

# *Florida's Guide to Public High School Graduation*

*It's a Major Opportunity!*

*For Students Entering Ninth Grade in 2007-2008*



*Florida Department of Education  
October 2007 Edition*

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

If you are the parent of a Florida middle or high school student, this guide is for you. It is designed to explain Florida's high school graduation programs, including two programs that provide students with the opportunity to graduate from high school in three years. The guide also provides information to help students and their families as they plan and prepare for postsecondary goals. Florida students entering their first year of high school in the 2007-2008 school year may choose from five different graduation options: 24-Credit Program; a three-year, 18-Credit Career Preparatory Program; a three-year, 18-Credit College Preparatory Program; the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program; and an Advanced International Certificate of Education Program. All of these graduation paths include opportunities to take rigorous academic courses designed to prepare students for their future academic and career choices. All students, regardless of graduation program, must still earn a specific grade point average on a 4.0 scale and achieve passing scores on the Grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (FCAT) in order to graduate with a standard diploma (refer to graduation options charts). However, the two three-year programs are significantly different from the 24-credit program. In addition to the above mentioned graduation options, some students with disabilities can earn a Special Diploma. For specific graduation options for students with disabilities, contact your child's school counselor, exceptional student education teacher, or visit [www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/diploma.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/diploma.pdf).

**24-CREDIT PROGRAM** - This program requires students to take 24 credits in the subject areas of English, mathematics, science, social studies, fine or performing arts, and a physical education course to include the integration of health. Foreign language credit is not required for this program, although it is recommended for community college preparation and is **required** for admission to Florida's state universities. This program requires students to take eight elective credits—four credits in a Major Area of Interest (MAI) and four credits combined to allow for a second major area of interest, a minor area of interest, or elective courses. An MAI will allow students to define their interests and use their high school experience to become better prepared for higher education and/or a career of their choosing.

**ACCELERATED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OPTIONS** - Florida's three-year programs are designed for students who are clear about their future goals and are ready to pursue their goals beyond high school in an accelerated manner. To assist students and parents with this task, each school district shall provide each student in grades six through nine, and their parents, with information concerning the three-year and the 24-credit high school graduation options. To select a three-year graduation program, students and their parents must meet with designated school personnel to receive an explanation of the requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of each program option. Students must also receive the written consent of their parents. The student must select the graduation program prior to the end of ninth grade that will best address his/her future.

- **THREE-YEAR, 18-CREDIT CAREER PREPARATORY PROGRAM** - This accelerated graduation program requires fewer credits than the 24-credit program and does not require the student to select a Major Area of Interest. This program focuses more on academic courses, which means students take fewer elective courses. Unlike the 24-credit program, the three-year career preparatory program requires students to earn specific credits in a single vocational, career, or technical education program. It requires students to maintain a cumulative weighted grade point average of a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale with a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least a 2.0 or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits. The requirements of the program are designed to prepare students for entrance into a technical center, community college, or the workforce.
- **THREE-YEAR, 18-CREDIT COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM** - This accelerated graduation program requires fewer credits than the 24-credit program and does not require the student to select a MAI. This program focuses more on academic courses, which means students take fewer elective courses. Unlike the 24-credit program, the three-year college preparatory program requires students to earn two credits in a foreign language. Students must earn at least 6 of the 18 required credits in specified rigorous courses and maintain a cumulative weighted grade point average of a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale with a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least a 3.0 or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits. It also requires higher-level mathematics courses than does either the 24-credit program or the three-year career preparatory program. The credits required by this program must satisfy the minimum standards for admission into Florida's state universities.

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

- **INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) DIPLOMA PROGRAM** - The IB Diploma Program is a rigorous pre-university course of study that culminates in internationally standardized tests. The program's comprehensive two-year curriculum allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of many different nations' education systems. Students completing IB courses and earning appropriate scores on exams from the six subject groups are eligible for college credit. Students can earn up to 30 postsecondary semester credits by participating in this program at the high school level. Approximately 54 Florida high schools participate in the IB program. Students in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in IB courses do not have to pay to take the exams. For information, visit [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org).
- **ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (AICE) PROGRAM** - The AICE Program is an international curriculum and examination program modeled on the British pre-college curriculum and "A-Level" exams. College credit, advanced placement, or both may be earned throughout the U.S., depending on the college or university. Florida's public community colleges and universities provide college credit for successfully passed exams. AICE Diploma recipients completing 75 hours of community service will receive the Florida Academic Scholars Award. Enrollment in the AICE Program fulfills the requirement for a student's Major Area of Interest. Approximately 19 Florida high schools offer the AICE program. Students in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in AICE courses do not have to pay to take the exams. For information, visit [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk) and [www.cie.org.uk/countries/usa](http://www.cie.org.uk/countries/usa).

