



# Graduation Requirements for Florida's Statewide Assessments

## Overview

According to Florida law, students must meet all academic requirements in order 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: **Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® (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 Grade 10 FCAT Reading and Mathematics. The required passing scores for these students are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Passing Scores for Students Entering Grade 9 from 2000-01 to 2008-09**

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 Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading and Grade 10 FCAT Mathematics. The required passing scores for students entering grade 9 in the 2009-10 school year are provided in Table 2 (prior to the spring 2012 test administration, FCAT 2.0 scores were reported as FCAT Equivalent Scores).

**Table 2: Passing Scores for Students Entering Grade 9 in 2009-10**

FCAT 2.0 Reading	FCAT 2.0 Reading: FCAT Equivalent Score	FCAT Mathematics
241 or above <i>(Beginning in spring 2012)</i>	1926 (scale score of 300) or above <i>(Used in spring and fall 2011)</i>	1889 (scale score of 300) or above

- FCAT 2.0 and Florida EOC Assessments**—For students entering grade 9 in the 2010-11 school year and thereafter, the passing score for all assessments required for high school graduation or for course credit is the minimum scale score in Achievement Level 3. Students entering grade 9 in the 2010-11 school year and thereafter must pass the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading for graduation purposes. Students must pass the EOC assessments listed in Table 3 to earn high school credit for each course. This requirement also applies to middle school students seeking high school course credit for Algebra 1, Biology 1, and Geometry. Table 3 provides the school year when these requirements begin for students entering grade 9 and for middle school students enrolled in these courses.

**Table 3: Achievement Level 3 Passing Requirement by School Year**

Achievement Level 3 Requirement Begins for Students Entering Grade 9 and Middle School Students	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 table because according to current statute, students will not be required to earn an Achievement Level 3 or higher score on the U.S. History EOC Assessment to earn course credit.

Achievement Levels for FCAT 2.0 Reading and the Algebra 1 EOC Assessment were established by the State Board of Education on December 19, 2011. Table 4 below provides the passing scores for students who need to meet the Achievement Level 3 requirement for each assessment.

**Table 4: Passing Scores for the Achievement Level 3 Requirement**

FCAT 2.0 Reading	Algebra 1 EOC Assessment
245 or above	399 or above

### 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” 13<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> grade year may retest in fall and spring of their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years; however, it is

important to note that the last administration of the FCAT Reading Retake will occur in spring 2012, and the last administration of the FCAT Mathematics Retake will occur in spring 2013. Students who have not passed the FCAT by its last administration will need to take and pass FCAT 2.0 Reading by earning the approved concordant passing scores that have been 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.

- Concordant Scores Option**—A student 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 Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading for students scheduled to graduate in 2012-13. Concordant scores for students entering grade 9 in 2010-11, who are scheduled to graduate in 2013-14, are not yet available.

Students may satisfy the score requirements using various combinations of tests. See Table 5 for the concordant scores that must be achieved by graduation year.

**Table 5: Concordant Scores by Graduation Year**

Assessment	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. All enrolled grade 10 students are required to participate in the statewide assessments in accordance with s. 1008.22, F.S. Additional guidance regarding FCAT concordant scores is posted at <http://www.fldoe.org/BII/StudentPro/resources.asp>.

- Community College**—Graduates 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.) 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; 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 twice. 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.

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 scores required for graduation, 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 assessment 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](http://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 for all of the Florida EOC Assessments, as well as selected FCAT and FCAT 2.0 assessments.
- **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. Students eligible for this requirement may satisfy it by earning a Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading score of 236 or higher.
- **High School Competency Test (HSCT)**—Passing scores on the FCAT Reading, FCAT Mathematics, and FCAT 2.0 Reading have been established for students who were previously required to pass the HSCT. The concordant scores are provided in Table 6.

**Table 6: HSCT/FCAT Concordant Scores for Eligible Students**

Assessment	Reading	Mathematics
FCAT 2.0	229	N/A
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.