

Student Progression Plan

2016-2017



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF DESOTO COUNTY

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K-12 General Information

Comprehensive Student Progression Plan (Elementary School, Middle School and High School)

Introduction

The School District of DeSoto County has a comprehensive student progression that includes the following:

1. Standards for evaluating each student's performance, including how well he or she masters the performance standards approved by the State Board of Education.
2. Specific levels of performance in English/language arts (herein after ELA), science, civics, and mathematics for each grade level, including the levels of performance on statewide assessments as defined by the Commissioner of Education, below which a student must receive remediation, or be retained within an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and that takes into account the student's learning style.
3. The provision that the School District of DeSoto County provides all courses required for middle grades promotion, high school graduation and appropriate instruction designed to ensure that students meet State Board of Education adopted standards in reading and other language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, health and physical education, and the arts.

The district's comprehensive program for student progression uses assessment data (universal screening and ongoing progress monitoring) to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, identify students needing more intensive instructional support, and monitor the students' responses to implemented instruction and interventions. The specific standards and grade level performance which must be met can be found in each section of the Student Progression Plan under the heading Promotion or Retention or Grade Level Classification.

F.S. 1008.25 (2) (a) (b) (c)

The Florida Standards

Florida is moving from the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) to The Florida Standards. The Florida Standards are a set of high-quality academic expectations in English/Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics that define both the knowledge and skills all students should master by the end of each grade level in order to be on track for success in college and career. The Florida Standards have replaced our previous state standards in ELA and mathematics while NGSSS standards in science and social studies remain in place for the 2015-2016 school year.

Florida Standards Instructional Emphasis

ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects

- Building knowledge through content rich nonfiction and informational texts in addition to literature
- Reading and writing that is grounded in evidence from the text
- Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary (i.e. words such as commit and synthesize).

Mathematics

- Make sense of problems and persevere in problem solving
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

For more information on the Florida Standards go to: www.fldoe.org/bii/curriculum/sss/.

Allocation of Resources

The School District of DeSoto County will allocate remedial and supplemental instructional resources to students in the following priority:

1. Students who are deficient in reading by the end of grade 3
2. Students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion as defined by the performance standards in each grade level.

F.S. 1008.25 (3) (a) (b)

Assessment and Remediation

Schools shall provide for the frequent monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance.

- Each student who does not meet the minimum performance expectations defined by the Commissioner of Education for the statewide assessment tests in reading, writing, science, and mathematics 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.

The School District of DeSoto County shall assist schools and teachers in implementing research-based reading strategies that have been shown to be successful in teaching reading to low-performing students. Students not meeting grade level expectations receive increasingly intense instruction and intervention services to support student academic mastery of standards. Students are matched to the instruction and interventions based on screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments.

Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated in accordance with the state and district expectations, as well as state requirements for promotion or retention, the student may be retained.

F.S. 1008.25 (4) (a) (b) (c)

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Multi-tiered System of Student Supports (MTSS)

The School District of DeSoto County is committed to the implementation of a Response to Intervention model, through the Multi-tiered System of Student Supports (MTSS). The multi-tiered system of academic and behavioral supports relies on problem-solving and data-based decision-making to improve educational outcomes and meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students. The district will provide high quality instruction and/or intervention(s) matched to student needs and will use learning rate and level of performance to drive

instructional decisions—including decisions regarding promotion, acceleration, retention, and remediation. A three-tiered data-based problem-solving method will guide decisions about the allocation of resources and intensity of instruction and interventions needed to improve learning and/or behavior.

Monitoring Progress

Student progression decisions consider the effectiveness of core instruction and the student's response to evidence-based instruction and interventions implemented with fidelity. For complete information regarding Promotion/Retention and Monitoring Progress, please refer to the appropriate section at each level, i.e., elementary, middle or high school.

The acceptable level of performance on State and Local Assessments in both ELA and Math varies by each grade level, by test, and is dependent up the Department of Education establishing “cut scores”, or those scores which represent passing, and/or above/below grade level.

NOTE: Students who do not meet the cut score in reading in grade three (3) may be retained except for good cause. (Refer to the Good Cause heading in the Elementary section of this document.)

F.S. 1008.25 (4) (a) (b) (c)

Virtual School Opportunities

My District Virtual School

My District Virtual School (MDVS) is an Internet-based high school funded by the School District of DeSoto, in conjunction with NEFEC (Northeast Florida Education Consortium): <http://www2.nefec.org/virtual/>. The courses offered are based upon the state standards and provide Florida's students with an alternative way to access a K-12 education. Part-time students take courses online for graduation acceleration, credit recovery, grade forgiveness, or to earn high school credit while in middle school. Students in 4th and 5th grades who are eligible for middle school course acceleration may also enroll part-time with their school's approval. A major characteristic of this system is the expectation that students assume full responsibility for learning by locating, evaluating and using a wide range of resources. It is therefore most suited to students who are self-motivated, committed, and fully matured independent learners.

Florida Virtual School

Public school students who are enrolled in a traditional school within the School District of DeSoto County may take supplemental courses online with Florida Virtual School. Part-time students take courses online for graduation acceleration, credit recovery, grade forgiveness, or to earn high school credit while in middle school. Students in 4th and 5th grades who are eligible for middle school course acceleration may also enroll part-time with their school's approval.

Requirements for Registration in MDVS/FLVS

Students may access all virtual school options from the “Students” tab of the district website. Registration and course selection in either program must be approved by a school guidance counselor or designee. School representatives reserve the option to deny a request based on

academic or behavioral record which indicates that the student would not be best served by this program.

Admissions are limited and students may be placed on a “wait” list for the next available placement. Registration is an ongoing process with students entering and leaving the system as they complete coursework. However, the District reserves the right to close registration in either program 30 days before the first day of school.

Student Expectations

There are very specific student expectations that should be considered before applying for a distance learning course. Students must be able to demonstrate the following:

- organizational skills in a self-paced environment;
- ability to apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies;
- ability to satisfactorily complete assignments;
- willingness and capability to participate actively in on-line chat-room discussions;
- ability to work independently of continuous face-to-face monitoring;
- word processing skills; and
- basic internet skills (search, research, and etiquette)

In addition, students will do the following:

- direct their own learning environment and methods to fulfill course requirements to achieve individual academic success;
- must have a strong commitment to organize and plan their learning;
- take responsibility for meeting at a designated site to return instructional materials and take final exams;
- provide transportation and accept all liability for any transportation needed in association with any course.

Schools must accept all academic grades and credits attempted and/or earned at MDVS/FLVS full time and through Florida Virtual School’s part time program.

Florida Virtual School “W/F” codes will be treated as a grade of “F” on a student’s transcript.

Part-time enrollment in any virtual program does not grant a high school diploma.

F.S. 1002.37; 1002.455; 1008.22(3)(c)2

Interscholastic Extracurricular Activities/Athletics

At the secondary level the term “extracurricular” means any school-authorized or education related activity occurring during or outside the regular instructional school day. In order to participate in interscholastic, extracurricular student activities, a student must maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the previous semester or a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale.

F.S. 1006.15; SB Policy: 2431

District Physical Education Programs

In accordance with School Board policy and Florida State Statute, the School District of DeSoto County has developed a physical education program that stresses physical fitness and encourages healthy, active lifestyles and encourages all students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 to participate in physical education. Students are required to wear appropriate dress for class, and participate in physical activity of moderate intensity level and for duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit

Physical Education Requirements

- Grades K-5 – 150 minutes each week
- Grades 6-8 – One class period of physical education for one semester, or a 90-day equivalent, each year.
This requirement shall be waived if the student is enrolled or is required to enroll in a remedial course; the student's parent indicates in writing requesting the student enroll in another course from among those offered or the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement.
- Grades 9-12 – Health Opportunities through Physical Education (HOPE) is required for graduation. (See the section on high school graduation requirements.)
- Approved teachers will teach all physical education programs (F.S.1012.01(2);
- Physical education teachers will work cooperatively with parents, physicians, school counselors, and administrators to design/adapt physical activities to meet the needs of all students;
- Physical activity and physical education time shall not be withheld as a punishment or used as a punishment.
- The program will follow all requirements of Florida Statutes.

F.S. 1003.45 5

Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

The purpose of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military children is to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents. This applies to the children of active duty members of the uniformed services, including members of the National Guard and reserve on active duty orders, members or veteran of the uniformed services who are severely injured and medically discharged or retired for a period of 1 year after medical discharge or retirement and members of the uniformed services who die on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty for a period of 1 year after death. The compact does not apply to the children of inactive members of the National Guard and military reserves, members or veterans of the uniformed services now retired except as previously stated, and other US Department of Defense personnel and other federal agency civilian and contract employees not defined as active duty members.

A special power of attorney relative to the guardianship of a child of a military family is sufficient for enrollment; official or unofficial records will be accepted to expedite student enrollment; 30 days will be given for proper immunizations; students are allowed to continue their grade level enrollment if transfer is during the school year; students must be able to continue with special courses (gifted, honors, AP, etc.); student who meet criteria for special academic programs will

be given first preference for admission; and, students placed in the care of a non-custodial parent who lives in a school's jurisdiction different from that of the custodial parent may continue to attend the school in which he or she enrolled. Schools must facilitate the inclusion in extracurricular activities, regardless of application deadline to the extent the student is otherwise qualified; schools must facilitate on time graduation by waiving courses required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed; schools will accept end of course exams and other required tests from the sending state in lieu of local requirements. If a military student transfers at the beginning of or during his or her senior year and is not eligible to graduate from the receiving local education agency after all alternatives have been considered, the sending and receiving local education agencies must ensure the receipt of a diploma from the sending local education agency if the student meets the graduation requirements from the sending local education agency. If one of the states in question is not a member of the Military Compact, the member state shall use its best efforts to facilitate the on-time graduation of the student. (See Addendum for full explanation)

F.S. 1000.36

Homeless Students

In the case of homeless children and families, school nurses, social workers, the Homeless Liaison, guidance counselors, and registrars will coordinate efforts to assist these students with obtaining the required registration documents during the first 30 days of enrollment.

Hospital Homebound

Hospital/Homebound services are available for students with a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric illness or injury which confines the student to home or hospital for an extended period of time and significantly restricts the student's activities. Students will receive hospital/homebound instruction only in core academic subjects. Student participation in the instructional session is monitored for attendance. The curriculum will follow that of the regular school, adapted to the needs of the student. The instructional program is individualized.

The student's classroom teacher(s) will be responsible for providing the homebound teacher with appropriate assignments and tests. A secondary student will receive hospital/homebound instruction only in core academic subjects and other subjects as appropriate. Successful course completion or credit can be awarded for hospital/homebound instruction. Long term participation in the hospital/homebound program will require a change to the student's schedule and can impact credits and the graduation timeline. The hospital/homebound service will be terminated upon recommendation of the physician, recovery from the illness or injury, and/or the ability to participate in the regular school program.

To be eligible for hospital/homebound services a Florida licensed physician must certify the following:

The student:

- is expected to be absent from school for at least fifteen (15) school days, or the equivalent on a block schedule, due to a physical, psychiatric, chronic, or repeated intermittent illness;
- is under medical care for the illness or injury which is acute, catastrophic, or chronic in nature;

- is confined to hospital or home and all activities are restricted;
- will be able to participate and benefit from an instructional program; and
- can receive instructional services without endangering the health and safety of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact.

Each homebound teacher will be responsible for evaluating and recording grades for the student while he/she is receiving instruction in this program. The classroom teacher and the Hospital Homebound Teacher will collaborate on grades and attendance.

Transferring Students

In order to be admitted to a school within the School District of DeSoto County, a transferring student must provide the following data within 30 days of enrollment:

- Official documentation that a parent/guardian was a legal resident of the state in which the child was previously enrolled in school;
- An official letter or transcript from a proper school authority that shows the record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student;
- Evidence of immunization against communicable diseases as required by Florida law;
- Evidence of date of birth as required by Florida law;
- Evidence of a medical examination completed within the last 12 months as required by Florida law;
- Evidence of legal guardianship/custody, when appropriate; and
- A completed disclosure noting previous school expulsions, arrests resulting in a charge, and juvenile justice actions the student has had as required by Florida law.

S.R.R. 6-A 1.0985; 6-A 1.0895(3) (b)
F.S. 1003.22; 1003.21; 1003.22; 1006.17 (1) (b)

Transfer Student Grade Placement

The grade placement of students transferring from other counties, countries, states, or private schools will be determined by the principal of the receiving school based on placement tests, course completion status, credits earned, age, and previous school records.

All failing grades from classes taken in DeSoto County and all Florida public schools are subject to course completion recovery or credit recovery. All transcripts from private school, home school, and an out of state school are accepted at face value.

A student who transfers in grades 11 and 12 from out of state or from a foreign country shall not be required to spend additional time in order to meet Florida graduation requirements if the student is on track to graduate from the district, state, or country from which s/he is transferring.

Please see the Middle and High School Sections of this document for the required End of Course Exam (EOC) mandates regarding Transfer Credit.

Home School and Private School Students

Home School Student Access to Courses

Home school students wishing to take courses at the high school level beyond those which are connected to out of school activities, may do so in accordance with compliance of class size

reduction requirements. Home school students must register for these courses during the two week period before each semester begins.

Home School Transfer Student Grade Placement

The grade placement of students transferring from home education programs will be determined by the principal of the receiving school with assistance from the Director of Student Services.

Appropriate grade placement will be based on the following:

- Assessment of academic achievement;
- Portfolio of work completed in home education;
- Previous record in public and/or private school; and
- Age and maturity

At the end of the first grading period after placement, if the student earns at least a “C” in each of the core academics, the placement shall be determined to be appropriate.

Home School Students and Extracurricular Activities

In order to participate in extracurricular activities at the geographic school the student is eligible to attend, the student must meet the following requirements:

- The student must register with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a representative of the school before the beginning date of the season for the activity in which he or she wishes to participate;
- The student must be able to participate in curricular activities if that is a requirement for the extracurricular activity;
- The student must meet the requirements of the home education program, the residency requirements and the behavior requirements as other students;
- A student who transfers from a home education program before or during the first grading period of the school is academically eligible to participate during the first grading period provided the student has a successful evaluation from the previous year; ineligible students need to successfully complete one grading period;
- During the period of participation, the home school student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects taken in the home education program by a method agreed upon by the parent and the school principal which may include the following:
 - Review of the student’s work by a certified teacher chosen by the parent;
 - Grades earned through correspondence;
 - Grades earned in courses taken at a community college, university or trade school; and
 - Standardized test scores above the 35th percentile or other methods according to law.

