Grade placement of 9th – 12th grade students is based only on credits earned in courses approved by the school board.

Summer Instruction

Students who do not currently attend Okeechobee County Schools are not eligible for summer instruction. Students who are new to the area, registered for the following school year and provide school records prior to the beginning of summer instruction may attend. Summer instruction is a privilege and may be withdrawn if the student is in non-attendance for more than one day or fails to comply with the Student Code of Conduct. A **non-custodial parent**, who has his/her child in Okeechobee for the summer may be permitted to enter the child in summer instruction.

Homework

The School Board of Okeechobee County believes there is a clear relationship between homework and student achievement.

Homework refers to schoolwork that the child is assigned to do on his/her own time as an extension of his/her classroom activities. Homework assignments should support clearly defined school and classroom objectives and should be used to reinforce or enhance school experiences. Homework assignments should take into consideration the individual differences of students, such as health, ability, conditions and the educational resources in the home.

Guidelines regarding homework in Okeechobee County schools shall be as follows:

- Each teacher shall establish specific plans for the assignment of homework.
- All parents shall be informed of the amount of time and the subject area(s) their child will routinely be assigned.
- Teachers shall maintain a system of evaluation and recognition of completed homework assignments.
- Homework shall not be used as a form of punishment, and teachers should communicate regularly with parents regarding assignments.
- Teachers shall make homework assignments meaningful and the directions clear and specific.

All make-up work should be completed within one week following return from absence. This deadline may be extended with the approval of the teacher or principal.

Homework shall contribute no more than 10 percent of the achievement grade for each grading period.

Transfers

Transfers – Elementary/Middle School

The grade placement of students in the elementary or middle grades, who are transferring from other states or countries, private schools, or Florida Home Education programs, will be determined by the principal of the receiving school. When the principal determines that there is insufficient evidence to determine grade placement of students 14 years of age or younger due to incomplete or inadequate records, any or all of the following procedures shall be utilized:

- The student's age.
- A review of all existing and available school records or credit transfers of the student.
- A review of the previous educational program including, but not limited to, time spent in program and curriculum requirements of the program.
- A test on the grade level or individual subject objectives, to be determined by the principal.
- An interview of the student by the principal or designee.
- Classroom performance at both the level and the length of time established by the principal.

In accordance with FS 1003.25(3) uniform procedures have been established relating to the acceptance of transfer work and credit for students entering Florida's public high schools. The procedures to be followed are:

- 1) Credits and grades earned and offered for acceptance shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if required by the receiving school's accreditation. If validation of the official transcript is deemed necessary, or if the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, credits shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in paragraph 2).
- 2) Validation of credits shall be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and should have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have credits validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in paragraph 3).
- 3) Alternative Validation Procedure. If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal, and parent:
 - a) Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee;
 - b) Written recommendation by a Florida certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal;
 - c) Demonstrated performance in courses taken through dual enrollment or at other public or private accredited schools;
 - d) Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally-normed standardized subject area assessments;
 - e) Demonstrated proficiencies on the FCAT; or
 - f) Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school.

Students must be provided at least ninety (90) days from date of transfer to prepare for assessments outlined in paragraphs (3) (d) and (3) (e) if required.

Instruction for English Language Learners

Each English Language Learners (ELL) child enrolled in any program offered by the Florida public schools is entitled to equal access to programming which is appropriate to his or her level of English proficiency, academic achievement and special needs.

The primary goal of all such programming is to develop, as effectively and efficiently as possible, each child's English language proficiency and academic potential. Such programs should also provide positive reinforcement of the self-image and esteem of participating students, promote cross-cultural understanding, and provide equal educational opportunities.

1. Equal access to appropriate programming shall include both access to intensive English language instruction and instruction in basic subject areas of math, science, social studies, computer literacy which is:
 - Understandable to the ELL student given his or her level of English language proficiency and school shall be equal and comparable in amount, scope and sequence and quality to that provided to English proficient students.
 - Equal and comparable in amount, scope and sequence and quality to that provided to English proficient students.
 - Recommendations for such programming shall be documented in the form of an ELL student plan, which shall be in conformity with this agreement.
2. English Language Learners with special needs such as compensatory, remedial, or exceptional education, and who are at greater risk for under-achievement and/or dropping out, and in need of additional services, shall be provided equal and comparable services to those provided to English

proficient students. ELL students shall receive needed services on a timely basis, and the services provided shall be appropriate for their level of English proficiency as set forth above.

When an ELL student enrolls, the principal shall place him/her at the most appropriate grade level, based on age and maturity. ELL student achievement shall be assessed through a combination of ESOL, standardized and district tests. Grades shall be based on the effort and progress made by each ELL student. ELL students shall not be retained solely on the basis of their limited English proficiency.

Students currently enrolled in an approved ELL program less than one year may be exempt from taking the state mandated assessments.

Exempted students must be assessed through other means determined by the district and school personnel.

Students currently classified as LF (Limited former ESOL in monitoring stage) or LZ (Limited previously beyond monitoring stage) may not be exempted from taking required state mandated assessments.

Students cannot be awarded a standard high school diploma until the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT is passed).

Addition of New Courses

A new course or unit of study may be introduced into the district curriculum using the following procedures:

1. The principal at the school determines the need and identifies an appropriate course in the Course Code Directory.
2. The principal submits the course to be added to the superintendent or designee for approval.

Florida Virtual School

Florida Virtual School will be available to students during or after the normal school day and through summer school enrollment. Student requesting to take a course offered by Florida Virtual School must have counselor, principal, and parent permission. The school district will award credit for successful completion of courses taken through Florida Virtual School. Courses coded with "W/F" will be treated as a grade of "F" on the student transcript.

Privacy Rights of Students and Parents

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g (FERPA), and corollary state law, Section 1002.22, Fla. Statute affords parents and students who have attained 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- The **right of privacy** with respect to the student's education records.
Personally identifiable records or reports of a student, and any personal information contained in those reports, are confidential. The School District of Okeechobee County will not release the education records of a student without the written consent of the eligible student or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), except to the extent FERPA and state law authorized disclosure without consent.
- The **right to inspect and review** the student's education record within 30 law days of the day the District receives a request for access.
Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The **right to request the amendment** of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The **right to consent to disclosures** of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health person or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
- A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- The Okeechobee County School District will forward educational and disciplinary records to other schools that have requested records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll (34 CFR §§ 99.7 and 99.34(a) (ii)).
- Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. {NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.}
- The **right to file a complaint** with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.
- Florida Statute, 1002.22 (2) (C), provides that an educational institution may, without authorization from parents, guardians, or eligible students, release “Directory Information”. Directory information includes the following:
 - **Student’s name, address, telephone listing if not an unlisted number, date and place of birth, a major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent educational institution attended by student, photographs in the school year book and similar information.** Section 9528 of the NCLB Act requires local education agencies (LEAs) to provide military recruiters with the name, address, and telephone listing of secondary student (appendix A).
 - If any parent, guardian, or student above the age of 18 years objects to the release of such information, he/she shall make known the objections, in writing, to the Superintendent by September 15th of the school year. The School Board shall release directory information after 30 days public notice has been given.
 - The Okeechobee Education Records Manual is set forth in District Manual 2.60, Student Records. The manual is available for inspection at the District Administration Office located at 700 S.W. 2nd Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida, during regular office hours Monday – Friday. A copy of the policy may be obtained, free of charge, upon request.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) requires the School District of Okeechobee County to notify parents and obtain consent or allow the parents to opt their child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following areas:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- 6...Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility. This requirement also

applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes (marketing surveys), and certain physical exams and screenings.

At this time the school district has not scheduled surveys for this school year. You will be notified if your child will be asked to participate and at that time you will be provided with information about the survey.

Student Progression in the Elementary School

Kindergarten and First Grade Attendance

In accordance with FS 1003.21, students must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 in order to be eligible to enter Kindergarten. First grade eligibility requires satisfactory completion of kindergarten and an age requirement of six (6) by September 1. Students who turn six (6) after September 1, but before February 1 are required to attend kindergarten.

Any child who has been enrolled in kindergarten in a public school or a nonpublic school, from which the district school board accepts transfer of academic credit and will attain the age of 6 years on or before September 1, may be admitted to the first grade at any time during the school year.

Non-Public Schools and/or Out-of-State Transfers into Grades K-1

An eligible child (one who is six (6) years of age by September 1), who has attended a non-public kindergarten, shall be admitted to first grade upon presentation of documentation from the director of the non-public kindergarten, attesting to the fact that the child has satisfactorily completed a kindergarten skill development program and, in the opinion of the director, is prepared for entrance into first grade.

Out-of-State

Students transferring from out-of-state kindergartens who do not meet Florida age requirements shall meet the following criteria:

1. The child must meet the legal age requirement for public schools within the state from which he/she is transferring.
2. The child's academic credit must be acceptable under the rules of the School Board.
3. The following data must be provided:
 - Official documentation that the parent(s)/guardian(s) was a legal resident(s) of the state in which the child was previously enrolled in school;
 - An official letter or transcript from proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student;
 - Evidence of immunization against communicable diseases as required in FS 1003.22;
 - Evidence of date of birth in accordance with FS 1003.21, Florida Statutes; and
 - Evidence of a medical examination completed within the last 12 months in accordance with FS 1003.22, Florida Statutes.

Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener

The school district is required to administer the school readiness uniform screening implemented by the Department of Education to each Kindergarten student in the district school system upon the student's entry into Kindergarten.

The results of this assessment and the identification of each student's early childhood education provider for the year prior to kindergarten enrollment shall become part of each student's record in the state's automated student database.

Accelerated Placement K - 1

For accelerated placement of a student from kindergarten to first grade, the following procedure will be followed:

- The student will be assigned to a kindergarten class at the beginning of the school year.
- During the first two weeks of school, the following will occur:
The student will be assessed by the Reading Coach.
- Reading – using Macmillan Reading Inventory
- Mathematics – using the Harcourt Mathematics First Grade Placement Test
The kindergarten teacher will observe the student and provide information about the student's behaviors in relation to being accelerated to first grade.
- The results of the assessments and information from the kindergarten teacher will be given to the principal. The principal will make a recommendation either in favor of (or) against acceleration. The

principal will inform the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services of his/her recommendation.

- The Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services. will schedule a conference with the parents of the child to provide counseling, to inform them of the recommendation, and to address any concerns.
- The parents will be notified, in writing, that their child is being accelerated from kindergarten to first grade. A copy of this notification will be placed in the student's cumulative guidance record.

Promotion Requirements

Students shall meet appropriate instructional goals that shall be based on Florida's Sunshine State Standards and locally developed curricula. Non-English speaking students may demonstrate mastery of benchmarks in their native language to be eligible for promotion. *(See Exceptional Student Education section of this Plan for requirements of Exceptional Student Education.)*

K-3 READ Initiative

The focus of K-3 READ Initiative is to prevent the retention of grade 3 students and to offer intensive accelerated reading instruction to:

- grade 3 students who failed to meet standards for promotion to grade 4
- each K-3 student who is assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency

The Okeechobee County School District READ Initiative will:

- be provided to all K-3 students at risk of retention as identified by the statewide 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.
- provide MacMillan Treasures 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 with 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
- provide a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in maintaining or meeting proficiency levels for the appropriate grade in all academic subjects.

Successful Progression of Retained Third-Grade Readers

- Retained students will be provided intensive interventions in reading to ameliorate the student's specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment.
- This intensive intervention will include:
 - effective instructional strategies
 - participation in summer reading camp
 - 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
- Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, Okeechobee County School District will:
 - conduct a review of the student data for all third grade students who did not score above Level 1 on the reading FCAT and did not meet the criteria for one of the good cause exemptions
 - address additional supports and services needed to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency
- The Okeechobee County School District will:
 - complete a student portfolio for each such student
 - provide students who are retained with intensive instructional services and supports to remediate identified areas of reading deficiency, including:

- a minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically research-based reading instruction and other strategies prescribed by the school district, 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
 - ❖ summer reading camps
- Students who are retained in third grade will be provided with a high-performing teacher as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals.
- In addition to required reading enhancement and acceleration strategies, the Okeechobee County School District will provide parents of student to be retained with at least one of the following instructional options:
 - supplemental tutoring in scientifically research-based reading services in addition to the regular reading block, including tutoring before and/or after school
 - a “Read at Home” plan outlined in a parental contract including participation in “Families Building Better Readers Workshops” and regular parent-guided home reading
 - a mentor or tutor with specialized reading training

Intensive Acceleration Class for Retained Third Graders

- Okeechobee County School District will establish at each school, where applicable, an Intensive Acceleration Class for retained grade 3 students who subsequently score at Level 1 on FCAT reading. The focus of the Intensive Acceleration Class is to increase a child’s reading level at least 2 grade levels in 1 school year.
- The Intensive Acceleration Class will:
 - be provided to any student in grade 3 who scores at Level 1 on the reading FCAT and who was retained in grade 3 the prior year because of scoring at Level 1 on the reading FCAT
 - have a reduced teacher-student ratio
 - provide uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of student contact time each day
 - incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 Sunshine State Standards in other core subject areas using a reading program that is scientifically research-based and has proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year
 - provide intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientifically research-based program
 - include weekly progress monitoring measures to ensure progress is being made

Transitional Instructional Setting for Retained Third Graders

- The Okeechobee County School District provides a student who has been retained in grade 3 and has received Intensive instructional services but is still not ready for grade promotion, as determined by the school district, the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such setting must specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency.

Mid-Year Promotion for Retained Third Graders

Mid-year promotion means promotion of a retained student at any time during the year of retention once the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.

The Okeechobee County School Board has implemented a policy for the mid-year promotion of any student retained in third grade due to a reading deficiency as required by Section 1008.25 (5) (b), Florida Statutes. Such mid-year promotions of retained third grade students must occur by November 15th of the academic year.

1. To be eligible for mid-year promotion, a student must demonstrate that he or she:

- a) is a successful and independent reader as demonstrated by reading at or above grade level;
 - b) has progressed sufficiently to master appropriate fourth grade reading skills; and
 - c) has made satisfactory achievement in mathematics, science, social studies and writing at the fourth grade level.
2. Standards that provide a reasonable expectation that the student has met the requirements of subparagraphs (1) (a)-(b) of this rule include the mastery of reading skills, consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade, as presented in the scope and sequence of MacMillan Treasures © reading program. Evidence of demonstrated mastery is successful completion of portfolio elements that meet state criteria.
 3. To promote a student mid-year using a student portfolio there must be evidence of the student's mastery of third grade Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts and beginning mastery of the Benchmarks for fourth grade. The student portfolio must meet the following requirements:
 - a) be selected by the student's teacher;
 - b) be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
 - c) include evidence of mastery of the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 Reading FCAT, as required by Rule 6A-1.094221,FAC.; and
 - d) include evidence of beginning mastery of fourth grade benchmarks that area assessed by the grade 4 Reading FCAT. This includes multiple choice, short response, and extended response items and passages that are approximately fifty (50) percent literary text and fifty (50) percent information text, and that are between 100 – 900 words with an average of 375 words. Such evidence will include passages from the Third Grade Reading Assessment Portfolio, Level B supplies by the Just Read, Florida! Office. For each benchmark, there must be two examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of C or better; and
 - e) be signed by the teacher and principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.
 4. Supplemental instruction for any retained third grade student who has been promoted mid-year to fourth grade must continue to be implemented for the entire academic year.

Elementary Program of Study

The elementary school program shall fulfill the requirements of the Sunshine State Standards and the Okeechobee County Public Schools. The integration of learning in the seven academic areas will require the flexible use of weekly instruction time and other alternatives such as multi-age classes, teaming, looping, etc.

Health and Physical Education

In order to promote lifelong physical fitness and good health habits Okeechobee elementary students will receive instruction in physical fitness and health concepts that meets or exceeds the recommendations of the American Heart Association and the course requirements of Goal 3 Student Performance Standards of the Florida System of School Improvement and Accountability.

Students will participate in physical activities of at least a moderate intensity level and for duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to their differing capabilities. Florida House Bill 967 requires 150 minutes of Physical Education per week in grades K-5. Accordingly students in grades K-5 will receive at least 150 minutes per week of physical education. On any day during which physical education instruction is conducted there must be 30 consecutive minutes of instruction. The time will be dedicated to supervised physical activity, health instruction, and nutrition instruction.

Students will demonstrate competency in Physical Education and Health related Sunshine State Standards. Assessment of achievement of course requirements will be adapted according to individual student needs and abilities.

Students will be encouraged to include their families in incorporating physical fitness experiences into their daily routines outside of school hours. Parents will receive information on student health and fitness from the

school and will be encouraged to become involved in monitoring the levels of fitness and healthy life choices of their children.

Patriotism

In order to encourage patriotism, members of the instructional staff of the public schools should teach the sacrifices that veterans have made in serving the country and protecting democratic values worldwide. Such instruction must occur on or before Veterans' Day and Memorial Day.

Bill of Rights Day

December 15 has been established as "Bill of Rights Day". This special day would encourage our schools to instruct children about this aspect of our American heritage. December 15 is so designated because the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution was ratified on December 15, 1791.

Character Education Program

In compliance with FS 1003.42, the Okeechobee County School Board has approved the use of the Character Counts Program to assist young people in developing good character and core ethical values such as trustworthiness, respect, citizenship, responsibility, and caring for self and others.

Academic Time Frames (Minutes)

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Gr. 1-2</u>	<u>Gr. 3-4</u>	<u>Gr. 5</u>
Reading	90	90	90
Writing	30	30	30
Language Arts/Spelling	30	30	30
Math	50	55	55

Science and Social Studies must be taught.

Computer literacy, critical thinking and other related skills will be taught in the context of the instruction outlined above.

To provide remediation in reading, writing and mathematics, all curriculum except reading, writing, and mathematics may be suspended.

Awards and Honor Recognition

Elementary school awards and honor recognition programs may be developed by principals and staff as deemed appropriate.

Student Progression in the Middle School

Course of Study: Offerings and Requirements

Each middle school will hold a parent meeting in the evening or weekend to inform parents about the school's curriculum or activities.

