

Student Progression Plan 2023–2024



POLK COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENTS FIRST

Fredrick Heid, Superintendent of Schools

District 1: Dr. William Allen

District 2: Lori Cunningham

District 3: Rick Nolte

District 4: Sara Beth Wyatt

District 5: Kay Fields

District 6: Justin Sharpless

District 7: Lisa Miller

Web Site: <https://polkschoolsfl.com/>

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The mission of Polk County Public Schools is to provide a high quality education for all student.

Contents

I. FLORIDA STATUTORY REQUIREMENT 1

II. STUDENT PROGRESSION PROCEDURES 4

 A.Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) 4

 B.Student Performance Standards 5

 C.Student Progress Monitoring 6

III. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS 7

 A.Polk County Schools Entrance Requirements 7

 1. Evidence of Date of Birth Required 7

 2. Physicals 8

 3. Immunizations 8

 4. Proof of Residency 8

 B.Withdrawal and Transfer..... 8

 1. Home Education Students 8

 2. Student in Homeless Situations 9

 3. Collecting Social Security Numbers 9

 C.Attendance Requirements 9

 D.Health/Immunization Requirements 11

 E.School Zones..... 11

 F.Verification of Residence 13

 G.Provisions for Teacher’s Children 13

 H.Emergency and Contact Information 13

 I.Student Identification Badges 14

 J.Notification of In Loco Parentis 14

IV. GRADE PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS..... 14

 AEntering Students (K-1) Who Are Transferring from Nonpublic Schools 14

 BEntering Students (K-1) Who Are Out-of-State Transfer Students and Do Not Meet Age Requirements... 14

 CEntering Students (Grades 2-12) 15

 D.Students in Home Education, Homeless Situations and Private/Parochial Schools 15

 E.Nondiscrimination Statement 16

V. STUDENT TRANSFERS 16

 A.Transferring Between Polk County Public Schools (Grades K-12) 16

 B.Within the District..... 16

 C.Out of Country or State or from Private, Home Education, or Military Compact 17

 D.Hope Scholarships 17

VI. ACCELERATION MECHANISMS.....	17
VII. VIRTUAL LEARNING	20
GRADING AND REPORTING OF STUDENT PROGRESS K-12	20
A.Interim Reporting	20
B.Regular Reporting	21
C.Student Retention.....	21
D.Grading Practices	21
E.Grading System.....	22
VIII. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)	22
A.Eligibility for ESOL Services	22
When the ELL committee is convened for the purpose of making an initial entry placement decision, all academic information is reviewed to determine placement.....	24
B.Accommodations for ELL Students in the Administration of Statewide Assessments.....	24
C.ACCESS for ELLs Testing.....	24
D.ELL Grading Policy.....	25
E.Graduation Requirements for Certain Students in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program	26
F.ELL Student Progress Monitoring	27
G.ESOL Program Exit Procedures	27
IX. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD).....	28
X. ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (PREK – GRADE 5) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	34
A.Required Program of Study K-5.....	34
1. Required Program of Study	34
2. Health Education Requirements	36
3. Physical Education Requirements	36
4. Character Life Skills Education.....	36
5. Recess	36
6. State Required Performance Expectations and Assessments	36
B.Early Childhood/Preschool Programs	36
C.Promotion and Placement	38
1. Grade 3 Good Cause Exemptions	39
c. Request for Good Cause Exemption	41
Summer Reading Camp	42
2. Mid-Year Promotion for Retained 3 rd Graders.....	43
Elementary ACCEL Options	44
3. Parent Requests for Acceleration Operations Appeals Process	46
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	48

1. Progress Monitoring for Students with Language Arts Substantial Reading Deficiencies.....	49
2. Content of Remedial Instruction	50
3. Duration of Remediation	50
4. Parent or Guardian Refusal for Remediation	51
5. Allocation of Remedial Resources (§ 1008.25 (3)(a)(3)(b) F.S.)	52
XI. MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....	53
A. Program of Study: General Requirements for Grades 6, 7 and 8	53
1. Language Arts	53
2. Mathematics	53
3. Science	53
4. Social Studies.....	54
5. Physical Education and Health	54
6. Elective Program	54
B. Enrollment and Assignment of Transfer Students	55
1. Transfer of Credits with an Official Transcript	55
2. Transfer of Credits without an Official Transcript	56
3. Grade Level Placement	56
C. Grading System.....	56
D. Honor Roll Format	57
E. High School Courses Taken in Middle School	57
F. Grading System and Reporting Procedures.....	58
1. Promotion and Retention.....	58
2. Transitional Courses for Middle Grades (Over Age)	59
3. Alternative Programs for Over-Aged Students to Qualify for Promotion	59
G. Assessment.....	59
XII. HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	60
A. Florida Department of Education for Graduation Requirements link:.....	60
B. Grading System and Reporting Procedures	61
Determination of Standard Mastery	61
1. Eligible Students – Mastery of Performance Standards	61
C. Assessment.....	61
D. Civic Literacy Requirement.....	62
E. Graduation Requirements for Certain Students in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) .	62
F. Maximum Age for High School Students.....	62
G. Career and Technical Education	62
H. Course Substitutions	63
1. Career Education Course Substitutions	63

I. Community Service Program	63
J. Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program	64
K. Acceleration Mechanisms	64
L. Rank in Class and Grade Point Average (GPA)	65
Courses in Ranking	65
1. Procedures for Determining Minimum GPA Required for Graduation	66
M. Graduation Honors for Standard Diploma Students	67
N. Retaking a Course to Improve a Grade	68
O. Early Graduation	69
P. Credit Acceleration Program (CAP)	70
Q. Grade Classification in Grades 9-12	70
XIII. OTHER PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	71
A. Home Education Students	71
B. Compulsory Attendance Exemptions	73
C. Absences	74
1. Excused Absences	74
2. Unexcused Absences	75
D. Makeup Work	76
E. Adult Education	76
1. Program Description and Mission	76
2. Adult High School Graduation	77
F. Alternate Education Programs	78
Disciplinary Programs	78
G. Credit/Course Completion Recovery Programs	78
H. Career Centers or Technical Colleges	78
I. Choice School Programs	79
1. Dual Language	79
2. Enrollment & Entrance Criteria:	79
3. Program Benefits:	79
4. District Schools with Dual Language Programs:	79
J. Early Admissions Programs	80
K. Foreign Exchange	81
1. Sponsors	81
2. Eligible Students	81
3. Procedures for Admissions	82
4. Required registration documents	82
5. Athletic Eligibility	84

6. Student Transfers	85
7. Financial Support	85
8. Compliance with Policies and Supervision.....	85
L.International Baccalaureate Schools (IB)	85
1. Program Description.....	85
2. Admission Criteria	86
3. Program Requirements	86
4. Weighting	87
5. IB Dismissal	87
M.Advanced International Certificate of Education Schools (AICE)	87
1. Program Description.....	87
2. Admission Criteria	88
3. Program Requirements	88
4. Weighting	88
5. Cambridge Dismissal.....	88
N.Visual and Performance Arts Program.....	89
1. Admission Criteria	89
2. Program Requirements	89
3. Course of Study in the Arts Program	90
O.Magnet/Choice School Program Description	91
1. Admission Criteria	91
2. Program Requirements	92
3. Course of Study in The Magnet/Choice Schools.....	93
P.Fine Arts Co-Curricular Eligibility	93
a. All-County Music/Dance/Theatre/Visual Arts Eligibility.....	93
b. Marching MPA Eligibility (Band/Auxiliary)	93
c. Music Performance Assessments (Concert for band, chorus, and orchestra)	94
Q.Career Academies and Pre-academies	94
a. Program Description	94
b. Admission Criteria	94
c. Program Requirements.....	95
d. Weighted Courses	95
d. Career Academy Dismissal	95
XIV.Interscholastic Extracurricular Student Activities.....	95
A.Local Rules May Be More Stringent.....	95
B.Attendance Requirements	95
C.Attendance Exceptions.....	96

1. Home Education Student.....	96
2. Charter School Student	96
3. Non-Member Private School Student	96
4. Florida Virtual School Full-Time Public Program Students.....	97
5. District Approved Special/Alternative School Students	97
D.Transfer Regulations	98
1. Polk County Public Schools Good Cause Policy.....	99
2. Disciplinary Actions – Extracurricular Activities/Athletics	99
3. High School Eligibility	100
4. Hope Scholarship	101
E.Academic Requirements.....	101
F Limit of Eligibility	103
G.Age Restriction	103
H.Physical Evaluation/Consent and Release	103
I.Cheerleading Tryouts.....	103
J.Polk County Public Schools Athletics Policies and Procedures	104
XV. APPENDICES	105
A.Appendix: Immunization Information	105
B.Appendix: ELL Matrix of Florida’s Programs and Instructional Models	106

I. FLORIDA STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

The purpose of the Student Progression Plan for Polk County Public Schools is to present to school personnel, parents, students and other interested citizens the School Board Rule and administrative procedures required to implement state legislative and local School Board pupil progression requirements.

In June 1976, the Florida Legislature passed into law the Educational Accountability Act of 1976, which includes a statutory requirement that each school district in the State of Florida establish a comprehensive program for pupil progression. The Act specifically requires that:

- (1) By July 1, 1977, each district school board shall establish a comprehensive program for pupil progression, which shall be based upon an evaluation of each pupil's performance, including how well he masters the minimum performance standards approved by the State Board.
- (2) The district program for pupil progression shall be based upon local goals and objectives which are compatible with the state's plan for education and which supplement the minimum performance standards approved by the State Board of Education. Particular emphasis, however, shall be placed upon the pupil's mastery of the basic skills, especially reading, before he is promoted from the third, fifth, eighth and eleventh grades. Other pertinent factors considered by the teacher before recommending that a pupil progress from one grade to another shall be prescribed by the district school board in its rules.
- (3) Beginning with the 1978–79 school year, each district school board shall establish standards for graduation to include state requirements from its secondary schools. Such standards shall include, but not be limited to, mastery of the basic skills and satisfactory performance in functional literacy as determined by the State Board of Education, and the completion of the minimum number of credits required by the State of Florida and district school board. Each district shall develop procedures for the remediation of those students who are unable to meet such standards. Based on these standards, each district shall provide for the awarding of certificates of completion and may provide for differentiated diplomas to correspond with the varying achievement levels or competencies of its secondary students.

In July 1983, the Florida Legislature enacted the Raise Achievement In Secondary Education (RAISE) Legislation that mandated widespread changes for Florida's public schools. The state has prescribed minimum graduation requirements effective the 1984–85 school year in conjunction with current requirements already in the district's pupil progression plan. Changes in Florida Statutes are reflected in Polk County's Student Progression Plan. Future changes and interpretations from the state will be enacted locally by state and district memoranda, then, as needed, will be incorporated into the district's pupil progression plan.