**SPECIAL DIPLOMA** - Students who have been identified in accordance with State Board of Education rules as "educable, trainable, or profoundly handicapped," "deaf, hard-of-hearing, or dual sensory impaired," "specific learning disabled," "language impaired," "physically impaired with an orthopedic, other health impairment, or traumatic brain injury," "autism spectrum disorder," or "emotional/behavioral disabilities," are not required to meet all the requirements of a standard diploma. Requirements for special diplomas are established by district school boards. However, the availability of a special diploma does not restrict the right of a student with a disability solely to a special diploma. There are two options available to special diploma students. Special Diploma Option 1 requires the student to 1) earn the minimum number of course credits determined by the local school board; and 2) show mastery of the standards for special diploma. Special Diploma Option 2 requires the student to 1) be successfully employed for at least one semester, at or above minimum wage; 2) achieve all annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks related to employment and community competencies in the graduation training plan; and 3) show mastery of competencies in his or her employment and community competencies training plan. Students who graduate with a special diploma are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) until they reach age 22 or receive a standard diploma, whichever comes first. For more information about a special diploma and other graduation options for students with disabilities, contact your child's school counselor, exceptional student education teacher, or visit [www.fldoe.org/epe/pdf/diploma.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/epe/pdf/diploma.pdf).



## STUDENT OPTIONS

Within the five graduation programs, students have multiple options in a variety of areas.

**HIGH SCHOOL COURSES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL** - Middle school students can take some high school courses for high school credit while in middle school. To encourage this practice, for middle school students who take any high school course for high school credit and earn a grade of "C," "D," or "F" or the equivalent of a grade of "C," "D," or "F," the district grade forgiveness policy must allow the replacement of the grade with a grade of "C" or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. Course offerings vary by district. For more information, contact your district or your middle school guidance counselor.

**ACCELERATION PROGRAMS AND ADVANCED COURSEWORK** - Studies show that students who complete a solid academic program in high school, including advanced courses, are more likely to be successful in college. Students in all graduation programs are encouraged to take advantage of advanced course offerings and acceleration programs such as dual enrollment, early admission, Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, Advanced International Certificate of Education courses, and courses from the Florida Virtual School. These courses are available to all qualified students, no matter which graduation program they choose. For information, contact your child's school counselor.

**DUAL ENROLLMENT AND EARLY ADMISSION** - **Dual enrollment** allows eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses. They earn credit toward high school graduation and, at the same time, earn credit toward a college degree or technical certificate. All 28 public community colleges and some of the state universities in Florida participate in dual enrollment. Students are permitted to take dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Dual enrollment students do not have to pay registration, matriculation, or laboratory fees. In addition, textbooks for dual enrollment are provided to students free of charge. **Early admission** is similar to dual enrollment, except that students enroll in college/university courses full time. They earn credits simultaneously toward a college degree and a high school diploma.

**ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) PROGRAM** - The College Board's AP Program is a nationwide program consisting of more than 30 college-level courses and exams offered at participating high schools. Subjects range from art to statistics. Students who earn a qualifying grade of 3 or above on an AP exam can earn college credit or advanced placement or both, depending on the college or university in which the student enrolls. Students in Florida's public secondary schools enrolled in AP courses do not have to pay to take the exams. For information, visit [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html).

**INTERNATIONAL GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (PRE-AICE) PROGRAM (IGCSE)** - The optional pre-AICE curriculum program, called the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), was developed in 1985 to meet the need for an internationally focused curriculum appropriate for a wide range of student ability. IGCSE is suitable for grades 9 and 10 and features over 50 subjects with end-of-course, international criterion-referenced, externally assessed examinations. While schools offering AICE subjects are not required to also offer IGCSE courses, students are expected to have mastered the IGCSE level of study and skills in a subject before beginning an A-level AICE course. Most IGCSE subjects are offered at two levels: extended and core. The extended level is for students planning to progress to AICE or other college level equivalent courses in grades 11 and 12. The core level of IGCSE is suitable for a wider range of ability student. Students at the core level may find during their course of study that they are actually able to move up to the higher, extended level of IGCSE study and continue on to the AICE program. This possibility opens doors for previously unidentified advanced students. For information, visit [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk) and select "Qualifications."