Beginning with students entering grade 6 in 2006-2007 school year, promotion from a school composed of middle grades 6, 7, and 8 requires that:

- A student must take and pass three (3) courses in English.
- A student must take and pass three (3) courses in mathematics.
- A student must take and pass three (3) courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civic education.
- A student must take and pass three (3) courses in science.
- A student must take and pass one (1) semester-long course in career and education planning to be completed in seventh or eighth grade. This will be integrated in the eighth grade social studies curriculum.

All 2008-2009 eighth grade students will be required to take the integrated social studies course and complete an electronic personal education plan (ePEP) on FCATS.org.

Students attending middle school in Okeechobee County can fulfill these requirements by following the Middle School Course of Study. Listed below are courses and the grade in which the course should be taken.

Subject	Course	Grade Level
Reading	M/J Intensive Reading	6-8
Reading	M/J Reading 1	6
Reading	M/J Reading 2	7
Reading	M/J Reading 3	8
Critical Thinking	M/J Critical Thinking	6-8 (Gifted Reading)
Language Arts	M/J Lang Arts 1	6
Language Arts	M/J Lang Arts 2	7
Language Arts	M/J Lang Arts 3	8
Language Arts	M/J Lang Arts 1 ESOL	6
Language Arts	M/J Lang Arts 2 ESOL	7
Language Arts	M/J Lang Arts 3 ESOL	8
Mathematics	M/J Math 1	6
Mathematics	M/J Math 1 Advanced	6
Mathematics	M/J Math 2	7
Mathematics	M/J Math 2 Advanced	7
*Mathematics	Algebra I	8
*Mathematics	Algebra IA	8
Science	M/J Comprehensive Science 1	6
Science	M/J Comprehensive Science 2	7
Science	M/J Comprehensive Science 2 Adv.	7
Science	M/J Comprehensive Science 3	8
Science	M/J Comprehensive Science 3 Adv.	8
Social Studies	M.J World Cultures	6
Social Studies	M/J Social Studies	7
Social Studies	M/J US History	8
Social Studies	M/J US History & Career Planning	8

This course is for high school credit. High school credit will be applied to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and all other applicable scholarships.

Any deviation from the course of study for middle school students must be approved by the Principal.

Middle schools with less than 75 percent of their 6th, 7th, or 8th grade students reading at or above grade level, as measured by a student scoring at level 3 or above on FCAT Reading, will incorporate a rigorous reading

requirement as a primary component of the academic program. The rigorous reading component plan for low-performing students will address:

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- The desired levels of performance for the areas listed
- The instructional and support services to be provided

A student who scores at level 1 on FCAT Reading must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course. Level 2 readers must be placed in an intensive reading course or a course in which reading strategies are delivered. The school will use research-based activities that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students. Middle school students scoring at level 1 or 2 on FCAT Mathematics shall receive remediation the following year.

In addition students will be able to take classes in music, physical education, agriculture, and technology. These courses are semester-length courses. The following courses are offered at middle schools in Okeechobee County.

Subject	Course	Grade Level
Career Ed	M/J Career Education	6-8
Physical Education	M/J Comprehensive PE 1	6
Physical Education	M/J Comprehensive PE 2	7
Physical Education	M/J Comprehensive PE 3	8
Music	M/J General Music 1	6
Music	M/J Music Appreciation 1	6
Music	M/J Band 1	6
Music	M/J Band 2	7
Music	M/J Band 3	8
Career/Tech	Orientation to Agriscience	6
Career/Tech	Introduction to Agriscience	7
Career/Tech	Exploration of Agriscience	8
Career/Tech	Exploring Technology	6
Career/Tech	Exploration of Communication Tech.	7
Career/Tech	Exploration of Production Tech.	8

Students enrolled in physical education in grade 6-8 will receive 225 minutes per week of physical education for the a semester. At least 135 minutes of this time should be dedicated to actual physical activity. The balance of the time is to be dedicated to classroom instruction on health related topics. Assessment of achievement of course requirements in physical education will adapted according to individual needs and abilities.

Students will be encouraged to include their families in incorporating physical fitness experiences into their daily routines outside of school hours. Parents will receive information on student health and fitness from the school and will be encouraged to become involved in monitoring the levels of fitness and healthy life choices of the children.

Patriotism

In order to encourage patriotism, members of the instructional staff of the public schools should teach the sacrifices that veterans have made in serving the country and protecting democratic values worldwide. Such instruction must occur on or before Veterans’ Day and Memorial Day.

Bill of Rights Day

December 15 has been established as “Bill of Rights Day”. This special day would encourage our schools to instruct children about this aspect of our American heritage. December 15 is so designated because the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution was ratified on December 15, 1791.

Character Education Program

In compliance with FS 1003.42, the Okeechobee County School Board has approved the use of the Character Counts Program to assist young people in developing good character and core ethical values such as trustworthiness, respect, citizenship, responsibility, and caring for self and others.

Grade Forgiveness for High School Courses Taken by Students in Middle Grades

A student in the middle grades who takes any high school course for high school credit and earns a grade of “C”, “D”, or “F” or the equivalent of a grade of “C”, “D”, or “F” shall be allowed the replacement of the grade with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher, 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 the district forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation.

Summer Credit

Middle school summer instruction shall be provided to enable students to make up courses that were failed during the school year. A maximum of one excused absence is permitted in summer instruction at the middle school level. Exceptions may be granted by the principal, based upon documented medical evidence. A high standard of conduct will be expected of students in summer instruction. A suspension from summer instruction will result in immediate dismissal.

Student Progression in the High School

Specific Requirements for Graduation

1. Students must meet the passing score established for the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) for graduation.
2. Students who selected an accelerated graduation program before July 1, 2004, may continue that program and all statutory program requirements that were applicable to the student as long as the student continues that program (Option 1, 2, or 3).
3. According to FS 1003.429, as amended by the 2004 legislature, high school students who enter 9th grade in the 2004-2005 school year and thereafter may select one of three high school graduation options (Option 1, 4, or 5).
4. Each of the options described below prepares students to receive a STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA which meets entrance requirements for Florida colleges/universities or technical schools.

These options are as follows

OPTION 1 – GENERAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA (4 YEAR PLAN)

24-Credits Required

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in Math (must include Algebra I)
- 3 credits in Science (two of which must include a lab component)
- 1 credit in American History
- 1 credit in World History
- ½ credit in Economics
- ½ credit in American Government
- 1 credit in Vocational/Technical Education or Performing Fine Arts or ½ credit each in Vocational/Technical Education or Performing Fine Arts
- ½ credit in Life Management Skills*
 - 2 credits in ROTC Leadership I and II
- 1 credit in Physical Education **
 - ½ credit Personal Fitness
 - ½ credit Other PE requirement
 - Elective PE Course
 - Official Marching Band Course
 - Physical activities such as dance corps, flag corps, and who regularly practice and perform marching activities during a full marching band season.
 - Official JR ROTC Course
 - 8 ½ credits in Electives

*Students earning credit for two ROTC classes, Leadership I and II, with a grade of C or above meet the graduation requirement for Life Management Skills.

**Students are allowed to satisfy the one credit requirement by participating in two full seasons of junior varsity or varsity sports, and earning a “C” or better on the personal fitness competency exam. This participation meets the one credit requirement; however, it does not allow a credit to be earned on the transcript. The competency exam will be administered in November and April of each year. Students will have two opportunities to pass the exam. Tenth grade students are encouraged to take the exam for the first time in April. The personal fitness competency exam cannot be taken by a student who has taken the Personal Fitness course.

New Option 1 for Students Entering High School in 2007-08

Beginning with students entering their first year of high school in the 2007-08 school year, a student must successfully complete at least 24 credits, an International Baccalaureate curriculum or an Advanced International Certificate of Education curriculum to graduate.

The 24 credits must be earned as follows:

- 1) 16 core curriculum credits:
 - 4 credits in English
 - 4 credits in mathematics, one of which must be Algebra 1, its equivalent, or a higher than Algebra 1;
 - 3 credits in science, two of which must have laboratory component;
 - 3 credits in social studies (1 credit in American history; 1 credit in world history; ½ credit in economics and ½ credit in American government);
 - 1 credit in fine arts or performing arts which may include speech and debate, or a practical arts course that incorporates artistic content and techniques of creativity, interpretation, and imagination.
 - 1 credit in physical education to include the integration of health.
- 2) 8 credits in a major, minor, electives; selected by the student as a part of the personalized education plan;
 - 4 credits in a major area of interest. Majors which will be developed by districts and approved by the Commissioner can be in a career and technical program, fine and performing arts, or in an academic content area.
 - 4 credits in elective courses, which may be combined to allow for a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest (3 credits), individual elective courses, intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses, or credit recovery courses.