Private School Students and Extracurricular Activities

In order to participate in extracurricular activities at the geographic school the student is eligible to attend, the student must meet the following requirements:

- The student must register with the school his/her intent to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a representative of the school before the beginning date of the season for this the activity in which he or she wishes to participate;
- The student must complete the participation application upon registering his/her intent to participate;

- The student must be able to participate in curricular activities if that is a requirement for the extracurricular activity;
- The student must meet the requirements of the private school program and the home school residency requirements and the behavior requirements as other students;
- During the period of participation, the private school student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects taken at the private school by a method agreed upon by the parent and the school principal which may include the following:
 - Review of the student's work;
 - Report Card Grades earned;
 - Grades earned in courses taken at a community college, university or trade school; and
 - Standardized test scores above the 35th percentile or other methods according to law.

F.S. 1002.41

Teacher / Class Change Request

A parent/guardian may request the movement of a student to another teacher's classroom. The request must be made in writing and include the following information: date of request, student name, name of teacher from which the student is to potentially be transferred, reason, parent signature. The requestor may not request a specific teacher or classroom assignment to which the student may be assigned. The request should be given to the school principal. The school has approximately two weeks to respond to the request, and will provide a reason if the request should be denied.

HB 7069

Student Progression in the Elementary School Grades K-5

Introduction

The following section targets elementary school progression and the requirements set forth by Florida State Statutes, the Florida Department of Education, and the School District of DeSoto County in an effort to provide parents, students, and families the knowledge to progress through the elementary school years successfully. The school district's expectations and guidelines are student-focused for college and career readiness.

Kindergarten

To enter Kindergarten, a child must meet the eligibility criteria established by the Florida Department of Education. Program eligibility and selection is based on meeting the following criteria:

- Students must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 to be eligible to enter kindergarten as stated in Florida law.
- Students must have received appropriate health examinations and immunization records as stated in Florida law.
 - proof of date of birth for students; (For acceptable alternates to birth certificates see Florida Statute 1003.21(4)).
 - a certificate showing a physical examination with at least three components performed within one year prior to enrollment (height, weight, blood pressure, etc.)
 - a valid Florida Certificate of Immunization (DH680) transcribed by a health professional.
 - kindergarten through 6th grade immunizations required for entry:
 - 4-5 doses of DTP or DTaP (If the 4th dose is administered after the 4th birthday, a 5th dose is not required);
 - 3-5 doses of polio* (according to age at time of final dose);
 - 2 doses of MMR;
 - 2 doses of Varivax or documentation of chicken pox disease;
 - 3 doses of Hepatitis B.
- The statewide kindergarten screening will take place within the first 30 school days of each school year.
- **DeSoto County policy does not grant a 30-day extension to obtain required immunizations or a physical.** Immunizations and physicals may be obtained through the student's physician. Only students who do not have health insurance coverage or children who are assigned to the Department of Health in DeSoto County as their health care provider may obtain immunizations through Florida Department of Health in DeSoto County.

F.S. 1003.21 (1)(a)(2); 1003.22(1); 1002.69(1)

Out of State Transfer Student

Entry by an out-of-state transfer student who does not meet regular age requirements for admission to Florida public school kindergarten and first grade shall be in accordance with Florida Administrative Rule 6A-1.985 which states:

1. Any student who transfers from an out-of-state public school shall be admitted upon presentation of the following data:
 - a. Official verification that the parent(s) or guardian(s) was a legal resident of the state in which the child previously enrolled in school;
 - b. An official letter or transcript from a proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information and grade placement of the student.
2. Any student who transfers from an out-of-state non-public school may be admitted if the student meets the age requirement for public schools within the state from which the student is transferring.

Enrollment/Registration

Upon initial admission or entry from one attendance zone to another in DeSoto County Public Schools, evidence of residence must be presented to the receiving school. All addresses are subject to verification. The following documents shall be required:

- Owned residence:
 - copy of the recorded deed (or agreement for deed), or a certified copy of the declaration of homestead exemption, and
 - a copy of a **current** electric bill or initial order for service; and
 - one of the following **current** documents:
 - auto registration
 - driver's license
 - voter's registration
 - Florida ID
- Rented or leased residence:
 - copy of **current** lease, rental agreement, or a notarized letter from the landlord, and
 - a copy of a **current** electric bill or initial order for service; and
 - one of the following **current** documents:
 - auto registration
 - driver's license
 - voter's registration
 - Florida ID
- Non-primary owner or renter (families living with families):
 - Verification of Residency Form must be completed by primary and non-primary owner or renter. This form is for one school year only.
- If applicable, legal documents, i.e. a copy of current judgment of divorce (dissolution of marriage) or other court order establishing the right of custody should be presented at time of enrollment.

Verifying Residence:

All student residence addresses and all documents submitted for verification are subject to validation by district staff. When a change of address occurs after initial enrollment, verification of the new residence is required. Students who are suspected of residing outside of DeSoto County, Florida, or in an attendance zone other than the student attendance zone for the school they are attending, will be reported for a residency determination investigation.

The School Board reserves the authority to verify enrollment information provided by a parent or parents and to reassign a student on the basis of its investigative determination. A

student who is found to be attending an out-of- zone in-county school as the result of giving false or misleading information at registration, shall immediately be transferred to the school serving the student’s residential attendance zone or withdrawn and advised to enroll in the appropriate school in their county of legal residence.

Any disagreement regarding the investigative finding will be reviewed by the Director of ESE. Any disagreement regarding a determination that a student is a bona fide resident of a county other than DeSoto may be contested as provided by law.

Florida Statute 837.06 provides that whoever knowingly makes a false statement in writing with the intent to mislead a public servant in the performance of his official duty shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree.

- **Divorced/Separated Parents:**
 - divorced parents:
 - ONE or more of the following documents:
 - certified copy of final judgment of divorce
 - court custody order/parenting plan
 - court guardianship order
 - other such document establishing the right of custody
 - separated parents:
 - A notarized statement that the child actually lives in the home of the parent designated in the child’s school records as the residential parent or parent with
 - whom the student resides.

Grade Placement

When a student transfers into a DeSoto County public school from an out of district public or nonpublic school, the student may be academically screened. Testing results will be shared with the parent. **The principal shall have the final decision regarding student placement.**

When a student transfers from a home education program, it will be the responsibility of the principal or principal’s designee to assess the student’s achievement level. The following will be considered by principals for placement of home education students:

- review of the required home e d u c a t i o n annual evaluation (acceptable options include student portfolio, national normed achievement test, state student assessment test, psychological evaluation, or other approved valid measurement tool)
- site based assessment.

Attendance

School attendance is required of all students, age 6 through age 16. Students who have excessive excused absences, unexcused absences, tardies, or early departures will be referred to the school’s Attendance Monitoring Committee for appropriate interventions. For more information, see The School District of DeSoto County’s Code of Student Conduct.

F.S. 1003.21

Course of Study

Curriculum/Courses

Students in kindergarten through grade five will be provided instruction at their appropriate instructional level(s) and will follow curricula that include the following:

- ELA: Florida Standards K-5
- Mathematics: Florida Standards K – 5;
- Science/Health: NGSSS K-5;
- Social Studies: NGSSS K-5; and
- Physical Education.

Other subjects in the curricula may include the following:

- Music;
- Art;
- Computer Technology (use of digital tools and applications);
- Personal/Social Development

Curricula shall be determined by the following:

- Laws of the State of Florida;
- Florida State Standards;
- Topics of subject matter required by the State Board of Education;
 - African-American History
 - Awareness of Handicaps
 - Career Awareness
 - Character Education
 - Civics
 - Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
 - Energy/Environmental Education
 - Health, Safety, Substance Abuse
 - Multi-cultural Awareness
 - Holocaust Awareness
 - Veteran Sacrifices
- Others as determined by state law; and
- Needs of students

A variety of support services are available to students to help them meet the performance standards of each subject.

Homework

Homework is an extension of learning and is important for improving student achievement. Each school is expected to have homework guidelines tailored to its student population, including a system for reviewing the homework which promotes learning.

- Homework is designed as an extension of school class work for the purpose of practice and reinforcement of classroom learning.
- Homework is purposeful and meaningful.
- There is a system for reviewing homework assignments that promotes learning.
- Parents shall be fully informed of the school's homework policy.
- It is expected that parents will instill in their children the responsibility to see that homework is completed and returned.

S.B. Policy: 2330

Assessment

Each child must participate in statewide assessment tests unless exempt under criteria established by the Commissioner of Education.

For students with disabilities and ELL (English Language Learners) students, any accommodations must be specified in their Individual Education Plans, 504 Plans, or ELL plans. Each plan must state specifically which tests the student is expected to take and the accommodations(s) allowed for that test.

In order to meet the state mandated requirements for assessment and progress monitoring, the following research-based assessments are used at the elementary level to help determine student achievement: IReady, DAR Reading Assessments, District Standards Checks. Other research-based assessments may also be used to help determine student progress and achievement. Specific assessments will be administered as scheduled to provide consistency sufficient data to determine student progress among all elementary schools, classrooms and students.

F.S. 1008.25

Remediation

Response to Intervention (Rtl)

Multi-tiered System of Student Supports (MTSSS)

Progress Monitoring/Progress Monitoring Plans (PMP) Process

Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance on required assessments as required by the District School Board in ELA, science and/or mathematics shall be provided with scientifically research-based interventions as indicated by additional diagnostic assessments used to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, and areas of academic need, and strategies for appropriate intervention and instruction. Remedial instruction shall continue until performance expectations are met as documented by demonstrating mastery, passing the state assessment(s) or graduating from high-school.

Progress monitoring plans (PMP) may be developed in consultation with the parent or guardian for any student not meeting district or state achievement levels in ELA, science, or mathematics. The plan can be an IEP, ELL plan, or an Rtl/MTSS plan developed in a school-wide system of progress monitoring for all students through the Multi-tiered System of Student Supports (MTSSS) or Response to Intervention (Rtl). The multi-tiered system of academic and behavioral supports relies on problem solving and data-based decision-making to improve educational outcomes and meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students. Multiple tiers of increasingly intense instruction intervention services are implemented and monitored.

School wide and/or student intervention plans may be tailored to identify the individual assistance deemed necessary to remedy a student's diagnosed deficiencies.

- clearly identify the specific diagnosed academic need(s) to be remediated
- the success-based intervention strategies to be used
- Provide innovative methods to promote the student's advancement which may include the following:
 - ✓ Flexible scheduling;
 - ✓ Tutoring;

- ✓ Focus on core curriculum;
- ✓ Online instruction; and
- ✓ Alternative learning environment
- Identify the monitoring and reevaluation activities to be employed.

Florida Standards Assessment: Levels for Remediation

The acceptable level of performance on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) at each grade level is Level 3. Students at this level demonstrate a satisfactory level of success with the content of the Florida standards.

Students must demonstrate proficiency in English language arts, mathematics and social studies at each grade level as determined by state/district levels of proficiency plus local levels of proficiency on district assessments. The independent work of the student may be considered in the student's placement decision.

Reading/ELA Deficiencies

ANY student in ANY grade who is identified as having a deficiency in reading/ELA must be provided intensive reading instruction immediately following the identification of the deficiency. These students will participate in the school-wide Progress Monitoring Plan/RtI/MTSS plan, which must identify the following:

- The student's specific areas of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension;
- The desired level of performance in these areas;
- The instructional strategies and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance.
- Plans for regular reassessment using locally determined tools or teacher observation. Intensive reading instruction will be continued until the reading deficiency is remedied.

The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading will be notified in writing of the following:

- That his or her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading.
- A description of the current services that are provided to the child.
- A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of 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 in reading proficiency.
- That the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) is not the sole determiner of promotion and that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews, and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion.
- The district's specific criteria and policies for a portfolio and the evidence required for a student to demonstrate mastery of Florida's academic standards for English Language Arts. A parent of a student in grade 3 who is identified anytime during the year as being at risk of retention may request that the school immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio.

- The district’s specific criteria and policies for midyear promotion. Midyear 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.

F.S. 1008.25(5) (c)

Promotion and Retention

Promotion

- Each student’s progression from one grade to another is determined in part by grade level mastery of standards in ELA, mathematics, and science as assessed by classroom work, portfolios, teacher/staff observation, teacher assessments, and data from district and state assessments.
- Promotion/retention for grades K-5 will not be determined solely on the basis of a single test/method except in grade 3. Grade three students who do not score at level 2 or above in reading on FSA will be retained except for those students who are promoted for good cause.
- The primary responsibility for determining and documenting each student’s level of performance and ability to function academically, socially, and emotionally at the next grade level belongs to the student’s teacher(s), subject to review and approval of the school principal.
- No student can be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
- The principal has the final authority to determine the placement of students except for good cause promotions at grade three (3) which must be reviewed by the superintendent.

Retention-Grades K-5

- The following are considered when retention of a student is a possibility:
 - FSA scores (when available);
 - SAT 10 scores (when available);
 - The Progress Monitoring Plan/Rtl-MTSS Plan and assessments;
 - Progress Monitoring / Standards Assessments (iReady, Performance Matters)
 - Report card;
 - Remediation services (before, during, and after school programs);
 - Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services;
 - English Language Learner (ELL) services ; and
 - Prior retentions.
- Any child being considered for retention should be referred to the Child Study Team who will analyze the contents of the cumulative record prior to a recommendation for retention. This team will also gather input from related classroom teachers and other appropriate school personnel.
- When retention is the recommendation, parents/guardians must be advised immediately, through a parent conference, at which time future program modifications will be discussed.
- When students are retained, they must be enrolled in an intensive program that is different from the previous year’s program and that takes into account the student’s learning style.
- No student can be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

- The principal has the final authority to determine the placement of students except for good cause promotions at grade three (3) which must be reviewed by the superintendent.

F.S. 1008.25(1); 1008.25(2) (a); 1008.25(2) (b); 1008.25(5); 1008.25(6) (z)

Retention and FSA

- The acceptable achievement level on FSA in grades 3-5 is level 3.
- Students scoring at level 1 demonstrate an inadequate level of success with Florida standards; students scoring at level 2 demonstrate a below satisfactory level of success with Florida standards.
- In grades K-2 where there is no FSA, students should master the majority (51% or more) of the standards with minimal intervention in the core curriculum.

Grade Three (3) Reading and Retention

Students who score Level 1 on the FSA in ELA may be retained unless they qualify for good cause promotion.

Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated in accordance with the school-based Progress Monitoring Plan/RtI/MTSS plan, the student may be retained.

Any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading based upon locally determined or statewide assessments conducted in kindergarten through grade three (3) or through teacher observations, must be given intensive reading instruction immediately and it must be continued until the reading deficiency is remediated. If the student's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade three (3), as demonstrated by scoring at Level 2 or higher on the FSA in reading for grade three (3), the student must be retained except for good cause. If a student is retained, the parent must be given the reasons the student is not eligible for a good cause exemption.

