

5410.02 - REGULAR PROGRAM CORE  
CURRICULUM/PROMOTION/RETENTION/ACCELERATION - MIDDLE SCHOOL

Regular Program Requirements

Each middle school student will be registered in a minimum of seven (7) courses per year while in a Pinellas County middle school.

Basic Course Requirements

The basic course requirements are listed below for middle school student progression. Students must pass all twelve (12) of these courses or higher level courses:

- A. Language Arts: Grades 6, 7, 8
- B. Mathematics: Grades 6, 7, 8
- C. Science: Grades 6, 7, 8
- D. Social Studies: Grades 6, 7, 8

Additional Requirements

- A. Reading is required for the following students:

1. ~~All sixth-grade students in the standard diploma program who scored Level 1 or 2 on the fifth-grade FCAT 2.0 Reading Assessment must take a year-long reading course.~~ Middle school students who score at Level 1 or Level 2 on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) 2.0 for Reading are required to complete an intensive reading course. Those students in grades 6-8 who score at Level 1 or Level 2 on the FCAT 2.0 for Reading and do not need instruction in decoding or text reading efficiency may receive reading remediation through a content area course with a Reading Certified/Endorsed, Content Area Reading Professional Development (CAR-PD), or Next Generation/Common Core Content Area Reading Professional Development (NGCAR-PD) Qualified teacher in which remediation strategies are incorporated into course content delivery. Those students who qualify for content reading remediation must also have an approved Secondary Individual Literacy Improvement Plan in place, and data must be available to show that Level 1 or Level 2 students do not have decoding or text reading efficiency issues based on district placement criteria. The opportunity for students who scored at Level 1 or Level 2, but in three years prior scored at Level 3 or above, to receive a one-year exemption from reading intervention is no longer available due to the requirements of Senate Bill 1076.
2. ~~Seventh and eighth-grade students in the standard diploma program who scored at Level 1 or 2 on the previous year's FCAT 2.0 Reading Assessment must take a year-long reading course. Seventh and eighth-grade students who are fluent Level 2 students may receive the required reading intervention in a District approved content area class.~~
3. ~~A middle school student who scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT 2.0 Reading but who did not score below Level 3 in the previous 3 years may be granted a 1-year exemption from the reading remediation requirement;~~

however, the student must have an approved academic improvement plan already in place, signed by the appropriate school staff and the student's parent, for the year for which the exemption is granted.

2. Sixth grade students who scored Level 3 or higher must take a semester or year long reading course, as determined by the school unless this requirement was completed at the elementary level. Sixth grade students enrolled in the gifted ~~reading program, the sixth grade MEGSSS program~~elective, Advanced Academics, or the approved magnet world languages programs at John Hopkins, ~~and~~ Bay Point, ~~and~~ Sanderlin may exempt this requirement if they scored at Level 3 or above on the fifth grade FCAT 2.0 Reading Assessment.

B. ~~All students scoring a level 1 or level 2 on FCAT 2.0 Mathematics Assessment must receive remediation the following school year. Students who score Level 1 or Level 2 on the statewide Math, standardized assessments must be enrolled in and complete a remedial course or a content area course in which remediation strategies are incorporated into course content delivery.~~

C. Career Education and Planning

Students entering sixth grade in the 2006-2007 school year and beyond must complete a course containing the standards of Career Education and Planning before finishing eighth grade. Each student must generate a personalized academic and career plan.

SB 1076 adds requirements that the middle grades career and education planning course:

- Be Internet-based, easy to use and customizable to each student
- Include research-based assessments to assist students in determining educational and career options and goals
- Emphasize the importance of entrepreneurship skills
- Inform students about diploma designation options

~~D. Computer literacy is incorporated into seventh grade reading, gifted, world languages programs, and as appropriate in all curriculum areas.~~

ED. Physical education is required in grades 6, 7, and 8 for a minimum of one (1) semester. Any student having written parental consent (see PCS Form 2-3097) or who is enrolled in a remedial class may be exempt from the physical education requirement.

Physical education teachers should be certified in physical education.

FE. Health is required in grades 6 and 8 for a minimum of ~~twelve~~eighteen (~~12~~18) weeks.

~~1. Eighth grade students in the John Hopkins magnet are taught health integrated with science.~~

21. ~~M/J Health 3 (08000200)~~M/J Health 6 (08000500) or Personal Development (85002300) will meet the requirement for Comprehensive Health Education/Family Life Education.