The Omnibus Legislation in 1984 provided for many changes and additions for the school program in grades 4–8 with some revisions of the RAISE Legislation (1983) in grades 9–12. The Education Program (PRIME), Florida Progress in Middle Childhood incorporated into The Omnibus Legislation, established programs, which recognized the developmental diversity and needs of students. PRIME was designed to build upon the Primary Education Program (PREP) at grades 4 and 5 and to integrate with high

performance standards and graduation requirements in the RAISE legislation. The 1985 Legislature continued to revise the RAISE and Omnibus Legislation with the RAISE Omnibus Clarification Act that further clarified graduation requirements and other state curriculum requirements. The ROCA Act amended Section 230.2319, Florida Statutes, to change the implementation date for the general requirements in grades 4–5 and 6–8 from 1985–86 to 1986–87 and specified that all requirements are authorized and implemented to the extent specifically funded in the General Appropriations Act. The study of the United States and World Geography was added to the grades 6–8 requirements, when they became effective.

Legislation from 1986 to 1990 also had significant impact, including a complete rewrite of the state-mandated testing program (CSSB2746 of the 1990 legislature) amending Florida Statutes 228.301 Test Security; 229.555 Educational Planning and Information Systems; 229.565 Educational Evaluation Procedures; 229.57 Student Assessment Program; 229.575 Reporting Procedures; 232.245 Student Progression; 232.2454 District Uniform Student Performance Standards, Instruments, and Assessment Procedures; 232.246 General Requirements for High School Graduation; 233.0641 Free Enterprise and Consumer Education Program; 236.088 Basic Skills and Functional Literacy Supplement; 240.107 College Level Communication and Computation Skills Examination.

The 1991 Florida legislation known as "Blueprint 2000" represents the greatest changes in more than a decade, repealing, modifying and building upon preceding legislation. The changes mandated by Blueprint 2000 included the following:

- 229.58 District and school advisory councils
 - Requires each school to have council composed of principal and appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students (secondary), parents and other business and community citizens who are representative of the racial, ethnic and economic community served by school.
 - Provides that each council assist in preparation and evaluation of school improvement plan.
- 229.591 Comprehensive revision of Florida's system of school improvement and education accountability
 - Establishes seven Florida education goals.
 - Establishes a system for school improvement and accountability.
- 229.592 Implementation of state system of school improvement and education accountability
 - Requires each school to develop and implement a school improvement plan.
 - Requires ongoing assessment of student needs.
 - Establishes Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability.
 - Charges Florida Education Commissioner with implementing and maintaining a system of "intensive school improvement and stringent education accountability" including data collection, analysis, and reporting.
 - Requires the Florida Department of Education to implement training and technical assistance to schools and districts.

- Provides for withholding funds from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund to any district in which a school does not have a school improvement plan.
 - Provides for waivers of selected Florida Statutes to assist in school improvement.
- 229.593 Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability
- Establishes Commission.
 - Defines membership, selection.
- 229.594 Powers and duties of the commission
- Prescribes duties and responsibilities for recommending to the Legislature and State Board components of a system of school improvement and accountability including:
- adequate progress;
 - methods for measuring school progress toward goals;
 - methods for public reporting;
 - methods for recognizing progress and financial incentives for schools that make progress;
 - methods for assistance and intervention for schools not making progress;
 - monitoring multicultural education and making recommendations.
- 24.121 Allocation of revenues and expenditure of funds for public education
- Adds requirement for school improvement plans to receive funds from Educational Enhancement Trust Fund.
- 230.03 Management, control, operation, and administration
- 231.085 Duties and supervision of principals
- Adds to responsibilities of the principal the providing of leadership in the development, revision, and implementation of a school improvement plan.
- 230.23 Powers and duties of school board
- Requires school board to maintain a system of school improvement and accountability including:
 - annually approving and requiring implementation of a school improvement plan for each school in the district;
 - developing a three-year plan for assistance and intervention for any school not making adequate progress;
 - providing information regarding performance of students and educational programs and implementing school reports.
- 230.33 Duties and responsibilities of superintendent
- Adds recommending procedures for implementing and maintaining a system of school improvement and educational accountability
- 1008.25 Public school student progression; remedial instruction, reporting requirements

The 2013 Legislature passed Senate Bill 1076, providing for comprehensive K–20 career and education planning; substantially rewording the student assessment program for public schools; providing requirements for Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options, including rigorous industry certifications that are articulated to college credit.

II. STUDENT PROGRESSION PROCEDURES

A complete Student Progression Plan is available upon request.

The School Board of Polk County, Florida, is dedicated to the total and continuous development of each student. The professional staff of the school system has the responsibility to develop administrative procedures to ensure the placement of each student in the subject, in the grade level, or in the special program best suited to meet the student's academic needs, with consideration given to social, emotional and physical development.

The Student Progression Plan (SPP) was developed to ensure that all students meet high academic standards through standards-driven curriculum, rigorous and relevant instruction, and instruction that is focused on critical thinking and problem solving. The effectiveness of this instruction is evaluated through the District's comprehensive program for student progression. The program analyzes assessment data through a universal screening and continuous progress monitoring system to identify students that need more intensive instructional support in order to accelerate growth. These instructional interventions are implemented and the student responses to them are continuously monitored to determine the level of effectiveness. Areas addressed within the plan are focused on preparing students as global citizens and to graduate students to meet with success for the present and future economies.

Decisions regarding student promotion, retention and special placement are primarily the responsibilities of the individual school's professional staff; however, the final decision in regard to grade placement is the responsibility of the principal. District-wide standards, to be used as guidelines for placement decisions and procedures for their implementation, have been developed in the form of a student progression plan. These standards and procedures in the district's plan show clearly that promotion in the Polk County public schools is based primarily on student achievement and is not an automatic process.

A. Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

The purpose of the instructional program in the district's schools is to provide appropriate core instruction, supplemental interventions, and intensive individual interventions to ensure all students receive the time and support they need to learn at high levels. This model requires the following components:

- A multi-level prevention system or tiers of support, also called Response to Intervention (RtI) that includes Tier 1 – core instruction, Tier 2 – supplemental interventions, and Tier 3 interventions
- A collaborative, coordinated system of leadership, grade-level/subject-area, and intervention teams that determine how the adults on the campus will be utilized to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students.
- A four-step problem-solving process to organize data-based decision making at all levels of support
- Review of data, consisting of:
 - universal screening to identify students at risk

- progress monitoring to monitor students' progress and the effectiveness of the supports provided to students
- outcome data.

TIERS: Florida's process uses a three-tiered model: differing levels of intensity of interventions are provided to students based on their response to instruction/intervention.

Intensity can be varied in numerous ways, including type of intervention, frequency, duration, and the number of students in the setting. To ensure efficient use of resources, schools begin with the identification of trends and patterns using school-wide and grade-level data. The school-based leadership team then uses the *Eight Step Problem Solving Model* to develop a plan to address core instruction and/or behavioral difficulties.

Students who need instructional intervention beyond what is provided universally for positive behavior or academic content areas are identified by grade level teams or the Problem Solving team using the student-specific data. For more information go to: http://www.florida-rti.org/docs/ParentResourceGuide_print_final.pdf.

B. Student Performance Standards

Each district school board is required to establish a comprehensive program for student progression as well as standards for evaluating each student's performance. District student progression plans help to ensure that the required program of study, placement, promotion, reporting, retention, and assessment procedures are equitable and comprehensive, thereby providing accountability for all students.

Mastery of Performance Standards

In the determination of mastery of student performance standards, it is the intent of the Polk County School Board to:

- Utilize student performance standards which are:
 - clear and precise statements of what the learner is expected to do by the end of a prescribed learning period;
 - reflective of the essential knowledge, skills, concepts, or behaviors contained in the state-approved course description and district curriculum;
 - clearly communicated to all learners at the beginning of a course or unit of instruction.
- Measure student performance standards on a regular, continuous basis. Such measurements may be made through the use of teacher observations, classroom assignments and projects, and assessments. It is not the intent of the Polk County School District to measure student performance standards solely through the use of a single method or instrument (i.e., end of course test).
- Provide to students who have an excused absence(s) from instructional time the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of student performance standards using either the same or an equivalent method as provided during the missed instructional time. Please refer to the Attendance section of the Student

Progression Plan for more information related to makeup work and absenteeism.

Assessment of Student Performance Standards

Student mastery on Student Performance Standards for each high school course may be assessed using a variety of sources, including but not limited to: teacher observations, oral presentations or reports, speech, recitation, impromptu speaking, response to questions, labs/experiments, lab practicals, demonstrations, class assignments (including homework), paper and pencil assignments, worksheets, research papers, models, projects, exhibits, posters, assessments.

Evaluation of Student Achievement

Student assessment and promotion in Polk County's public schools is based upon an evaluation of each student's achievement in terms of appropriate instructional goals. The basis for making the determination should reflect consideration of the following: progress tests, classroom assignments, daily observation, standardized tests, state assessment, and other objective data. The primary responsibility for determining each student's level of performance and ability to function academically, socially and emotionally at the next grade level is that of the classroom teacher, subject to review and approval of the Principal.

C. Student Progress Monitoring

The district-wide progress monitoring program is designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency. Progress monitoring results inform the provision of intensive instruction in the areas of weakness through one or more of the following activities, as considered appropriate by the school administrator, teacher and parent/guardian. Schools determine the supplemental strategies most appropriate for each student. These include, but are not limited to, modified curriculum, reading instruction, after-school instruction, tutoring, mentoring, class size reduction, and extended learning program. State assessment results will be compiled and posted to the Student Information System (FOCUS) and will be used as the basis for instructional decisions where deficient scores exist. Instruction will be adjusted in response to results obtained through intermittent progress monitoring via district assessments.

Any student, at any grade, who is not meeting the state or district requirements for reading, writing, mathematics, and science will be provided with a student-specific progress monitoring plan designed to meet the academic needs of the student. This plan will be developed in consultation with the student, parent, and school administration as defined by

§ 1008.22, F.S. and §1008.25, F.S.

In conjunction with the state mandated K- 12 Comprehensive Reading Plan, it is also the responsibility of the district to progress monitor reading skills for all Kindergarten – Third grade students. Furthermore, students in Fourth – Twelfth grade who demonstrate reading deficits must also have their reading skills monitored.

III. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

A. Polk County Schools Entrance Requirements

	Pre-K	K	1 st	Out of State Transfers for First Time	Out of State Transfers NOT First Time	Out of County but In State Transfers	In County Private or Public Transfers
1. Legal certificate of birth date which shows parents' names or proof of age acceptable under Florida Law (<i>See #1 below</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2. Physical Examination within 12 months of registration completion needed at K or at 1 st entrance to Florida Schools (<i>See #2 below</i>)	X	X		X	*See #2	*See #2	*See #2
3. Florida Certificate of Immunization (form DH 680) (<i>See #3 below</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Two proofs of residency (<i>See #4 below</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5. Withdrawal and transfer form from the school student had been attending							X
6. Must be 5 years old on or before September 1 st of the school year. There is no early entry.		X					
7. Child must be 6 years old on or before September 1 st of the school year. Student has completed Kindergarten. Student may be admitted any time during the school year.			X				
Students in homeless situations	Information is provided on page 8 section B:2						

1. Evidence of Date of Birth Required

If the first prescribed evidence is not available, the next evidence obtainable in the order below may be accepted.

- A transcript of birth record filed according to law;
- A certificate of baptism showing the date of birth and place of baptism signed by the parent;
- A life insurance policy on the child (at least 2 years old);
- A Bible record of the child's birth accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;
- A passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child;
- A transcript of record of age shown in the child's school records (at least 4 years prior to application);

If none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a public health officer or by a public school physician, or, if neither of these is available in the county, a licensed

practicing physician designated by the School Board, may issue a certificate stating that the health officer or physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is correct.

2. Physicals

Physicals are required only on first entrance into a Florida school **unless** first entrance was Pre-K, or the hard copy of the physical cannot be located. Physicals completed out of county or state are acceptable. A physical form, which contains body systems assessment as well as the physician's signature, is required. If document is questionable, please refer to your school nurse. **The hard copy of the physical must be sent from the previous school. If it is not obtained after sending for records, a new physical is required. The physical must be completed within 1 year of the child's first day of attendance.**

3. Immunizations

Religious exemptions from immunization (form DH 681) must be obtained at a Health Department clinic. Electronic transfer of immunization dates may be used; however, all immunization dates must be transferred. A notation that there is a certificate of immunization is not acceptable. Students may enter school on Temporary Medical Exemption (DOH 680 – Part B), (DOE code 2), provided expiration date has not passed. **Students that are not in compliance with immunization laws are not allowed to attend school.** (See Appendix A for more information.)

4. Proof of Residency

TWO proofs of residency must be from the categories listed below. Each proof **MUST** include name and **current** physical address. Post office boxes, private mailbox addresses or commercial addresses are insufficient.

Category 1: Home lease agreement, mortgage document,
or property tax record

Category 2: One **current** utility bill (e.g. electric, gas, home phone, cable, water)

Category 3: Current Voter Registration Document

Category 4: Proof of **current** government benefits (Medicare, Disability, Food Stamps, DCF correspondence)

Category 5: Current Florida driver's license, automobile registration, automobile insurance

B. Withdrawal and Transfer

Withdrawal and transfer from the school the student last attended. The form should include name, address, phone number and fax number of that school.

1. Home Education Students

All home education students who participate in public school academic or athletic events must comply with the Polk County Schools entrance requirements. Registered home education students may participate in a maximum of three courses at their zoned school. Home education students may select courses on a "space available" basis after the first five days of each term or when the zoned school has completed the registration and enrollment of their full-time students, whichever occurs first. A

student seeking to enter or re-enter a Polk County public school from a home education program must meet all entrance requirements (state and district) that any other student must meet.

2. Student in Homeless Situations

Students in homeless situations are to be enrolled in schools immediately even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residence, birth certificates, proof of guardianship, or other required documentation. A homeless child shall be given temporary exemption to the above medical requirements for 30 school days (§ 1003.212 F.S.). Students in homeless situations are students who lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence and may be residing in any of the following situations: (1) sharing housing with others due to loss of housing or economic hardship (2) living in a motel or hotel due to loss of housing or economic hardship (3) staying in a shelter (4) living in substandard housing without electricity, running water, health code violations, etc. (5) sleeping in a car, campground, park or public space. For questions call Homeless Services at 863-457-4709 ext. 683.

3. Collecting Social Security Numbers

Florida Statute 1008.386 says, "Each district school board shall request that each student enrolled in a public school in this state provide his or her social security number." In accordance with law, the school district uses confidential social security information for a number of important reasons like making accurate student identification, for college transcripts, and other legitimate state and federal educational programs, including but not limited to free and reduced lunch programs, health department programs, Medicaid/Medicare, grants, and financial aid opportunities.

Presenting a student's social security card or a copy of the card to school enrollment officials satisfies this request. To protect students' identification, the school district takes reasonable and appropriate steps to secure social security numbers from unauthorized access and unlawful release to unauthorized parties.

A student is not required to provide his or her social security number as a condition for enrollment or graduation.

C. Attendance Requirements

The legislature finds that nonattendance is associated with poor academic performance and that school districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance. The legislature finds that early intervention in school attendance is the most effective way of producing good attendance habits that will lead to improved student learning and achievement. (§ 1003.26, F.S.)

Compulsory Attendance

All children who have attained the age of six (6) years by February 1st of any school year (initial year of entrance), or who are older than six (6) years of age but have not attained the age of sixteen (16) years, are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term unless otherwise exempt under the law. Students between 16 and 18 years of age must regularly attend school and are subject to all required intervention and

related enforcement procedures unless the parent and the student have formally terminated school enrollment by completing the *Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment* form and participate in an Exit Interview (§ 1003.21, F.S.).

Parent or guardian and student responsibilities are:

- to be informed of school board policies and school rules about absenteeism and tardiness,
- to appeal a decision about an absence,
- to make up class work in a reasonable amount of time after an excused absence,
- to attend classes daily and be on time,
- to explain or document the reason for an absence, and
- to request make-up work after an absence and to complete it in a reasonable amount of time.

Legal Proof of Age

One of the following legal evidences of age is required for all students, pre-kindergarten through grade 12, entering school in Polk County for the first time. It is required that the evidence be obtained in the order listed below for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and it is recommended that the evidence be obtained in the order given below for grades 1–12.

1. A duly attested transcript of the child's birth record fully filed according to law with a public officer charged with the duty of recording births. Certified copy of Birth Certificate (obtainable in Bartow office of the Polk County Health Department for children born in Polk County or Bureau of Vital Statistics from state of birth).
2. A duly attested transcript of a certificate of baptism showing the date of birth and place of baptism of the child, accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent(s)/guardian(s); or
3. An insurance policy on the child's life which has been in force for at least two years; or
4. A bona fide contemporary Bible record of the child's birth accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent; or
5. A passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child; or
6. A transcript or record of age shown in the child's school record of at least four years prior to application, stating date of birth; or
7. If none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parents, accompanied by a certificate of age assigned by a public health officer or by a public school physician, or if neither of these shall be available in the county, by a licensed practicing physician designated by the School Board, which certificate shall state that the health officer or physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct.

School records are not acceptable as evidence of age for first time entrance into the Polk County school system for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade students.

D. Health/Immunization Requirements

Immunizations	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. MMR (one shot)	X													
2. MMR (two shots)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. POLIO (3–5 doses)	♦	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. DTP/DTaP (5 shots)	♦	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5. Tdap (one shot)									X	X	X	X	X	X
6. Td or Tdap														
7. Hepatitis B Series (3 shots)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8. Hib	X													
9. Varicella (one shot or signed proof of disease)	X													
10. Varicella (two shots or signed proof of disease)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

♦ Pre-K students must have started the series, and have a current immunization certificate

X Denotes required immunizations per grade level

Students who are not in compliance with immunization laws are required to be excluded from school. (Immunizations given four days before a minimum interval or age will be counted as valid.) These immunization requirements also apply to all new students and retained students. For more information, contact your physician or the local health department.

E. School Zones

Before entering a child into any grade, first determine whether they live in your school zone. If they do not, they must have an approved transfer form. If they do not, they must have an approved transfer form. Information on transferring your child through Controlled Open Enrollment is located at <https://polkschoolsfl.com/transfer/>. The transfer request must be approved by the district office before the student may attend an out-of-zone school. Please contact 863-519-7600 ext. 456 for more information.

Controlled Open Enrollment

Parents of students throughout Florida have enrollment options available to them through a process called “controlled open enrollment.”

The Florida legislature passed a statute that allows students to request a transfer to another school besides their zoned school, including transfers to public schools in surrounding counties.

During controlled open enrollment, parents seeking additional choice options for their students can apply for placement in any school in the state that has not reached capacity and still has seats available. The goal is to promote and encourage parental involvement and ensure students have access to a school that meets their needs.

The application window for residents of Polk County begins the first Monday in April and ends the last Friday in April.

The application window for non-residents of Polk County also begins the first Monday in April and ends the last Friday in April. Priority will be given to Polk County students for acceptance of available seats in Polk County schools.

Those approved for transfers through the controlled open enrollment window will be notified in writing once the enrollment period ends. Parents are required to take the notification letter to the assigned school by the date specified within the letter; the school will then provide a class schedule and claim your seat.

A list of available schools will be posted prior to the application period opening.

Capacity at schools with a waiting list of COE applicants will be reviewed every 12 weeks throughout the school year. If there is available capacity at the requested school, COE applications will be approved at that time and approval letters will be sent to parents/guardians.

Important notes about Controlled Open Enrollment:

- Transportation to and from the transfer school is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- Student hardship transfer/placement is available for students within Polk County only.

IEP requirements cannot be guaranteed for students accepting a Controlled Open Enrollment placement.

Pre-kindergarten students enrolled in a Pre-kindergarten program do not automatically roll to kindergarten at that same school site. Parents may apply for a transfer to attend the Pre-kindergarten site for kindergarten if the site is not their zoned elementary school and kindergarten seats are available.

Additional information is available on the district's website: <https://polkschoolsfl.com> search keyword "transfer."

F. Verification of Residence

Verification of a parent or guardian's residence shall be required at the time the child registers in a District School. Verification of residence may also be required at any other time at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee.

G. Provisions for Teacher's Children

Students who are attending a school under the provision which allows teachers to bring their child to the school where they teach will be permitted to remain at that school, even if the parent no longer teaches at that school. Enrollment for these students must be continuous and may continue to the highest grade level at the school site, unless the school has a direct feeder pattern, in which case the student may continue through the highest grade level in that feeder pattern.

H. Emergency and Contact Information

All new enrollees must register in the main office of the school and provide truthful and accurate Emergency and Contact Information. The principal will also be notified of any transfer or withdrawal so that the files may be purged as changes occur. In addition, changes of address must be reflected on student records.