When any student exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, the parent/guardian must be given a written description of the current services provided, as well as the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that will be provided to the child. The parent must also be told that if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade three (3), the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.

- Good cause exemptions for reading retention are limited to the following:
 - Limited English proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English for Speakers of other Language (ESOL) program;
 - Students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate;
 - Students with disabilities who participate in the FSA ELA, and who have an IEP or a Section 504 plan which reflects that they have received the intensive remediation in reading and ELA for more than two (2) years but still demonstrate a deficiency and were previously retained in grades K, 1, 2, or 3;
 - Students who have received intensive remediation in reading and ELA for 2 or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade one (1), or grade two (2) for a total of two (2) years. A student

may not be retained more than once in grade 3. Intensive instruction for students so promoted must include an altered instructional day that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies for each student.

- Alternate ways to demonstrate proficiency include:
 - Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading or ELA assessment approved by the State Board of Education;
 - Students who demonstrate through a student portfolio that they are performing at least at Level 2 on FSA ELA;
- Requests for good cause exemptions from the mandatory retention requirement must include documentation submitted by the teacher to the school principal.
- The principal must review and discuss such recommendations with the teacher and make the determination as to whether the student should be promoted or retained.
- If the principal determines that the student should be promoted, the principal must make that recommendation in writing to the superintendent who in turn shall accept or reject the principal's recommendation in writing.

F.S. 1008.25(6) (a) (c), (5) (b)

Successful Progression for Retained Third Grade Students

Third grade students who are retained must be provided daily intensive interventions in reading as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment. Intervention must include the following:

- A highly effective teacher
- Effective instructional strategies;
- One of the following instructional options shall be provided:
- Participation in the summer reading program;
- Appropriate teaching methodologies;
- Review of the Progress Monitoring Plan/RtI/MTSS plan to address additional support;
- A completed student portfolio; and
- 90 minutes per day of uninterrupted scientifically research-based reading instruction which includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and other strategies which may include but not be limited to the following:
 - small group instruction;
 - integration of science and social studies content within the 90 minute block;
 - reduced teacher-student ratio;
 - more frequent progress monitoring;
 - tutoring or mentoring;
 - Intensive Acceleration Class: (required by F.S. 1008.25(7) (b) (5)), each school must establish, when applicable, an "Intensive Acceleration Class" for retained grade 3 students who subsequently score Level 1 on the required statewide, standardized assessment. The focus of the "Intensive Acceleration Class" shall be to increase a child's reading and English Language Arts skill level at least two grade levels in one school year. The Intensive Acceleration Class shall:
 - Be provided to any student in grade 3 who scores a Level 1 on the ELA FSA and who was retained in grade 3 the prior year because of scoring Level 1.
 - Have a reduced teacher-student ratio.
 - Provide uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of student contact time each day and incorporate opportunities to master the grade 4 Florida Standards in other core subject areas.

- Use 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, including use of a speech-language therapist.

F.S. 1008.25(7) (a) (b)

Mid-Year Promotion of Third Grade Students

Any retained 3rd grade student may be promoted to 4th grade if he or she can demonstrate that he or she is a successful and independent reader performing at or above grade level in reading / English Language Arts. Evidence to be used in reevaluating a student retained may include subsequent assessments, alternative assessments, and portfolio reviews.

Promotion for Exceptional Education Students

ESE students receiving instruction with ESE support will have the following additional criteria considered for promotion:

- Individual Education Plan (IEP) including how the student's disability affects the student's participation in the general curriculum;
- Classroom performance; and
- Level of mastery of course performance standards.

F.S. 1008.25 (6) (a)

Reporting Student Progress

Grade and Progress Reporting to parents shall include:

- progress report (midpoint of each grading period);
- kindergarten through grade 5 report card;
- annual reporting of district wide state assessment results:
 - will be provided to parents in writing in a format adopted by the district School Board;
 - will be reported to the public as required by state law; and
- parental notification of English language arts deficiencies.

The standards-based reporting system is designed to inform parents about their child's progress towards achieving specific learning standards. These learning standards describe what students should know and be able to do by the end of the year.

On the elementary standards-based report card, students will still receive a grade in each subject area. In English/Language Arts and Mathematics, students will also receive a rating on the level of mastery of the standards.

Report cards are issued as follows:

- Grades K-5 – four (4) times per year
- Report cards give an annual report of student progress towards achieving state and district expectations for mastery of standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies based on results of district and statewide testing.
- Report cards indicate to parents whether a student is working at a level below that expected for his/her assigned grade placement.

- For students with disabilities, the report card will include progress toward achievement of Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives.
- For ELL students, progress should be communicated in a language that the parents understand, whenever feasible.

The following grading system shall be used for grades 1-5 to indicate progress towards mastery of the Florida State Standards in English/language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Grading Scale – Grades 1-5

The following letter grading system shall be used for 1st through 5th grades for language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Elementary Grading Scale (1 st – 5 th Grade)	
Percentage	Letter Grade
90 – 100	A – (Excellent)
80 – 89	B – (Above Average)
70 – 79	C – (Average)
60 – 69	D – (Needs Improvement)
0 – 59	F – (Failing)

*Other classes will use E (Excellent), S (Satisfactory), N (Needs improvement), and U (Unsatisfactory).

Additionally, the standards-based report cards will contain a scale based on the following rubric:

Elementary Grading Scale (Kindergarten through – 5 th Grade)	
Standards-Based Rubric	
MS	Mastered: The student demonstrates and applies an in-depth understanding of skills/concepts at grade level. Performance is accurate without additional teacher support.
DV	Developing: The student demonstrates a basic understanding of skills/concepts at grade level. Performance is accurate with minimal support.
DI	Developing with Intervention: The student demonstrates a basic understanding of skills/concepts at grade level. Performance varies in consistency, and requires significant intervention and assistance.
NM	Not Mastered: The student demonstrates minimal understanding of skills/concepts at grade level and requires constant support.
NA	Not assessed at this time.

Grading Scale – Kindergarten

The following grading system shall be used in kindergarten for language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Elementary Grading Scale (Kindergarten)
E - Excellent

S - Satisfactory
N – Needs improvement
U - Unsatisfactory

F.S. 1007.27

Student Progression in Middle School Grades 6-8

Introduction

The following section targets middle school progression and the requirements set forth by Florida State Statutes, the Florida Department of Education, and the School District of DeSoto County in an effort to provide parents, students, and families the knowledge to progress through the middle school years successfully. The school district's expectations and guidelines are student-focused for college and career readiness.

Admission, Enrollment, and Transfers

To enter middle school, a child must meet the eligibility criteria established by the Florida Department of Education. Program eligibility and selection is based on meeting the following criteria:

- Students must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 to be eligible to enter kindergarten as stated in Florida law.
- Students must have received appropriate health examinations and immunization records as stated in Florida law.
 - proof of date of birth for students; (For acceptable alternates to birth certificates see Florida Statute 1003.21(4)).
 - a certificate showing a physical examination with at least three components performed within one year prior to enrollment (height, weight, blood pressure, etc.)
 - a valid Florida Certificate of Immunization (DH680) transcribed by a health professional.
 - kindergarten through 6th grade immunizations required for entry:
 - 4-5 doses of DTP or DTaP (If the 4th dose is administered after the 4th birthday, a 5th dose is not required);
 - 3-5 doses of polio* (according to age at time of final dose);
 - 2 doses of MMR;
 - 2 doses of Varivax or documentation of chicken pox disease;
 - 3 doses of Hepatitis B.
 - 7th through 12th grade:
 - 4-5 doses of DTP or DTaP (If the 4th dose is administered after the 4th birthday, a 5th dose is not required);
 - 3-4 doses of Polio (according to age at time of final dose);
 - 2 doses of MMR;
 - 2-3 dose series of Hepatitis B (according to age of administration);
 - 1 dose of Varivax or documentation of chicken pox disease.
 - 7th graders 2 doses of Varivax
 - Tdap booster

- **DeSoto County policy does not grant a 30-day extension to obtain required immunizations or a physical.** Immunizations and physicals may be obtained through the student’s physician. Only students who do not have health insurance coverage or children who are assigned to the Department of Health in DeSoto County as their health care provider may obtain immunizations through Florida Department of Health in DeSoto County.

F.S. 1003.21 (1)(a)(2); 1003.22(1); 1002.69(1)

Out of State Transfer Student

Entry by an out-of-state transfer student who does not meet regular age requirements for admission to Florida public school kindergarten and first grade shall be in accordance with Florida Administrative Rule 6A-1.985 which states:

1. Any student who transfers from an out-of-state public school shall be admitted upon presentation of the following data:
 - a. Official verification that the parent(s) or guardian(s) was a legal resident of the state in which the child previously enrolled in school;
 - b. An official letter or transcript from a proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information and grade placement of the student.
2. Any student who transfers from an out-of-state non-public school may be admitted if the student meets the age requirement for public schools within the state from which the student is transferring.

Enrollment/Registration

Upon initial admission or entry from one attendance zone to another in DeSoto County Public Schools, evidence of residence must be presented to the receiving school. All addresses are subject to verification. The following documents shall be required:

- Owned residence:
 - copy of the recorded deed (or agreement for deed), or a certified copy of the declaration of homestead exemption, and
 - a copy of a **current** electric bill or initial order for service; and
 - one of the following **current** documents:
 - auto registration
 - driver’s license
 - voter’s registration
 - Florida ID
- Rented or leased residence:
 - copy of **current** lease, rental agreement, or a notarized letter from the landlord, and
 - a copy of a **current** electric bill or initial order for service; and
 - one of the following **current** documents:
 - auto registration
 - driver’s license
 - voter’s registration
 - Florida ID
- Non-primary owner or renter (families living with families):
 - Verification of Residency Form must be completed by primary and non-primary owner or renter. This form is for one school year only.
- If applicable, legal documents, i.e. a copy of current judgment of divorce

(dissolution of marriage) or other court order establishing the right of custody should be presented at time of enrollment.

Verifying Residence:

All addresses and changes of address are subject to verification by the School Board. All student residence addresses and all documents submitted for verification are subject to validation by district staff. When a change of address occurs after initial enrollment, verification of the new residence is required. Students who are suspected of residing outside of DeSoto County, Florida, or in an attendance zone other than the student attendance zone for the school they are attending, will be reported for a residency determination investigation.

The School Board reserves the authority to verify enrollment information provided by a parent or parents and to reassign a student on the basis of its investigative determination. A student who is found to be attending an out-of- zone in-county school as the result of giving false or misleading information at registration, shall immediately be transferred to the school serving the student’s residential attendance zone or withdrawn and advised to enroll in the appropriate school in their county of legal residence.

Any disagreement regarding the investigative finding will be reviewed by the Director of ESE. Any disagreement regarding a determination that a student is a bona fide resident of a county other than DeSoto may be contested as provided by law.

Florida Statute 837.06 provides that whoever knowingly makes a false statement in writing with the intent to mislead a public servant in the performance of his official duty shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree.

- **Divorced/Separated Parents:**

- divorced parents:
- ONE or more of the following documents:
 - certified copy of final judgment of divorce
 - court custody order/parenting plan
 - court guardianship order
 - other such document establishing the right of custody
- separated parents:
- A notarized statement that the child actually lives in the home of the parent designated in the child’s school records as the residential parent or parent with whom the student resides.

Transfers / Grade Placement

Any student who transfers from an in-state public or nonpublic school or out-of-state public or nonpublic school shall be admitted upon presentation of the following data:

- an official letter or transcript from a proper school authority which shows a record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student;
- proof of immunization; proof of date of birth; and proof of a medical examination completed within the last twelve months (first time entry to Florida Public School only).

State Uniform Transfer of Students in the Middle Grades

The purpose of this rule is to establish uniform procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and courses for students entering Florida's public schools composed of middle grades 6, 7, and 8 from out of state or out of country. The procedures shall be as follows:

- 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, successful completion of courses shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in subsection (b) of this rule.
- Validation of courses 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 be passing each required course at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have
- courses validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in subsection (c) of this rule.
- Alternative Validation Procedure – If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives identified in the district student progression plan shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal, and parent:
 - Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee;
 - Demonstrated performance in courses taken at other public or private accredited schools;
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally-normed standardized subject area assessments;
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on the FSA; or
 - 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 c (3) and (4) of this rule if required.

Grade Placement

When a student transfers into a DeSoto County public school from a public or nonpublic school, it will be the responsibility of the principal of the previous school to determine grade level placement. From a home education program it will be the responsibility of the principal or the principal's designee of the receiving school to assess the student's achievement level. The principal shall have the final decision regarding student placement.

Rule 6A-1.09942

Attendance

School attendance is required of all students, kindergarten through age 16. Students who have excessive excused absences, unexcused absences, tardies, or early departures will be referred to the school's Attendance Monitoring Committee for appropriate interventions. For more information, see The School District of DeSoto County's Code of Student Conduct.

F.S. 1003.21

Course of Study

The School District of DeSoto County provides all courses required for middle grades promotion and provides appropriate instruction designed to ensure that students meet State Board of Education adopted standards.

Curriculum/Courses

There shall be instruction in any subject matter, field, topic, or specific area required by law in accordance with the Florida Statutes and the Florida Department of Education. High school courses such as English/language arts (herein after ELA), mathematics, social studies, and science may be offered to middle school students who meet the appropriate entrance requirements. Students in grades six (6) through eight (8) will be provided instruction at their appropriate instructional level(s) and will follow curricula that include the following subjects:

- 3 courses in ELA emphasizing literature, composition, and technical text;
- 3 courses in mathematics.
 - Middle schools must offer at least one high school level mathematics course for which students can earn high school credit;
- 3 courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education;
- 3 courses in science; and
- One course in career and education planning to be completed in 7th or 8th grade. This course will include:
 - A completed personalized academic and career plan for the student; emphasis in technology or the application of technology in career fields; and, beginning in the 2014-2015 academic year, must include information from the Department of Economic Opportunity' s economic security report as described in s. 445.07, F.S.
- 1 semester in physical education each year unless a district waiver is secured, or the student is participating in a required remedial course.

