

Graduation Requirements for Florida's Statewide Assessments

Overview

According to Florida law, students must meet certain academic requirements to earn a standard high school diploma from a public school. This means that students must pass required courses, earn a minimum number of credits, earn a minimum grade point average and pass the required statewide assessments. 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. Passing scores for the statewide assessments are determined by the State Board of Education.

Graduation Requirements

Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment Requirement

The reading/ELA assessments students must pass to graduate with a standard high school diploma are determined by each student's year of enrollment in grade 9. Table 1 lists the required reading/ELA assessments for each grade 9 cohort and the passing score for each assessment.

Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading

Students who entered grade 9 in 2010-11 through 2012-13 are required to pass the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment aligned to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). The State Board of Education established performance standards for FCAT 2.0 Reading on December 19, 2011. Students may satisfy this requirement by earning a concordant score (as described on the following page) or by earning the alternate passing score of 349 on the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) ELA Retake. For more information on the FCAT 2.0 and NGSSS assessments, please see the [NGSSS Statewide Science Assessment and FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake Fact Sheet](#).

FSA Grade 10 English Language Arts

In 2014-15, the Florida Standards Assessments, aligned to the Florida Standards, were introduced, and the Grade 10 FSA ELA assessment was administered for the first time in spring 2015. Passing status was determined by linking student performance on the 2015 Grade 10 FSA ELA test to student performance on the 2014 Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading test, using a linked passing score of 245 on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading test. These students, as well as students who took the Retake assessment in fall 2015, are eligible for an alternate passing score.

New performance standards were adopted in State Board of Education rule in January 2016. Beginning with students who entered grade 9 in 2014-15 and beyond, students must pass the Grade 10 FSA ELA by earning the score established in the State Board of Education rule, as indicated below. For more information on the FSA ELA, please see the [FSA English Language Arts and Mathematics Fact Sheet](#).

Table 1: Reading/ELA Assessment Requirement and Passing Score by School Year

| School Year When Assessment Requirements Began for Students Entering Grade 9 | Assessment that Students Must Pass in Order to Graduate | Passing Score for the Required Assessment |
|--|---|---|
| 2010-11 to 2012-13 | Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading | 245 |
| 2013-14 | Grade 10 FSA ELA | 349* |
| 2014-15 and beyond | Grade 10 FSA ELA | 350 |

*Students who took the assessment prior to the adoption of the passing score on the new scale adopted by the State Board are eligible to use the alternate passing score for graduation, which is linked to the passing score for the previous assessment requirement.

Algebra 1 End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment Requirement

Beginning with students entering grade 9 in 2011-12 and beyond, students must take and pass the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment to satisfy this graduation requirement.

NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC Assessment

The State Board of Education established performance standards for the Algebra 1 EOC assessment aligned to the NGSSS on December 19, 2011. Only students who took an Algebra 1 course aligned to the NGSSS who need to achieve a passing score (399) will take the NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC Assessment Retake. For more information on the NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC, please see the [NGSSS End-Of-Course Assessments Fact Sheet](#). Students whose graduation requirement is the NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC may also satisfy this requirement by earning the alternate passing score of 489 on the FSA Algebra 1 EOC assessment.

FSA Algebra 1 EOC Assessment

The FSA Algebra 1 EOC Assessment was first administered in spring 2015. Passing status was determined by linking student performance on the FSA Algebra 1 EOC to student performance on the NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC, using a linked passing score of 399 on the NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC Assessment. These students, as well as students who took the assessment in summer, fall, or winter 2015, are eligible for an alternate passing score of 489. Students taking the assessment for the first time after performance standards were set in January 2016 must pass the Algebra 1 EOC by earning the passing score of 497, adopted in State Board of Education rule in January 2016. For more information on the FSA Algebra 1 EOC, please see the [FSA End-of-Course Assessments Fact Sheet](#).

Table 2: Algebra 1 EOC Assessment Requirement and Passing Score by Implementation Year

| Implementation Year | Assessment that Students Must Pass in Order to Graduate | Passing Score for the Required Assessment |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 2011-12* | NGSSS Algebra 1 EOC | 399 |
| 2014-15 | FSA Algebra 1 EOC Assessment | 489** |
| 2014-15 and beyond | FSA Algebra 1 EOC Assessment | 497 |

*Students who entered Grade 9 in the 2010-11 school year were required to earn course credit in Algebra 1 or an equivalent course and participate in the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment. The results of the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment must constitute 30% of these students' final course grades, but there is not a passing requirement for this cohort of students.

**Students who took the assessment prior to the adoption of the passing score on the new scale adopted by the State Board in January 2016 are eligible to use the alternate passing score for graduation, which is linked to the passing score for the previous assessment requirement.