Where parents are divorced or separated, the parent who enrolled the student is responsible for providing Emergency and Contact Information that is truthful, accurate and consistent with the most recent court order governing their divorce, separation, or custody matters. Any parent contesting the Emergency and Contact Information may seek assistance from the court governing their divorce, separation or custody matters to compel the enrolling parent to revise the information provided. The District does not enforce court orders and will not make any change to the Emergency and Contact Information as may be ordered by the court.

Anyone who knowingly makes a false statement in writing with the intent to mislead a public servant in the performance of his/her duty is guilty of a second degree misdemeanor under § 837.06, F.S. In addition, anyone who knowingly makes a false verified declaration is guilty of perjury, a third degree felony under § 92.525 F.S.

Each parent has the right to pick-up, visit, and meet with his/her student at school, without interference of or the need for consent from the other parent, unless the school has received a certified copy of an enforceable court order that provides to the contrary. The principal may restrict the times, location, frequency, and length of parent visitations at school, based on legitimate pedagogical or scheduling reasons. The District will abide by enforceable "no contact orders" which have been provided to the school.

Both parents have an equal right to make decisions about the education and welfare of their student, unless the school has received a certified copy of an enforceable court order that specifies that one of the parents, or someone else, has the sole right to make educational and/or general welfare decisions for the student.

If the parents cannot agree on a significant decision about the student's education or on matters affecting the health, safety, or welfare of the student, the school will take action based on what it considers to be in the best interests of the child.

I. Student Identification Badges

Student Identification badge will be provided to secondary students to ensure safety and security of students and staff. Students must wear their ID card at all times when on school grounds.

J. Notification of In Loco Parentis

In cases in which a student is temporarily not residing with his/her parents or legal guardian, the parent or legal guardian of the student shall designate in writing that adult person with whom the student resides who stands in loco parentis to the student in order for him/her to be admitted to or continue in school.

IV. GRADE PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

A. Entering Students (K-1) Who Are Transferring from Nonpublic Schools

- Students entering kindergarten must have attained the age of five years on or before September 1 of the school year pursuant to [§ 1003.21, F.S.](#)
- Students entering first grade must have attained the age of six years on or before September 1 and successfully completed a county-approved kindergarten.
- Private or Home Education Kindergarten students who did not meet the age requirement for public school Kindergarten (5 years old on or before September 1 of the school year), are not eligible for a transfer to public school Kindergarten during that school year.
- With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program and verification that the student meets the age requirement for entrance into first grade, a student shall be provisionally placed in a first-grade class. During the first 20 days of enrollment, the student shall be assessed through teacher observation and district or state assessments to demonstrate mastery of the applicable state standards for Kindergarten. If the student does not demonstrate mastery of the standards, he/she shall be reassigned to and placed in Kindergarten.
- Students must fulfill all health requirements as defined in the previous section of this document.
- First-time enrollees from out-of-state who have never been in school but meet the district's first grade requirements must begin in kindergarten.

B. Entering Students (K-1) Who Are Out-of-State Transfer Students and Do Not Meet Age Requirements

- Any student who transfers from an out-of-state public school and who does not meet regular age requirements for admission to Florida public schools will be admitted to kindergarten or first grade when certain data are presented. A student who transfers from an out-of-state nonpublic school and who does not meet regular age requirements for admission to Florida public schools, may be admitted if he or she meets the age requirements for the public schools in the state from which he or she is transferring, and if the transfer of the student's academic credit is acceptable under the rules of Polk County School Board.

If a student is transferring from an out of state public or nonpublic school, the parent of the student must provide the following data to the school prior to admission:

- Official documentation that the parent(s) or guardian(s) was a legal resident(s) of the state in which the child was previously enrolled in school
- An official letter or transcript from proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student
- Evidence that all health requirements have been fulfilled pursuant to the above A through D subsections. Prior to admission, the parent or guardian must also provide the data required in the above subsection E related to school zones.

C. Entering Students (Grades 2-12)

- The enrolling party must present information that fulfills all requirements pursuant to subsections B through E. ***If student has ever been enrolled in a Florida school, a physical exam is not required.***
- If the enrolling party does not have age verification documentation in his/her possession, the enrolling school may telephone the last school attended. If the last school attended verifies age and immunization certification pursuant to our requirements, the student may be enrolled while awaiting transfer of school records.
- Evaluation of Transfer Students (K–5)
 - The grade placement of students transferring from other states or private schools will be determined by the principal of the receiving school after receipt of the official student records or transcripts. A temporary grade placement may be established, if all other entry requirements are met, at the discretion of the principal, contingent on receipt of school records. The grades should be interpreted so that the requirements for promotion are not retroactive to prior school attended provided the student has met all requirements for grade placement and promotion in the school from which the student is transferring.
 - When a student is transferring into Polk County Public Schools without records from a public or nonpublic school or from a home education program, it will be the responsibility of the principal to assign grade placement.

D. Students in Home Education, Homeless Situations and Private/Parochial Schools

Students in home education, homeless situations and private/parochial seeking to enter or re-enter a Polk County public school must meet all initial entry requirements (state and district) as specified within the PCSB SPP (see page 8, section B:2 for guidance regarding homeless situations). A student may enter the school system at any time and at any grade level. The initial grade placement will be determined by a review of official transcripts presented at the time of enrollment. “Enrolling schools will accept the grades at the time of withdrawal to use as transfer grades during an active grading period or to award partial or full credits at the end of a semester, along with a review of any additional relevant information.”

The district will comply with the McKinney-Vento Act as it pertains to the awarding of credits for students in homeless situations. For a student enrolling without an official transcript or without verifiable scholastic records, initial grade placement and course selection will be determined by the Superintendent’s designee. Final placement will be determined within 45 days of initial enrollment and verified through the following:

- Satisfactory completion of appropriate subject or grade level examinations (60 percent or higher);
- Successful completion of classwork;
- Satisfactory completion of a district benchmark or end-of-course assessment;
- Recommendation of the school principal.

For more information on home education, visit FL-DOE Office of Independent and Parental Choice website <http://www.fl DOE.org/schools/school-choice/other-school-choice-options/home-edu/> or the district website for Home Education: <https://polkschoolsfl.com/homeeducation/>

For more information regarding homeless youth, visit McKinney-Vento Act:

Click here for [McKinney-Vento Act](#) link.

E. Nondiscrimination Statement

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against harassment on the basis of, race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status or gender identity), disability (including HIV, AIDS, or sickle cell trait), pregnancy, marital status, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, language spoken, homelessness, ancestry, or genetic information which are classes protected by State and/or Federal law (collectively, "protected classes") (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment) and encourages those within the School District community as well as third parties who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify the problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where legally prohibited harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

The Board will provide equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other identified Title 36 patriotic youth groups as required within 34 C.F.R. 108.9.

To file concerns, you may contact the Equity & Compliance Analyst in Human Resource Services at 863-534-0513 or P.O. Box 391 Bartow, FL 33831.

V. STUDENT TRANSFERS

A. Transferring Between Polk County Public Schools (Grades K-12)

During the school year, students are required to have the Withdrawal and Transfer form from the Polk County Public School they have been attending. This is not required of emergency shelter cases or during the summer months.

B. Within the District

Charter students: During the school year, students are required to have the Withdrawal and Transfer form from the Polk County School in which they have been attending. This is not required of emergency shelter cases or during the summer months.

C. Out of Country or State or from Private, Home Education, or Military Compact

If a student transfers into a Florida public high school from out of country, out of state, a private school, or a home school, the student's transcript is reviewed to determine if the student is required to take a Florida end-of-course (EOC) assessment in accordance with Rule 6A-1.09941, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), *State Uniform Transfer of High School Credit*.

For ELL students with incomplete or unobtainable records, the ESOL Department, the School Counseling Department and the school instructional staff will collaborate in the evaluation of the information obtained from the interviews and assessments to develop a student profile. The placement will be placed on the age of the student and information gathered.

Factors to take into consideration for ELL Grade level placement.

- Age Appropriate
- Documented Prior Educational Services
- ELL Committee
- Assessment – Diagnostic/placement test
- Parent/Guardian and Student Interview

D. Hope Scholarships

If a student reports a violent incident or bullying pursuant to [§ 1002.40](#), Florida Statutes, and at the conclusion of the investigation or within 15 days of reporting the incident, the student may 1) enroll in another public school that has capacity or 2) request a FDOE scholarship to attend an eligible private school subject to available funding. A student who enrolls in a public school located outside of the district is eligible for a transportation scholarship as provided in paragraph (11)(b) of the above referenced statute. More information about Hope Scholarships is available in the Office of Acceleration and Innovation and on the website for Polk County Public Schools.

VI. ACCELERATION MECHANISMS

It is the intent of the Legislature that each student's progression from one grade to another be determined, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics, and science; that district school board policies facilitate student achievement; and that each student and his or her parent be informed of that student's academic progress; and that students have access to educational options that provide academically challenging coursework or accelerated instruction pursuant to [§ 1002.3105](#), F.S.

Where accelerated educational experiences seem indicated for an individual student, basic courses may be modified or offered virtually to increase the overall time of instruction in a given period of time or to increase credit earned through curriculum compacting. Such modifications are based on assessment of student's needs.

Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options

ACCEL options are educational options that provide academically challenging curriculum or accelerated instruction to eligible public school students in kindergarten through grade 12 (§ 1002.3105, F.S.). Each school must offer the following ACCEL options: whole-grade and midyear promotion; subject-matter acceleration; virtual instruction in higher grade level subjects; and the Credit Acceleration Program under § 1003.4295, F.S.

Eligibility and Procedural Requirements

In accordance with § 1002.3105, Florida Statutes, all Polk County Public Schools will provide educational options that provide academically challenging curriculum or accelerated instruction to all eligible K–12 students and inform parents/guardians of these options.

Schools **may also offer** options that include, but are not limited to, enriched science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) coursework; enrichment programs; flexible grouping; advanced academic courses; combined classes; self-paced instruction; curriculum compacting; advanced-content instruction; and telescoping curriculum. These options are available at each school to students who meet specific eligibility criteria.

Process for Acceleration

In order to be in compliance with State Statute the following process should be followed:

1. Review data indicated on the *Request for Academic Acceleration* form to determine the students that are eligible for acceleration. Students must meet the requirements in each category to be recommended for the district determined qualifying norm-referenced assessment.
2. Letter of notification will be sent to the parent/guardian if the student is eligible to take the district determined norm-referenced qualifying assessment.
3. To begin the review process, for an upcoming school year, the completed *Request for Academic Acceleration* form must be received in the Office of Acceleration and Innovation **prior to May 31st**
4. Eligible students will take the qualifying norm-referenced assessment.
5. The principal and parent/guardian will be notified of the result of the assessment.
6. If the student qualifies for acceleration, the school acceleration team will request a conference with the parent/guardian. If the student does not qualify, the parent/guardian will be notified via certified mail.
7. The *Academic Acceleration Program* contract will be initiated at the request of the principal and filed in the student's cumulative file.

