



Graduation Requirements for Florida's Statewide Assessments

Overview

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 required statewide assessments: FCAT, FCAT 2.0, and/or Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments.** Students who meet these requirements but do not pass the required FCAT or FCAT 2.0 assessments will receive a Certificate of Completion, which is not equivalent to a standard high school diploma. Depending on the school year and grade level, students who do not pass the required Florida EOC Assessments may not receive course credit. Passing scores for the statewide assessments are determined by the State Board of Education.

Graduation Requirements

- FCAT**—Students who entered grade 9 in the 2008-09 school year or prior and were originally scheduled to graduate between 2004 and 2012 must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics assessments. The required passing scores are as follows:

FCAT Reading	FCAT Mathematics
1926 (scale score of 300) or above	1889 (scale score of 300) or above

- FCAT/FCAT 2.0**—Students who entered grade 9 in the 2009-10 school year must earn passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading and Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics assessments. The required passing scores are as follows:

FCAT 2.0 Reading: FCAT Equivalent Score	FCAT Mathematics
1926 (scale score of 300) or above	1889 (scale score of 300) or above

Note: The required FCAT 2.0 Reading scores will change in 2012 once FCAT 2.0 Achievement Level standards are set by the State Board of Education. Students will be required to earn an Achievement Level 3 or higher in order to pass the assessment.

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- FCAT 2.0 and Florida EOC Assessments**—Students who entered grade 9 in the 2010-11 school year and beyond must earn an Achievement Level 3 or higher in order to pass the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment for graduation purposes. The State Board of Education is scheduled to set the Achievement Level standards for the FCAT 2.0 in December 2011. Once Achievement Levels are established for an EOC assessment, students must pass the EOC assessment by earning an Achievement Level 3 score or higher in order to earn course credit. The table below provides the school year when these requirements begin for students entering grade 9:

Achievement Level 3 Requirement Begins for Students Entering Grade 9	Assessment
2010-11	Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading
2011-12	Algebra 1 EOC Assessment
2012-13	Biology 1 EOC Assessment Geometry EOC Assessment

Note: The U.S. History EOC Assessment is not included in this chart because according to current statute, students will not be required to earn an Achievement Level 3 or higher on the U.S. History EOC Assessment to earn course credit.

Graduation Options

- Retaking the Statewide Assessments**—Students can retake the FCAT or FCAT 2.0 as many times as they like until they pass it and can enroll for a “free” 13th year of public education should they need additional instruction to successfully pass the assessment. Students currently have up to five opportunities to pass the assessments prior to their scheduled graduation. Students who do not pass the Grade 10 FCAT or FCAT 2.0 in the spring of their sophomore year may retest in fall and spring of their junior and senior years; however, it is important to note that the last administration of the FCAT Reading Retake assessment will occur in spring 2012, and the last administration of the FCAT Mathematics Retake assessment will occur in spring 2013. Students who have not passed the FCAT by its last administration will need to take and pass the FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment by earning the approved concordant passing scores that will be established, or by achieving a concordant score on the SAT or ACT, as described below.

In addition, if students do not pass the required Florida EOC Assessment, they will not earn course credit and must retake the assessment until they pass it.

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- Concordant Scores Option**—A senior can graduate by receiving a score comparable to the FCAT passing score on the ACT or SAT. The current, approved reading scores may also be used for the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment for students scheduled to graduate in 2012-13. Students may satisfy the score requirements using various combinations of tests. See the chart below for the concordant scores that must be achieved by graduation year:

Concordant Scores by Graduation Year				
	Reading		Mathematics	
	2009-10 and prior	2010-11 to 2012-13	2009-10 and prior	2010-11 and beyond
FCAT	1926	1926	1889	1889
SAT	410	420	370	340
ACT	15	18	15	15

The option of substituting a concordant passing score at any time became available to students who have not passed the FCAT on July 1, 2010. Prior to July 1, 2010, students were required to take the FCAT at least three times without passing in order to use the concordant scores. Additional guidance regarding FCAT concordant scores is posted at <http://www.fl DOE.org/BII/StudentPro/resources.asp>.

