Graduation Requirements

Importance of the Grade 10 FCAT

According to Florida law, students must meet all academic requirements in order to receive a standard high school diploma from a public school. This means that students must take required courses, earn the correct number of credits, maintain a passing grade point average, **and pass the Reading and Mathematics Sunshine State Standards (SSS) portion of the Grade 10 FCAT**. Students who meet these requirements, but do not pass the Grade 10 FCAT, will receive a Certificate of Completion, which is not equivalent to a standard high school diploma.

In accordance with s. 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ test will become a graduation requirement beginning in 2010. This means that a student enrolled in Grade 9 for the first time in the 2006-07 school year must achieve a passing score on the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ assessment in addition to the current reading and mathematics requirements in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma.

The passing scores for the Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics SSS and Retake tests and the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ test are determined by the State Board of Education and are as follows:

1926 (scale score of 300) or above	1889 (scale score of 300) or above	300

Graduation Options

Students can retake the FCAT as many times as they want, until they pass it, and can enroll for a "free" 13th year of public education should they need additional instruction to successfully pass the FCAT. Students have up to six opportunities to pass the Grade 10 FCAT prior to graduation. Students who do not pass the FCAT in the spring of their sophomore year may retest in fall, spring, and summer of their junior and senior years.

Florida students do have other options. A senior can graduate by receiving a score comparable to the FCAT passing score on the ACT or SAT. See the chart below for the concordant scores that have been in place since the 2003-04 school year:

Concordant Scores			
Reading		**Mathematics**	
FCAT	*1926*	*FCAT*	*1889*
SAT	410	SAT	370
ACT	15	ACT	15

Per s. 1008.22(9), F.S., a student must take the Grade 10 FCAT a total of three times without earning a passing score in order to use these scores from the ACT or SAT. This requirement does not apply to a student new to the public school system in Grade 12.

Seniors with a Certificate of Completion may enroll in any community college in the state by taking the College Placement Test (CPT) to determine if they qualify to register for credit or must take remedial courses.

Finally, if students have not received passing FCAT scores, they can enroll in a GED preparation course. As each school district can adopt different policies and rules regarding this option, students should obtain a copy of the *Student Progression Plan* for their county for a better understanding of the rules and policies adopted by their school board. To access the *Student Progression Plan* for any district in Florida, visit http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/sig/districtstudprog.htm.

Helpful Resources

The **FCAT Home Page**, located at http://fcat.fldoe.org on the Department of Education website, provides a wealth of information about the FCAT and serves as a valuable resource to students, parents, and educators.

Schedules for FCAT administrations are available on the Department of Education website. The 2007-2008 FCAT schedule is located at http://fcat.fldoe.org/pdf/schedule07-08.pdf in PDF format.

Sample Test Materials, located at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatsmpl.asp in PDF format, are designed to help students become familiar with the FCAT by providing helpful hints and offering practice answering questions in different formats.

FCAT Explorer, located at http://www.fcatexplorer.com/, features skills practice for both reading and mathematics for public school students.

Released Grade 10 FCAT test books and answer keys are available at http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatrelease.asp. The FCAT Released Tests are provided available in PDF format. The 2006 FCAT Released Tests are also provided in an interactive format that allows users to get immediate feedback while answering test questions and in PDF format, which allows users to print and take a test in its entirety before checking answers.

The **K-12 Student Progression** website, located at http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/sig/studentprogression.htm, contains helpful information regarding progression for students of all grade levels, including official department memorandums regarding graduation and progression, links to state laws regarding graduation and progression, and fact sheets to aid students in making decisions regarding their graduation options.

Previous FCAT Passing Scores

Students who were originally scheduled to graduate in 2003 are still eligible for a lower passing score of 1856 (scale score of 287) or higher on FCAT SSS Reading and 1868 (scale score of 295) or higher on FCAT SSS Mathematics.