32. Sixth grade students enrolled in a yearlong program (i.e., band, strings, chorus, world languages, etc.) may opt out of the sixth grade health requirement.



43. Only eighth grade gifted students enrolled in ~~the gifted program as~~  
an Advanced Academics gifted elective may opt out of the eighth grade health  
requirement. Written parental consent is required. (see PCS Form 2-3097)

GF. School-Based Requirements

Reading, physical education, and health may be scheduled beyond the minimum  
requirements shown above.

HG. Elective Program Grades 6, 7, and 8

Elective courses are part of the core curriculum and are described in the Middle  
School Course Code Directory with recommendations regarding course length and  
grade level. Middle schools should attempt to schedule a variety of elective offerings,  
but no attempt should be made to establish classes that are not feasible or practical  
for a particular school as it strives to meet the needs of its students.

~~I.~~ Advisor/Advisee

~~Each middle school will provide advisement support to meet the needs of students.~~

## Exceptional Student Requirements

The IEPs for each student with disabilities must specify the student's instructional levels and level of  
participation in the general education curriculum. Course selections (general or exceptional education),  
progress reporting, participation in assessment, and implication for diploma options must be clearly  
communicated to parents. The decision to pursue a standard or special diploma may be determined at  
anytime but must be made by the IEP team no later than the end of the first semester of eighth grade, or  
during the school year of the student's 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, whichever comes first. Annual parental consent  
must be obtained in order to administer the alternate assessment in accordance with s.1008.22, FS and  
for the provision of instruction in state standards access points' curriculum. This decision is reviewed  
annually by the IEP team. The decision may be changed, understanding that it may increase the amount  
of time required to graduate.

Students with disabilities are enrolled in coursework in one (1) or more of the following options:

- A. General education classes with no accommodations required (Speech only);
- B. General education classes with accommodations required;

Accommodations cannot change course performance standards. They specify  
changes in instructional strategies that are required as a result of a student's disability  
and may address methods and materials for instruction, assignments and classroom  
assessments, learning environment, time demands and scheduling, or special  
communication systems. Courses may be taught by ESE teachers, but students must  
be graded based on the grade level performance standards.

Students in "A" and "B" above are pursuing standard high school diplomas and  
participate in all State and District assessments.

- C. Below grade level curriculum for 11-12<sup>th</sup> grade student's pursuing a Special Diploma:  
Students can enroll in one (1) or more exceptional student education courses with  
special diploma performance standards (This does not include Access Courses) to  
attempt to remediate academic skills. Students continue to participate in all State and  
District assessments. Parents are informed that students are working on different

performance standards and may not be able to meet graduation requirements for a standard diploma.

- D. Sunshine State Standards with Access Points for K-10<sup>th</sup> grade students pursuing a Special Diploma: Students that meet the state exemption requirement, as specified on their IEP, can enroll in exceptional student education courses teaching Sunshine State Standards with Access Points ~~performance standards~~. These standards which focus on varying levels of complexity identified as independent, supported, and participatory in academic and functional living. ~~Students must be exempt from State and District assessment to participate in the Florida Alternate Assessment, as specified on their IEPs. Parents are informed that students are working toward a special diploma.~~

1. The basic course requirements for middle school students pursuing a special diploma are listed below. Students must pass all twelve (12) of these courses:
  - a. ESE Access Language Arts: Grades 6, 7, 8
  - b. ESE Access Mathematics: Grades 6, 7, 8
  - c. ESE Access Science/ESE Health: Grades 6, 7, 8
  - d. ESE Access Social Studies: Grades 6, 7, 8
2. All ESE academic courses address the general education Sunshine State Standards as appropriate for the individual student as well as the eleven (11) additional Sunshine State Standards with Access Points.
3. Additional requirements are listed below. Students must pass five (5) out of nine (9) units:
  - a. ESE Reading: Grades 6, 7, 8 (embedded in LA Access course)
  - b. ESE Exploratory Vocational or ESE Unique Skills: Grades 6, 7, 8
  - c. Physical Education: One (1) semester in grades 6, 7, and 8 or written parent consent waiving the requirement (see PCS Form 2-3097)
  - d. Electives: One (1) semester in grades 6, 7, and 8
4. Students who have Special Diploma signified on their IEP must complete a course containing the standards of Career Education and Planning before finishing eighth grade. Each student must generate a personalized academic and career plan.

#### Student Promotion, Retention and Acceleration

##### A. Promotion from Elementary School to Middle School

Students entering middle school must have successfully completed the requirements and standards of the elementary school program and demonstrated adequate reading ability as specified in the elementary promotional guidelines in Board policy or shall have been administratively promoted by the elementary school.