A second grade student cannot be considered for whole-grade acceleration to fourth grade (must complete 3rd grade) due to state statute.

Credit Acceleration Program (CAP)

The CAP is created for the purpose of allowing students to earn high school credit in courses that require statewide, standardized end-of-course (EOC) assessments. Credit will be awarded by the district for any student who attains the specified score, as defined in § 1008.22 (3) (c) 5, F.S.

Students are not required to be enrolled in the course or to have completed the course. A student who is not enrolled in the course or who has not completed the course will take the standardized EOC assessment during the regular administration of the assessment.

Students requesting to participate in the CAP must contact the testing coordinator and counselor at the current school of enrollment 9 weeks prior to the state-mandated testing window.

Elementary students participating in ACCEL may not take middle school courses as part of their school-day schedule, without prior approval from the Office of Acceleration and Innovation. Additional information is provided in the Elementary ACCEL Options section of this document.

Middle school students participating in ACCEL should attend middle school for three years. High School courses may be taken by eligible middle school students. An ACCEL Course Progression document is available from the Office of Acceleration and Innovation.

In rare cases where an under-age student meets all the academic and assessment requirements to be promoted to the next grade band (Middle School or High School), students and parents may request a grade-level promotion option. In these rare cases, a conference with the student, parent, school administrator, counselor, and a district representative must be held to discuss the option. Prior to implementing the option, the student must spend at least two hours shadowing a (6th or 9th grade) student at the rising zoned school, and a **Request for Academic Acceleration** form must be completed by the Acceleration Committee. The committee decision will be final.

VII. VIRTUAL LEARNING

1002.455 Student eligibility for K-12 virtual instruction.

All students, including home education and private school students, are eligible to participate in any of the following virtual instruction options:

1. School district operated part-time or full-time kindergarten through grade 12 virtual instruction programs pursuant to s. 1002.45(1)(c)4. to students within the school district.
2. Part-time or full-time virtual charter school instruction authorized pursuant to s. 1002.45(1)(c)5. to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state pursuant to s. 1002.31; however, the school district enrolling the full-time equivalent virtual student shall comply with the enrollment requirements established under s. 1002.45(1)(e)4.
3. Virtual courses offered in the course code directory to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state pursuant to s. 1003.498.
4. Florida Virtual School instructional services authorized pursuant to s. 1002.37.
5. Virtual instruction provided by a school district through a contract with an approved virtual instruction program provider pursuant to s. 1002.45(1)(c)2. to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state pursuant to s. 1002.31; however the school district enrolling the full-time equivalent virtual student shall comply with the enrollment requirements established under s. 1002.45(1)(e)4.

Students enrolled in a K–12 virtual school are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements of § 1003.21, F.S. Student attendance must be verified according to procedures of the Department of Education. Each student enrolled in a K–12 virtual school must take state assessments within the student’s school district of residence which must provide that student with access to the district’s testing facilities.

GRADING AND REPORTING OF STUDENT PROGRESS K-12

A. Interim Reporting

Interim progress reports will be given to all students in all subjects at the midpoint of the marking period. Schools are to establish procedures for teachers to notify parents/guardians when it is apparent that a student may fail or is doing unsatisfactory work in any skill level (i.e., skill level is below grade placement), course or grade assignment. These procedures should include the following:

1. Notification of parents/guardians, written or verbal, during the grading period.
2. Documentation by the school of such notification.
3. School attempt, in cooperation with parents/guardians, to assist the student in achieving at minimum levels.

B. Regular Reporting

Report cards shall be issued to students after each marking period. Only report cards approved by the School Board, or in special cases by the Superintendent, shall be used. Grades on report cards must clearly reflect the student's level of achievement, including student performance which is below established standards for the student's grade placement. No penalty or reward shall be reflected in a student's academic grade for his/her conduct. Report cards will contain a separate designation for a student's conduct. Parents of student with disabilities will be informed of their student's progress toward IEP annual goals at the nine-week report card intervals.

C. Student Retention

In addition to the notification of parents/guardians noted in sections 1 and 2 through interim reporting and report cards after each marking period, schools will provide an opportunity for a conference involving the teacher, school counselor or principal and parent/guardian for any student not progressing appropriately toward promotion and/or graduation.

D. Grading Practices

Pursuant § 1003.33 F.S. "Each district school board shall establish and publish policies requiring the content and regular issuance of student report cards for all elementary school, middle school, and high school students. The student's academic performance in each class or course in grades 1 through 12 must be based upon examinations as well as written papers, class participation, and other academic criteria, and must include the student's performance and nonperformance at his or her grade level."

Students and guardians are encouraged to monitor grades and attendance through the portal. The portal provides real-time grade and attendance data.

Elementary Grading (Grades K-5)

Elementary schools are encouraged to use the Polk County Public School's Elementary Grading Handbook to help guide classroom grading practices. The Elementary Grading Handbook provides recommendations for assessing and reporting progress of elementary students.

Elementary Art and Music (Grades K-5)

Elementary art and music grades are reported with letter grades A-F, but the percentage distributions are different from above.

Secondary Grading (Grades 6-12)

Secondary students are to receive at least two standards-based grades per course, per week reflecting the proficiency of state standards for that course; each 9 weeks grade must include at least 18 standards-based grades. Grade books are to be updated weekly ensuring timely grade and attendance data is available to students and parents. Secondary schools are encouraged to use the Secondary Grading Guidelines to help guide classroom grading practices. The Secondary Grading Guidelines provides recommendations for assessing and reporting progress of secondary students. Click [here](#) to access the Secondary Grading Handbook.

Uniform Transfer of Credits (Grades 6-12)

State Rule 6A-1.09941 State Uniform Transfer of Students in Middle Grades and High School establishes uniform procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and credit for students entering Florida's public schools. The rule referring to completed coursework is available [here](#).

Transfer of Grades In-Progress

Transfer grades for each student are evaluated on a case by case basis. Students should not be penalized due to a transfer between schools, nor should a student benefit from a transfer between schools. Transfer grades are sent from the school counselors to receiving teachers. Transfer grades are to be entered into the grade book by the receiving teacher. Transfer grades are transferred by course, content, and/or category, as appropriate. Teachers have the ability to override final grades ensuring accurate reporting of student progress and proficiency for each course of enrollment. School administrators are encouraged to contact their Regional Superintendent or his/her designee for additional assistance.

Secondary Semester Averaging (Grades 6-12)

A student enrolled in a full-year course shall receive full course completion/full credit if the student successfully completes either the first half or the second half of a full-year course but fails to successfully complete the other half of the course and the numeric average of the grades obtained in each half results in a passing grade of 60% or higher, provided that such additional requirements specified in district school board policies, such as class attendance, homework, participation, and other indicators of performance, shall be successfully completed by the student.

E. Grading System

Grades will be reported by letter grade or numerical score in recording student progress as follows:

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Description
A	90–100	Outstanding Progress
B	80–89	Above-average Progress
C	70–79	Average Progress
D	60–69	Lowest Acceptable Progress
F	0–59	Failure

VIII. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

A. Eligibility for ESOL Services

Assessments are administered for incoming/new students to determine if they are eligible to receive ESOL services based on the Home Language Survey found on the registration form package. If a parent/guardian answers “yes” to any of the three

questions on the Home Language Survey, the student is considered a potential ELL student. If a K-12 parent answers “yes” to ANY of the three questions on the Home Language Survey, then the student is assessed for aural/oral language proficiency in English within 20 school days from the date of registration.

The Home Language survey form is a separate form; however, it is an integral part of the student’s registration procedure, and it is placed in the student cumulative folder.

Data is collected in accordance with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Consent Decree order. Schools are prohibited from inquiring, requiring, or requesting, any documentation on the students or the parents’ immigration status, as such, for any educational purposes, except for circumstances stipulated in LULAC’s Consent Decree to satisfy eligibility requirements of the Federal Emergency Immigrant Act within the last three years.

Placement in ESOL is determined by the results of the initial aural and oral language proficiency test (Idea Proficiency Test). Assessment of each student’s aural and oral proficiency or listening and speaking should be completed as soon as possible after the student’s initial enrollment but no later than twenty (20) school days after the student’s initial enrollment. Students in grades 3–12 who score at the FES level will take the Reading/Writing portion as soon as possible after initial enrollment, but no later than thirty (30) school days after enrollment. Rule 6A-6.0902 delineates requirements for Identification, Eligibility, and Programmatic Assessments of English Language Learners (see Appendix B for Matrix of Florida Programs for ELL). Parents will be notified of ESOL Program entry or placement, and an ELL Plan will be developed for the student.

If the assessments do not offer a clear answer in determining a student’s eligibility, an ELL Committee shall be convened. The committee shall review the student’s academic record holistically and shall consider the assessment results as well as the following criteria:

- a. Extent and nature of prior educational or academic experience, social experience, and a student interview;
- b. Written recommendation and observation by current and previous instructional and support services staff if available;
- c. Level of mastery of basic competencies or skills in English and/or heritage language according to state or national criterion-referenced standards, if any;
- d. Grades from the current or previous years; and,
- e. Test results from tests other than the assessment according to paragraph (2)(a) of rule 6A-6.0903

When the ELL committee is convened for the purpose of making an initial entry placement decision, all academic information is reviewed to determine placement.

B. Accommodations for ELL Students in the Administration of Statewide Assessments

The dictionary or glossary must provide word-to-word translations only and may not contain definitions or other information. A dictionary or glossary written exclusively in the heritage language or in English shall not be provided. Electronic translation dictionaries or glossaries that meet the same requirements without accessing the Internet may be used.

ELL students classified as LY and LF are entitled to accommodations as indicated in the Test Administration Manual, **Rule 6A-6.09091, FAC**. The Rule allows for the provision of Accommodations for the Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and procedures for Limited English Proficient students. The allowable accommodations are limited to:

(a) **Flexible Setting.** ELLs may be offered the opportunity to be tested in a separate room with the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Parents must be informed of this option for students not of legal age and shall be given the opportunity to select the preferred method of test administration.

(b) **Flexible Scheduling.** ELLs may take a test session during several brief periods within one (1) school day; however, each test session must be completed within one (1) school day.

(c) **Assistance in the Heritage Language.** ELLs may be provided limited assistance by an ESOL or heritage language teacher using the student's heritage language for directions, prompts, items, and answer choices. Assistance may not be provided for passages in Reading and Writing tests. Assistance in the heritage language shall be limited to the following:

(d) **Approved Dictionary and Glossary.** ELLs must have access to English-to-heritage language/heritage language-to-English dictionaries or glossaries or both, in print, electronic, or digital format, such as those made available to ELLs in an instructional setting. The dictionary or glossary must provide word-to-word translations only and may not contain definitions or other information. A dictionary or glossary written exclusively in the heritage language or in English shall not be provided. Electronic translation dictionaries or glossaries that meet the same requirements without accessing the internet may be used. Students in Grades K-2 may be provided with a picture translation dictionary or glossary that meets the requirements of this paragraph.