**FLORIDA VIRTUAL SCHOOL (FVS)** - The FVS offers high-quality, online high school curricula, including AP courses. The FVS Program can be a resource for students with limited access to AP offerings. All students have the option of taking online courses from the Florida Virtual School. For information, visit [www.flvs.net](http://www.flvs.net).

**COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM (CLEP)** - Students with strong content background in a subject area can earn credit through an examination program administered by the college they attend. One such program is the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Candidates for the CLEP include students who have completed an AP course but did not take or earn a qualifying score on the AP exam. Other students who have taken several high school courses in one particular subject area may wish to take a CLEP exam. For more information on CLEP testing sites and dates, contact the admissions or registrar's office at the postsecondary institution in which the student wants to enroll.

**ADULT EDUCATION** - Many school districts let high school students take courses through the district's adult education program. Credits earned may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to local school board policies.

**GED EXIT OPTION MODEL** - The GED Exit Option is a graduation strategy that permits currently enrolled high school students who are at risk of not graduating with their cohort group to earn a standard diploma through an alternate graduation route. For more information go to [www.fldoe.org/faq/default.asp?Dept=108&Cat=90](http://www.fldoe.org/faq/default.asp?Dept=108&Cat=90).

**THREE GRADUATION PROGRAMS FOR  
STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE NINE IN 2007-2008 SCHOOL YEAR**

Subject Area	Graduation Requirements of 24-Credit Program	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year, 18-Credit College Preparatory Program <sup>1</sup>	Graduation Requirements of Three-Year, 18-Credit Career Preparatory Program
<b>English</b>	4 credits, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature	4 credits with major concentration in composition and literature	4 credits with major concentration in composition and literature
<b>Mathematics</b>	4 credits, one of which must be algebra I or its equivalent, or a higher-level mathematics course <sup>2</sup>	3 credits at the algebra I level or above, from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission	3 credits, one of which must be algebra I or its equivalent <sup>2</sup>
<b>Science</b>	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component
<b>Social Studies</b>	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit American history .5 credit American government .5 credit economics
<b>Foreign Language</b>	Not required for high school graduation, but required for admission into state universities	2 credits in the same language or demonstrated proficiency in a second language	Not required
<b>Fine Arts or Performing Arts</b>	1 credit in fine or performing arts, which may include speech and debate	Not required	Not required
<b>Physical Education</b>	1 credit in physical education to include the integration of health <sup>3</sup>	Not required	Not required
<b>Major, Minor, or Electives</b>	8 credits <sup>4</sup> ✓ 4 credits in a Major Area of Interest (MAI)  ✓ 4 credits in elective courses, which may be combined to allow for a second Major Area of Interest, a minor area of interest (3 credits), individual elective courses, or intensive reading or mathematics intervention courses	3 credits in electives	3 credits in single vocational/career education program and 2 credits in electives <i>or</i> 3 credits in single career/technical certificate dual enrollment and 2 credits in electives <i>or</i> 5 credits in vocational/career education (including 3 credits in one sequential career and technical education program)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24 credits</b>	<b>18 credits</b>	<b>18 credits</b>
<b>State Assessment Requirements<sup>5</sup></b>	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing scores on the FCAT (ACT or SAT)
<b>Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements<sup>6</sup></b>	Cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale <sup>6</sup>	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits

<sup>1</sup>All courses earned toward the three-year, 18-credit college preparatory program must satisfy admission requirements for the State University System. To determine which courses meet State University System admissions requirements, please see the high school counselor for assistance. At least 6 of the 18 credits must be completed in courses that include dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), or are specifically listed as rigorous by the Department of Education.

<sup>2</sup>See high school counselor for assistance with Algebra I equivalents. Courses or series of courses deemed "equivalent" for satisfying the Algebra I graduation requirements are: Algebra I; Algebra I Honors; Algebra Ia and Ib; Applied Mathematics I and II, Integrated Mathematics I and II; Pre-AICE Math; and Pacesetter Mathematics I.

<sup>3</sup>For more information on meeting the physical education requirement, please visit <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4461/k12-2007-103.pdf> or see a high school counselor.