B. Promotion and Retention

1. Promotion of middle school students shall be based upon their achieving minimum standards as identified in program objectives and meeting the required number of courses. Students scoring below Level 2 on FCAT 2.0 Reading or Mathematics, below 4.0 on FCAT Writing, or below Level 2 on FCAT Science will receive remediation ~~and may be retained~~. Additional diagnostic assessments aligned to FCAT 2.0 or statewide standardized assessments will be administered. Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated in accordance with the academic improvement plan, the student may be retained. In cases in which minimum standards have not been met, the decision to promote a student to the next grade shall be made by the school's principal and staff, based upon supporting data concerning classroom performance, reassessment results, and past educational history. For promotion to high school, an eighth grade student must successfully complete three (3) courses in Language Arts, three (3) courses in Science, three (3) courses in Social Studies, and three (3) distinct courses in Math. All courses must be at the middle school level or higher. To be considered for promotion, an eighth grade student must also successfully complete a career planning course (currently embedded in US History and Adv. US History) or career themed course and a personalized academic and career plan. The promotion of a student from a regular middle school to high school is also based upon successful completion of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards/Common Core. The standards are embedded in the middle school curriculum. A decision will be made by the middle school staff in consultation with the receiving high school principal for any student meeting State mandated requirements for promotion, but not completing District promotion requirements for eighth to ninth grade promotion. No students may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

2. Basic Course Requirements for Promotion/Retention

a. Promotion to grades 7 or 8: To be promoted from grade to grade within the middle school program, a student may fail only one (1) basic course. The student will be required, however, to pass the course either during the following year or in the extended learning/course recovery program or its equivalent.

1) If a sixth or seventh grade student fails two (2) basic courses, the student may be promoted upon passing one (1) course in the extended learning/course recovery program and taking one (1) course during the following school year.

2) Recommendation to reflect that the student be retained – if he/she has not taken advantage of either the extended learning/course recovery program or its equivalent.

If a sixth or seventh grade student fails three (3) basic courses in an academic year, the student will be retained at the same grade level or will be promoted upon passing two (2) courses in the extended learning/course recovery program and taking one (1) course during the following school year.

- 3) If a sixth or seventh grade student fails more than three (3) basic courses within an academic year, the student will be retained.
- b. Promotion to High School: If an eighth grade student fails one (1) or more basic courses, the student will be retained or will be administratively promoted upon passing the course(s) in the extended learning/course recovery program. Promotion from a middle school to a high school is contingent upon the student's passing not fewer than twelve (12) basic courses and five (5) of the additional requirements as stated in Board policy and related arts courses, for a total of seventeen (17) courses. Students who pass the required courses will be considered to have demonstrated adequate progress for promotion to ninth grade.
- c. Other Requirement: If a student fails a related arts, vocational, or elective course, including physical education/health, the student will be promoted but will be required to pass five (5) such courses before promotion to a high school.
- d. In all instances the parents' input shall be solicited and considered for purposes of promotion, retention, and challenged promotion; however, the decision to retain, accelerate, promote, or place a student in an alternative program shall be based upon the professional judgment of the principal and staff, with the principal having final jurisdiction.

C. Acceleration Options (Whole Grade, Midyear, Subject Matter and Virtual Instruction)

1. Core Requirements
  - a. For a student to be eligible for whole grade or midyear promotion, they must have completed all basic course requirements for their current grade level prior to promotion
2. Acceleration Process
  - a. Each school principal will establish an ACCEL team to review requests for whole grade and midyear promotion. The team will include but not be limited to: principal, guidance counselor, gifted teacher, psychologist, student's current teacher, a teacher from the receiving grade level and the parent.
  - b. A teacher, administrator, or parent may request that a student be considered for ACCEL options of whole grade or midyear promotion by completing the appropriate form provided by the school principal.
  - c. A conference will be held with the parent and ACCEL team to review the ACCEL evaluation process and obtain consent for evaluation using the Iowa Acceleration Scale (which may include an intellectual evaluation).
  - d. Following the collection of all required data by the principal or principal designee, the ACCEL team will meet to review the data and determine student eligibility for whole grade or midyear acceleration.
  - e. Student eligibility for whole grade or midyear promotion shall be based on obtaining an Iowa Acceleration Scale composite score of at least sixty (60) points.
  - f. A performance contract including progress monitoring will be established and signed by the parent and student, if the student is eligible.