MAJOR AREAS OF INTEREST

Students who enter ninth grade in 2007-08 and thereafter will select a Major Area of Interest. The student must earn four (4) credits in a Major Area of Interest. The Major Area of Interest may be in the area of career and technical programs, fine and performing arts, or an academic content area. A student is not required to complete a major to graduate but does have to be enrolled in a major area of interest each year. A student may revise his/her major area of interest selection each year as part of the annual course registration process. Students who enter ninth grade in 2008-09 -and are seeking a standard diploma may choose from the following Major Areas of Interest:

- Accounting and Finance
- Agriscience and Natural Resources Education
- Business Technology Education
- Fine Arts
- Foreign Languages
- Health Science Education
- Integrated Academic Focus
- Integrated Language Arts and Media
- ROTC and Leadership Training
- Teacher Preparation

Students who enter ninth grade in 2008-09 and are seeking a special diploma may choose from the list above or from the following Major Areas of Interest:

- Custodial Assistant
- Food Service Assistant
- Landscape Assistant

ACCELERATED GRADUATION OPTIONS

The accelerated options require fewer credits but concentrate on more academic courses than the four-year, 24-credit graduation option. The number of credits within the college preparatory program aligns with the minimum standards for admissions into Florida's state university system, while the career preparatory program requirements are aimed toward entrance into a technical center or community college for career preparation. These new options are designed for students who are clear on their future goals, possess the maturity to leave high school, and feel they are ready to pursue their goals beyond high school in an accelerated manner.

Each student and his or her parents must select the graduation option and curriculum that most appropriately prepares the student for his or her postsecondary education or career plan.

Accelerated Options – For students selecting accelerated options prior to July 1, 2004

OPTION 2 – COLLEGE PREPARATORY DIPLOMA (3 YEAR PLAN)

18-Credits Required

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in Math (Algebra I or higher)
- 3 credits in Science (two of which must include a lab component)
- 3 credits in Social Science
 - 1 credit World History
 - 1 credit American History
 - ½ credit American Government
 - ½ credit Economics
- 2 credits in the same Foreign Language (or substitute 2 credits in other academic courses if able to demonstrate proficiency in another language)
- 3 credits in Electives

OPTION 3 – CAREER PREPARATORY DIPLOMA (3 YEAR PLAN)

18-Credits Required

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in Math (must include Algebra I)
- 3 credits in Science (two of which must include a lab component)
- 3 credits in Social Science
 - 1 credit World History
 - 1 credit American History
 - ½ credit American Government
 - ½ credit Economics
- 2 credit in the same Foreign Language
- 3 credits in Electives
 - Note: The 3 credits must be in a vocational job preparatory or technical education program in one sequential Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.

Accelerated Options – For students who entered 9th grade in 2004 - 2005

The following requirements for Option 4 and Option 5 must be met for students entering 9th grade in the 2004-2005 school year who choose an accelerated program:

- a) The student and his/her parents must meet with designated school personnel for an explanation of the relative requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of each graduation option.
- b) The student shall submit to the high school principal and guidance counselor a signed parental consent to enter the 3-year accelerated graduation program.
- c) The student shall have achieved at least an FCAT reading achievement level of 3, an FCAT mathematics achievement level of 3, and an FCAT Writing score of 3 on the most recent assessments taken by the student.

Beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, each district school board shall provide each student in grades 6 through 9 and his/her parents with information concerning the 3-year and 4-year high school graduation

options (1, 4, and 5), including the respective curriculum requirements for those options, so that the students and their parents may select the postsecondary education or career plan that best fits their needs. The information shall include a timeframe for achieving each graduation option.

Selection of an accelerated graduation option (4 or 5) 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 listed:

- Students who meet one or more of the following criteria must select a graduation option before the beginning of the second semester of their 10th grade year:
 - 1) Students who transfer into the district after the end of their ninth grade year.
 - 2) Students who enter a Florida public school after grade 9 as a transfer from a private school or another state.
 - 3) Students who were prevented from choosing a graduation option due to illness during grade 9.

If the student and parent fail to select a graduation option, the student shall be considered to have selected Option 1 (24 credit option).

Students pursuing accelerated 3-year high school graduation Options 4 or 5 are required to:

- a) Earn passing scores on the FCAT as defined in FS 1008.22(3)© or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT as defined in FS 1008.22(9).
- b) Students who enter grade 9 in the 2006-07 school year and thereafter are required to have a 3.5 grade point average to participate in the 18 credit college preparatory diploma track.
- c) Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the college preparatory option (Option 4).
- d) Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the career preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option (Option 5).
- e) Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3 points, or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the college preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option (Option 4).
- f) Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2 points or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the career preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option (Option 5).

OPTION 4 – COLLEGE PREPARATORY DIPLOMA (3 YEAR PLAN)

At least 6 of the 18 credits required for completion of this program must be received in classes that are honors, dual enrollment, or advanced placement, specifically listed or identified by the Department of Education as rigorous, or weighted by the district school board for class ranking purposes.

For students who enter grade 9 in the 2006-07 school year and thereafter 6 of the 18 credits must be earned from advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, or Advanced International Certificate of Education courses. Honors courses will not be accepted as part of the 6 hours.

18-Credits Required

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in Math (Algebra I or higher)
- 3 credits in Science (two of which must include a lab component)
- 3 credits in Social Science
 - 1 credit World History
 - 1 credit American History
 - ½ credit American Government
 - ½ credit Economics
- 2 credits in the same Foreign Language (or substitute 2 credits in other academic courses if able to demonstrate proficiency in another language)
- 3 credits in Electives

OPTION 5 – CAREER PREPARATORY DIPLOMA (3 YEAR PLAN)

18-Credits Required

- 4 credits in English (major concentration in composition and literature)
- 3 credits in Math (must include Algebra I)
- 3 credits in Science (two of which must include a lab component)
- 3 credits in Social Science
 - 1 credit World History
 - 1 credit American History
 - ½ credit American Government
 - ½ credit Economics
- 3 credits in a single vocational or career education program, three credits in career and technical certificate dual enrollment courses, or five credits in vocational or career education courses.
- 2 credits in electives unless five credits are earned in vocational or career education courses.

If, at the end of grade 10, 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 student and parent of the following:

- a) The requirements that the student is not currently meeting.
- b) The specific performance necessary in grade 11 for the student to meet the accelerated graduation requirements.
- c) The right of the student to change to the 4-year program (Option 1).

A student who selected one of the accelerated 3-year graduation options will automatically move to the 4-year program if the student:

- a) Exercises his or her right to change to the 4-year program.
- b) Fails to earn 5 credits by the end of grade 9 or fails to earn 11 credits by the end of grade 10.
- c) Does not achieve a score of 3 or higher on the grade 10 FCAT Writing assessment; or
- d) By the end of grade 11 does not meet the credit requirements of the selected accelerated option and the FCAT, G.P.A., and individual grade requirements

Definition of “Credit”:

One full credit equals a minimum of 135 hours of instruction in a course that contains student performance standards. The hourly requirements for one-half credit are one half of the requirements as shown above. The State Board of Education may determine the number of postsecondary credit hours earned through dual enrollment that satisfy the requirements of the district’s interinstitutional articulation agreement according to FS 1003.235 and that equal one full credit of the equivalent high school course identified in FS 1007.271(6).

Exclusions for High School Credit:

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

- more than a total of nine elective credits in remedial program.
- more than one credit in exploratory vocational courses.
- more than three credits in practical arts family and consumer sciences classes.
- any Level 1 course 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 educational plan or student performance plan and signed by the principal, guidance counselor, and the parent if the student is not 18 years old or older.

Attendance

In order for a student to earn credit in a course, a student must not be absent more than nine days per semester. A student who exceeds nine absences in a course may earn credit in that class by earning a passing grade in at least one of the two nine weeks grading periods, and pass a comprehensive semester exam for that course.

Absences due to the following reasons will be excused:

- Illness of the student

- Major illness in the immediate family of the student
- Medical appointments of students
- Death in the immediate family of the student
- Duration of a religious holiday of the specific faith of a student
- Subpoena or forced absence by any law enforcement agency
- Major disaster that would justify absence in the judgment of the administration
- Head lice - a maximum of two days per incident
- Planned absences of educational value approved in advance by the principal.

Electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP)

Each high school student's Electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP) will be reviewed annually to assess the student's progress. Updates and changes to the plan will be made as required. Student who enter high school without an ePEP will prepare a plan.

SUMMARY OF ACCELERATION PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Florida provides many ways for students to earn college credit for material learned in high school, such as advanced placement, dual enrollment, credits by examination, Florida Virtual School, and the International Baccalaureate Program. Most of these programs are available free or at minimal cost to the students. School counselors help students by encouraging them to take advantage of these programs, and they work with district leaders to expand programs and opportunities for students enrolled in their school district. Parents of students in or entering high school will be notified of the opportunities and benefits of acceleration mechanisms. Okeechobee High School offers the following Acceleration Programs:

Advanced Placement Program

The College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) program is a nationwide program consisting of over 30 college-level courses and exams in subjects ranging from art to statistics offered at participating high schools. Students earning a "qualifying" grade on an AP exam can earn credit or advanced placement for their efforts. According to the College Board, "...More than 2,900 universities and colleges worldwide grant credit, advanced placement, or both to students who have performed satisfactorily on the exams, and approximately 1,400 institutions grant sophomore standing to students who have demonstrated their competence in three or more of these exams." (College Board 2000) Studies have shown that students, who complete a solid academic core, including advanced courses, are more likely to be successful in college. Many school counselors have found that AP courses provide the challenging content necessary to engage all types of learners.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment allows eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses for which the student earns credit towards high school graduation while at the same time earning credit toward a college degree or vocational certificate. The college course must be creditable toward the high school diploma to be classified as dual enrollment. Participating students are exempt from the payment of registration, matriculation, and laboratory fees. Students are permitted to enroll in the dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Home Education students may participate in the dual enrollment program. In accordance with the State Board of Education ruling, each semester-long dual enrollment English course will earn the student one credit in high school English.