Graduation Options

- **Retaking the Statewide Assessments**—Students can retake the Grade 10 Reading/ELA test or Algebra 1 EOC Assessment (NGSSS or FSA, as appropriate) each time the test is administered until they achieve a passing score, and students can continue their high school education beyond the twelfth-grade year should they need additional instruction. Students currently have up to five opportunities to pass the Grade 10 Reading/ELA test before their scheduled graduation. Students who do not pass the Grade 10 Reading/ELA in the spring of their tenth-grade year may retest in fall and spring of their eleventh- and twelfth-grade years. The number of opportunities to retake the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment will depend on the grade students are in when they first take the test, since it is taken at the conclusion of the course. The Algebra 1 EOC Assessment is currently administered four times each year: in the fall, winter, spring and summer.

- Concordant and Comparative Scores Option**—A student can also meet assessment graduation requirements by receiving a score concordant to the FCAT 2.0 Reading passing score on either the ACT or SAT and a score comparative to the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment (NGSSS) passing score on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT). FCAT 2.0 Reading concordant scores for students entering grade 9 in 2010-11 and after and the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment comparative score for students entering grade 9 in 2011-12 and after were established in rule by the State Board of Education in September 2013. **New concordant and comparative scores will be established for the new assessments once a sufficient number of students have participated in both the new assessment and the alternate assessment(s) to conduct the concordant/comparative score study. Until these new scores are established, the current scores may be used by all students.**

Table 3 shows the concordant and comparative scores students must achieve to satisfy graduation requirements. All students enrolled in grade 10 are required to participate in the Grade 10 FSA ELA assessment in accordance with section 1008.22, Florida Statutes (F.S.), regardless of whether they have a passing concordant score on file.

Additionally, if students have achieved a comparative score on the PERT prior to enrolling in and completing Algebra 1 or an equivalent course, they must take the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment in accordance with s. 1008.22, F.S.

Table 3: Concordant and Comparative Scores

| Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading or Grade 10 FSA ELA | |
|--|-----|
| Old SAT Critical Reading* | 430 |
| New SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing** | 430 |
| New SAT Reading Subtest** | 24 |
| ACT | 19 |
| Algebra 1 EOC (NGSSS or FSA) | |
| PERT Mathematics | 97 |

*Administered prior to March 2016.

** Administered in March 2016 or beyond; either the 430 score on Evidence-Based Reading and Writing **OR** the 24 score on Reading may be used.

- Scholar Diploma Designation**—To qualify for a Scholar diploma designation on a standard high school diploma, a student must earn a passing score on each of the statewide assessments shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Passing Scores Required for a Scholar Diploma Designation

| Students Entered Ninth Grade | EOC Assessment | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| | Geometry | Biology 1* | U.S. History* | Algebra 2 |
| 2010-2011 through 2013-2014 | | X | X | |
| 2014-2015 and beyond | X | X | X | X |

* A student meets this requirement without passing the Biology 1 or U.S. History EOC Assessment if the student is enrolled in an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Biology 1 or U.S. History course and the student:

- o Takes the respective AP, IB, or AICE assessment, and
- o Earns the minimum score to earn college credit.

The passing score for each EOC assessment is the minimum score in Achievement Level 3 (see <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/3/urlt/achlevel.pdf>). For students who took an EOC assessment during its implementation year, districts may opt to convert the reported T scores to the established score scale to determine the Achievement Level a student would have earned on the new scale, or a district may allow these students to retake the test to earn a passing score. Districts have received a formula that may be used to convert students' T scores to the established scale scores. Additionally, districts may choose to administer an EOC assessment to students who did not have an opportunity to take it if they wish to qualify for the Scholar

designation. Passing scores for FSA Geometry and Algebra 2 were adopted in State Board of Education rule in January 2016.

For students who took the FSA Geometry EOC (2014-15) prior to the adoption of passing scores, the alternate passing score is 492 and above, which corresponds to the passing score of 396 and above for the NGSSS Geometry EOC (2010-11), last administered December 2014.

- Waivers for Students with Disabilities**—Students with disabilities who entered grade 9 in 2014-15 and succeeding years are required to work toward a standard high school diploma and are expected to participate in statewide, standardized assessments. (Students with disabilities who entered grade 9 in 2013-14 or earlier and are working toward a standard high school diploma are also expected to participate in statewide, standardized assessments.) Legislation, however, provides for a waiver of statewide, standardized assessment graduation requirements for students with disabilities whose abilities cannot be accurately measured by the assessments. Pursuant to s. 1008.22(3)(c)2., F.S., “A student with a disability, as defined in s. 1007.02(2), for whom the individual education plan (IEP) team determines that the statewide, standardized assessments under this section cannot accurately measure the student’s abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations, shall have assessment results waived for the purpose of receiving a course grade and a standard high school diploma. Such waiver shall be designated on the student’s transcript.” For additional information, contact the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu>.
- High School Equivalency Diploma Program (2014 GED® Test)**—The high school equivalency diploma program is designed to provide an opportunity for adults who have not graduated from high school to earn a State of Florida High School Diploma, the state’s equivalency diploma, by measuring the major academic skills and knowledge associated with a high school program of study, with increased emphasis on workplace and higher education. The state selected the 2014 GED® test as the assessment for the high school equivalency program during a competitive process conducted in 2014. The 2014 GED® Test includes four required content area tests: Reasoning through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies. It is a computer-based test. Passing the test may require some preparation. Local adult education programs sponsored by school districts, colleges and community organizations may assist students with determining how to best prepare for the test. Additional information and resources regarding the GED® Test and the high school equivalency program may be accessed at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/hse/>.

