



Accelerated 18-Credit High School Graduation Options

What are the 18-credit graduation options?¹

There are two 18-credit graduation options, a College Preparatory Program and a Career Preparatory Program, which allow a student to graduate from high school in 3 years.² To select one of these options, a student must have the written consent of his or her parent.³

How many students complete the 18-credit graduation options?

The following table shows the 4-year cohort of students earning a standard high school diploma through both 18-credit graduation options:⁴

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
College Preparatory	837	417	210	89	62
Career Preparatory	228	111	41	19	18

What are the requirements for the 18-credit graduation options?

Students selecting the College Preparatory Program must earn a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale⁵ and students selecting the Career Preparatory Program must earn a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.⁶ Students must also pass the grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in Reading and Mathematics or attain concordant scores on either the SAT or ACT tests.⁷

In 2010, the Legislature significantly revised the credit and assessment requirements for high school graduation, including phasing in more rigorous mathematics and science credit requirements, and replacing high school level FCAT Mathematics and Science with statewide, standardized end-of-course (EOC) assessments in Algebra I, Geometry, and Biology I.⁸ The

following table specifies the credit and assessment requirements for both of the 18-credit graduation options for students entering grade 9 in specified academic years:

¹ For additional information on high school graduation requirements, see the High School Graduation Fact Sheet and the Traditional 24-Credit High School Graduation Option Fact Sheet.

² Section 1003.429(1)(b) and (c), F.S.

³ Section 1003.429(2), F.S.

⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Florida Public High School Graduation Rates, 2008-2009* (Nov. 2009), at 4, available at www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/word/gradrate0809.doc.

⁵ Section 1003.429(6)(b)1., F.S.

⁶ Section 1003.429(6)(b)2., F.S.

⁷ Section 1003.429(6)(a), F.S.; see also Florida Department of Education, Office of Assessment and School Performance, *FCAT Graduation Requirements* (November 2009), available at <http://fcats.fldoe.org/pdf/fcatpass.pdf> and the High School Graduation and Statewide Assessment Program Fact Sheets.

⁸ Chapter 2010-22, L.O.F.; see also the Statewide Assessment Program Fact Sheet.

COLLEGE PREPARATORY <i>(s 1003.429(1)(b), F.S.)</i>				
English	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 and subsequent academic years			
	4 credits (with major concentration in composition and literature)			
Mathematics	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 through the 2009-10 academic year			
	3 credits (each credit must be at the Algebra I or higher level and qualify for state university admission)			
Mathematics	For students entering grade 9 in:			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (performance on EOC constitutes 30 percent of student's final course grade) ❖ Geometry or equivalent	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Geometry or equivalent (performance on EOC constitutes 30 percent of student's final course grade)	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Geometry or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit)	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Geometry or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Algebra II
	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 through the 2009-10 academic year			
	3 credits (2 credits must have a laboratory component)			
Science	For students entering grade 9 in:			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	No change	3 credits, including: ❖ Biology I or equivalent (performance on EOC constitutes 30 percent of student's final course grade)	3 credits, including: ❖ Biology I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit)	3 credits, including: ❖ Biology I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Chemistry or
	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 through the 2009-10 academic year			
	3 credits (2 credits must have a laboratory component)			

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				<i>physics</i> ❖ <i>Equally rigorous course</i> ⁹
Social Studies	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 and subsequent academic years			
	3 credits, including: ❖ 1 credit in United States History ❖ 1 credit in World History ❖ ½ credit in United States Government ❖ ½ credit in Economics			
Second Language	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 and subsequent academic years			
	2 credits in the same second language ¹⁰			
Electives	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 through the 2009-10 academic year			
	3 credits			
	For students entering grade 9 in:			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	2 credits	No change	No change	No change
CAREER PREPARATORY (s. 1003.429(1)(c), F.S.)				
English	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 and subsequent academic years			
	4 credits (with major concentration in composition and literature)			
Mathematics	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 through the 2009-10 academic year			
	3 credits, including: ❖ 1 credit in Algebra I			
Mathematics	For students entering grade 9 in:			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (performance on EOC constitutes 30 percent of student's final course grade) ❖ Geometry or	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Geometry or equivalent	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Geometry or equivalent	4 credits, including: ❖ Algebra I or equivalent (student must pass EOC to earn course credit) ❖ Geometry or equivalent

⁹ The State Board of Education determines which courses qualify as "equivalent" and "equally rigorous." Section 1003.428(2)(a), F.S.