College credits shall be recorded in the student's record and credits apply toward graduation requirements.

Dual Enrollment for honor-weighted courses **must** be taken **during the regular school day at the high school site**. Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in 2006-07, all Dual Enrollment courses must be weighted the same as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Advanced International Certificate of Education courses.

The dual enrollment program serves a broad range of high achieving students, not just the top academic performers in a school.

The State Board of Education, based on the recommendations of the Articulation Coordinating Committee, recently identified the specific dual enrollment courses that meet high school graduation requirements and

assigned a specific amount of high school credit that must be granted for each dual enrollment course. These courses must be accepted by all high schools in Florida in accordance with the State Board of Education list. In addition, school districts offering dual enrollment through a local articulation agreement must provide information regarding postsecondary dual enrollment courses that meet high school graduation requirements.

Because a student's grade in a dual enrollment course is part of both his high school and college transcript, guidance counselors monitor a student's progress in the class. Students are encouraged to maintain at least a 3.0 in dual enrollment courses.

Early Admissions

1. Early admission allows a student to enter college following completion of grade eleven, substituting two semesters of college for the senior year of high school. Home Education students may participate in early admission.
2. Program participants must meet the requirements that follow:
 - (a) School Board approval is required.
 - (b) College or university admission is required.
 - (c) Participants must carry full loads and earn grade point averages of "C" or its equivalent.
 - (d) College credit sufficient to fulfill graduation requirements must be earned prior to graduation.
3. An early admission student is not included in high school rank computations or consideration for valedictorian, salutatorian, or other honors or memberships in school organizations.

Florida Virtual High School

With support from the Florida Department of Education, Florida Virtual School was established in 1997 to create and make available quality on-line high school curriculum, including Advanced Placement courses. Florida Virtual School can be a great resource for students with limited access to AP offerings in their traditional schools. To learn how to access AP courses through the on-line Florida High School, visit www.flvs.net. Adult Education-Many district school boards offer adult education program course credit opportunities to high school students which may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to school board policies.

Florida Virtual School courses shall be available to student during or after the normal school day and through the summer session. Students intending to accelerate graduation by using the Florida Virtual School must have a written plan that is approved by administration and parents and outline the projected course plan for high school.

Course Forgiveness

According to FS 1003.43 (5) (e) forgiveness policies for required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F" or their equivalent with a grade of "C" or higher or its equivalent earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. Forgiveness policies for elective courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or

"F" or their equivalent with a grade of "C" or higher or its equivalent earned subsequently in another course. Any course grade not replaced according to a district forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation. **No additional credit will be awarded for previously passed repeated courses. All courses taken will appear on the official student transcript.**

Florida Virtual School may be an option for taking a course for forgiveness. Students requesting to take a course offered by Florida Virtual School for course forgiveness must have the approval of the principal and the parent.

Health and Physical Education – High School

In order to promote lifelong physical fitness and good health habits high school students enrolled in health or PE classes will receive instruction in physical fitness and health concepts that meets or exceeds the recommendations of the American Heart Association and the course requirements of Goal 3 Student Performance Standards of the Florida System of School Improvement and Accountability.

Students will participate in physical activities of at least a moderate intensity level and for duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing capabilities. Accordingly the students enrolled in physical education in grades 9-12 will receive at least 225 minutes per week of physical

education. At least 135 minutes of this time should be dedicated to actual activity time. The balance of the time may be used for classroom instruction on health related topics.

Students will demonstrate competency in Physical Education and Health related Sunshine State Standards. Assessment of achievement of course requirements will be adapted according to individual student needs and abilities.

Students will be encouraged to include their families in incorporating physical fitness experiences into their daily routines outside of school hours. Parents will receive information on student health and fitness from the school and will be encouraged to become involved in monitoring the levels of fitness and healthy life choices of their children.

Patriotism

In order to encourage patriotism, members of the instructional staff of the public schools should teach the sacrifices that veterans have made in serving the country and protecting democratic values worldwide. Such instruction must occur on or before Veterans’ Day and Memorial Day.

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Semester Grading Chart						
HIGH SCHOOL SEMESTER GRADING CHART						
	Semester Exam Grades					
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>No Exam</u>
9 Wks Grds						
A A	A	A	B	B	B	A
A B	A	B	B	B	C	n/a
A C	B	B	B	C	C	n/a
A D	B	B	C	C	C	n/a
A F	B	C	C	C	F	n/a
B B	B	B	B	C	C	n/a
B C	B	B	C	C	C	n/a
B D	B	C	C	C	D	n/a
B F	C	C	C	D	F	n/a
C C	B	C	C	C	D	n/a
C D	C	C	C	D	D	n/a
C F	C	C	D	D	F	n/a
D D	C	C	D	D	D	n/a
D F	C	D	D	D	F	n/a
F F	F	F	F	F	F	n/a
	F	Failure to earn 2 out of 3 passing grades				

Grade Level Classification

Progression through the high school program is dependent upon the student’s earning the required number of credits, passing required courses, achieving the required grade point average and demonstrating functional literacy.

Students will be prohibited from taking lower level courses unless there is a demonstrated need. If during the high school years a student demonstrates a deficiency in basic skills, the opportunity to enroll in a remediation program during the summer or regular school term shall be provided.

Mastery of Student Course Performance Standards

Student Course Performance Standards, based upon the student intended outcomes specified in each course description, are adopted and published by the School Board in "The Okeechobee Course of Study, Grades Nine - Twelve". The standards reflect the Sunshine State Standards adopted by the State Board of Education. FS 1003.33

Required Credits

	End of Academic Year	*Mid-Year
Total credits to graduate	24	24
Credits to become a Senior	17	20 ½
Credits to become a Junior	11	13 ½
Credits to become a Sophomore	5	7 ½

*Students may apply for mid-year promotions when they meet the above credit requirements at the end of the first semester of school.

Note: A student selecting an 18 credit, three year plan must have 15 credits by the end of the first semester of the third year to become a senior.

Procedure for Remediation in Grades 9-12

The high school has developed a variety of ways to remediate students who are below grade level in Reading, Writing, or Mathematics.

Remediation will be provided for students using the following criteria:

1. A grade of "F" in Language Arts or Mathematics
2. Scoring at Level 1 or Level 2 on the FCAT Reading or Mathematics Test or less than 3.0 on FCAT Writing
3. An overall grade point average at year's end of less than 2.0

Remediation may be provided in the following ways:

1. Summer Instruction
2. Tutoring before or after school
3. **Level 1** courses
4. Other elective courses
5. Extra assistance in the classroom
6. Credit Retrieval Courses

Remedial instruction in high school may not be in lieu of required English and Mathematics credits and earns only elective credit.

High school students who score at Level 1 on FCAT Reading will be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year. Level 2 readers will be placed in either an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered. High school students who score at level 1 or Level 2 in FCAT Mathematics will receive remediation the following year.

When the principal determines that there is insufficient evidence to determine grade placement or credit status of students who are 15 years of age or older due to incomplete or inadequate records, the student will be placed in the regular high school.

Credits should be interpreted so that the requirements for promotion and graduation are not retroactive, provided the student has met all requirements for that grade placement in the school from which the student

is transferring. The number of credits and required courses should be made a part of the transferring student's cumulative folder as a permanent record when the student is admitted.

Test Requirements

Students must receive a passing score on each section of the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). The required passing score is established when the student first takes the 10th grade FCAT.

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 this assessment.

Opportunities for remediation will be provided to all students who have not passed the designated test.

Minimum Grade Point Average for Graduation

A cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent in the courses required for graduation as specified in FS 1003.43 (1) is necessary to graduate from high school.

Students will be assisted in meeting these G.P.A. requirements through forgiveness policies, summer instruction, attendance, special counseling, volunteer and/or peer tutors, school sponsored help sessions, homework hotlines, study skills classes, Indian River State College Tutorial Assistance, and Florida Virtual School.

At the end of each semester, the parent or guardian of each student in grades 9-12 who has a cumulative G.P.A. of less than 2.5 above the cumulative GPA required for graduation will be notified that the student is at risk of not meeting the requirements for graduation.

Diplomas

Regular Standard Diploma- Awarded to a student who has met all state and local graduation requirements.

Standard Certificate of Completion - Awarded to a student who has met the course requirements for graduation, but has **not** passed the FCAT or has **not** met the minimum grade point average requirement.

The student may then elect one of the following:

1. Apply for admission to the Adult Education Program to complete graduation requirements. If these requirements are met in this program, the Standard Diploma will be awarded.
2. Apply to take the General Education Development (G.E.D.) Test. If the required minimum scores are achieved, the student will be awarded a "State of Florida High School Diploma".
3. **Additional Year** - A student who has met the graduation credit requirement, but who has not passed both parts of the FCAT and/or who has not met the 2.0 minimum G.P.A. requirement, may enroll for one additional year in order to meet these requirements. The Standard Certificate of Completion may be exchanged for a Standard High School Diploma providing all requirements are satisfied within that additional year.