Previous Scores Required for Graduation

Students Originally Scheduled to Graduate between 2004 and 2013—Students who entered grade 9 in the 2008-09 school year or prior and were originally scheduled to graduate between 2004 and 2013 must earn passing scores on Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics, or their equivalents. Students who entered grade 9 in the 2009-10 school year or prior must earn an alternate passing score (comparable to the passing score for Grade 10 FCAT Reading) on Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading and a passing score on Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics. The FCAT Mathematics retake is no longer administered. Students who still need to satisfy this requirement must earn a concordant score on the SAT or ACT. **Students may also meet the FCAT Mathematics requirement by passing the NGSSS or FSA Algebra 1 EOC Assessment.** The required passing and concordant scores for students who entered grade 9 from 2001-01 to 2009-10 are provided in Table 5 (on the following page).

Table 5: Passing Scores for Students Entering Grade 9 from 2000-01 to 2009-10

| Assessment | Reading | Mathematics |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| FCAT | 1926 (scale score of 300) or above | 1889 (scale score of 300) or above |
| FCAT 2.0 | 241 or above* | N/A |
| SAT Concordant Score | <p><u>SAT administered prior to March 2016</u> 410 (for students who entered grade 9 in 2006-07 or earlier)</p> <p>420 (for students who entered grade 9 in 2007-08, 2008-09, or 2009-10)</p> <p><u>SAT administered after March 2016</u> For students who entered grade 9 in 2006-07 or earlier: 410 – New SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing OR 22 – New SAT Critical Reading</p> <p>For students who entered grade 9 in 2007-08, 2008-09, or 2009-10: 420 – New SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing OR 23 – New SAT Critical Reading</p> | 340** |
| ACT Concordant Score | 15 (for students who entered grade 9 in 2006-07 or earlier) 18 (for students who entered grade 9 in 2007-08, 2008-09, or 2009-10) | 15 |

*Students who participated in the spring 2011 Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading test received scores called FCAT Equivalent Scores that were reported on the FCAT score scale, and the passing score was 1926 (scale score of 300). This is comparable to a score of 241 on the FCAT 2.0.

**A concordant score of 370 on SAT Mathematics was previously established in 2003 as an alternative for the Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics requirement. This alternative passing score was lowered to a score of 340 after a concordance study was conducted in November 2009 on a revised, more challenging version of the SAT. Students required to pass FCAT Mathematics for graduation may submit a score of 340 or higher regardless of their year of enrollment in grade 9 if the score is dated March 2005 and beyond.

Class of 2003—Students who were originally scheduled to graduate in 2003 may satisfy their graduation requirements by earning a Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading score of 236 or higher.

High School Competency Test (HSCT) Requirement—The HSCT State Board Rule (6A-1.09421) was repealed in Fall 2015. Students who were scheduled to graduate in 2002 or earlier and have not passed the HSCT as part of their graduation requirements will need to enroll in an adult education program to earn a standard high school diploma. In accordance with Rule 6A-6.020, F.A.C., those who enter adult high school after their ninth grade cohort has graduated or who are not part of a ninth grade cohort must meet the current grade 12 cohort’s graduation requirements that are in effect the year they enter adult high school.

Helpful Resources

- Academic advisement flyers for students entering ninth grade and other information related to graduation requirements are available on the [Graduation Requirements](#) webpage.
- The [FSA Portal](#), [FSA Homepage](#), [FCAT 2.0 Homepage](#), and [Florida EOC Assessments Homepage](#) provide information about the assessments currently administered and serve as valuable resources to students, parents/guardians, and educators. For previous assessments, please visit the [Historical FCAT 2.0 Homepage](#) and the [FCAT Homepage](#).
- [Schedules](#) for FSA, FCAT 2.0, and EOC assessment administrations are accessible from the Florida Department of Education website.
- [FloridaStudents.org](#) provides student tutorials and resources for the Florida Standards.
- [CPALMS.org](#) is Florida's official source for standards information and course descriptions and includes helpful resources for educators and students.