F. S. 1003.4156

A variety of exploratory experiences may be offered by schools including, but not limited to, the following:

- Art
- Band
- Chorus
- Computer Literacy/Technology
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Spanish
- Health
- Media

Earning High School Credit toward Graduation

Middle school students may earn credit toward high school graduation under the following conditions:

- Students are considered ninth graders during the periods in which they are enrolled in the high school credit courses offered at the middle school site;

- The courses are listed in the Florida Course Code Directory and meet high school requirements;
- Courses are offered for the same number of hours of instruction as currently offered at the high school;
- Students demonstrate mastery of district and state course performance standards; and
- Placement of grades to the high school transcript is as follows:
 - All grades earned must be placed on the high school transcript;
 - Students who earn a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F” will have the opportunity for grade forgiveness by retaking the same course or a comparable course in high school; and
 - If the student retakes the course, only the higher grade and credit will be included in the grade point average calculation.
- Successful completion (middle school requirement) of a high school level Algebra I or Geometry course is not contingent on the end-of-course (EOC) assessment; however,
 - To earn high school credit for Algebra I, a middle school student must take the Algebra I EOC Assessment, which will count as 30% of the final grade. (Not required to pass the EOC to earn high school credit.)
 - To earn high school credit for Geometry I, a middle school student must take the Geometry I EOC assessment which will count as 30% of the final grade. (Not required to pass the EOC to earn high school credit.)
- Students must pass the Algebra I and the Geometry EOC in order to meet the high school graduation requirements and earn a high school diploma.
- Advanced / accelerated courses are open for enrollment to any student who desires to self-select a more rigorous and challenging curriculum. Students who choose to enroll in advanced classes must commit, in writing, to doing the additional tasks, assignments, and assessments associated with the more intensive curriculum. Students who fail to maintain a 2.0 average over two consecutive nine-week grading period in an advanced course may be exited from that course.

F. S. 1003.4156

Homework

Homework is an extension of learning and is important for improved student achievement. Each school is expected to have homework guidelines tailored to its student population including a system for reviewing which promotes learning.

- Homework is designed as an extension of school class work for the purpose of practice and reinforcement of classroom learning.
- Homework is purposeful and meaningful.
- Students should be able to successfully complete homework independently.
- There is a system for reviewing homework assignments that promotes learning.
- Parents shall be fully informed of the school’s homework policy.
- It is expected that parents will instill in their children the responsibility to see that homework is completed and returned.

Assessment

Each student must participate in statewide assessment tests unless exempt under criteria established by the Commissioner of Education.

Middle School State Standardized Assessments		
Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Grade 6 - English Language Arts Florida Standards Assessment	Grade 7 - English Language Arts Florida Standards Assessment	Grade 8 - English Language Arts Florida Standards Assessment
Grade 6 - Math Florida Standards Assessment	Grade 7 - Math Florida Standards Assessment OR Algebra 1 End of Course Assessment	Grade 8 - Math Florida Standards Assessment OR Algebra 1 End of Course Assessment OR Geometry End of Course Assessment
	Civics End of Course Assessment	Grade 8 - FCAT Science

F. S. 1008.25(4)

For students with disabilities and ELL (English Language Learners), any accommodations must be specified in their Individual Education Plans, 504 Plans, or ELL plans. Each plan must state specifically which tests the student is expected to take and the accommodations(s) allowed for that test.

In order to meet the state mandated requirements for assessment and progress monitoring, the following research-based assessments are used at the middle school level to help determine student achievement: IReady and District Progress Monitoring Assessments. Other research-based assessments may also be used to help determine student progress and achievement. Specific assessments will be administered as scheduled to provide consistency among classrooms to provide sufficient data to determine student progress.

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- iReady
- Florida State Assessments (ELA, Writing, Mathematics, and Science)
- Algebra EOC
- Geometry EOC
- Florida Alternative Assessment
- Additional research-based assessments may be used

F. S. 1008.22

Remediation

Response to Intervention (RtI)/Multi-tiered System of Student Supports (MTSS) Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring in Reading must occur three times per year.

State Board Rule 6A-6.054

Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance on required assessments as required by the District School Board in English/Language Arts, science and/or mathematics shall be provided with scientifically research-based interventions as indicated by additional diagnostic assessments used to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, and areas of academic need, and strategies for appropriate intervention and instruction. Remedial instruction shall continue until performance expectations are met as documented by demonstrating mastery, passing the state assessment(s) or graduating from high-school.

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Each PMP or school-wide improvement plan shall be tailored to identify the individual assistance deemed necessary to remedy a student's diagnosed deficiencies. The PMP must:

- clearly identify the specific diagnosed academic need(s) to be remediated
- the success-based intervention strategies to be used
- Provide innovative methods to promote the student's advancement which may include the following:
 - ✓ Flexible scheduling;
 - ✓ Tutoring;
 - ✓ Focus on core curriculum;
 - ✓ Online instruction; and
 - ✓ Alternative learning environment
- Identify the monitoring and reevaluation activities to be employed.

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The acceptable level of performance on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) at each grade level is Level 3. Students at this level demonstrate a satisfactory level of success with the content of the Florida standards.

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ANY student in ANY grade who is identified as having a deficiency in reading/ELA may be provided intensive reading instruction immediately following the identification of the deficiency.

These students will participate in the school-wide Progress Monitoring Plan/RtI/MTSS plan, which must identify the following:

- The student’s specific areas of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension;
- The desired level of performance in these areas;
- The instructional strategies and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance.
- Plans for regular reassessment using locally determined tools or teacher observation.
- Intensive reading instruction will be continued until the reading deficiency is remedied.

The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading will be notified in writing of the following:

- Strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed in reading proficiency.
- That the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) is not the sole determiner of promotion and that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews, and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion.
- As required by FL Statute 1001.42 (18) a middle grades early warning system is used to identify students who need additional support to improve academic performance and stay engaged in school.

F. S. 1008.25(5) (c), 1001.42 (18)

Promotion and Retention

Promotion/retention will not be determined solely on the basis of a single test/method. Promotion from middle school to high school requires the successful completion of the following:

- 3 courses in ELA emphasizing literature, composition, and technical text
- 3 courses in mathematics. Middle schools must offer at least one high school level mathematics course for which students earn high school credit
- 3 courses in social studies, one semester of which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education
- 3 courses in science
- Promotion to the next grade shall be based upon a student making adequate progress and demonstrating an appropriate level of achievement of the essential concepts in the academic core.
- Student performance must be judged on the basis of a number of measures taken over time (see grading criteria).
- No student can be assigned a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
- A student who scores below Level 2 on the State Assessment reading and whose academic progress is inadequate, as determined by the principal, must attend the summer reading program, if offered, in order to be considered for promotion. This includes promotion to high school.

Note: Remediation of failed core courses must take place as soon as possible. If a student fails any semester of a core class, the student may be promoted to the next grade level if the student enrolls and is successful in the summer course retrieval program, when offered, and/or in a before, during, or after school course retrieval program, when offered.

Promotion between Grade Levels

Promotion between grade levels is determined by 2 successful course completions in core subjects each year. Successful course completion is defined as passing a core course with a grade of “D” or better.

Promotion to high school is determined by 12 successful core course completions, specifically 3 in English/language arts, 3 in mathematics, 3 in science and 3 in social studies. 8th graders that have not met these requirements are not eligible for assignment to the 9th grade due to scheduling and high school credit earning issues.

The principal(s) has/have the authority to determine the final placement of students.

Course Recovery

Middle school students have an opportunity to achieve successful course completions after failing a course through participation in virtual courses, the summer program (when offered) or during the before, during, or after school program throughout the school year (when offered). Students are required to recover only the semester of the course which they failed, (received an ‘F’). The highest replacement grade that can be earned in credit recovery is a C.

Attendance Requirement for Course Completion

School attendance is required of all students, kindergarten through age 16.

A student with more than nine (9) absences in a semester can earn half of the successful course completion only if he/she has demonstrated mastery of the course performance standards in the course of study by achieving a grade of “C” or better on the semester examination or an alternate assessment, each of which covers all the standards. If the student does not meet the above requirements, he/she will receive a final grade of “F” and no successful completion for the course. All the other policies governing successful course completions, semester averages, and grade promotion must be met as outlined in the School District of DeSoto County Student Progression Plan. Hardship cases should be referred to the principal and the principal’s team.

Additional information regarding the DeSoto attendance policies, class work, make-up privileges, etc. can be found in the School District of DeSoto County Code of Student Conduct.

F.S. 1003.436

Reporting Student Progress

Parents can view grades by signing into the District’s Parent Portal (online) at any time throughout the school year.

Grading Criteria

Middle school students shall be expected to demonstrate achievement of the essential concepts (state standards) in the core subject areas. Student progress reporting will include mastery of standards data in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies.

- Grading criteria must be based on a variety of assessments which may include the following:
 - Classroom work;

- Projects/presentations;
- Classroom assessments;
- Observations;
- Portfolios; and
- Other relevant information.
- All of the above provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate mastery of the course-specific benchmarks and standards as outlined in the state course descriptions. Student progress reporting will include mastery of standards data in ELA, mathematics, and science.
- Conduct and effort reflect student work habits, not academic achievement of course specific benchmarks and standards, and therefore should not be included in the academic grade.
- Students must be advised of the grading criteria used in the school and in each class at the beginning of the course of study.

Semester Exams

Semester exams based on subject area standards will be given at the end of both semesters in all grades. Early exams will not be provided. Exams must be made up within the reasonable time limits established by the teacher, at minimum, the number of days absent plus one (1) additional day. The teacher may administer an alternate exam to assess competency or mastery of subject matter. The teacher’s decision on make-up schedules shall be final.

Grade Point Average

To determine the grade point average (GPA), the total number of quality points for a marking period is divided by the total number of letter grades in the marking period.

To determine a cumulative GPA, the total number of quality points for all courses are added, and the sum is divided by the total number of letter grades represented.

Grading Scale

The district grading scale for grades six through eight is as follows:

Middle School Grading Scale		
Percentage	Letter Grade	Quality Points
90 – 100	A	4
80 – 89	B	3
70 – 79	C	2
60 – 69	D	1
0 – 59	F	0

F.S. 1007.27

Semester Grades

Semester grades will be determined in the following way:

Semester Averages Scale			
Semester 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Semester Exam
Semester 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Middle School Courses	40%	40%	20%
High School Courses	35%	35%	30%

*Credit for courses with End of Course (EOC) Exams is awarded at the end of the year. The middle school Civics course grade is calculated using high school semester averages.

Reporting of Progress and Report Cards

It is the firm belief of The School District of DeSoto County that excellence in education requires community commitment, and one of the cornerstones of this belief is communication between home and school. Good communication is informative, purposeful and ongoing. It should include the following:

- Progress reports at the 4 ½ week period for all students;
- Interim reporting—daily, weekly, or an “as needed basis” for students performing below grade level;
- Nine week report cards to include information on the following:
 - Absences and tardies;
 - Grades which reflect;
 - mastery of performance standards as outlined in the state course descriptions
 - mastery of standards levels in reading, writing, mathematics, and science as appropriate;
 - Indication to parents when a student is working at a level below that expected for his/her assigned grade placement.
- Annual report of student progress towards achieving state and district expectations for mastery of standards in reading, mathematics, and science, based on results of district and statewide testing.
- For ESE and ELL students, the report will include progress toward achievement of the goals and objectives in the student’s education plan.

F.S. 1008.25

Grade Point Average and Participation in Interscholastic Activities

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic activities, a student will need an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or above for the preceding grading period. Without the needed GPA, a student is not eligible to participate in any middle school interscholastic activities.

Student Progression in High School Grades 9-12

Introduction

The following section targets high school progression and the requirements set forth by Florida State Statutes, the Florida Department of Education, and the School District of DeSoto County in an effort to provide parents, students, and families the knowledge to progress through the high school years successfully. The school district's expectations and guidelines are student-focused for college and career readiness.

Admission, Enrollment, and Transfers

To enter Kindergarten, a child must meet the eligibility criteria established by the Florida Department of Education. Program eligibility and selection is based on meeting the following criteria:

- Students must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 to be eligible to enter kindergarten as stated in Florida law.
- Students must have received appropriate health examinations and immunization records as stated in Florida law.
 - proof of date of birth for students; (For acceptable alternates to birth certificates see Florida Statute 1003.21(4)).
 - a certificate showing a physical examination with at least three components performed within one year prior to enrollment (height, weight, blood pressure, etc.)
 - a valid Florida Certificate of Immunization (DH680) transcribed by a health professional.
 - kindergarten through 6th grade immunizations required for entry:
 - 4-5 doses of DTP or DTaP (If the 4th dose is administered after the 4th birthday, a 5th dose is not required);
 - 3-5 doses of polio* (according to age at time of final dose);
 - 2 doses of MMR;
 - 2 doses of Varivax or documentation of chicken pox disease;
 - 3 doses of Hepatitis B.
 - 7th through 12th grade:
 - 4-5 doses of DTP or DTaP (If the 4th dose is administered after the 4th birthday, a 5th dose is not required);
 - 3-4 doses of Polio (according to age at time of final dose);
 - 2 doses of MMR;
 - 2-3 dose series of Hepatitis B (according to age of administration);
 - 1 dose of Varivax or documentation of chicken pox disease.
 - 7th graders 2 doses of Varivax
 - Tdap booster
- **DeSoto County policy does not grant a 30-day extension to obtain required immunizations or a physical.** Immunizations and physicals may be obtained through the student's physician. Only students who do not have health insurance coverage or children who are assigned to the Department of Health in DeSoto County as their health care provider may obtain immunizations through Florida Department of Health in DeSoto County.

F.S. 1003.21 (1)(a)(2); 1003.22(1); 1002.69(1)

Out of State Transfer Student

Entry by an out-of-state transfer shall be in accordance with Florida Administrative Rule 6A-1.985 which states:

1. Any student who transfers from an out-of-state public school shall be admitted upon presentation of the following data:
 - a. Official verification that the parent(s) or guardian(s) was a legal resident of the state in which the child previously enrolled in school;
 - b. An official letter or transcript from a proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information and grade placement of the student.
2. Any student who transfers from an out-of-state non-public school may be admitted if the student meets the age requirement for public schools within the state from which the student is transferring.

Enrollment/Registration

Upon initial admission or **entry** from one attendance zone to another in DeSoto County Public Schools, evidence of residence must be presented to the receiving school. All addresses are subject to verification by the School Board. The following documents shall be required:

- Owned residence:
 - copy of the recorded deed (or agreement for deed), or a certified copy of the declaration of homestead exemption, and
 - a copy of a **current** electric bill or initial order for service; and
 - one of the following **current** documents:
 - auto registration
 - driver's license
 - voter's registration
 - Florida ID
- Rented or leased residence:
 - copy of **current** lease, rental agreement, or a notarized letter from the landlord, and
 - a copy of a **current** electric bill or initial order for service; and
 - one of the following **current** documents:
 - auto registration
 - driver's license
 - voter's registration
 - Florida ID
- Non-primary owner or renter (families living with families):
 - Verification of Residency Form must be completed by primary and non-primary owner or renter. This form is for one school year only.
- If applicable, legal documents, i.e. a copy of current judgment of divorce (dissolution of marriage) or other court order establishing the right of custody should be presented at time of enrollment.

Verifying Residence:

All addresses and changes of address are subject to verification by the School Board. All

student residence addresses and all documents submitted for verification are subject to validation by district staff. When a change of address occurs after initial enrollment, verification of the new residence is required. Students who are suspected of residing outside of DeSoto County, Florida, or in an attendance zone other than the student attendance zone for the school they are attending, will be reported for a residency determination investigation.

