

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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**K12:** 2005-126

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Jeanine Blomberg  
Hanna Skandera

**DATE:** September 8, 2005

**SUBJECT: HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RELATING TO THREE-YEAR GRADUATION PROGRAMS**

The Florida Legislature has provided students and their parents the opportunity to select the graduation program that will most appropriately prepare the student for his or her chosen postsecondary and career path. Some students have selected to graduate via one of the three-year high school graduation programs. This memo is written to clarify several issues related to high school assessment and three-year graduation programs.

### Opportunities to Take and Pass the Grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

Students choosing one of the three-year graduation programs will have five opportunities to earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT beginning with the March administration during their second year in high school. These opportunities are as follows:

- March of their second year in high school – first opportunity to participate in the Grade 10 FCAT
- Summer following their second year in high school - first opportunity to retake the Grade 10 FCAT if they do not earn passing scores in their second year
- Fall of their third year in high school – second opportunity to retake the Grade 10 FCAT
- Spring of their third year in high school – third opportunity to retake the Grade 10 FCAT

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- Summer following their third year in high school – fourth and final opportunity to retake the Grade 10 FCAT and graduate via a three-year graduation program.

Please note that students who choose one of the three-year graduation programs do not meet the criteria to be included in the fall administration of the FCAT during their second year in high school. Furthermore, section 1003.429(8), Florida Statutes (Accelerated high school graduation options), states that a student who selected one of the three-year graduation programs will automatically move to the 24-credit traditional graduation program if, by the end of the eleventh grade, he or she does not earn passing scores on the FCAT, including the summer administration following the student's third year in high school.

### **Participation in the Grade 11 Science FCAT**

In the past, districts were advised that students must be classified and reported in accordance with the district's student progression plan. It was recommended that a student selecting one of the three-year graduation programs be classified as a twelfth grade student or senior at the beginning of their last year in school. For purposes of state reporting, it is now recommended that students who select one of the three-year programs be classified as ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students. This ensures that students are eligible to participate in Grade 11 FCAT Science even if it is the students' last year in high school.

A student who has selected a three-year program must be allowed to participate during his or her third year in all activities traditionally provided for graduating students, including eligibility for valedictorian, salutatorian, Talented 20, and Bright Futures. However, a school district may choose to recognize a valedictorian and a salutatorian from each graduation program (three-year and traditional four-year).

If you have questions, please contact Mary Jo Butler or Samantha Love in K-12 Student Achievement at (850) 245-0426 or via email at [samantha.love@fldoe.org](mailto:samantha.love@fldoe.org); or Cornelia Orr or Kris Ellington in Assessment and School Performance at (850) 245-0513 or via email at [kris.ellington@fldoe.org](mailto:kris.ellington@fldoe.org).

Thank you for your continued leadership in ensuring the highest quality educational program for our students.

JB:HS:mjbo

cc: Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum and Instruction  
District Coordinators of Assessment  
Guidance Supervisors  
Student Services Directors  
Student Database Contacts