

Importance of the Grade 10 FCAT

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 Reading and Mathematics Sunshine State Standards (SSS) portion of the Grade 10 FCAT.** Students who meet these requirements, but do not pass the Grade 10 FCAT, will receive a Certificate of Completion, which is not equivalent to a standard high school diploma.

The passing scores for the Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics SSS and Retake tests are determined by the State Board of Education and are as follows:

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

Graduation Options

Students can retake the FCAT as many times as they want, until they pass it, and can enroll for a “free” 13th year of public education should they need additional instruction to successfully pass the FCAT. Students currently have up to six opportunities to pass the Grade 10 FCAT prior to graduation. Students who do not pass the FCAT in the spring of their sophomore year may retest in fall, spring, and summer of their junior and senior years.

Florida students do have other options. A senior can graduate by receiving a score comparable to the FCAT passing score on the ACT or SAT. Students may satisfy the score requirements using various combinations of tests. See the chart below for the concordant scores that have been in place since the 2003-04 school year:

Concordant Scores			
Reading		Mathematics	
FCAT	1926	FCAT	1889
SAT	410	SAT	370
ACT	15	ACT	15

Per s. 1008.22(9), F.S., a student must take the Grade 10 FCAT a total of three times without earning a passing score in order to use these scores from the ACT or SAT. This requirement does not apply to a student new to the public school system in Grade 12.

Seniors with a Certificate of Completion may enroll in any public community college in Florida by taking the College 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.

Legislation provides for a waiver of the FCAT 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. The individual educational plan (IEP) team may request a waiver of the FCAT 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.

Finally, if students have not received passing FCAT 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* for their county for a better understanding of the rules and policies adopted by their school board. To access the *Student Progression Plan* for any district in Florida, visit <http://bsi.fsu.edu/schoolimprove/studentprogression/>.

Helpful Resources

The **FCAT Home Page**, located at <http://fcat.fldoe.org> on the Department of Education Web site, provides a wealth of information about the FCAT and serves as a valuable resource to students, parents, and educators.

Schedules for FCAT administrations are accessible from <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/schedule.asp> on the Department of Education Web site.

Sample Test Materials, located at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcatsmpl.asp> in PDF format, are designed to help students become familiar with the FCAT by providing helpful hints and offering practice answering questions in different formats.

FCAT Explorer, located at <http://www.fcatexplorer.com/>, features skills practice for both reading and mathematics for public school students.

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.

The **K-12 Student Progression** Web site, located at <http://bsi.fsu.edu/schoolimprove/studentprogression/>, contains helpful information regarding progression for students of all grade levels, including official department memorandums regarding graduation and progression, links to state laws regarding graduation and progression, and fact sheets to aid students in making decisions regarding their graduation options.

Previous FCAT Passing Scores

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 FCAT SSS Reading and 1868 (scale score of 295) or higher on FCAT SSS Mathematics.