C. ACCESS for ELLs Testing

All K–12 English language learners will be assessed annually using the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs) in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing as per **Rule 6A-1.09432, F.A.C.**, Assessment of Limited English Proficient Students.

According to the Florida Department of Education:

Florida uses the ACCESS for ELLs suite of assessments as a tool to measure English Language Learners (ELLs) proficiency in the English language; thus, ensuring the skills needed in school to achieve at academic high levels, academically. The ACCESS for ELLs suite is a product of a collaborative effort by the multistate WIDA Consortium that is designed to provide:

- Evidence of program accountability in accordance with Title I and III of Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (formerly the No Child Left Behind Act), which calls for schools and districts to meet state accountability objectives for increasing the English-language proficiency of English Language Learners.
- Data useful for charting student progress over time and, for the newly arrived students, charting progress over the first year.
- Information about the language proficiency levels of individual students that can be used in making decisions regarding exit from the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program.
- Diagnostically useful information about students' strengths and weaknesses in English (with as much specificity as possible within the limitations of a large-scale standardized test).

The ACCESS for ELLs suite of assessments includes the following:

- ACCESS for ELLs, a paper-based assessment for Grades 1–12
 - Students are administered the Speaking section of the test one-on-one with a certified test administrator; the Listening, Reading, and Writing sections may be administered in a group setting.
- Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs, a paper-based assessment for Kindergarten
 - Students are administered all sections of the test, one-on-one with a certified test administrator.
- Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, a paper-based assessment for students in Grades 1–12 who have significant cognitive disabilities.
 - Students are administered all sections of the test, one-on-one with a certified test administrator.

Each test is based on the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards that form the core of WIDA's approach to instructing and assessing ELLs in Grades K–12. For more information about Florida standards, course descriptions and standards resources, please visit the [CPALMS website](#).

ALL ELL students coded LY are expected to participate in statewide assessment programs, The ESOL Department provides training to schools in order to ensure compliance with state guidelines for annual testing of English Language Learners and inclusion in all yearly state mandated assessments.

D. ELL Grading Policy

No grading policy shall adversely affect an ELL student solely based on English language proficiency. ELL students must receive a grade that represents an accurate evaluation of achievement based on their limited linguistic competency.

Teachers will determine grades of ELL students based on their progress toward and achievement of the benchmarks. Teachers must provide evidence of the use of differentiated instruction based on the student's English language proficiency level. Differentiation strategies must be documented in the teacher's lesson plan book and observed during classroom walkthroughs as described in the grading handbook.

The following guidelines should be taken into consideration when grading and reporting progress of ELLs:

- *The level of English language proficiency affects the ELLs ability to communicate content.
- *Grading should be done with a formative and summative approach. Grades should reflect the ELLs performance based on a variety of assessment tools: oral explanation, portfolios and projects, all of them based on the ELL's English language proficiency level.
- *The Florida Consent Decree requires teachers to provide comprehensible instruction to English Language Learners.
- *Use the same grading system as that for non-ELLs but employ a variety of alternative assessments to assign grades.
- *Do not assign a lower grade solely based on lack of English language proficiency or use one single assessment to measure mastery of content.

E. Graduation Requirements for Certain Students in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program

Rule 6A-1.09422: Alternative Assessment Graduation Pathway for Recently Arrived English Language Learners (ELL)

In accordance with Florida Statute § 1003.433 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09422, beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, students who have been enrolled in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for less than 2 school years and have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of any ELA assessment required for graduation as specified by Florida Statute § 1003.4282, or Florida Statute § 1008.22, or alternate assessment is eligible for a standard high school diploma if the ELL student can meet the grade 10 English Language Arts assessment graduation requirement, by "satisfactorily demonstrating grade-level expectations on formative assessments, in accordance with the state board rule."

Passes the required assessment or alternative assessment after having received English language instruction offered by a public school during the summer following the student's senior year through an instructional model for ELLs: sheltered-English, Sheltered-Core/Basic Subject Areas, Mainstream/Inclusion-English, Mainstream/Inclusion-Core/Basic Subject Areas, Maintenance or Developmental Bilingual Education, or Dual Language

OR

Meets the requirement to pass the statewide, standardized grade 10 ELA assessment by satisfactorily demonstrating grade-level expectations on a formative assessment that generates a score or metric that can be interpreted as a measure of grade 10 level achievement in ELA. There are 5 options to satisfy this pathway:

Option 1: ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 (2022 or 2023 Score Report)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reading Domain Level 4 or greater and,▪ Composite Score of 4 or greater
Option 2: Portfolio of Student Formative Work <i>(Student must complete 4 Informational and 4 Literature Formative Assessments at 80% or higher.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Teacher created materials.▪ Material demand should reflect student's growth in language proficiency and academics.▪ Portfolio must include evidence that the standards assessed by the grade 10 statewide, standardized assessment in ELA have been met.▪ Must be an organized collection of evidence of the student's work on 10th grade standards▪ Teacher must work in collaboration with the school ELA Department.
Option 3: StudySync Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Passing score of 70 % or higher
Option 4: STAR Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Average of 70% Mastery Across Standards or▪ Cut scores of 1124 (10th grade Level 3)
Option 5: Achieve 3000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Meet the Reading/ELA proficiency levels: 1080L or higher

F. ELL Student Progress Monitoring

After each grading period (nine weeks), the ELL Committee shall convene to create a remediation plan for English language learners with D's and F's, at risk for retention or not meeting graduation or promotion requirements. Parents must be invited to the meeting and for that purpose, a Parent Invitation letter will be sent home in a language comprehensible to the parents.

Going to the third year, and thereafter, of the date the student entered a US school (DEUSS Date), the ELL will be re-evaluated for the extension of services. The monitoring will be done with a language instrument (ACCESS/IPT) and two academic instruments. The ELL Committee Meeting will convene to make a continuation/exit decision.

ESOL students in the program for less than two school years should not be held accountable to demonstrate the standards in English; as the Meta Consent Decree and Title III requirement is to measure the student's ability toward attainment of the standards. An ESOL student's ability toward attainment of the standards may be demonstrated in English or in their native language. An ELL Committee may recommend an ELL to be retained; if they are not demonstrating satisfactory academic progress, and the lack of academic progress is not based on language acquisition. In addition; ELLs may not be retained if they are substantially below grade level in reading in English but can demonstrate grade level literacy skills in their native language.

G. ESOL Program Exit Procedures

ELLs students may exit the ESOL program and be classified as English proficient when the criteria are met per Rule 6A-6.0903, F.A.C., Requirement for Classification, Reclassification, and Post Reclassification of English Language Learners.

English learners scoring proficient on the state assessments in ELA, the four domains of the ACCESS for ELLs (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and/or through the SAT or ACT concordant scores, must be reviewed by the ELL Committee and be considered for exit.

6A-6.0903 Requirements for Exiting English Language Learners from the English for Speakers of Other Languages Program.

Each student identified as an English Language Learner (ELL) shall continue to receive appropriate instruction until such time as the student is reclassified as English proficient and exited from the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program per Rule 6A-6.0903.

The exit procedures are described as follows:

- a. For ELL students in grades K-2: Reading and Overall proficient on the statewide English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS) is the only assessment required.
- b. For ELL students in grades 3-9, earning a passing score on the grade level state ELA assessment plus proficient on the statewide English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS), Rule 1.09430, F.A.C.; or
- c. For ELL students in grades 10-12, earning a passing score on the grade level state ELA assessment plus proficient on the statewide English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS), Rule 1.09430, F.A.C.; or an equivalent concordant score pursuant to Section 1008.22, F.S.

Notwithstanding a student's statewide English Language Proficiency Assessment scores, upon the request of a student's teacher, counselor, administrator, or parent, a student who has been classified as an ELL and enrolled in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program may be re-evaluated for English language proficiency by convening an ELL Committee at any time.

IX. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD)

ESE STUDENT RIGHTS AND PARENT NOTIFICATION [F.A.C. 6A-6.03311]

The Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures for Parents of Students with Disabilities describes parent and student rights that go along with programs for students with disabilities. as they relate to Exceptional Student Education.

Program Placement

1. A student will only be placed in an ESE program when a staffing committee determines that the student meets eligibility and a parent or guardian consents to Exceptional Student Education.
2. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) team will use the IEP document to make appropriate placement decisions based on the student's individual needs. The IEP team consists of the parent or guardian, general education teacher(s), special education provider(s), school psychologist or other specialist, Local Education Agency (LEA) representative, and when appropriate, the student.
3. The IEP team determines Extended School Year (ESY) services for SWD. The general education setting is the first consideration when determining placement for students with disabilities (SWD). Core instruction should be delivered in the general education classroom to the maximum extent appropriate. PCPS will provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to a SWD through the end of the school year in which the student turns 22, provided the student is age 21 at the start of the school year and has not graduated with a standard diploma. Accommodations Any student who has been evaluated and determined to have a disability under IDEA or Section 504 may receive accommodations based on the individual needs of the student, as documented on the IEP or Section 504 plan. Accommodations are changes that are made in how the student accesses information and demonstrates performance. Students use accommodations to increase, maintain or improve academic performance. Accommodations do not alter course content or expectations for achievement of grade level state standards. (Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(a), F.A.C.)

Waiver of Assessment Results/Scores

A student with a disability (SWD) for whom the individual education plan (IEP) team determines that the required assessments 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. A waiver of the statewide, standardized assessment results by the IEP team must be approved by the parents and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an independent reviewer selected by the parents. (F.S. 1008.22, F.S. 1003.572) A graduation portfolio of quantifiable evidence of achievement is required for students alternately assessed whose performance on standardized assessments is waived. The portfolio must include a listing of courses the student has taken, grades received, student work samples and other materials that demonstrate growth, improvement, and mastery of required course standards. Multi-media portfolios that contain electronic evidence of progress, including videos and audio recordings, are permissible. Community-based instruction, modified occupational completion points, work experience, internships, community service, and postsecondary credit must be documented in the portfolio, when applicable.