Special Diploma- (See explanation in the Exceptional Student Education section.)

Special Certificate of Completion- (See explanation in the Exceptional Student Education section.)

State Of Florida High School Diploma (G.E.D.) - A diploma issued by the State of Florida, through the Adult Education Program, based upon passing the General Education Development (G.E.D.) test, is offered as an alternative to regular graduation. The student must be eighteen years of age except in extraordinary circumstances in which the Superintendent of Schools or designee may grant an exception for lowering the age to sixteen.

All graduation requirements for each diploma option must be met prior to participation in graduation ceremonies.

Each standard high school diploma shall include, as applicable:

- Designation of the student's major areas of interest pursuant to the completion of credits as provided in s. 1003.428
- Designation reflecting completion of four or more accelerated college credit courses if the students is eligible for college credit pursuant to s. 1007.27 or s.1007.271 in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, or dual enrollment courses
- Designation reflecting career education certification in accordance with s. 1003.431
- Designation reflecting a Florida Ready to Work Credential in accordance with s. 1004-99.

Graduation Exercises

Participation in Graduation Exercises

A student will be permitted to participate in graduation exercises at the end of the school term only when all district requirements have been met for receiving one of the following:

- A Standard Diploma
- A Special Diploma
- A Certificate of Completion
- A Special Certificate of Completion

Class Rank

A student who has met the district requirements for a regular STANDARD Diploma shall be ranked in the graduation class. Ranking of the graduating class will be based on the weighted grade point average using all courses taken. The G.P.A. calculation shall be carried out to four (4) decimal places. All students will be notified in advance of the courses that will be weighted.

Recognition of the Top Students at Graduation

Special recognition will be awarded at graduation for the top graduating class. This ranking will be based upon a weighted ranking of all courses taken and will be done at the end of the first semester of the graduating year. The G.P.A. calculation shall be carried out to four (4) decimal places. All students will be notified in the Curriculum Guide of the courses that will be weighted. In computing a student's rank, a student with fewer repeated courses will be ranked ahead of a student with the same weighted G.P.A. with more repeated courses. The principal may delete any student from recognition who exhibits a significant decline in performance during the final semester. Dual Enrollment for honor-weighted courses must be taken during the regular school day at the high school site.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian Selection Process

The designations of Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be reserved for students who have earned all credits in Okeechobee County public schools or other accredited schools and earned the last twelve credits at Okeechobee High School.

The selection of the Valedictorian and Salutatorian shall be determined **only** on the basis of the total of all accumulated semester quality points earned in honor weighted courses taken on the OHS Campus, by the end of the first semester of the senior year. Credits earned at the Florida Virtual High School do not count for Valedictorian and Salutatorian unless taken on the OHS Campus.

In computing a student's rank, a student with fewer repeated courses will be ranked ahead of a student with the same weighted G.P.A. (or total quality points in honor weighted courses) with more repeated courses. The principal may delete any student from recognition, who exhibits a significant decline in performance during the final semester.

Satisfactory Conduct Extracurricular Activity Requirements

Students who want to participate in an extracurricular program must practice good citizenship and self-control. In order to maintain eligibility a student must not receive more than 2 unsatisfactory conduct grades each grading period.

If the student is convicted of, or found to have committed, a felony or a delinquent act that 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 withdrawn.

Summer Credit

High school summer instruction shall be provided to select students to make up courses that were failed during the school year. New credit may be granted in high school programs only when approved in advance by the high school principal and the superintendent.

High school honors courses, laboratory-based courses and most elective courses will not be offered during summer instruction. Make up of credits not offered in summer instruction can be achieved by credit retrieval, retaking the course during the next regular school year, or by an accredited correspondence course. High school summer sessions will consist of 60 clock hours of instruction for ½ credit. Students must demonstrate achievement of course performance standards and meet minimum attendance requirements in order to earn credit.

A maximum of one excused absence is permitted in summer instruction at the high school level. Exceptions may be granted by the principal, based upon documented medical evidence.

A high standard of conduct will be expected of students in summer instruction. A suspension from summer instruction will result in immediate dismissal.

Advanced Placement Credit

Advanced placement allows a student to complete a limited number of college credits prior to high school graduation if the student scores high enough on the final examination.

Advanced Placement credits apply toward graduation requirements.

High School Credit for Pre-nine Students

A student in a grade below nine who is enrolled in a course listed in the grades 9-12 section of the Course Code Directory, shall be classified as a ninth grade student for that portion of the day for which he is enrolled in a 9-12 course.

Exit Interviews/Dropout Prevention

An exit interview will be conducted with a student who desires to drop out of school. This interview will be conducted by the student's guidance counselor or other designated school personnel. The interview will be designed to determine the reasons for the student's decision to drop out of school and what actions could be taken to keep the student in school. The student must be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including, but not limited to, adult education and GED test preparation. The student must complete a survey in the format prescribed by DOE to provide data on student reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by the school to keep the student enrolled.

GED Exit Option

The GED Exit Option is available to students identified by school administrators or guidance counselors as at risk of not completing high school.

In order to qualify for the GED Exit Option students must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- a. the student is 17 years of age or older and enrolled in an approved Exit Option site;
- b. the student is at least one year deficient in credits and unable to graduate with his/her peers (his/her kindergarten cohort);
- c. the student's cumulative GPA is below the 2.0 requirement for high school graduation;
- d. the student's results on the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) or BASI (Basic Achievement Skills Inventory) test indicate a reading level above 9th grade; **and**
- e. the student has passed the FCAT.

If the student qualifies for the GED Exit Option **and passes the complete GED battery** he/she will receive a standard high school diploma.

Student Progression for Exceptional Education Students

An exceptional student is one who has been identified, evaluated, staffed and placed in an exceptional education program as prescribed by an individual education plan according to the Florida Department of Education regulations and Okeechobee County’s District Procedures/Special Programs and Procedures (SP&P) for Exceptional Students.

Programs

Programs are provided for the following Exceptionalities:

W	Intellectual Disabilities (Educable, Trainable Profound Mentally Disabled)		
PI	Physically Disabled, Other Health Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injured	S/L	Speech and Language Impaired
DD	Developmentally Disabled	HI	Hearing Impaired
		VI	Visually Impaired
E/BD	Emotional Behavior Disabled	SLD	Specific Learning Disabled
H/H	Hospital/Homebound		
		ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder

Services

To meet exceptional student’s educational needs, the following full range of placements are considered and recommended by the Staffing Committee:

- regular class programming
- regular class supplemented by a resource room
- special day school
- non-public residential or day school through a cooperative agreement
- regular classes with consultation services/Inclusion
- special class in a regular school
- special day treatment program
- individual instruction in a hospital or home setting

The philosophy of the Exceptionalities program in Okeechobee County is to help each student reach his/her maximum potential in a positive environment that is conducive to learning. Students shall be educated in the least restrictive environment as determined by the individual needs and abilities in each curriculum area. Based upon individual needs, as reflected in the goals and objectives of the IEP, the IEP Committee must determine the most appropriate least restrictive environment (LRE) where the student can master the goals and objectives. Factors such as severity of the disabling condition, time and needed support services must be considered when making placement decisions. Placement will be reviewed as these factors change and alternative placements considered.

Individualized performance objectives will be designed to reflect student needs. Appropriate curricula will be used to meet individual educational program goals.

The methodology used will be determined individually on the basis of levels of functioning in the mental, physical, social and emotional areas of development. The general methodology will include both individual and small group instruction using a multimedia, multisensory approach.

Age Requirements for Enrollment into ESE Programs

Consistent with rules adopted by Okeechobee County School Board, exceptional students, excluding the gifted, who have attained the age of three (3) are eligible for admission to exceptional student education. Students in ESE pre-kindergarten will be classified as kindergarten when they meet age qualifications for kindergarten.

Exceptional Education students are eligible to be served through the end of the semester in which the student turns 22 years of age when continued placement is deemed appropriate and reflected on the student’s IEP. If the student is attending summer school when the 22nd birthday occurs, the student will be allowed to complete the summer session.

Promotion, Retention and Grade Acceleration

Promotion/Retention of Exceptional Students

All students (grades K – 12) participating in Statewide Assessments shall meet appropriate instructional goals that shall be based on Florida's Sunshine State Standards and locally developed curricula. Accommodation will be discussed by the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Team and reviewed annually.

Promotion/retention of exceptional students participating in the Statewide Alternate Assessment should be a reflection of student's mastery or non-mastery of their Individual Educational Plan.

A School Based Intervention Team (SBIT) meeting should be held for any student the teacher determines needs to be retained to determine the most appropriate least restrictive environment.

Grade Acceleration

The assignment of a gifted student to a higher grade, which results in the student skipping a grade or part of a grade, should be made on the basis of exceptionally high achievement by the student and evidence that the student will benefit more from the instructional program at the advanced grade level. The probable long-range academic, social and emotional effect of the decision should be considered. The principal has the responsibility for making such assignments. A child will not be accelerated without parental consent.

Students who qualify as intellectually gifted should not be prohibited from vertical and/or horizontal acceleration. The pace of acceleration should be commensurate with their abilities in the regular classroom curriculum.