The School Board reserves the authority to verify enrollment information provided by a parent or parents and to reassign a student on the basis of its investigative determination. A student who is found to be attending an out-of- zone in-county school as the result of giving false or misleading information at registration, shall immediately be transferred to the school serving the student’s residential attendance zone or withdrawn and advised to enroll in the appropriate school in their county of legal residence.

Any disagreement regarding the investigative finding will be reviewed by the Director of ESE. Any disagreement regarding a determination that a student is a bona fide resident of a county other than DeSoto may be contested as provided by law.

Florida Statute 837.06 provides that whoever knowingly makes a false statement in writing with the intent to mislead a public servant in the performance of his official duty shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree.

- **Divorced/Separated Parents:**
 - divorced parents:
 - ONE or more of the following documents:
 - certified copy of final judgment of divorce
 - court custody order/parenting plan
 - court guardianship order
 - other such document establishing the right of custody
 - separated parents:
 - A notarized statement that the child actually lives in the home of the parent designated in the child’s school records as the residential parent or parent with whom the student resides.

Transfers / Grade Placement

Any student who transfers from an in-state public or nonpublic school or out-of-state public or nonpublic school shall be admitted upon presentation of the following data:

- an official letter or transcript from a proper school authority which shows a record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student;
- proof of immunization; proof of date of birth; and proof of a medical examination completed within the last twelve months (first time entry to Florida Public Schools only).

Transfer of Credits

Students who enter a Florida public school in grade 11 or 12 from out-of- district or from a foreign country shall not be required to spend additional time in high school in order to meet Florida high school course requirements if the student has met all requirements of the school district, state or country from which he/she is transferring. However, to receive a standard high school diploma, a transfer student must earn an unweighted 2.0 grade point average and pass

the Florida State Standards Assessments in English/Language Arts and Mathematics and other alternate assessments described in Florida Statute 1008.22(10). (Legislation may change options for alternative assessments.) End of course assessments required for the student's grade 9 cohort are required unless specific assessments have been taken in the state from which the student transfers. The school counselor and registrar will determine the course and assessment requirements for the transferring student.

The grade placement of any student transferring from another state or private school will be determined by the principal (or designee) of the receiving school.

Students entering school from a foreign nation or from a public, private or home school, and who are not able to provide a valid transcript or original report cards, shall identify and describe all courses taken in previous years.

Florida Statute: 1003.433(1)

Transfer of Credit from Home Schools

A student entering Desoto County High School from a home education program must present documentation (i.e., the student's portfolio with dated samples of work) which indicates the courses in which the student received home instruction. High School credits may not be given solely on the basis of time spent in a home education program. The decision regarding credits will be made by the high school principal. Parents shall provide to the school a detailed course description for each course, indicating objectives, instructional materials, and methods of student performance evaluation. Courses will be evaluated on the basis of comparability to local courses in terms of course length and content. Parents shall provide evidence that each course eligible for one high school credit consisted of at least 135 (or 120 in a flexible/block schedule) hours of instruction. If the receiving school cannot validate course/credit attainment through a portfolio assessment, the student shall be placed in an age appropriate course(s).

Validation of Credits

Work or credits from home schools, private schools, or public schools, as well as tutorial agencies, and correspondence school programs, shall be validated by performance assessment conducted during the first grading period. If requested, home education students shall be provided up to ninety days to prepare for the required assessment(s).

A transferring student 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. For students who do not meet this requirement, any of the following alternatives may be used by the District to validate credits:

- Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee.
- Written recommendation by a Florida-certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal.
- Satisfactory performance in courses taken through dual enrollment or at other public or private accredited schools.
- Satisfactory proficiencies on nationally-normed subject area assessments.
- Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school.
- Demonstrated by 70% proficiency level on the end of course exam.

The district's Student Services Department, in collaboration with the district's Curriculum and Instruction Department, and the school will assist with the evaluation of Home School student credit. If letter or numerical grades were not awarded at the prior school, the student will be awarded a grade that is equivalent to his/her end-of- course summative performance in the next sequential course. The final decision regarding credit is the responsibility of the school principal.

*If a student transfers to a Florida public high school from an out of country, out of state, a private school, or a home education program and the student's transcript shows a credit in a course that requires passage of a statewide, standardized assessment in order to earn a standard high school diploma, the student must pass the assessment unless the student earned a comparative score, passes a statewide assessment in that subject administered by the transferring entity, or passed the statewide assessment the transferring entity uses to satisfy the requirement. If a student's transcript shows a credit in high school reading or English/ Language Arts II or III, the student must take and pass the Florida Student Assessment (FSA) in English/Language Arts or earn a concordant score on the SAT or ACT as specified by state board rule.

F.S. 1002.25; F.S. 1003.25 (3); SBR: 6A-1.09941

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from high school with a standard diploma, students must complete the following requirements:

- A. Successfully complete all required courses for a standard diploma.
 - Students who meet eligibility criteria may select one of the graduation options and that is exclusively at the request and agreement of student and parent. To facilitate selection of the appropriate graduation plan option as the student enters grade 9, the school district will provide information to parents and students related to graduation options.
 - Selection of the graduation options may be completed by the student at any time between grades 9 and grade 12.

- B. Achieve a cumulative unweighted grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
 - Grade point averages in high school shall be calculated on both a weighted and unweighted scale. A weighted system for high school courses shall be utilized so that students are not penalized in terms of final "average" or class standing if they undertake rigorous academic work.
 - All state requirements for reporting grade point averages will be computed and reported on an unweighted (4 point) scale. Students earning credits in honors level courses will earn an additional .02 quality point per .5 credit and students earning credits in Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses will earn an additional .04 quality point per .5 credit.

- C. Pass the appropriate state reading assessment and End of Course Exams (EOC) required for graduation. Concordant scores on the SAT/ACT or other state approved assessments can be used to meet the reading graduation requirement.

- D. Any home school student wishing to receive a diploma from the high school should get specific information about EOC (End of Course) and statewide standardized assessments

required for graduation and credits from the District Office or the Student Services office prior to grade 10.

E. The School District of DeSoto County is committed to provide students with appropriate educational services through thirteen years from the date of their kindergarten entrance. Services are available for exceptional education students through the semester in which they turn 22 or they earn a standard diploma. In any instance consistent with the previous provision that admission or continued enrollment is denied, school personnel shall make recommendations for appropriate alternatives that would provide the student with a means to continue his/her education.

Graduation Cohort Requirements

Graduation from high school may be accomplished by fulfilling the following credit requirements. For anything earlier than 2012, please visit the Florida Department of Education website, or consult a guidance counselor.

Students Entering Grade 9 in 2013-2014 up to current year:

- ELA: 4 credits, ~Must Pass Grade 10 Florida Reading Assessment
- Math: 4 credits which includes Algebra I and Geometry I ~EOC (30% of final course grade)
 - Industry certifications that lead to college credit may substitute for up to two mathematics credits (except for Algebra 1 and Geometry)
- Science: 3 credits which includes Biology I (EOC ~30% of final course grade)
 - 2 equally rigorous courses to biology
 - 2 of 3 must have lab component
 - 1 may be substituted with allowable industry certification courses that lead to college credit except in Biology
- Social Studies: 3 Credits to include: World History, US History (EOC ~30% of final course grade), (.5 credit) US Government, (.5 credit) Economics to include financial literacy
- Fine Arts: 1 credit in fine or performing arts or practical arts
- Physical Education: 1 credit to include the integration of health
- On-line Course: One course within the 24 credits to be completed via online learning
- Electives: 8 credits including the online course (Note: World languages is not required for standard diploma, but required for admission into state universities.)
- GPA: Cumulative 2.0 on a 4.0 scale

Total Credits: 24

Diploma Options

18 Credit ACCEL Diploma Option

Each high school offers Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options: whole-grade and mid-year promotion, subject matter acceleration, virtual instruction in higher grade-level subjects, and the Credit Acceleration Program (CAP). Program specifics are available through the student's school counselor. Such placement shall be made after review and approval by the school principal (or designee) and school counselor. The student is

required to complete all course requirements and assessments as specified by the State of Florida. The requirements are available in this section of the Student Progression Plan. Parents and students will meet with the school counselor to discuss and select this option. Post-secondary plans, social and emotional readiness need to be addressed prior to the selection of this plan.

- The 18 Credit Accelerated Diploma option was implemented July 1, 2013.
- Students are required to earn the 15 core credits required for the standard diploma.
- Three elective credits are required.
- Physical Education is not required.
- A virtual course is not required.
- All assessments and grade point average for the standard diploma are required for the 18 credit diploma.

Florida Statute: 1002.3105

In addition to the 18 Credit Accelerated Diploma and 24 Credit Early Graduation Diploma option, other opportunities for articulated acceleration are available to shorten the time necessary for a student to complete the requirements associated with a degree or increase the depth of study available for a particular subject. This includes, but is not limited to: Dual Enrollment, CAP, and Florida Virtual School. At the beginning of each school year, parents of students in or entering high school must be notified of the opportunity and benefits of these acceleration mechanisms.

Florida Statute: 1003.02

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** A high school student must successfully complete all credits and assessments required for graduation by the State of Florida.

24 Credit Early Graduation Diploma

The student may select this plan to graduate prior to the 8th semester of high school. The student is required to complete all course requirements and assessments as specified by the State of Florida. The requirements are available in this section of the Student Progression Plan.

- Parents and students will meet with the school counselor to discuss and select this option. Post-secondary plans and social/emotional readiness need to be addressed prior to the selection of this plan.
- The 24 Credit Early Graduation Diploma requires students to earn the 16 core credits required for the standard diploma.
- Eight elective credits are required as well as the assessments and grade point average for the standard high school diploma.
- All requirements for this diploma **MUST** be completed before the 8th semester of high school.
- Students that choose this option are not eligible for valedictorian, salutatorian, and/or other class placement graduation ceremony recognitions.

The student will revert to the standard diploma requirements of their high school if all requirements are not completed before the 8th semester of high school.

24 Credit State Minimum Standard Diploma

- The 24 Credit Diploma requires students to earn the 16 core credits required for the standard diploma.
- Eight elective credits are required as well as the assessments and grade point average for the standard diploma.
- All requirements for this diploma **MUST** be completed by the end of the 8th semester of high school.

*Specific course requirements listed above by the entering 9th grade school year.

High School Credit in Middle School

In accordance with Florida statute, eligible middle school students may be enrolled in high school credit-earning courses. Students must meet all specified eligibility criteria for the high school course requested. Courses will adhere to high school grading policy which may be found in this section of the Student Progression Plan.

High School credits earned in grades 6-8 will become part of the student's permanent high school academic history and will be counted toward specific grade promotion in high school. High school grades earned in middle school can impact the GPA requirements of potential athletic and extracurricular eligibility when entering high school.

Subject Matter Acceleration (Credit Acceleration Program)

The Credit Acceleration Program (CAP) authorizes secondary students to earn high school credit in a course that requires a statewide, standardized end-of-course (EOC) assessment if the student attains a specified passing score on the EOC. These courses include Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology and U.S. History and all other courses identified in state statutes.

The district shall award course credit to a student who is not enrolled in the course, or who has not completed the course, if the student attains a passing score on the corresponding statewide, standardized assessment (EOC). Students and parents interested in this option should contact the school counselor.

The CAP requirements and eligibility process is as follows:

- The EOC will be administered only at the times established by the state assessment calendar.
- The score necessary to earn credit will be determined by the state and applied in all situations.
- Only credit (no grade) will be earned by meeting the passing score on the EOC.
- Students will be required to supply evidence that they are prepared to sit for the EOC or that there is reasonable justification for the request. This evidence includes but is not limited to: previous FCAT scores and grade in the most recent math or science course taken.

If a student takes the EOC and does not earn credit, the student will not be eligible to apply for further CAP testing for the same course until additional preparation has been documented and evaluated.

Florida Statute: 1003.4295; 1003.4156, 1008.22 (3) (c)

Course Credit

A credit (1) for high school graduation is defined as a minimum of 135 hours (or 120 hours in a flexible/block schedule) of bona fide instruction in a designated course which contains student performance standards. Credit will also be awarded to students who demonstrate mastery of course content and student performance standards through alternative instructional delivery models such as performance-based instruction, extended school year programs, and flexible/block scheduling.

Florida Statute: 1003.436

Attendance and Course Credit

School attendance is required of all students, kindergarten through age 16.

A student may not be awarded a credit for any course if he/she has not attended class for the minimum number of hours unless he/she has demonstrated mastery of the student performance standards for the course by earning a passing score on the subject area's End of Course Exam. (See CAP section of this document.)

A student with more than nine (9) absences in a semester or more than five (5) absences per nine weeks for an extended period can earn a half credit only if he/she has demonstrated mastery of the course performance standards in the course of study by achieving a grade of "C" or better on the semester examination or an alternate assessment(s), each of which covers all the standards. If the student does not meet the above requirements, he/she will receive a final grade of "F" and no credit for that semester of the course. All the other policies governing earning credits, semester averages, and grade promotion must be met as outlined in the School District of DeSoto County Student Progression Plan. Hardship cases should be referred to the leadership team, subject to the principal's approval.

Additional information regarding DeSoto attendance policies, class work, make-up privileges, etc. can be found in the School District of DeSoto County Code of Student Conduct.

Courses Excluded from Awarding Credits

No high school student may be granted credit toward high school graduation for enrollment in the following courses or programs: more than a total of nine (9) elective credits in remedial programs, more than three (3) credits in practical arts family and consumer science classes, more than (1) credit in exploratory career and technical courses, or any level 1 courses unless the student's assessment shows a more rigorous course would not be appropriate (this need must be included in the student's IEP or performance plan, such as an Academic Performance Plan, and signed by principal, school counselor, student, and parent).

Florida Statute: 1003.43(7)

Course Substitutions and Waivers

A course that has been used to substitute in one subject area may not be used to substitute for any other subject area. Course substitutions may not count toward state university system admissions requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: Program substitutions will remain in effect for students entering grade 9 prior to July 1, 2013.