Graduation Options for SWD

Standard Diploma

The high school section of this document provides graduation options for all students. Refer to the PCPS website for specific graduation requirements. Two additional options are available only to students with disabilities. Both require 24 credits and allow students to substitute a career and technical education (CTE) course with related content for one credit in ELA 4, mathematics, science, and social studies (excluding Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology 1, and U.S. History). The two options are as follows:

1. Students with significant cognitive disabilities may earn credits through access courses and be assessed with an alternate assessment.
2. Students who choose the academic and employment option must earn a semester credit in an employment-based course paid at a minimum wage or above in compliance with the requirements of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act. The student's employment transition plan specifies the required number of hours per week for the equivalent of at least one semester and documents the successful completion of required components. Students may earn additional elective credits in employment-based courses. The diploma option for a SWD will be documented on the IEP prior to the student's 14th birthday and reviewed annually by the IEP Team. A student will be exempted from the online course graduation requirement when the IEP indicates that an online or blended learning course is inappropriate.

Deferral of Receipt of a Standard Diploma

SWD who meet the standard high school diploma requirements and the criteria specified in F.S.1002.4282 (3)(c) may defer the receipt of the diploma and continue to receive services. The decision to accept or defer the standard high school diploma must be made during the school year in which the student is expected to meet all requirements for a standard high school diploma. The decision must be noted on the IEP and the parent or guardian, or the student over the age of 18 for whom rights have transferred must sign a separate document stating the decision. (Rule 6A-6.03311(8), F.A.C.) The IEP Team must review the benefits of deferring the standard high school diploma, including continuation of educational and related services. The parent and the student must be informed by the PCPS, in writing, by January 30 of the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements. Failure to defer receipt of a standard high school diploma after all requirements are met releases the PCPS from the obligation to provide a FAPE. This communication must state that the deadline for acceptance or deferral of the diploma is May 15 of the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements, and that failure to attend a graduation ceremony does not constitute a deferral. A student with a disability who receives a certificate of completion may continue to receive FAPE until their 22nd birthday, or, at the discretion of PCPS, until the end of the school semester or year in which the student turns 22. (Rule 6A-6.0328(1), F.A.C.), (F.S. 1001.02(1), F.S. 1003.4282, F.S. 1008.22)

504 Educational Plans

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 guarantees

the right to full participation and access to FAPE. PCPS is committed to identifying, evaluating, and providing a FAPE to students who are disabled, within the definition of Section 504, regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities. PCPS recognizes and acknowledges that students may be disabled and eligible for services under Section 504, even when they do not qualify for or require special education and/or related services pursuant to the IDEA. If a student has a physical or mental impairment that significantly limits the student's learning but does not require specially designed instruction, the student will be eligible for reasonable, but more than standard, accommodations and/or modifications of the regular classroom or curriculum to have the same access to an education as students without disabilities. Such accommodations and/or modifications will be provided, pursuant to a Section 504 Accommodation Plan. Refer to the fldoe.org for additional information.

Students With an Active Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Students with active Section 504 Accommodation Plans may not be exempted from District or state assessments. However, the Section 504 Team must determine whether a student with an active Section 504 Accommodation Plan may need testing accommodations. Testing accommodations are determined by the Section 504 Team.

Gifted Education

Exceptional student education includes students who are identified as gifted. A continuum of services and specially designed instruction is available for students who qualify for gifted services, including differentiated curriculum, acceleration, and enrichment. At the high school level, the course of study may include Honors, Advanced Placement courses; International Baccalaureate Program; Advanced International Certificate of Education Program (AICE); academic and career dual enrollment; and career education courses, including career-themed courses, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and course sequences that lead to an industry certification. The Education Plan (EP) document is used by the EP team in making appropriate placement decisions based on the student's goals, strengths, and needs. The EP team includes the parent or guardian, general education teacher(s), special education provider(s), LEA representative, and when appropriate, the student. If a student is eligible for an additional ESE program, then the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) will include their gifted eligibility and goals. Refer to Rule 6A-6.030191 F.C.A. for additional information.

Hospital Homebound Programmatic Considerations for Placement

Definitions

1. A homebound or hospitalized student is a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric condition that is acute or catastrophic in nature, a chronic illness or a repeated intermittent illness due to a persisting medical problem, which confines the student to home or hospital and restricts activities for an extended period of time.

Eligibility Criteria A student is eligible for educational instruction through homebound or hospitalized services if the following criteria are met:

1. A physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or 459, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., must certify: a. That the student is expected to be absent from school due to a physical or psychiatric condition for at least 15 consecutive school days (or the equivalent on a block schedule), or due to a chronic condition for at least 15 school days (or the equivalent on a block schedule), which need not run consecutively; and b. That the student is confined to home or hospital; and c. That the student will be able to participate in and benefit from an instructional program; and d. That the student is under medical care for illness or injury that is acute, catastrophic, or chronic in nature; and e. That the student can receive instructional services without endangering the health and safety of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact.
2. The student is in kindergarten through twelfth grade and is enrolled in public school, unless the student meets criteria for eligibility under Rules 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.030121, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.030151, 6A-6.030152, 6A-6.030153, 6A-6.03016, 6A-6.03018, 6A-3.03022, 6A-6.03023, or 6A-6.03027, F.A.C.
3. A child is three (3) through (5) years of age and has been determined eligible as a student with a disability in accordance with s. 1003.571, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.030121, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.030151, 6A-6.030152, 6A-6.030153, 6A-6.03016, 6A-6.03018, 6A-3.03022, 6A-6.03023, 6A-6.03026, 6A-6.03027, or 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.
4. A parent, guardian, or primary caregiver signs a parental agreement concerning homebound or hospitalized policies and parental cooperation.

Student Evaluation

In addition to the provisions of Rule 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the minimum evaluation for determining eligibility shall include the following:

1. A current medical report from a licensed physician, as defined above, describing the following:
 - A. A disabling condition or diagnosis with any medical implications for instruction;
 - B. A statement that the student is unable to attend school;
 - C. The plan of treatment;
 - D. Recommendations regarding school re-entry and other school-related activities; and
 - e. An estimated duration of condition or prognosis.
2. The team determining eligibility may require additional evaluation data. This additional evaluation data must be obtained at no cost to the parent.
3. A physical reexamination and a medical report by a licensed physician or physicians, which may be requested by the administrator of exceptional student education or the administrator's designee on a more frequent basis than annually, may be required if the student is scheduled to attend school part of a day during a recuperative period of readjustment to a full school schedule. This physical examination and medical report shall be obtained at no cost to the parent.

Procedures for Providing an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP)

1. The IEP or IFSP shall be developed or revised following determination of eligibility in accordance with this rule.
2. A student may be assigned to both a homebound or hospitalized program and to a school-based program due to an acute, chronic or intermittent condition as certified by a licensed physician.
3. This decision shall be made by the IEP or IFSP team in accordance with the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03028 or 6A-6.03029, F.A.C.

Instructional Services

The following settings and instructional modes, or a combination thereof, are appropriate methods for providing instruction to students determined eligible for these services:

1. Instruction in a home. The parent, guardian or primary caregiver shall provide a quiet, clean, and well-ventilated setting where the teacher and student will work; ensure that a responsible adult is present; and establish a schedule for student study between teacher visits that takes into account the student's medical condition and the requirements of the student's coursework.
2. Instruction in a hospital. The hospital administrator or designee shall provide appropriate space for the teacher and student to work and allow for the establishment of a schedule for student study between teacher visits.
3. Instruction through telecommunications or electronic devices. When the IEP or IFSP team determines that instruction is by telecommunications or electronic devices, an open, uninterrupted telecommunication link shall be provided, at no additional cost to the parent, during the instructional period. The parent shall ensure that the student is prepared to actively participate in learning.
4. Instruction in other specified settings. The IEP or IFSP team may determine that instruction would be best delivered in a mutually agreed upon alternate setting other than the home, or hospital or through telecommunications or electronic devices.
5. Instruction in a school setting on a part-time basis may be appropriate as the student transitions back to the student's regular class schedule, if the IEP or IFSP team determines this meets the student's needs.
6. Services for students in specialty hospitals. In accordance with the requirements of s 1003.57, F.S., eligible students receiving treatment in a children's specialty hospital licensed in accordance with Chapter 395, Part I, F.S., must be provided educational instruction from the school district in which the hospital is located until the school district in which the hospital is located enters into an agreement with the school district in which the student resides. The agreement must ensure the timely provision of seamless educational instruction to students who transition between school districts while receiving treatment in the children's specialty hospital.

7. Notification Agreement. A school district in which a children’s specialty hospital is located must enter into an agreement with the hospital that establishes a process by which the hospital must notify the school district of students who may be eligible for educational instruction through homebound or hospitalized services pursuant to s. 1003.57, F.S.

Students Receiving Treatment in a Children’s Specialty Hospital

Eligible students receiving treatment in a children’s specialty hospital licensed under Chapter 395, Part I, F.S., must be provided educational instruction from the school district in which the hospital is located until the school district in which the hospital is located enters into an agreement with the school district in which the student resides.

The district must enter into an agreement with children’s specialty hospitals in the district. This agreement establishes a process by which the hospital must notify the school district of students who may be eligible for instruction consistent with the eligibility for homebound and hospitalized services.

Statutory and Regulatory

Citations 34 CFR §300.115 Chapters 458 and 459, F.S. Sections 1003.01 and 1003.57, F.S. Rules 6A-6.03011, 6A-6.03012, 6A-6.03013, 6A-6.03014, 6A-6.030151, 6A-6.030152, 6A-6.030153, 6A-6.03016, 6A-6.03018, 6A-6.03020,6A-6.03022, 6A-6.03023, 6A-6.03027 and 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.

Request for Consideration for Hospital Homebound Services

X. ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (PREK – GRADE 5) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The elementary school section of the Student Progression Plan (SPP) for students in grades pre-kindergarten through five is designed to support the mission and vision of the Polk County School District.

A. Required Program of Study K-5

The required program of study for elementary students in the Polk County School District reflects the state-adopted standards and local requirements for elementary education. The areas of study required for each grade, Kindergarten through 5, include: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health, Art, Music, Physical Education, and Character Education.

1. Required Program of Study

The required program of study for elementary students in the Polk County Public Schools reflects state and local requirements for elementary education. The areas of study required for each grade, Kindergarten through 5, are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 ELEMENTARY PROGRAM OF STUDY					
Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5

Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)	Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language)
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
Health	Health	Health	Health	Health	Health
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art
Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music

Language Arts, which includes reading, writing, speaking and listening, will be scheduled for 120 minutes per day, with an additional 60 minutes scheduled for intervention/acceleration. Mathematics will be scheduled for 90 minutes per day. In grades kindergarten through third, inquiry science will be scheduled for 45 minutes per day, and in fourth and fifth grades, inquiry science will be scheduled for a minimum of 50 minutes per day. Students should be enrolled in both music and art for a minimum of 50 minutes each, once a week (in certain instances, when class size in larger elementary schools exceeds 7 classes per grade level creating more than 30 students for art and music due to combining classes, a 6-day rotational schedule may be necessary– these schedules will be recommended by the Department of Fine Arts and approved by the Regional Assistant Superintendents in collaboration with the building principal).