- g. If the ACCEL team determines that whole grade or midyear promotion is not appropriate for the student, the team will consider subject-matter acceleration as an option.
- h. For planning purposes, students who qualify for a whole grade or midyear promotion shall remain in their current grade level until the end of that semester.
- i. If a parent disagrees with the recommendation of the ACCEL team he/she has the right to seek an appeal through policy 5500.13.

#### Progress Monitoring Plan

Each student must participate in the Statewide assessment tests. Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance for each grade level, or who does not meet specific levels of performance on Statewide assessments, must be provided with additional diagnostic assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for appropriate intervention and instruction. A student who is not meeting the School District or State requirements for proficiency in reading and math shall be covered by a school wide system of progress monitoring for all students. The plan must assist the student or the school in meeting State and District expectations for proficiency. If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading, the K-12 comprehensive reading plan shall include instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. Students may be required to attend remediation programs held before or after regular school hours or during the summer if transportation is provided. Upon subsequent evaluation, if the deficiency has not been remediated the student may be retained. Each student who does not meet the minimum performance expectations for the Statewide assessment testing program must continue to be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the expectations are met or the student is promoted from middle school.

#### Enrollment in [Pinellas Virtual School](#) or Florida Virtual School

With the approval of the principal (or designee) and the student's parent, a middle school student may enroll in a Florida Virtual School course or courses during or beyond the regular school day/year.

- A. The course must fulfill an educationally valid purpose and be an appropriate course placement based on the student's academic history, grade level, and age. The assistant principal will collaborate with the ~~guidance-certified school~~ counselor and teacher(s) to decide if placement in a virtual course is appropriate. A parent may appeal the staff decision to the principal who will make the final decision on placement.
- B. Certain District required middle school courses or course sequences may not be substituted by taking a [Pinellas Virtual School](#) or Florida Virtual School course.
- C. The student must meet the recommended prerequisites.
- D. Students enrolled in a magnet program may not take their specific magnet courses through [Pinellas Virtual School](#) or Florida Virtual School.
- E. A student may not be enrolled simultaneously in the same course at both their school and the [Pinellas Virtual School](#) or Florida Virtual School. Students should enroll in [Pinellas Virtual School](#) or Florida Virtual courses at the beginning of a semester. While students await acceptance in a Florida Virtual School course, they must be enrolled full time in a District school.
- F. Although Florida Virtual School may have institutional drop/add procedures and timelines, students must be enrolled in a full schedule in the District and may not drop

a Florida Virtual School course that results in less than a full course load. Florida Virtual School "W/F" grades will be treated as a grade of "F" on a student's transcript.

G. During a grading period, a student must be enrolled in and attending at least four (4) courses in middle school or be a full time student of the Pinellas Virtual School Program in order to be a District student.

H. Middle schools may build Pinellas Virtual School or Florida Virtual School courses into their master schedules during the school day.

#### Middle School Course Offerings – Advanced and/or High School Credit

A. Placement in advanced and/or high school credit courses will be based on the consideration of a variety of indicators such as grades, classroom performance, assessment data, student motivation/interest, and by the student making a plan with the ~~guidance~~ school counselor and parent for a sequence of courses that would allow the student to earn college credit while in high school through advanced placement course(s) or dual credit course(s). If a student is not recommended for placement, placement may be requested by signing a Request for Placement form (PCS Form 2-3059). The classroom teacher and other school personnel will work with the student to help them be successful and the parent is expected to provide additional support that the student may need to succeed in the class. Students experiencing difficulty (i.e. a grade of "D" or "F") in the placement may be removed from the advanced or high school credit course and placed in the appropriate course for the remainder of the school year. All end of the grading period grades will be included in the final grade average for the course.

B. Credit for high school courses can only be awarded upon successful completion of all course requirements.

1. For courses with a required End of Course Assessment, students must obtain a passing score in order to earn high school credit.
2. For courses with a required End of Course Assessment, students who receive a passing grade in the course, but fail the End of Course Assessment, do not receive high school credit.
3. For courses with a required End of Course Assessment, students who receive a failing grade in the course, but pass the End of Course Assessment receive high school credit.

C. Grades for courses that offer high school credit in middle school will be used to calculate high school class rank and grade point average. A middle school student enrolled in a course awarding high school credit and earning a grade of "C", "D", or "F" may repeat the course for forgiveness as defined in Board policy.

F.S. 1001.32(2), 1001.41, 1001.42, 1001.43, 1003.415, 1008.25

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Approved as to form and legality:

  
 School Board Attorney