The School District of DeSoto County curriculum and approved courses and programs are to be the means for granting credits. Some course substitutions are provided through state statute as follows:

REQUIRED COURSES	APPROVED SUBSTITUTIONS
1.0 HOPE (Health Opportunities through Physical Education)	Participation in two seasons of an interscholastic sport at the JV and Varsity levels and a passing grade of C on a Personal Fitness Competency test. Or Completion of 2 Full Years JROTC
1.0 Performing/Fine/Practical Art	Completion of 2 Full Years JROTC

OTHER COURSE(S) WITH ALLOWABLE SUBSTITUTION	APPROVED SUBSTITUTIONS
1.0 HOPE (Health Opportunities through Physical Education)	Successful completion of the JROTC Army Science Program (Army Science I, II, III)
.5 Physical Education	Successful completion of the Army JROTC Leadership Educational Training Courses I and II.
Foreign-Born Students entering high school with 1.0 – 4.0 credits in the study of English language	1.0 – 4.0 credits for student’s study of a foreign language (in this case, the foreign language is English for that student).
Foreign-Born Students entering high school with 1.0 – 4.0 credits in the study of their own country’s primary language	1.0 – 4.0 credits in English (e.g. a French student gets credit for studying French in the same way that an American student gets credit for studying English).
.5 Credit/1.0 Credit Performing/Fine/Practical Arts	Successful completion of any art form course, that requires manual dexterity, or a course in speech and debate
Substitutions listed in Annual DOE Course Code Directory	A student who earns an industry certification for which there is a statewide college credit articulation agreement approved by the State Board of Education may substitute the certification for one science credit, except for Biology 1. The same is true for substitution for up to two mathematics credits, except for Algebra 1 and Geometry.

Florida Statute: 1011.62; 1003.43; DOE Annual Course Code Directory

Course Recovery

High school students have an opportunity to achieve successful course completions after failing a course through participation in virtual courses, the summer program (when offered) or during the before, during, or after school program throughout the school year (when offered). Students are required to recover only the semester of the course which they failed, (received an ‘F’). Students may elect to replace a course grade of ‘D’, if needed to increase his/her GPA.

Course Titles on Transcripts

A course title on a student schedule and transcript means that the student is receiving regular, planned instruction, by a teacher following the course content as defined in the State of Florida Curriculum Course Descriptions (Frameworks) and the School District of DeSoto County curriculum. GPA weight is dependent upon the course, and all weighted courses must be approved by the School Board and in compliance with statutory requirements and articulation agreement(s) with post-secondary institutions.

Determination of Mastery of Student Performance Standards

Student performance standards will be measured on a regular, continuous basis. Such measurements may be made through the use of teacher observations, classroom assignments, and traditional and alternative forms of assessment.

A student will have demonstrated mastery of student performance standards for a district-approved course when through teacher observations, classroom assignments, and examinations, it has been determined that a student has attained a passing score for the course. This score and the procedures to be used to determine semester and yearly averages will be in accordance with the procedures as outlined in this Student Progression Plan and End of Course Examinations (EOCs) as mandated by the state.

Although course preparation is recommended, students are not required to take the course prior to taking an EOC examination. (See CAP requirements under Subject Matter Acceleration)

With the determination of mastery of student performance standards for high school credit, it is the intent of the School District of DeSoto County to utilize student performance standards which are clear and precise statements of what the learner is expected to do by the end of a prescribed learning period; reflective of the essential knowledge, skills, concepts, or behaviors contained in the state- approved course descriptions; and clearly communicated to all learners at the beginning of a course or unit of instruction.

Grade Level Classification

In order to be classified at a specific grade level, a specific number of credits must be earned:

End of Year Promotion			
	TO BE PROMOTED TO	CREDITS EARNED	COURSES REQUIRED
Class of 2014 and Beyond	10th Grade	5	1.0 English or 1.0 Math
	11th Grade	10	1.0 English and 1.0 Math

	12th Grade	16	2.0 English and 2.0 Math
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Mid-year promotion is permitted when students earn the appropriate number of credits to join their cohort and are in the appropriate English class for that cohort.

F.S. 1008.25

Remediation

Schools are expected to provide, with school district assistance, a variety of strategies to meet the individual needs of students. These strategies may include but are not limited to extended school year, dropout prevention services, tutorial programs, exceptional student education, modified curriculum, reading instruction, after-school instruction and other extended day services, tutoring, mentoring, class size reduction, and intensive skills development programs.

Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, college readiness assessments (PERT, ACT, or SAT) shall be administered to all high school students prior to grade 12 with defined Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) scores. The State Board of Education has established by rule the minimum test scores a student must achieve to demonstrate readiness. Students achieving the minimum scores, and enrolling in a community college within two years, will not be required to enroll in remediation courses. High schools must provide students in grade 12 who score below the minimum scores access to remedial instruction prior to graduation.

F.S. 1008.25

Reading Remediation

Each year a student scores Level 1 or Level 2 on 9th grade or 10th grade Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) in Reading/Language Arts, it is recommend that the student be enrolled in and complete an intensive remedial course the following year or be placed in a content area course that includes remediation skills not acquired by the student.

Students identified as having a deficiency in reading may undergo a series of diagnostic testing to determine the specific areas of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Schools may also provide for the frequent progress monitoring of all Level 1 and 2 Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) reading students’ progress in meeting the desired levels of performance.

F.S. 1003.428-2.C

Promotion and Retention

The time required to complete high school will depend upon successful completion of required credits, testing requirements and grade point average.

Parents or guardians of each student will be notified in writing annually of the progress of the student toward achieving the minimum levels of performance in reading and mathematics and the student’s results on each statewide assessments to include those required for graduation.

Evaluation of each student's progress will be based upon the student's classwork, observations, tests, district and state assessment and other relevant information.

At the end of each semester, the parent or guardian of each student in grades 9, 10, 11, 12 who has an unweighted cumulative grade point average of less than 2.5 must be notified that the student is at risk of not meeting the requirements for graduation.

School personnel should attempt to identify those students at each grade level in grades 9 through 12 who have attained a cumulative grade point average at or below the minimum grade point average required for graduation pursuant to Florida Statute 1003.43(5)(e). Schools must further inform parents of provisions for assisting such students to achieve the required cumulative grade point average. Provisions may include but not be limited to:

- Referral to the school's intervention/child study team
- Remedial groups within existing classes
- Extended School Year programs for students who qualify
- Credit recovery programs for students who qualify
- Remedial programs during the day

No student may be retained based solely on his/her level of English language proficiency. A formal retention recommendation regarding an English Language Learner/Limited English Proficient may be made through the action of an ELL/LEP committee

F.S. 1003.43(5)(e); 1003.43(5)(e)2; 1008.25

Mid-Year Promotion for Retained Students/Grade Re-Classification and Graduation

In no case shall the decision to mid-year promote or reclassify grade level be based on age or on the basis of social promotion. For students who are retained, the school will consider placement in an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and that takes into account the student's learning style. When students are retained for two or more years, the school will consider other, more intensive or alternative placements.

Students who have successfully completed all graduation requirements for the option in which they are enrolled (traditional, 18 credit Accelerated Diploma, 24 credit Early Graduation Diploma) may graduate at mid-year. Counselors will provide information for dual enrollment, early admission or post- secondary options available to mid-term graduates. Graduates may return to the high school for graduation ceremonies.

High School Courses Taken Below Grade Nine

Middle school students may earn credit toward high school graduation under the following conditions:

- Students are considered ninth graders during the periods in which they are enrolled in the high school credit courses offered at the middle school site.
- The courses are listed in the Florida Course Code Directory and meet high school requirements.
- The courses are offered for the same number of hours of instruction as currently offered at the high school.
- Students demonstrate mastery of district course performance standards.
- All grades earned must be placed on the high school transcript.

- Students who earn a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F” will have the opportunity for grade forgiveness by retaking the same course or a comparable course in high school.
- If the student retakes the course, only the higher grade and credit will be included in the grade point average calculation; however, the original grade will be shown on the transcript.

Career and Professional Academies

A career and professional academy is a research-based program that integrates a rigorous academic curriculum with an industry-driven career curriculum. Students completing career and professional academy programs receive the following:

- A standard high school diploma
- Possible Merit designation on diploma
- The highest available industry certification
- Post-secondary credit if the academy partners with a postsecondary institution

F.S. 1003.493

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

The high school offers options to students to enter a Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Academy. CAPE Academies are small, personalized career themed learning communities within a high school that offer a rigorous academic curriculum and career themed courses that lead to an industry certification. Industry certifications articulate to postsecondary level coursework and provide instruction to high skill, high wage and high demand careers. CAPE Academies have partnerships with postsecondary institutions, business and industry.

1003.4282

Each school will offer instruction for English Language Learners/Limited English Proficient (ELL/LEP) that complies with the 1900 LULAC/META Consent Decree and the District ELL/LEP Plan.

Each student must participate in statewide assessment tests at designated grade levels as required by.

F.S. 1008.22; 1008.34; 1001.11

Students entering grade 9 in the 2011-2012 school year and beyond must complete at least one online course within their graduation requirement for high school graduation. Credit recovery courses do not meet this requirement.

Florida Statute 1003.4282

Student Rights for Instruction

All School District of DeSoto County classes, including those that are designed to provide accelerated graduation options or additional opportunities for weighted GPAs, shall be available to all students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation. This is not intended to eliminate the provision of programs

designed to meet the needs of students with limited proficiency in English or exceptional education students.

Florida Statute 1000.05

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services are designed to meet the communicative, academic, and social needs of English Language Learners/Limited English Proficient (ELL/LEP). Services will be provided as outlined in the District ELL/LEP Plan. No ELL/LEP student will be retained solely due to a lack of English language proficiency.

Florida Statute 1003.56

No student will be denied appropriate use of his/her primary language.

Florida Statute 1003.56

Students who score at highly proficient levels on the Grade 10 PSAT may be afforded the opportunity to participate in rigorous honors, Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment courses. No student will be denied access to such rigorous course on the basis of a single assessment or any other single criterion. The following guidelines were recommended for high school students to access rigorous courses:

- Demonstrate regular school attendance.
- Demonstrate academic performance by grades and standardized test scores (FSA, PSAT, SAT, ACT, PERT, etc.).
- Parents/students can select rigorous courses when a student demonstrates mastery of curricular prerequisites as evidenced through academic history (grades/standardized test scores).
- Any student taking an AP course will be required to take the end of the year AP course tests; the teacher has the discretion of administering a separate final exam or end of course project/assignment.

Any student who believes that he/she has been denied participation in or access to an education program or activity, or has otherwise been discriminated against due to age, sex, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, handicapping condition, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, political beliefs, social and family background or for any other reason not related to his/her individual capabilities, may file a grievance according to the procedure established in School board policy.

In cases of alleged discrimination and /or harassment, nothing in this policy shall prohibit a student, applicant (for admission to an educational program or service) or parent from pursuing a grievance through the complaint and /or grievance procedures as may be established by federal and/or state statutes or regulations. No student, applicant (for admission to an educational program or service), parent, or employee shall be subject to adverse action in retaliation for having filed a grievance or for having testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted under the authority of this policy.

GPA and Other Criteria for Participation in Interscholastic Activities

Interscholastic extracurricular activities are those organized student activities between, among or within schools which are carried on outside the curriculum or regular course of study in school. These activities may involve displays of talent which include, but are not limited to, sports, speech debate, and fine arts interscholastic competitions or festivals, and career and technical student organization activities.

- In order to comply with the School District of DeSoto County School Board and the Florida High School Athletic Association policies for eligible participation in interscholastic extracurricular student activities, a student must maintain an unweighted cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required by Florida Statute 1006.43(1) at the conclusion of each semester in order to be eligible during the following semester.
- A student shall be eligible for the first semester of the ninth-grade year provided it is the student's first entry into the ninth grade, and he or she was regularly promoted from the eighth grade the immediate preceding year.
- A student who is ineligible during the second semester of his or her ninth grade year or during the first semester of his or her tenth grade year as a result of earning a GPA of less than 2.0 may regain eligibility for the following semester provided the student earns a GPA of 2.0 or above in all courses taken during the semester of ineligibility.
- Once a student enters grade 11, he or she must have an unweighted cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale in all courses required for graduation at the conclusion of each semester in order to maintain eligibility for the following semester.
- Additionally, a student must maintain satisfactory conduct. If a student is arrested and charged or is found to have committed a felony or a delinquent act which would have been a felony if committed by an adult, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld, the student's participation in the interscholastic extracurricular activities is contingent upon established and published school board policy.

Florida Statute 1006.15(2)

Graduation GPA

The achievement of a cumulative unweighted grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale in the courses need for graduation is required. All courses must be included in unweighted GPA calculation unless the grade has been forgiven or replaced. Semester grades will be averaged for the unweighted GPA calculation.

Florida Statute 1007.27(6); 1003.43(5)

IEP procedures will be followed for exceptional education students.

Grading and Student Performance

Initial and primary authority and responsibility for assessment and reporting of students' classroom performance is assigned to the classroom teacher.

The grades reflecting achievement in courses for grades 9 – 12, with numerical equivalents, shall be:

High School Grading Scale		
Percentage	Letter Grade	Designation

90 – 100	A	Outstanding Progress
80 – 89	B	Above Average Progress
70 – 79	C	Average Progress
60 – 69	D	Lowest Acceptable Progress
0 – 59	F	Failure

Grading criteria must be based on a variety of assessments which may include the following:

- Classroom work;
- Projects/performance tasks;
- Classroom assessments;
- Observations;
- Discussion-based assessments;
- Portfolios; and
- Other relevant information.

Teachers shall be responsible for assuring student achievement of the student performance standards (based on the Sunshine State Standards) which are incorporated into their course standards.

- Students must be advised of the grading criteria used in the school and in each class at the beginning of the course of study.
- Conduct and effort reflect students' work habits, not their academic achievement on benchmarks and should not be included in their academic grade.

Promotion/retention will not be determined solely on the basis of a single assessment/method. The primary responsibility for determining and documenting each student's level of performance and ability to function academically is that of the student's teacher(s), subject to review and approval of the school principal.

F.S. 1007.27

Semester Assessment and Grades

The purposes of giving the mid-term/semester exams are to provide instruction and experience in preparing for and taking comprehensive, cumulative assessments; to prepare students for post-secondary college course work; and to serve as a validation of mastery of the course content.

The design of mid-term/semester exams should provide an overview of the major course content and facilitate connections within and among key concepts and processes of the course work and is not limited to any one method.

All teachers are expected to give a mid-term/semester exam.

Semester grades will be determined in the following way:

Semester Averages Scale			
Semester 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Semester Exam
Semester 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	

High School Courses	35%	35%	30%
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*Credit for courses with End of Course (EOC) Exams is awarded at the end of the year. The middle school Civics course grade is calculated using high school semester averages.

Incomplete Grades

Students are to satisfy course requirements within ten days of the last day of the previous grading period. The principal may extend the time requirement for extreme hardships. A grade of “Incomplete” will calculate as a zero unless changed to reflect course work completed.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness

In all cases of grade forgiveness only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student’s grade point average. No exceptions will be according to the state statute.