The student's cumulative record and report card should be noted to indicate "accelerated grade placement", major reason(s) for the assignment, and the name of the principal who has made the placement.

Parents should be notified formally in writing that their child is receiving an accelerated grade placement to the next higher grade.

A copy of this notification should be placed in the cumulative record. See General Information in this Plan under Accelerated Placement Procedure.

Graduation Requirements for Certain Exceptional Students/Diploma Options

Exceptional students, grades 9-12 and parents will participate in the decision regarding available diploma options commensurate with their level of performance. The appropriate State Student Performance Standards and corresponding diploma/certificate option must be noted on the IEP, as well as on the Diploma Option Form. The parents of each exceptional student eligible for any type of diploma for exceptional students shall be notified in writing of the options available prior to their fourteenth birthday.

Students may move from standard diploma track to special diploma track and receive credit for courses passed if mastery of special course content is demonstrated. An ESE Course cannot be substituted for a regular academic credit in pursuit of a standard diploma. Nothing shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of an ESE student solely to a special diploma or special certificate of completion. Any such student shall, upon written request, be afforded the opportunity to fully meet all requirements for a standard diploma. A staffing committee must convene whenever a change in diploma status is indicated and a new diploma option form must be provided to the parent/guardian.

The required program of study for an exceptional student may be altered to meet a student's needs. However, where possible, the program of study for general education students should be followed, unless specified otherwise in the IEP. The level of achievement for these courses will conform to each exceptional student's IEP. IEP's will address all domain areas determined by the team including Curriculum/Instruction, Social/Emotional, Independent Functioning and Communication with the necessary accommodations needed to master annual goals.

Access Points for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

As part of the revision to the Sunshine State Standards, access points for students with significant cognitive disabilities have been developed. These access points are expectations written for students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general education curriculum. Embedded in the Sunshine State Standards, access points reflect the core intent of the standards with reduced levels of complexity. The three levels of complexity include participatory, supported, and independent with the participatory level being the least complex. The new Florida Alternate Assessment will measure achievement on the Access Points.

The Access Points for the Mathematics Sunshine State Standards were developed through the cooperative efforts of writing teams composed of Florida educators and parents under the direction of staff from the Accommodations and Modifications for Students with Disabilities Project, the Accountability and Assessment for Students with Disabilities Project, and the Florida Department of Education.

Students with disabilities now continue to be eligible for free and appropriate public education (FAPE) through age 21 if they have not earned a standard diploma, even if they have earned a general educational development (GED) credential. The only exception includes students with disabilities who successfully utilize the GED Exit Option Model.

The GED Exit Option is available to students identified by school administrators or guidance counselors as at risk of not completing high school.

In order to qualify for the GED Exit Option students must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- a. the student is 17 years of age or older and enrolled in an approved Exit Option site;
- b. the student is at least one year deficient in credits and unable to graduate with his/her peers (his/her kindergarten cohort);
- c. the student's cumulative GPA is below the 2.0 requirement for high school graduation;
- d. the student's results on the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) or BASI (Basic Achievement Skills Inventory) test indicate a reading level above 9th grade; **and**
- e. the student has passed the FCAT.

If the student qualifies for the GED Exit Option **and passes the complete GED battery** he/she will receive a standard high school diploma.

Criteria for Receipt of a Standard Diploma

See General Education Guidelines, secondary section for explanation of the five (5) standard diploma options.

Access to a Standard Diploma for exceptional students means that:

All Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students must meet the district course and credit requirements. Basic courses may be modified, as necessary, to assure exceptional students the opportunity to meet the graduation requirements for a standard diploma, using one of the following strategies:

1. Assignment of the exceptional student to an exceptional education class for instruction in a basic course with the same student performance standards as those required of general education students.
2. Course Modifications - ESE courses which are equivalent in content to basic education or vocational courses, may be modified for exceptional students as follows:
 - An increase or decrease in the instructional time
 - Variation of instructional strategies
 - Alternate instructional materials
 - Teacher instruction of student response through special communication system
 - Type of certification required of the student's teacher
 - Modification of content where specific sensory or motor functioning is required for applications and when that particular sensory or motor functioning is impaired.
 - Modification of test administration procedures and other evaluation systems to accommodate the student's disabilities.

A qualified ESE student pursuing a Standard Diploma (Option 1) may also receive a diploma based on the Enhanced New Needed Opportunities for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act. Such student must:

- Have a current IEP
- Have attempted to take the FCAT with all allowable accommodations on at least two occasions and not received a passing score. At least one occasion must be in their senior year.
- Have participated in district remediation courses
- Have received 24 credits and met the 2.00 GPA

A formal IEP meeting is required to determine that the FCAT cannot accurately measure the student's abilities. The superintendent shall review the IEP decision and approve all cases where the FCAT is waived.

Criteria for Receipt of a Special Diploma

In accordance with Florida Statutes, exceptional students who are eligible for a special diploma include:

Specific Learning Disabled	Emotional Behavior Disabled
Hearing Impaired	Educable Mentally Disabled
Physically Impaired whose ability to communicate is seriously impaired	Language Impaired whose ability to communicate orally or in writing is seriously impaired
Trainable Mentally Disabled	Profoundly Disabled students*

*Profoundly Disabled students may obtain a Special Diploma by following standards set aside for an ESE program based on functioning level consistent with the requirements for any exceptional student and shall be specified in the student's individual educational plan.

Special students electing to receive a Special Diploma must earn twenty-four (24) credits and demonstrate mastery of the performance standards or competencies appropriate for their Exceptionality. There are two (2) options available to a student seeking a Special Diploma:

- Option 1: Special Diploma based upon credit requirements and mastery of all the appropriate student performance standards. The required percentage of skills within each performance standard to be mastered will be specified on the student's IEP. Mastery of the performance standards will be determined by teacher observation, class assignments, skills check lists, examinations, and/or formal assessments. Written documentation of mastery, including but not limited to the date each standard was mastered and the sign-off by the teacher who verified mastery must be maintained until the student graduates or withdraws from the Okeechobee County School District.
- Option 2: Special Diploma based upon demonstrated employment and community competencies and development of a training plan to implement the option. Students must be at least 16 years old, be successfully employed in the community for a minimum of one semester at or above minimum wage, achieve the goals, objectives and competencies on the Transition IEP and demonstrate mastery of the competencies specified in the training plan. To earn a Special Diploma under this option, the student must be recommended by a committee reviewing the IEP and by the principal of the school from which the student plans to graduate.

To return to Option 1 after spending time in Option 2, the student must have the same recommendations as stated above. A student may return only once to Option 1 after requesting and being accepted into Option 2.

The Individual Education 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 prior to the student's ninth grade year, or the IEP developed during the year prior to the student's sixteenth birthday, whichever occurs first. This decision shall be reviewed annually.

*Profound and Language Impaired refer to Requirements for a Special Diploma. The Course Code Directory contains titles that are available only for exceptional students. These courses for grades 9-12 may be used for elective credit for a standard diploma and/or credit for a special diploma.

Courses listed under Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Life Management are designed for exceptional students functioning at mildly disabled levels. Each course will have specific outcomes required of all students and count for one credit for a year's work.

The following is a list of the courses and credit requirements exceptional students must follow in order to obtain a Special Diploma (mild level):

24 Credits Required

- 4 credits in English
- 3 credits in Mathematics
- 3 credits in Science
- 3 credits in Social Science
- ½ credit in Life Management
- 1 credit in Practical Arts/Career and Technical Education or Performing Fine Arts or ½ credit each in Practical Arts/Career and Technical Education and Performing Fine Arts
- 1 credit in Physical Education
 - ½ credit in Elective PE Course
 - ½ credit in Personal Fitness
- 8 ½ credits in Electives

Students are allowed to satisfy the one credit requirement by participating in the full seasons of junior varsity or varsity sports and earning a "C" or better on the Personal Fitness Competency Exam. This participation meets the one credit requirement; however, it does not allow a credit to be earned on the transcript. The competency exam will be administered in November and April of each year. Students will have two opportunities to pass the exam. Tenth grade students are encouraged to take the exam for the first time in April. The personal fitness competency exam cannot be taken by a student who has taken the Personal Fitness course.

The district will ensure that students who graduate with a special diploma have achieved the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma exit standards set by the State of Florida.

Respective categorical basic education courses will satisfy requirements for a Special Diploma when certification of mastery of the ESE courses can be documented.

Additional exceptional courses have been listed in the Okeechobee County Course Code Directory under the 7900 numbers.

Special Diploma/Moderate Level

The courses listed in the Course Code Directory under Supported Levels are for the Moderately Disabled students functioning at levels similar to Trainable Mentally Disabled. The courses are designed to include a range of outcomes, and may be repeated for multiple credits of one (1), earned sequentially or simultaneously. The particular outcomes and student performance standards that the student must master to earn each credit must be reflected in the IEP.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credit</u>
Academic Skills for Functional Living	4
Communication Skills for Functional Living	4
Leisure & Recreation Skills for Functional Living	4
Personal & Home Living Skills for Functional Living	4
Total Required Credits	16
Total Electives	8
Total Credits	24

The district will ensure that students who graduate with a special diploma have achieved the Sunshine State Standards through a Florida Alternate Assessment process.