<sup>4</sup>Students may revise their Major Areas of Interest (MAI) each year as part of their annual course registration process.

<sup>5</sup>Students must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT in mathematics and reading (or scores that are concordant with the passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT). Students must also pass the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+. Please visit <http://fcats.fldoe.org/pdf/fcatpass.pdf> for additional information on state assessment requirements.

<sup>6</sup>Students in grades 6-8 who take any high school-level course(s) for high school credit and earn a grade of "C," "D," or "F" may replace the grade with a grade of "C" or higher earned subsequently in the same or comparable course(s) in accordance with the district school board's grade forgiveness policy.

## HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSION AND BRIGHT FUTURES REQUIREMENTS

State University System (SUS) Admission Requirements	Florida Community College System Admission Requirements	Bright Futures Scholarship Requirements for 2008 High School Graduates
<p><b>To qualify to enter one of Florida's public universities, a student must meet the following requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> high school graduation with a standard diploma, and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a minimum grade point average in high school academic core courses, and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> minimum admissions test scores (ACT or SAT)</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Qualify for the Talented 20 program</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be selected through a "student profile assessment" that considers other special factors (e.g., special talents)</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Obtain an associate of arts degree from a Florida community college</li> </ul>	<p><b>To qualify to enter an associate degree program at one of Florida's community colleges, a student must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Graduate with a standard high school diploma</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Earn a high school equivalency diploma</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have previously demonstrated competency in college credit postsecondary coursework</li> </ul> <p><b>AND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate readiness for college-level communication and computation skills (often determined by exam or standardized test scores)</li> </ul> <p>For those students interested in non-degree certificate programs, please see an admissions counselor as requirements may vary.</p>	<p><b>Florida Academic Scholars/Florida Medallion Scholars must have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 15 credits in college preparatory courses in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 4 English (3 with substantial writing)</li> <li>✓ 3 mathematics (algebra I and above)</li> <li>✓ 3 natural science (2 with substantial lab)</li> <li>✓ 3 social science</li> <li>✓ 2 foreign language (in the same language)</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Up to three additional credits from courses in the academic areas listed above and/or AP, IB, or AICE fine arts courses calculate a higher GPA</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A 3.5 weighted GPA in the above courses; 75 hours community service; and a minimum score of 1270 on the SAT or 28 on the ACT to be a Florida Academic Scholar (FAS)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A 3.0 weighted GPA in the above courses and a minimum score of 970 on the SAT or 20 on the ACT to be a Florida Medallion Scholar (FMS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Florida Gold Seal Vocational (GSV) Scholars<sup>7</sup> must have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 15.5 credits in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 4 English</li> <li>✓ 4 mathematics (including algebra I)</li> <li>✓ 3 natural science</li> <li>✓ 3 social science (American history, world history, American government, and economics)</li> <li>✓ 1 fine arts</li> <li>✓ 1 physical education to include the integration of health</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A 3.0 weighted GPA in above courses (for a 24-credit diploma)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3 career/technical job-preparatory or technology education program credits in one career/technical program with an unweighted 3.5 GPA in those courses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A minimum score listed below on <i>each</i> subsection of <i>either</i> the CPT or SAT or ACT (<i>Subsections of different test types may not be combined.</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPT: Reading 83/Sentence Skills 83/Algebra 72</li> <li>SAT: Verbal 440/Math 440</li> <li>ACT: English 17/Reading 18/Math 19</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>The 18 high school credits required for SUS admission are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 4 English (3 with substantial writing)</li> <li>✓ 4 mathematics (algebra I and above)</li> <li>✓ 3 natural science (2 with substantial lab)</li> <li>✓ 3 social science</li> <li>✓ 2 foreign language (in the same language)</li> <li>✓ 3 approved electives (in certain combinations)</li> </ul> <p>Students must meet with their school counselor to ensure that courses satisfy SUS admission requirements.</p>	<p><b>The 18 high school credits recommended for community college admission are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 4 English (3 with substantial writing)</li> <li>✓ 3 mathematics (algebra I and above)</li> <li>✓ 3 natural science (2 with substantial lab)</li> <li>✓ 3 social science</li> <li>✓ 2 foreign language (in the same language)</li> <li>✓ 3 approved electives (in certain combinations)</li> </ul>	