- Any grade for a completed course repeated for credit will replace the former grade in GPA calculation. However, all course outcomes will still be documented in the cumulative record and automated system.
- Grade forgiveness for all required courses will be limited to replacing a final grade of “D” or “F” with a final grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. An exception to this will be made for grade 9 students who are retaking Algebra I, Geometry, or a Foreign Language for the purpose of replacing a grade of “C”, “D” or “F” earned in the high school course attempted at the middle grades level.
- Grade forgiveness for elective courses shall be limited to replacing a final grade of “D”, or “F” with a final grade of “C” or higher earned subsequently by retaking the same or comparable course or another course.
- In addition, all courses taken must be included in the GPA calculation unless grade had been forgiven by retake.
- Grade forgiveness still applies for courses where participation in the state EOC is required and the score must count for 30% of the final grade. If the student’s final course average, with the EOC assessment included as 30%, results in course grade of “D” or “F”, the options for the student include one of the following:
 - Retaking a semester of the course
 - Retaking the entire course
 - Retaking only the EOC assessment for that course
 - Retaking both the course and the EOC assessment to improve the student’s final course grade
- If retaking the course, including the EOC assessment as 30%, or retaking the EOC assessment results in a final course average of “C” or above, then this grade replaces the “D” or “F” if it does not result in a “C” or above, then the original course average stands and is not replaced. Only one credit is allowed per course, so only one grade per course should be included as part of the student’s GPA: “In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of student’s grade point average. Any course grade not replaced according to a district school board forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation.”
- Pass/fail grades will not be included in GPA calculation. If a student passes the EOC in the second year of its administration or thereafter, without taking the course and therefore earns the credit, the credit will meet the course graduation requirement but will not be included in the GPA calculation.

Florida Statute 1003.428; 1003.43(5)(e); 1003.428(4)(d)

Second Chance Option

For courses provided on a full-year basis, if a student fails the first semester, a full-year credit can be earned under the following conditions:

- The student earns a “C” or higher for each of the third and fourth quarters;
- The student earns a “C” or higher on the second semester exam; and
- The student has met the attendance requirements for the second semester.

Additional Make-Up Credit Opportunities

Students in need of make-up credit may earn additional credits through programs such as PLATO, My District Virtual School, Florida Virtual School, or correspondence courses from accredited and/or approved programs. In addition, student may enroll in out-of-district summer school or night school programs with prior approval from the principal (or designee).

Reporting Student Progress

Parents can view grades by signing into the District’s Skyward Program for Parents.

Report Cards

It is the firm belief of The School District of DeSoto County that excellence in education requires community commitment, and one of the cornerstones of this belief is communication between home and school. Good communication is informative, purposeful and ongoing. It should include the following:

- Progress reports at the 4 ½ week period for all students;
- Interim reporting—daily, weekly, or an “as needed basis” for students performing below grade level;
- Nine week (quarterly) report cards will include information on the following:
 - absences and tardies;
 - grades which reflect;
 - mastery of performance standards as outlined in the state course descriptions
 - mastery of standards levels in reading, writing, mathematics, and science as appropriate;
 - indication to parents when a student is working at a level below that expected for his/her assigned grade placement.
- Annual report of student progress towards achieving state and district expectations for mastery of standards in reading, writing, mathematics, and science, based on results of district and statewide testing
- For ESE and ELL students, the report will include progress toward achievement of the goals and objectives in the student’s education plan.

Report card grades provide the student and/or the student’s parents/guardians with an objective evaluation of the student’s scholastic achievement, conduct, attendance, and tardies. Students are to receive grades for all courses. In addition, the final report card must contain a statement reporting promotion or non-promotion.

Even if a student is eighteen (18) years of age or older, the parent will be notified in print during a grading period when it is apparent that the student may fail or is doing unsatisfactory work in any course. The opportunity for a conference with the teacher or principal will be provided.

Florida Statute 1003.33(1)

Diplomas/Certificates of Completion

Diploma Designations

Scholar Designation: In addition to the requirements of a standard diploma in order to earn the Scholar Designation, a student must satisfy the following requirements

- Mathematics: Earn one credit in Algebra II (must pass EOC) and one credit in statistics or an equally rigorous course.
- Science: Pass the statewide, standardized Biology I end of course assessment and earn one credit in chemistry or physics and one credit in a course equally rigorous to chemistry or physics.
- Social studies: Pass the statewide, standardized United States History end-of-course assessment
- Foreign language: Earn two credits in the same world language
- Electives: Earn at least one credit in an Advanced Placement, an Advanced International Certificate of Education (A.I.C.E.), an International Baccalaureate, or a dual enrollment course.

Merit Designation: In addition to the requirements of the standard diploma, in order to earn the Merit designation, a student must attain one or more industry certifications from the list established by the Department of Education.

Standard Diploma Criteria

Passing scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT 2.0) (prior to 2015), the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA), or achieving the appropriate concordant scores on approved alternative assessments;

- Minimum GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for the college preparatory 18 credit option; and
- 24 credits or 18 credits (refer to the section on Graduation Requirements)

Certificate of Completion

Students who have successfully completed all the credit requirements for graduation but have not met the state requirement for FCAT 2.0 and/or have not achieved the minimum grade point average are eligible for a Certificate of Completion.

A Certificate of Completion is limited to those students who are in the 24-credit high school graduation program.

Additional Programs and Opportunities

Advanced Placement

The Advanced Placement (AP) program is a unique learning experience in which students can earn college credit. Qualified students engage in intense discussions, solve problems collaboratively, and learn to write clearly and persuasively. AP courses are taught as part of the high school curriculum and follow the curricular guidelines established by the high school in conjunction with the District Office. Students must meet enrollment criteria specific to each AP course and upon successful completion of each course the student may receive college credit.

Industry Certification

Career Technical Education (CTE) programs are now providing students with the opportunity to earn credentials and certifications which are recognized and valued by business and industry. Eligible students are assessed by an independent, certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge, skills and competencies, resulting in a time-limited credential that is nationally recognized and applicable to an occupation that is included in the workforce system's targeted occupation list.

Dual Enrollment

The dual enrollment program is designed to expand the learning opportunities for qualified students. Qualified students who wish to enroll in college level courses and who need the credits to meet high school graduation requirements may enroll in approved postsecondary courses. These courses are taught as part of the high school curriculum and follow the curricular guidelines established by the high school and South Florida State College. The number of credits a student may earn is determined by the college.

Students must meet enrollment criteria specific to each dual enrollment course, and upon successful completion of each course will receive both high school and post-secondary credit through South Florida State College. Students dually enrolled in the regular school year are exempt from tuition, fees, and textbook costs.

Criteria for Dual Enrollment at South Florida State College includes the following:

- The student is enrolled in DeSoto County high school or alternative school;
- The principal, parent/guardian, and superintendent (or designee) have given prior approval for the student to participate;
- The student has passed all sections of the FCAT 2.0, or FSA;
- The student is a junior or senior with a 3.0 cumulative unweighted grade point average;
- The student applies all credits to high school graduation requirements;
- The student must have completed one of the following tests and have an entry level test score appropriate for college level instruction prior to enrollment: American College Testing Program (ACT), Florida College Entrance Level Placement Test (FCELPT), Florida Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT), or Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT-I);
- Dual enrollment courses will be graded using the college standards for grading.
- The dual enrollment grade will be reported the same for high school report card and college transcript; and
- All instructional materials are the property of the School District of DeSoto County. The student is responsible for returning the materials to the home school principal or his/her administrative designee. Materials should be returned in the same condition as when initially issued to the student.

- All provisions of the annual articulation agreement with local colleges and/or universities shall be followed.

Early Admission under Dual Enrollment / Collegiate High School

Early admission or enrolling in the Collegiate High School program as a type of dual enrollment is available to juniors and/or seniors who wish to spend their junior and senior year on the campus of a postsecondary institution with which the School District of DeSoto County has an articulation agreement. Currently this type of enrollment is open to students attending South Florida State College. Students who wish to participate in this must meet the criteria set forth in the articulation agreements. These students maintain their enrollment at their home high schools and are still considered to be part of the high school graduating class.

In order to be recommended for this program, a student must meet the following requirements:

- Have completed the credit and course requirement to be classified as a senior as outlined in the Student Progression Plan;
- Be at least a junior with a 3.0 or higher cumulative unweighted grade point average;
- Apply all credits to high school graduation requirements;
- Have passed the FCAT 2.0;
- Have completed one of the following entry level tests and have an entry level test score appropriate for college level instruction prior to enrollment: ACT, FCELPT, or SAT-I;
- Acceptance from a postsecondary institution; and
- Be recommended by the principal.
- All provisions of the annual articulation agreement with local colleges and/or universities shall be followed.

The student will receive a high school diploma at the end of the senior year (of early admittance and/or Collegiate High School) if the student has done the following:

- Completed and received such credits as required and approved by the principal to meet equivalent course requirements for high school graduation; and
- Maintained at least a “C” average.

The following rules apply to the relationship between the home high school and a student who is in a College Early Admissions / Collegiate High School Program:

- Will no longer be considered a high school student;
- May contact his/her home high school guidance counselor to obtain scholarship information and assistance.

If a student enrolls in a college course after regular school hours or during summer break, the cost of such course work is the obligation of the student. Such course work does not count toward fulfilling graduation requirements unless the principal has given written, prior approval. The college may award credit in escrow for these courses.

South Florida State College On-line Classes

Students who wish to accelerate their learning and who wish to earn dual enrollment college credit are encouraged to take South Florida State College courses on-line. Students must have the required GPA and SAT/ACT or concordant scores to enroll in on-line dual enrollment courses. A computer lab will be available on campus for a period each instructional day for the students to access the on-line dual enrollment courses.

State of Florida High School Performance-Based Diploma/Exit Option Diploma (GED/FCAT 2.0)

This program can only be accessed by students who meet the following requirements:

- Meet program eligibility criteria whose cohort group is graduating or has graduated;
- Enroll in a dropout prevention, teenage parent or Department of Juvenile Justice program;
- Demonstrate through practice/achievement tests a probability for success on the GED test; and
- Receive formal counseling on all aspects of the program.

To utilize the Exit Option, the student must do the following:

- Meet eligibility criteria;
- Pass all required sections of FCAT 2.0;
- Pass the GED; and
- Not graduate before the graduation date of the class with whom he/she entered kindergarten.

Scholarships and Awards

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

This program establishes a lottery-funded scholarship to reward any Florida high school graduate who merits recognition for high academic achievement and who enrolls in an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary institution within three years of high school graduation.

The awards are the following:

- Florida Academic Scholars Award;
- Florida Merit Scholar Award; and
- Gold Seal Scholars Award.

The eligibility requirements vary for each scholarship. Requirements include, but are not limited to, certain course requirements and minimum grade point average. Detailed information about these programs may be obtained in the guidance office or on the Bright Futures website: <http://www.firm.edu/doe/brfuture>.

Talented 20 Program

At the end of the seventh semester the school district provides the Department of Education a list of the top twenty percent (20%) of the senior class seeking a Standard Diploma based on their weighted grade point averages as defined by the School District of DeSoto County. Students within this top twenty percent who have met the State University System required courses for admission are guaranteed admission by the State of Florida into one of the public universities. If more than 20% of the senior class falls into the top 20% due to ties in weighted grade point average, the following will be considered in the order listed:

- State University System – 19 required credits;
- Number of level 3 courses; and
- Length of time at school.

Home Education Students and High School Graduation

In order to receive a diploma from a district high school there are strict guidelines and timelines that must be followed in order to meet graduation requirements. Students officially registered as home school students who wish to graduate from their districted high school must do the following:

- Alert the Home School office of that intent prior to entering grade 10 so that appropriate guidance can be given related to mandatory testing and credit requirements.
- Designate the grade 10 reading assessment and other state assessments as one measure of annual evaluation in the home education evaluation plan.
- Take and earn passing scores on Florida's standardized grade 10 Reading assessment and successfully meet all other current testing requirements in all areas specified by the state. Passing scores on all state assessments will be defined by the State of Florida.
- Must enroll full time in the districted high school for the entire final or "senior" year.
- Must successfully complete all school graduation requirements (testing, credits, GPA).

Only Home Education students who have met all the above requirements will be permitted to participate in graduation celebrations and activities and be eligible to receive a district high school diploma. Students who are unable to meet the state assessment requirements in the grade 10 should enroll full time in their districted school no later than the beginning of his or her grade 11 year in order to attempt meeting all graduation requirements.

Assessment

In order to meet the state mandated requirements for assessment, the following required research-based assessments are used at the high school level to help determine student achievement:

The Florida EOC Assessments—students will participate in these assessments on the computer at the conclusion of specific high school courses. The following information shows how these assessments will affect graduation requirements. Every student must participate in statewide assessment tests unless exempt under certain criteria established by the Commissioner of Education.

Students must take the grade level Florida Assessment that corresponds to the grade in which they are enrolled, even if they have been retained. Off-grade-level testing is not permitted. Students in grade 9 (regardless of whether they have been retained) are not permitted to take the grade 10 Florida Assessment.

When the student reaches Grade 11, even if he has never taken the Grade 10 test, he meets the criteria to participate in the Retake version of the Grade 10 test.

Required High School Assessments

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 Florida English/Language Arts Standards portion of the Grade 10 FSA, as well as Algebra 1 EOC assessment. Students who meet these requirements, but do not pass the required assessments, will receive a Certificate of Completion, which is not equivalent to a standard high school diploma.

Reading: All current High School students must pass the Grade 10 FSA examination with a passing score to be determined by the State Department of Education.

Additional requirements are delineated below:

REQUIRED STATE STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

9th grader in	2012-13 Grad Base Year 2016	2013-14 Grad Base Year 2017	2014-15 Grad Base Year 2018	2015-16 Grad Base Year 2019
Graduation Requirements	10 th Grade FCAT 2.0 Level 3 Algebra 1 EOC Level 3 and 30% of course grade* US History EOC (30%) of course grade	10 th grade state standardized ELA assessment proficient score Algebra 1 EOC Level 3 and 30% of course grade Geometry EOC (30%) of course grade Algebra 2 EOC (30%) of course grade Biology EOC (30%) of course grade US History EOC (30%) of course grade	10 th grade state standardized ELA assessment proficient score Algebra 1 EOC Level 3 and 30% of course grade Geometry EOC (30%) of course grade Algebra 2 EOC(30%) of course grade Biology EOC (30%) of course grade US History EOC (30%) of course grade	10 th grade state standardized ELA assessment proficient score Algebra 1 EOC Level 3 and 30% of course grade Geometry EOC (30%) of course grade Algebra 2 EOC (30%) of course grade Biology EOC (30%) of course grade US History EOC (30%) of course grade

Concordant Scores Option

Students may use concordant scores to meet the graduation assessment requirement. Students may satisfy the score requirements using various combinations of tests. The following concordant scores are acceptable:

Reading: SAT – 430 ACT - 19

Seniors with a PERT Certificate of Completion may enroll in any public community college in Florida by taking the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) to determine if they qualify to register for college-credit courses or must take remedial courses to continue their college preparatory studies.