Criteria for Receipt of a Certificate of Completion

Exceptional students may receive a Regular Certificate of Completion if they meet the requirements outlined below:

- Meet district course and credit requirements. Students may use basic, vocational or those ESE courses so designated to meet these requirements. ESE courses that are equivalent in content to basic or vocational education courses may be modified for exceptional students as outlined on previous page.

Criteria for Receipt of a Special Certificate of Completion

Students who meet district credit and course requirements for a special diploma, but fail to demonstrate mastery of the Sunshine State Standards, meet the criteria for a Special Certificate of Completion. Profoundly Disabled students may be eligible for a Special Certificate of Completion if they meet the requirements as outlined below:

- Have participated in activities designed to enhance motor, self-help, cognitive, language, social and sensory skills, in accordance with their individual needs and abilities. Students must receive instruction in all skills and standards that they will be expected to master prior to examination. Teachers will assure that the students have an opportunity for instruction in all skills, as appropriate.

Access to a Special Diploma may be made available through requirements for the Trainable Mentally Disabled as specified in the student's Individual Educational Plan.

The courses listed under Participatory Skills are designed for students functioning at a level similar to severely mentally disabled. The courses are designed to include a range of outcomes and may be repeated for multiple credits. The particular outcomes and student performance standards that the student must master to earn each credit must be reflected in the IEP.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Cognitive Skills	4
Life Sustaining and Environmental Interaction Skills	4
Leisure/Recreation Skills	4
Developmental-Functional Motor and Sensory Skills	4
Language & Communication Skills	4
Electives	<u>4</u>
Total Credits	24

Testing and Accommodations

Accommodations

The following accommodations are authorized when determined appropriate by the staffing committee for any student who is an eligible exceptional student and has a current Individual Educational Plan (IEP). Students classified solely as gifted shall not receive any special test accommodations. In no case shall accommodations authorized be interpreted or construed as an authorization to provide a student assistance in determining the answer to any test item.

Exemptions/Inclusion

Students with disabilities are included in general state and district level assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations in administration, and all allowable student accommodations if necessary.

Students with disabilities who cannot participate in state and district level assessment programs will participate in the Florida Alternative Assessments Report (FAAR) as determined by their individual education plans.

Students must be assessed on the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma with the same frequency that students are assessed on the Sunshine State Standards. Methods of alternate assessment must be identified on the IEP and should be provided at grades 3 through 10 or comparable ages. While all standards must eventually be mastered at IEP-prescribed levels of functioning, it is recommended that formal alternate assessment strategies at grades 3 through 10 address, at a minimum, the four standards in Functional Academics and the standard in Communicating with Others.

The decision as to an exceptional student's ability to participate in the regular education testing program for mastery of the regular state student performance standards should be reviewed at the time of the annual IEP conference. This decision may be altered in subsequent annual IEP conferences, based upon the student's observable performance.

The administration of the State Student Assessment Testing program to all exceptional students falls under the responsibility of the district's Coordinator of Testing.

The administration of the Alternative Assessment Testing Program to exceptional students falls under the responsibility of the Director of Exceptional Education.

Special Standards

Exceptional students must be administered special standards in accordance with their IEP to satisfy the progression set forth by state and county requirements. If a student fails to master the standards, the ESE teacher or remediation regular teacher shall provide special instructional assistance for such students in a manner deemed most appropriate. Skills not mastered should be reflected in the student's IEP.

Benchmarks are set at three possible levels of functioning for each standard: independent, supported, and participatory. These levels are defined below.

- Independent Level: Students are expected to be able to perform the behaviors identified for each benchmark on their own once they have mastered 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 prompts, 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.

The IEP team should base its decisions regarding expected levels of functioning on what the student is projected to attain by the time of graduation. The IEP team needs to remember that these expected levels can change based on student progress.

Should an exceptional student not participate in state testing, they will participate in the State Alternative Assessment Program. Each student will be assessed using the Florida Alternate Assessment. The activity must reflect the task indicated in the skill. Since exceptional students exhibit pronounced deficits in either their developmental growth, academically, and socially, or in their modes of learning; they must demonstrate mastery of standards as required in this plan.

Mastery of regular or special standards for ESE students will be certified by the ESE teacher. ESE students scheduled into regular academic classes based upon Eligibility Staffing/IEP report will be remediated by the regular subject area teacher or remediation teacher assigned to the school. For instance, if a student is staffed into an ESE class for math only, the ESE teacher may not certify for reading, but is responsible for certifying mastery of the math skills/standards.

The documentation of remediation/post-testing citing the specific skill and standard is to be retained in the student file. Certification of skills is an on-going process and should be documented as the student successfully demonstrates mastery of each skill.

Grading Student Progress/Grade of “F”

Grade of “F”

In order for a grade of “F” to be given, the following factors must be reviewed by the ESE teacher with the school principal or designee prior to the end of the current grading period:

- Has an unsatisfactory progress report been sent to the parent or guardian?
- Have the student’s parents been officially notified and involved in documented conferences regarding the student’s problems?
- Are the instructional strategies, techniques, curriculum content and classroom assignments employed in the instructional program appropriate for the student’s needs?
- Are there environmental or emotional factors affecting the student’s performance that are not currently being addressed through the provision of related services?
- Is a behavior management system in operation in the classroom for those instances where effort and conduct are hindering the student’s mastery of skills necessary for meeting the goals and objectives?
- Are the goals and objectives on the IEP appropriate for the documented levels of performance?

Inclusion Grades

When an Exceptional Student Education Kindergarten-eighth grade student is included in a regular class, the district grading policy should be applied for each subject in which the student’s achievement grade is “D” or better. If the student is not performing on grade level in the subject area, but is working to his/her potential the student should receive an effort grade of E (excellent), S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), or U (unsatisfactory). If the student is working at grade level in that subject area, yet unable to earn a “D” or better, the teacher in consultation with the Exceptional Student Education teacher, should assign effort grades of E, S, N, or U as defined above for the time in the regular classroom. In the event an Exceptional Education Student has had appropriate accommodations in the general curriculum and is failing a course due to non-compliance, an “F” can be given after collaboration with the Exceptional Student Education Teacher and a review of the Individual Educational Plan.

Academic grades for exceptional students enrolled in ESE classes follow Sunshine State Student Performance Standards commensurate with the student’s exceptionality. The goals must be based upon documented levels of performance. An ESE student who is working up to the maximum of his or her potential should receive grades based on his ability rather than grade placement. Therefore, if a student had met all of the objectives specified in the ESE teacher’s plans, even though these might be at a lower level than other students of his chronological age, he should be given a grade in the ESE program to assess achievement appropriate to the individual student’s ability grade is “D” or better. If the student is not performing on grade level in the subject area, but is working to his/her potential the student should receive an effort grade of E (excellent), S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), or U (unsatisfactory). If the student is working at grade level in that subject area, yet unable to earn a “D” or better, the teacher in consultation with the Exceptional Student Education teacher, should assign effort grades of E, S, N, or U as defined above for the time in the regular classroom. In the event an Exceptional Education Student has had appropriate accommodations in the general curriculum and is failing a course due to non-compliance, an “F” can be given after collaboration with the Exceptional Student Education Teacher and a review of the Individual Educational Plan.

Academic grades for exceptional students enrolled in ESE classes follow Sunshine State Student Performance Standards commensurate with the student’s exceptionality. The goals must be based upon documented levels of performance. An ESE student who is working up to the maximum of his or her potential should receive grades based on his ability rather than grade placement. Therefore, if a student had met all of the objectives specified in the ESE teacher’s plans, even though these might be at a lower level than other students of his chronological age, he should be given a grade in the ESE program to assess achievement appropriate to the individual student’s ability.

No student should be denied the opportunity to earn above average grades because of placement in an ESE program.

When an ESE ninth through twelfth (9th-12th) grade student is included in a regular class, grades earned shall be based upon the student's ability to master the objectives specified for that subject area. Allowable accommodations must be made as indicated in the student's Individual Educational Plan.

Secondary ESE students enrolled in ESE courses shall be graded upon their ability to demonstrate mastery of the intended course outcomes prescribed for the ESE course.

Student Progress

All parents will be notified of their child's progress towards mastery of their annual IEP goals. Such notification will occur every four and one half (4 ½) weeks. Parents will be made aware of the reason(s) why progress is insufficient for mastery. If lack of progress is noted for two consecutive reports, the ESE teacher will hold an IEP review meeting and adjust the services as needed.

Extended School Year

Extended School Year (ESY) services are required if the IEP team has reason to believe that the provision of Free and Appropriate Public Education for an individual student would be jeopardized without such services. These guidelines are intended to assist IEP team in making decisions regarding the necessity for ESY services. Parents, teachers, and other qualified professionals are all useful sources of information. Appropriate data to be reviewed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- pattern of regression after breaks
- pre/post-tests before/after breaks
- reports of progress toward annual goals
- report cards
- teacher-made checklists
- work samples
- therapy logs
- anecdotal records
- point sheets
- probes/running records
- frequency charts
- referrals/discipline file
- documentation related to extenuating circumstances

Data collected over the course of the school year, including before and after scheduled breaks in instruction, should be used to frame the determination of need. The determination of whether an individual student should receive ESY services is ultimately an IEP team decision based on the unique needs of the student.