¹⁰ If a student is a native speaker of, or demonstrates competency in, a language other than English, the student may earn 2 credits in other academic courses. Section 1003.429(1)(b)5., F.S.

	<i>equivalent</i>	<i>(performance on EOC constitutes 30 percent of student's final course grade)</i>	<i>(student must pass EOC to earn course credit)</i>	<i>(student must pass EOC to earn course credit)</i> ❖ <i>Algebra II</i>
Science	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 through the 2009-10 academic year			
	3 credits (2 credits must have a laboratory component)			
	For students entering grade 9 in:			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	No change	3 credits, including: ❖ <i>Biology I or equivalent</i> <i>(performance on EOC constitutes 30 percent of student's final course grade)</i>	3 credits, including: ❖ <i>Biology I or equivalent</i> <i>(student must pass EOC to earn course credit)</i>	3 credits, including: ❖ <i>Biology I or equivalent</i> <i>(student must pass EOC to earn course credit)</i> ❖ <i>Chemistry or physics</i> ❖ <i>Equally rigorous course</i>
Social Studies	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-07 and subsequent academic years			
	3 credits, including: ❖ 1 credit in United States History ❖ 1 credit in World History ❖ ½ credit in United States Government ❖ ½ credit in Economics			
Vocational or Career Education	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-2007 and subsequent academic years			
	Three options: ❖ 3 credits in vocational or career education program; ❖ 3 credits in career and technical certificate dual enrollment courses; or ❖ 5 credits in vocational or career education courses.			
Electives	For students entering grade 9 in 2006-2007 - 2009-2010 school years			
	2 credits (if a student earns 5 credits in vocational or career education courses, electives are not required)			
	For students entering grade 9 in:			
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	<i>1 credit</i>	No change	No change	No change

To receive course credit toward graduation, a student in the College Preparatory Program must receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 grade points (*e.g.*, unweighted

“B”) in each of the required 18 credits.¹¹ A student in the Career Preparatory Program must earn a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 grade points (*e.g.*, unweighted “C”) in each of the required 18 credits.¹²

For students selecting the College Preparatory Program, at least 6 credits must be taken in International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), dual enrollment, or Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses or in other courses identified as rigorous by the Department of Education.¹³

What is the difference between the 18-credit high school graduation options and acceleration mechanisms?

The 18-credit graduation options allow a student to earn a high school diploma in less time than the traditional 24-credit graduation option. Acceleration mechanisms allow a student to simultaneously earn high school and postsecondary credit. For example, dual enrollment and early admission as well as the AP, IB, and AICE programs are acceleration mechanisms that allow a student to simultaneously earn high school and postsecondary credit for the same course.¹⁴ A student selecting an 18-credit graduation option may also participate in these acceleration mechanisms.¹⁵

Where can I get additional information?

Florida Department of Education

Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction
(850) 245-0423
<http://www.fldoe.org/bii>

Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS)

<http://www.facts.org>

Florida House of Representatives

Education Committee
(850) 488-7451
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

¹¹ Section 1003.429(6)(c), F.S. For more information on grade points and the calculation of grade point averages, see the Grading Scale for Grades 6-12 Fact Sheet.

¹² Section 1003.429(6)(d), F.S.

¹³ Section 1003.429(1)(b), F.S. In 2006, effective with students entering 9th grade in or after the 2006-2007 school year, the Legislature deleted authority for honors courses to count toward the required 6 credits in advanced courses. Section 24, ch. 2006-74, L.O.F.

¹⁴ Section 1007.27(1), F.S. Credit earned through the Florida Virtual School provides additional opportunities for early graduation and acceleration.

¹⁵ See s. 1003.429(1)(b), F.S.

Florida House of Representatives

Appropriations Committee

(850) 488-6204

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

