



What are the requirements for middle grades promotion?

In order for a student to be promoted from a school composed of middle grades 6, 7, and 8,¹ the student must successfully complete the following academic courses:

- ❖ Three middle school or higher courses in English that must emphasize literature, composition and technical text;
- ❖ Three middle school or higher courses in mathematics;
- ❖ Three middle school or higher courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education;
- ❖ Three middle school or higher courses in science; and
- ❖ One course in career and education planning to be completed in grades 7 or 8.²

Beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2012-13 academic year, one of the social studies courses must be at least a one-semester civics education course that includes the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.³ The course must include an end-of-course (EOC) assessment in civics education and, beginning with the 2014-15 academic year, a student must pass the EOC in order to pass the course and receive course credit.⁴

What are the requirements for the course in career and education planning?

The course in career and education planning must be completed in grades 7 or 8. It may be delivered as a stand-alone course or integrated into another course and may be taught by any member of the instructional staff. The course should incorporate the standards and benchmarks established in the curriculum frameworks. The course numbers for the approved stand-alone and integrated courses are listed in the Course Code Directory.

The course incorporates an educational planning component that uses an online student advising system known as Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (www.FACTS.org). The course also includes career exploration using Florida CHOICES (www.flchoices.org) or a

¹ Students in grades 6, 7, or 8 who are not enrolled in a school with a middle grades configuration are subject to the same promotion requirements as students enrolled in a school with a middle grades configuration. Section 1003.4156(2), F.S.

² Section 1003.4156(1)(a), F.S.

³ Section 3, ch. 2010-48, L.O.F.; s. 1003.4156(1)(a)3., F.S.

⁴ Sections 3 and 4, ch. 2010-48, L.O.F.; ss. 1003.4156(1)(a)3. and 1008.22(3)(c), F.S. During the 2012-13 academic year, the EOC assessment must be administered as a field test. During the 2013-14 academic year, each student's performance constitutes 30 percent of the student's final course grade. See also Statewide Assessment Program Fact Sheet.

comparable program. Each student completes an electronic personalized education plan (ePEP) by the end of the course. The ePEP must be signed by the student, the student's instructor, the student's guidance counselor, or academic advisor, and the student's parent must sign the ePEP.⁵

Additionally, the required ePEP must inform students of high school graduation requirements, high school assessment and college entrance test requirements, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements, state university and Florida college admission requirements, and programs through which a high school student can earn college credit, including:

- ❖ Advanced Placement (AP);
- ❖ International Baccalaureate (IB);
- ❖ Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE);
- ❖ Dual enrollment;
- ❖ Career academy opportunities; and
- ❖ Courses that lead to a national industry certification.

The Department of Education (DOE) recommends using the CHOICES Planner program for the career exploration component of the course. The CHOICES Planner is available through FDOE at no cost.⁶

CHOICES Planner is the state of Florida's online career information delivery system that helps students understand career and educational options. The assessments will help students learn about their interests, values, and skills, and explore career clusters that interest them. All assessment and exploration results can be stored in an electronic portfolio in CHOICES Planner. This allows students to access and update their portfolios throughout high school and beyond.⁷

How can middle grades students earn high school credit?

Each middle school must offer at least one high school level mathematics course for which students may earn high school credit.⁸ In the 2008-09 academic year, 63,178 grade 8 students were enrolled in Algebra I or an equivalent and 13,648 grade 7 students were enrolled in Algebra I or an equivalent.⁹ In the 2008-09 academic year, 8,834 grade 8 students were enrolled in geometry or an equivalent and 87 grade 7 students were enrolled in geometry or an equivalent.¹⁰

For high school level courses that require a "must-pass" EOC assessment (i.e., Algebra I, Geometry, and Biology I), a middle school student's successful completion of that course is not

⁵ Section 1003.4156(1)(a)5., F.S. The plan must inform students of high school graduation requirements, high school assessment and college entrance test requirements, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements, state university and Florida college admission requirements, and programs through which a high school student can earn college credit, including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, dual enrollment, career academy opportunities, and courses that lead to national industry certification. *Id.*, as amended by s. 2, ch. 2010-22, L.O.F.

⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Middle School Reform - Frequently Asked Questions*, http://www.fldoe.org/APlusPlus/FAQ_MS.asp (last visited March 11, 2010).

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Section 1003.4156(1)(a)2., F.S.

⁹ Information provided by staff at the Department of Education to the House PreK-12 Policy Committee meeting on Jan. 20, 2010.

¹⁰ *Id.*

contingent upon the student's performance on the EOC assessment. However, a middle school student is required to pass the EOC assessment in order to receive high school credit:¹¹

- ❖ In Algebra I beginning with the 2011-12 academic year; and
- ❖ In Geometry and Biology I beginning with the 2012-13 academic year.¹²

What are the requirements for middle grades students who are not performing at grade level in reading and mathematics?

For each year a student scores at Level 1 on FCAT Reading,¹³ the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year. A student who scores at Level 2 on FCAT Reading may be placed in either an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered based on a diagnosis of the student's reading needs.¹⁴

For each year a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year that may be integrated into the student's required mathematics course.¹⁵

Where can I get additional information?

Florida Department of Education

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

Florida House of Representatives

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

¹¹ Section 2, ch. 2010-22, L.O.F.; s. 1003.4156(1)(a)2., F.S.

¹² Section 2, ch. 2010-22, L.O.F.; s. 1003.4156(1)(a)2. and 4., F.S.

¹³ Student performance on FCAT Reading and Mathematics is categorized using achievement levels 1-5. Level 1 is the lowest of the five performance levels. Section 1008.22(3)(c)5., F.S., as amended by s. 8, ch. 2010-22, L.O.F.

¹⁴ Section 1003.4156(1)(b), F.S. The Department of Education is required to provide guidance on appropriate strategies for diagnosing and meeting the varying instructional needs of students reading below grade level.

¹⁵ Section 1003.4156(1)(c), F.S.