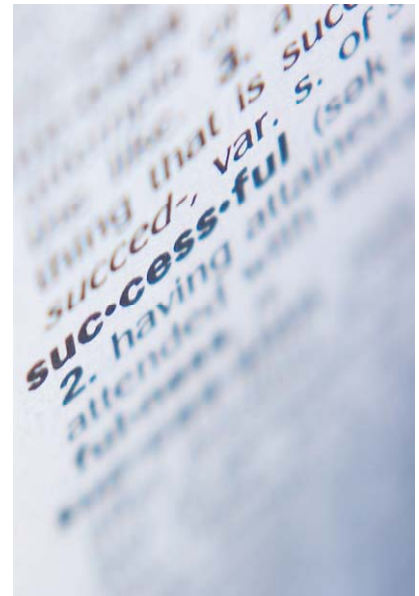
<sup>7</sup>College or career preparatory diplomas may be used to qualify for GSV, with appropriate career/technical education electives.

**For other ways to qualify for Bright Futures, visit [www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org](http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org).**

## MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE

The right graduation program for a particular student is the one that best fits the abilities, interests, motivation, and goals of that individual student. Families and students should consider the educational benefits of each program and choose the one that will best prepare the student for his/her postsecondary education or career plan. Families and students should work with the school counselor or career specialist on a regular basis during middle and high school to get more information about graduation programs, financial aid opportunities, acceleration programs, and college or career plans to help them make this important decision. Here are some things that students and families should consider:

- ✓ What is the student's postsecondary education and/or career goal?
- ✓ Is the student prepared to make a choice about postsecondary education and possible career paths?
- ✓ Is the student mature enough to leave high school after three years?
- ✓ If the student is planning to attend a postsecondary institution away from home, does he or she have the decision-making skills needed to make informed, safe choices required for mature independent living?
- ✓ In the 18-credit program, there are only three electives. Are three electives enough, or is the student interested in taking additional courses to explore his/her interests?
- ✓ Does the student want to participate in sports or other extracurricular activities for four years, or are three years enough?
- ✓ Can the student meet admissions requirements for postsecondary education institutions of his/her choice by choosing a three-year, 18-credit program?
- ✓ Has the family considered expenses and possible financial aid needs that may result from the student starting postsecondary education a year early?
- ✓ Is the student going to compete for scholarships that require certain academic core courses, community service experiences, demonstrated leadership skills, or participation in extracurricular activities?
- ✓ Has the family considered that the student has the option of taking an additional year of academic or technical courses through dual enrollment or AP courses to earn college credit by choosing the 24-credit program?
- ✓ Does the student intend to participate in college level sports and therefore needs to meet National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) course eligibility requirements?
- ✓ If the student is enrolled in a prepaid college tuition plan, and is interested in the three-year high school program, can the family pay off the balance of the plan a year early?



## POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN CHOOSING A GRADUATION PROGRAM

- ❑ High school credits awarded before grade nine can be counted toward the required credits for all graduation programs.
- ❑ Students who meet specified requirements for a comprehensive program of study in career education may be recognized with a career education certification on their high school diploma.
- ❑ Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program may still qualify for acceleration programs (e.g., Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, International Baccalaureate) and for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship if they meet the eligibility and/or admissions requirements for those programs and scholarships.
- ❑ Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program can participate in the National Merit Scholarship Program if they take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) in either the next-to-last year or the last year they are enrolled in high school. Those who take the PSAT/NMSQT in their last year of high school will be entering competition for awards to be offered as they are completing their first year of college.
- ❑ Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program; complete the 18 credits; earn a specified, cumulative weighted GPA (with individual course credit GPA requirements); and pass the Grade 10 FCAT, must graduate at the end of the three years. Students cannot remain in school for a fourth year after graduating from high school.
- ❑ Students will lose a year of potential athletics eligibility by opting for a three-year program. Issues such as continued eligibility for high school athletics or other extracurricular activities should be taken into consideration when making the decision.
- ❑ Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program will automatically be assigned to the 24-credit program if they do not earn 5 credits by the end of grade nine or 11 credits by the end of grade 10; do not achieve a score of three or higher on the Grade 10 FCAT Writing+ assessment; do not pass the Grade 10 FCAT; or do not meet credit or GPA requirements by the end of their third year. Passing the Grade 10 FCAT is mandatory.
- ❑ The three-year, 18-credit programs are only available to students who will receive a standard diploma.
- ❑ Selection of one of the three-year, 18-credit programs must be completed by the student prior to the end of grade nine, and the decision is exclusively up to the student and parent.
- ❑ Students who complete the three-year, 18-credit college preparatory program must still satisfy minimum academic core credit requirements for State University System admissions for admission to those institutions.
- ❑ Students who choose the three-year, 18-credit career preparatory program must take their electives in vocational, career, or technical education courses.
- ❑ Students who plan to apply to an out-of-state or private in-state college or university and who are interested in one of the three-year, 18-credit programs should contact those institutions as early as possible for specific admissions requirements.
- ❑ Students who choose a three-year, 18-credit program must be treated equally in all ways with students who choose the 24-credit program, including eligibility for graduation honors, valedictorian or salutatorian ranking, the Talented 20 Program, and the Bright Futures Scholarship.

## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESOURCES

**FACTS.org** ([www.facts.org](http://www.facts.org)) is Florida's free academic advising Web site. The site includes services to help students prepare for success in school and beyond. FACTS.org makes it easy for public middle and high school students and their parents to be actively involved in their academic and career planning. By establishing a log-in ID, students can create an ePersonal Education Plan (ePEP) that maps out high school coursework according to individual goals. Students can also monitor their progress by running evaluations against transcript information and the requirements for high school diplomas, State University System admissions, Bright Futures Scholarships, and a new federal grant called the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG). FACTS.org services support Department of Education initiatives and legislative reforms. For more information, contact the FACTS.org Help Desk toll-free at (866) 324-2618 or via e-mail at [facts@admin.usf.edu](mailto:facts@admin.usf.edu).

**Florida Counseling for Future Education Handbook** is a comprehensive guide designed for Florida's middle and high school counselors to help advise students who will enroll in Florida's postsecondary institutions. The Handbook is updated annually with the most current version available on FACTS.org. Please select "Advising Manuals" from the home page main menu.

**Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA)** administers state-funded grants/scholarship programs and federal student loan financial aid programs to assist students with the costs of postsecondary education. For information, go to [www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org](http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org) or call toll-free (888) 827-2004.

**Federal Student Aid** is your source for free information from the U.S. Department of Education on preparing for and funding education beyond high school. Visit [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov).

**Talented 20 Program** provides eligible students guaranteed admission to one of the 11 state universities. Please note that while eligible students are guaranteed admission to one of the state universities, they may not necessarily be admitted to the campus of their choice. These students are given *priority funding* from the Florida Student Assistance Grant Program, although this program provides no scholarships. For more information on how to qualify, visit [www.fldoe.org/Talented20/](http://www.fldoe.org/Talented20/) or call the Student Support Services Project office at (850) 922-3727.

**FCAT Explorer** offers five free online programs for Florida's public school students that offer practice for the skills tested on the FCAT and include features to help students get the most from their study time. The system features three practice programs created especially for middle school students—Reading Island, Interactive Library, and Math Navigator—and two practice programs created for grade ten students—Reading Timeline and Math Timeline. Students may use the system on any computer connected to the Internet, whether at school, at the library, or at home. Visit [www.fcatexplorer.com](http://www.fcatexplorer.com).

**CHOICES** Web site is a comprehensive career information system that uses a flexible approach combining graphics, multimedia, and search strategies to allow students to explore career and educational options. The site includes links to key Web sites related to career exploration to help students plan for a career. Visit [www.Florida.echoices.com](http://www.Florida.echoices.com).

**Career Voyages** Web site provides information and guided support for students in determining the best career path for their interests and abilities. The site includes Florida-specific information about high-growth jobs with better wages, including new career fields, video tours for students, and an online interest inventory. Visit [www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov).

**Major Areas of Interest (MAI)** is a means by which a student can explore areas of interest in depth. Students entering grade nine in 2007-2008 and thereafter will select a MAI as part of their required electives for graduation. For more information and to view a list of MAIs available in your school district, visit [www.fldoe.org/APlusPlus/](http://www.fldoe.org/APlusPlus/) or [www.FACTS.org](http://www.FACTS.org).

This is one of many publications available through the Florida Department of Education, designed to assist school districts, parents, and state agencies which support educational programs.

Telephone: (850) 245-0509 or SunCom: 205-0509

FAX: (850) 245-5036 or SunCom: 205-5036

Web site: <http://www.bsi.fsu.edu/schoolimprove/studentprogression/highschgradreq.htm>