- Community College**—Seniors with a Certificate of Completion may enroll in any public community college in Florida by taking the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.) or the Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT) to determine if they qualify to register for college-credit courses or must take remedial courses to continue their college-preparatory studies.
- Waiver of the FCAT and EOC Graduation Requirements for Students with Disabilities**—Students with disabilities who are working toward a standard high school diploma are expected to participate in the FCAT and FCAT 2.0 assessments; however, legislation provides for a waiver of the FCAT and FCAT 2.0 as a requirement for graduation with a standard high school diploma for students with disabilities whose abilities cannot be accurately measured by the statewide assessments after attempting each required assessment at least once. The individual educational plan (IEP) team may request a waiver of the FCAT/FCAT 2.0 requirement for a standard high school diploma for those students with disabilities identified in the Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities Act (ENNOBLES) who also meet the requirements set forth in Sections 1003.43(11)(b) or 1003.428(8)(b), Florida Statutes. Students with disabilities with Section 504 plans are not eligible for a waiver.



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Students with disabilities enrolled in courses for which a statewide EOC assessment is required are expected to participate in the Florida EOC Assessments. Waivers are available for an EOC requirement for students who have IEPs. The IEP team must determine that an EOC assessment cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations. The student may have the EOC assessment results waived for the purpose of determining the student's course grade and credit.

- **General Education Diploma (GED)**—If students have not received passing FCAT or FCAT 2.0 scores, they can enroll in a GED preparation course. As each school district can adopt different policies and rules regarding this option, students should obtain a copy of the *Student Progression Plan* from their school district for a better understanding of the rules and policies adopted by their school board.

Helpful Resources

- The **K-12 Student Progression** website, located at <http://www.fldoe.org/BII/StudentPro/>, contains helpful resources regarding graduation options and FCAT concordant scores.
- The **Florida Achieves!** website (<http://www.florida-achieves.com/>) provides access to **FCAT Explorer**, which features grade 10 skills practice for reading and mathematics public school students, and to **FOCUS**, which offers mini-assessments for reading (grades 3-10), mathematics (grades 3-9, Algebra 1, and Geometry), and science (grades 5, 7, 8, and 11).
- The **FCAT Homepage** (<http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcat/>), **FCAT 2.0 Homepage** (<http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcat2/>), and **Florida EOC Assessments Homepage** (<http://fcat.fldoe.org/eoc/>) provide a wealth of information about the assessments and serve as valuable resources to students, parents, and educators.
- **Schedules** for FCAT, FCAT 2.0, and EOC test administrations are accessible from <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/schedule.asp> on the Department of Education website.
- **Sample Questions and Answer Key Booklets**, located at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatsmpl.asp>, are designed to help students become familiar with the FCAT by providing helpful hints and offering practice answering questions in different formats. This page also provides a link to sample materials for the FCAT 2.0.
- **Computer-based practice tests**, also called ePATs, may be downloaded at www.FLAssessments.com/ePAT. The practice test environment is identical to the actual testing platform that students will encounter on the day of testing, providing an opportunity for students to become familiar with the test format and online tools.



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- Released Grade 10 FCAT Test Books and Answer Keys are available at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatrelease.asp>. The FCAT Released Tests are provided in PDF format.

Previous Scores Required for Graduation

- Class of 2003**—Students who were originally scheduled to graduate in 2003 are still eligible for a lower passing score of 1856 (scale score of 287) or higher on Grade 10 FCAT Reading and 1868 (scale score of 295) or higher on Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics assessments.
- High School Competency Test (HSCT)**—Lower passing scores for the FCAT have been established for students who were previously required to pass the HSCT. The concordant FCAT scores are as follows:

HSCT/FCAT Concordant Scores for Eligible Students		
	Reading	Mathematics
FCAT	268	278
HSCT	700	700

Note: The approved HSCT concordant score for the 2011 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment is an FCAT Equivalent Score of 268.