College Readiness Course/Scores

The State Board of Education shall adopt rules that require high schools to evaluate before the beginning of grade 12 the college readiness of each student who indicates an interest in postsecondary education and scores at Level 2 or Level 3 on the reading portion of the grade 10 Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) or Level 2, 3, or 4 on the Algebra 1 EOC. High schools shall perform this evaluation using results from the corresponding component of the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) or an equivalent test identified by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall establish by rule the minimum test scores a student must achieve to demonstrate readiness.

Students who demonstrate readiness by achieving the minimum test scores established by the state board and enroll in a community college within two years of achieving such scores shall not be required to enroll in remediation course as a condition of acceptance to any community college. The high school shall use the results of the test to advise the students of any identified deficiencies and, to the maximum extent practicable, provide grade 12 students access to appropriate remedial instruction prior to high school graduation. The college ready instruction provided under this subsection shall be a collaborative effort between secondary and postsecondary educational institutions.

Subject	Course Title	PERT	SAT	ACT
Reading	English 4: FL College Prep	50-105	≥ 440	≥ 19
Mathematics	Math for College Success	50-113	≥ 440	≥ 19

The College Readiness Course Placement Score Recommendations apply to students who will be seniors in 2014-2015. The PERT is administered to grade 11 students who have not previously met college readiness standards.

Statewide College-Ready Cut Scores for PERT*

Reading - 106

Mathematics - 114

* Pending any legislative changes.

College Readiness Courses

English IV: College Prep (Course Code: 1001405)

Mathematics for College Readiness (Course Code: 1200700)

Exceptional Student Education

ESE Student Rights and Parent Notification

Status with regard to mastery of regular or special diploma standards should be discussed with parents at each IEP review/revision conference. Additionally, graduation options should be discussed with parents at these conferences to include an explanation of the following:

- The type of Florida State Standards the student is attempting to master (i.e. general education FSS, FSS for special diploma with access points for independent, supported

or participatory levels) and the relationship to diploma options (i.e. standard or special diploma).

*Special Diploma options **ONLY** apply to students who entered 9th grade prior to the 2014/2015 school year.*

- The ramifications of not mastering regular Florida State Standards.

Nothing contained in this document shall limit or restrict an exceptional student solely to a special diploma or special certificate of completion. Any exceptional student shall be afforded the opportunity to pursue a standard diploma (F.S. 1003.438). The parents of each exceptional student shall be notified of the graduation options available at the IEP meeting prior to grade 9, or upon the 14th birthday, whichever occurs first.

- When a student is eligible to graduate with a standard diploma or at the end of the school year during which a student turns 22 years old, A notice of Anticipated Graduation Resulting in a Change of Placement and a Summary of Performance form must be issued to the student and parent prior to graduation.
- When a student meets the requirements of a special diploma or certificate of completion prior to the age of 22 and indicates that he/she will no longer receive special services, A Notice of Anticipated Graduation Resulting in a Change of Placement form must be issued to the student and parent prior to graduation.
- ESE students who have met all graduation requirements except passing the FCAT should be notified following the Waiver of the Results of the General Assessment Graduation Requirements meeting that they may:
 - Qualify for a regular diploma with a waiver.
 - Qualify for a special diploma. (9th grade prior to the 2014/2015 school year)

If a student meets eligibility for a standard or special diploma, then he/she may participate in graduation ceremonies. In the event a student pursuing a standard diploma opts to receive a special diploma and then return for one or more year to continue to pursue a standard diploma as allowed under the IDEA, the IEP need not be revised to reflect this change.

Florida Statute 1003.438; SBRA6A-195(4); 1.95(4) (f); 6A-1.995(1); 6A-1.0996

Assessment Waivers for Students with Disabilities

The Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act, addresses access to postsecondary education and meaningful careers for students with disabilities. For the purposes of this act, the term “student with disability” means any student who is documented as having; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a speech or language impairment; a visual impairment including blindness; a serious emotional disturbance, including an emotional handicap; an orthopedic impairment; autism; a traumatic brain injury; or a specific learning disability, including, but not limited to dyslexia, dyscalculia, or developmental aphasia.

The ENNOBLES Act also provides for the waiver of the General Assessment Graduation Requirements for graduation with a standard diploma for certain students with disabilities as defined in F.S. 1007.02(2) who have met all other requirements for graduation with a standard diploma, except a passing score.

Exceptional students eligible for consideration of the waiver are those:

- identified as a student with a disability as defined in section F.S. 1007.02(2).
- who are currently seniors or students with disabilities who remain enrolled seeking a standard diploma who have a Transition IEP (TIEP) and for whom the FCAT is the graduation test.
- who have met the district’s graduation requirement for academic credits and a 2.0 unweighted cumulative grade point average (GPA) or higher for graduation with a standard diploma. (4) who have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities required by the Grade 10 State Standards.
- who have taken both sections of the Grade 10 General Assessment Graduation Requirements with appropriate allowable accommodations at least twice, once in Grade 10 and once in Grade 11.
- who have participated in intensive remediation each year following, earning scores below level 3.
- for whom the TIEP team determines that the General Assessment Graduation Requirements cannot accurately measure the student’s abilities, even if all appropriate, allowable accommodations are used.

If there is sufficient evidence that the student has mastered the applicable State Standards and the TIEP team determines that the assessment is not an accurate measure of the student’s ability, the General Assessment Graduation Requirements may not be waived, and the student may graduate with a standard diploma.

An assessment waiver may not be used by students in either of the three-year, 18 credit graduation option plans.

Students may select and move between the special diploma options and/or standard diploma as appropriate. The Individual Educational Plan (IEP) committee shall document whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading toward a standard or special diploma. The chosen diploma option shall be recorded on the IEP prior to entering a high school program. The Parent/Student Notification of Diploma Options form must be completed and the decision shall be reviewed annually.

Florida Statute 1007.02; 1007.02(2); 1003.43(11)(b)

Free Appropriate Public Education through Age 22 (FAPE 22)

Exceptional students who have not earned a standard diploma remain eligible for educational services through the end of the school year in which they become twenty-two years old. (Students must be 21 years the first day of the current school year in order to receive services for that year). This includes students pursuing a regular diploma, special diploma (9th grade prior to the 2014/2015 school year), certificate of completion or a special certificate of completion. The education and transition needs of these students will be identified in the IEP.

These students are to be enrolled in grade 12 for FEFP purposes, and may attend full-time or part-time.

IDEA 2004 - 300.102

Grade Classification for ESE Students

High School ESE students will be assigned to grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 according to the requirements prescribed for basic education students as specified in the Student Progression Plan Student Rights and Parent Notification.

One Credit Scheduling Option

A multi-credit or single credit year-long ESE course may be schedule as a ½ credit semester course based on student need.

Diploma and Certificate Options for ESE Students

There are several options available to the ESE students for earning a diploma or certificate. The course and credit requirements for a special diploma are determined by the level of State Standards for Special Diploma (9th grade prior to the 2014/2015 school year) or State Standards access points or the student is pursuing.

Standard Diploma

An exceptional education student must satisfy the requirements of a Standard Diploma as detailed in the Graduation Requirements section, and shall acquire credit requirements for a Standard Diploma through either of the following methods:

- Attend exceptional education classes for instruction in basic courses with the same student performance standards as those required of non-exceptional students; or
- Attend regular classes where the instruction accommodates the student's exceptionality. The determination of strategies to use shall be based on an assessment of the student's needs and this decision shall be reflected in the student's IEP. Accommodations may include an increase or decrease in instructional time, variations in instructional strategies and materials, special teacher certification requirement adjustments, teacher or student use of special communication systems or other assistive technology, classroom and district test administration procedures and other evaluation procedures to accommodate the student's disability.
 - ✓ When developing modifications for vocational courses, the particular outcomes and student performance standards – which a student must master to earn credit – must be specified on the student's IEP.
 - ✓ Some students with disabilities may need modified program requirements.
 - ✓ Generally, these are students working toward a special diploma. For these students, expected outcomes and curriculum content can be modified.
 - ✓ Students seeking a standard diploma may receive accommodations for delivery of content, but not modification of the course requirement or student performance standards.
 - ✓ Eligible 504 students will receive course modifications as described in their accommodation plans
 - ✓ In some instances, the IEP committee may determine that the FCAT 2.0 or EOC (end of course) exam cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, thus the FCAT 2.0 and/or EOC exam results may be waived for the purpose of receiving a standard high school diploma if the student does the following:

- Completes the minimum number of credits and other requirements;
- Does not pass the grade 10 FCAT 2.0 with allowable accommodations after taking the test twice, once in grade 10 and once in grade 11;
- Demonstrates mastery of standards in the core content knowledge and skills necessary for grade-to-grade and high school graduation after being provided instruction; and
- Takes but does not pass the EOC exam, and has demonstrated mastery of the course standards and benchmarks.

F.S. 1003.43; 1003.43(11)(a); State Board Rule 6A-6.0312(1); 6A-6.0312(2)

Special Diploma (Students Entering High School prior to the 2014-2015 School Year)

The Special Diploma options are provided for students who have been properly identified as intellectually disabled (InD), Hearing impaired (HI), specific learning disabled (SLD), physically impaired (PI), dual-sensory impaired, emotionally/behaviorally disordered, on the autism spectrum (ASD) or language impaired (LI). Language impaired is only for students whose ability to communicate orally or in writing is seriously impaired.

Requirements for a Special Diploma do not include passing FCAT 2.0 or a minimum GPA of 2.0

- Option 1: The student will master access points of the State of Florida standards and complete 24 credits as prescribed in this plan.
- Option 2: The student will demonstrate mastery of specified employment community competencies. The student will be successfully employed at a job in the community, based on industry standards, employed for at least 180 days, demonstrate mastery of the annual goals and short-term objectives related to employment and community competencies specified on the student's Transition Individual Education Plan, demonstrate mastery of the competencies specified in the Employment and Community Competencies Training Plan, and paid at least a minimum wage in compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

For students with disabilities entering grade nine (9) in 2000-2001 and thereafter, who qualify for the Special Diploma (9th grade prior to the 2014/2015 school year), mastery of the State of Florida standards will be certified through completion of courses that address the relevant access points through use of alternative assessment procedures at the student's level of functioning.

If the student does not take Grade 10 FCAT 2.0, or demonstrate mastery of the performance standards for ESE students, but does meet all other graduation requirements, the student will receive a Special Certificate of Completion.

Florida Statute 1003.438; State Board Rule 6A-1.0996

Special Diploma Option 1 (FCAT/FSA) Students Entering Grade 9 prior to the 2014-2015 School Year

- ELA: 4 credits, ~Must Pass Grade 10 Florida Reading Assessment
- Math: 4 credits which can include Algebra I and Geometry I ~EOC (30% of final course grade)
- Science: 3 credits which can include Biology I (EOC ~30% of final course grade)

- Social Studies: 3 Credits which can include World History, US History (EOC ~30% of final course grade), (.5 credit) US Government, (.5 credit) Economics
 - Career and Technical Education: 4 credit in any Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses
 - Physical Education: 1 credit to include the integration of health (HOPE)
 - Electives: 5 credits including the online course
 - GPA: Cumulative 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
- *Option 1 students are exempt from the on-line learning course requirement for graduation.

Total Credits: 24

Special Diploma Option 1 (FAA)

Students Entering Grade 9 prior to the 2014-2015 School Year

- ELA: 4 credits, ~Must Pass the Florida Alternative Assessment
 - Math: 4 credits
 - Science: 3 credits
 - Social Studies: 3 Credits
 - Career and Technical Education: 4 credit in any Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses
 - Physical Education: 1 credit to include the integration of health (HOPE)
 - Electives: 5 credits including the online course
 - GPA: Cumulative 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
- *Option 1 students are exempt from the on-line learning course requirement for graduation.

Total Credits: 24

Special Diploma Option 2 (16 to under 18 years)

- Attend at least 2 semesters
- Successfully complete 1 hour of Transition-to-Work training
- Complete a total of 1080 hours of documented paid employment

Special Diploma Option 2 (Over 18 years)

- Attend at least 1 semesters
- Successfully complete 1 hour of Transition-to-Work training
- Complete a total of 540 hours of documented paid employment

Career Placement Options for ESE Students

Career Placement or job preparatory course may be substituted for social studies and/or science credit.

Career Preparation may be taken anytime during grades 9-12 and repeated, as needed, for credit. This course must be taken prior to or concurrently to the first Career Placement course. It is recommended to be repeated with subsequent Career Placement courses.

Certificate of Completion

Exceptional students may receive a certificate of completion if they:

- meet the course and credit requirements for a regular diploma, and
- attained the required 2.0 GPA, but

- have not passed the General Assessment Graduation Requirements and have been determined ineligible for a waiver.

Special Certificate of Completion

ESE students other than Speech only, Visually Impaired only, and Gifted only, may receive a special certificate of completion if they meet district course and credit requirements for a special diploma, but have a grade point average that is less than the required 2.0 GPA and/or have not demonstrated proficiency on alternate assessment.

Florida Statute 1003.438

Grading, Progress Reports, and Report Cards for ESE Students

Report Cards: Students in all ESE State Standards for Special Diploma at the participatory level shall receive standard report cards.

Progress Reports: A supplemental narrative report card may be used to report progress to parents of students following the Next Generation State Standards/ State Standards for Special Diploma at the supported or participatory levels.

Progress Monitoring: Parent(s) must be notified in writing at any time during a grading period when it is apparent that the student may fail or is doing unsatisfactory work in any course or grade assignment. No student shall receive an unsatisfactory conduct grade if parents have not been notified.

Other Programs: Therapies And Itinerant Services

Speech/language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and itinerant hearing impaired and vision services are pullout programs designed to reinforce or enhance a student's ability to benefit from instruction. Attendance in these programs will not affect the 135-hour minimum course instruction requirements for basic, CTE or ESE courses.

Educational Equity

It is the policy of the School District of DeSoto County, Florida, that no employee, student, or applicant shall – on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (gender), marital status, age, religion, disability (Section 504/ADA) or any other basis prohibited by law – be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination and harassment under any educational programs, activities or in any employment conditions, policies, or practices conducted by the district. For any concerns regarding employees/applicants -- contact the Director of Human Resources at 863-494-4222; regarding students – contact the Director of Exceptional Student Education and Student Services: 863-494-0261. Either Director may be contacted at: The School District of DeSoto County, 530 LaSolana Avenue, Arcadia, FL, 34266; 863-494-4222.

Each student shall be informed by a written notice published in the student handbook or a similar publication pursuant to s. 1006.07(2) that the student has the right not to participate in reciting the pledge. Upon written request by his or her parent, the student must be excused from reciting the pledge, including standing and placing the right hand over his or her heart. For any questions or more information, please contact the Director of Human Resources at 863-494-4222.