K - 3rd	Minutes Per Day
ELA and integrated Social Studies	120
Math	90
Science	45
Art / Music / PE	50 (PE 3x, art 1x, music 1x per week)
Recess	20
Intervention / Acceleration	60
Lunch	25

4th - 5th	Minutes Per Day
ELA and integrated Social Studies	120
Math	90
Science	50
Art / Music / PE	50 (PE 3x, art 1x, music 1x per week)
Recess	20
Intervention / Acceleration	60 (can be split among ELA and math) exception Bottom 300 schools must devote the entire 60 minutes to ELA)
Lunch	25

2. Health Education Requirements

Elementary students will receive the minimum amount of instruction in health education, to include child trafficking prevention and awareness (i.e. personal safety) human growth and development, substance use prevention, internet safety, HIV/AIDS, bullying prevention, and other topics as specified in § 1003.42, F.S. and § 1003.46, F.S. and § 1006.147, F.S.

Any student whose parent presents a written request to the principal shall be exempted from the teaching of reproductive health or any disease, including HIV/AIDS, its symptoms, development, and treatment. A student so exempted may not be penalized by reason of that exemption (§1003.42(3), F.S.).

3. Physical Education Requirements

All students in grades K-5 will receive a minimum of 150 minutes of physical education per week (§ 1003.455, F.S.).

4. Life Skills Education

Life skills education shall be embedded within the content of other standards for students in Kindergarten through fifth grade (§ 1003.42(2)(n), F.S.). Life skills build confidence, support mental and emotional health, and enable students to overcome challenges.

5. Recess

All students in kindergarten – fifth grade shall receive 20 minutes of recess daily.

6. State Required Performance Expectations and Assessments

The Florida Statewide Assessments Portal is available for districts, schools, students, parents and the general public to access information about the Florida ELA, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies assessments. The portal serves as the primary location for school and district administrators to access resources for test administration and to conduct activities related to testing, test management and reporting. To access general information about the state assessments and links to other FSA websites and resources, go to <http://fsassessments.org/>. The State of Florida's official source for standards information, course descriptions and standards resources is CPALMS.

Pursuant § 1008.22 F.S., participation in the state assessment program is mandatory for all students attending public schools.

B. Early Childhood/Preschool Programs

Polk County Schools' Early Childhood Program provides developmentally appropriate, standards-based instruction that addresses the young child's needs. Our high-quality early childhood classrooms deliver a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children and responds to the needs of the student's families and their community. Polk County Public Schools offer several different early childhood programs for 3- and 4-year-old children, including Head Start, Title One, and VPK, located at designated elementary schools. Each program has eligibility requirements that are unique to that program. Parents can access

enrollment steps to apply for PCPS Early Childhood Program on the PCBS website at <https://polkschoolsfl.com/earlychildhood/> or call (863)648-3051.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded, comprehensive child development program for at-risk students. Eligibility is based on the child's age and family income. Children must be three or four years of age on or before September 1 of the enrollment school year. Family income must meet the criteria as published in the Federal Poverty Guidelines. In addition, children who are in foster care, homeless, or receiving public assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Supplemental Security Income are also considered eligible for Head Start. Upon entry into the program, each child receives required screenings to assess overall health and developmental strengths and/or needs to include indications of delays or disabilities.

Title One

Title One is a federally funded, early childhood program designed to improve cognitive, health, and social-emotional outcomes for children within a school's zoned area to provide prerequisite skills and dispositions for learning to enable them to benefit from later school experiences. Children must be four years of age and live in the providing school's zone.

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

The Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) is a state-funded program and was implemented to give all 4-year-olds access to a quality prekindergarten experience. Students must reside in Florida and be 4 years of age on or before September 1 of the enrollment year. A child who will be five years of age after February 1 and before September 2 is eligible for VPK or kindergarten if there was no prior enrollment in either program. Parents have the option of enrolling eligible children in a school-year program (540 instructional hours) or a summer program (300 instructional hours). Seats are limited, and early application is encouraged.

Prekindergarten for Exceptional Student Education

provides specialized instruction and interventions for children with a developmental delay or disability who are aged three to five years old. The program is designed to increase inclusive opportunities and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for the youngest learners. Interventions are embedded in the curriculum as appropriate for each child. The continuum of services may include the following options:

- part-time, (1/2-day services)
- itinerant in-school services
- full-day inclusion classroom services
- full-day separate class services

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM OF STUDY
Grade PreK
Language, literacy, English language Acquisition
Mathematics
Science and Technology
Social Studies
Social-emotional
Cognitive (Approaches to Learning)
Physical (large/small motor)
Art

C. Promotion and Placement

Student progression in grades K–5 is determined by a variety of indicators, as defined by the adopted state standards and district expectations. These expectations include specific levels of student performance on locally determined assessments, including universal screenings and ongoing progress monitoring, and results of statewide assessments, as defined by the Commissioner of Education.

Promotion from one grade level to the next is based upon each student’s mastery of state standards in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

The evaluation of each student’s progress will be based upon the student’s classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information. The final decision as to grade placement is the responsibility of the principal. The only exception is the Mandatory Grade 3 Retention (§ 1008.25(5)(b) F.S.). When establishing student eligibility requirements, principals and school districts must consider, at a minimum:

1. The student’s performance on a locally determined assessment or a statewide, standardized assessment administered pursuant to § 1008.22.F.S.;
2. Recommendations from one or more of the student’s teachers in core-curricula courses as outlined in § 1003.01 (14)(a)-(e), F.S.

No student shall be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that amount to social promotion or administrative placement. This does not prevent students from being promoted based upon exemption according to state law and district policy.

The student’s growth toward the accomplishment of state and district identified minimum levels of performance in reading, writing, mathematics, and science shall be the primary consideration in promotion/retention decisions. Student progression decisions consider the effectiveness of core instruction and the student’s response to evidence-based instruction/interventions implemented with fidelity.

All students should be afforded every opportunity to meet achievement expectations. Students not meeting district/state identified minimum levels of performance must receive intensive instructional support in order to accelerate the student's rate of progress towards standards.

Every effort must be considered to maintain a student's appropriate grade placement using all available student data and the following strategies:

- Promote and remediate in the following school year with intensive remediation.
- Remediate before the beginning of the next school year and promote.
- Review IEP goals of students with disabilities to determine if retention would provide additional time to master objectives that are required for regular education students.
- Promote English Language Learner (ELL) students for academic progress.

A fifth-grade student may not be considered for midyear promotion to sixth grade due to the credit requirements to complete middle school.

All student retentions must be submitted to the Regional Superintendent.

1. Grade 3 Good Cause Exemptions

Pursuant §1008.25(6) (b) F.S.: the local school board may exempt a student from mandatory retention for good cause. The Board's policy regarding exemptions will be implemented by the principal with the approval of the Superintendent for third grade students.

Good cause is defined as conditions that exist such that retention would be more adverse for the student than promotion. The Board may waive the promotion requirements for a third-grade student when any one or more of the following conditions apply:

- Students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an ESOL program based on the initial date of entry into a school in the United States.
- Students with disabilities whose Individual Educational Plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment test for reading is not appropriate.
- Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative assessment approved by the Florida Board of Education.
- A student who demonstrates through a student portfolio that he or she is performing at least at Level 2 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment.
- Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide reading assessment and who have an IEP or a Section 504 Plan that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3. It is not required that the student be identified as a student with disabilities for two (2) years to qualify for this good cause exemption. However, the student must have received remediation for a reading deficiency for more than two (2) years and have been previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3.
- Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two (2) or

more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3, for a total of two (2) years. A student may not be retained more than once in third grade. If promoted under this exemption, intensive reading instruction must include an altered instructional day based on the deficiencies identified during the Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) process that includes specialized diagnostics information and specific reading strategies.

a. Reading Portfolio Promotion

Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the **B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Standards** in reading is equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the grade 3 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment. Such evidence shall be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the **B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Standards** that are assessed by the grade 3 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment. A school must immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio when a student in grade 3 is identified as being at risk of retention or upon the request of the parent, whichever occurs first. The portfolio must meet the following criteria:

1. Be selected by the student's teacher;
2. Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
3. Include evidence that the **benchmarks** assessed by the grade 3 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment have been met. Evidence is to include grade-level passages that are approximately fifty (50) percent literary text and fifty (50) percent informational text, and that are between 100-700 words with an average of 500 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum or teacher-prepared assessments **that are aligned with the B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Standards**;
4. Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the **B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Standards** that are assessed by the grade 3 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment. **For each benchmark, there must be at least eight (8) items assessed and the student must demonstrate seventy (70) percent mastery for all items assessed per benchmark**; and
5. Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

b. Transitional Instructional Setting

Each school must provide a student who has been retained in grade 3 the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such setting must specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of the reading

deficiency. Students who are retained in grade 3 a second time must be placed in a 3/4 grade level combination to ensure that grade 4 curriculum is being provided in subject areas where the student does not have a deficiency.

c. Request for Good Cause Exemption

Requests for good cause exemptions from mandatory retention requirements must follow this process:

- Teacher submits documentation to the principal that promotion of the student is appropriate and is based on the student's academic record. Documentation shall consist of the existing Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) or student portfolio.
- Principal reviews and discusses the documentation with the teacher and determines promotion or retention.
- Principal recommends promotion, in writing, through the designated supervisor, who will then submit the recommendation to the superintendent for third grade students.
- Superintendent, or designee, shall accept or reject the principal's recommendation in writing.

Retained students whose reading deficiency, as determined by the state reading assessment, has not been remediated by the end of third grade must be provided intensive interventions in reading. This intensive intervention must include evidence based instructional strategies, participation in the school district's summer reading camp, and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist those students in becoming successful readers, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the next grade.

The school district shall:

- Provide written notification to the parent of any student who is retained in 3rd grade that his or her child has not met the achievement level required for promotion and the reasons the child is not eligible for a good cause exemption. The notification must comply with the notification of parents with students who have a substantial reading deficiency and must include a description of proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.
- Conduct a review of Progress Monitoring Plans (PMP) for all students who did not score above Achievement Level 1 on the reading portion of the statewide reading assessment and did not meet the criteria for one of the good cause exemptions.
- This review shall address additional supports and services needed to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.
- The school district shall require a student portfolio to be completed for each student.
- Provide students who are retained with intensive instructional services and high yield strategies to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency, including a minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically evidence based reading instruction and other strategies which may include, but are not limited to:
 - small group instruction.
 - reduced teacher-student ratios.
 - more frequent progress monitoring.

- tutoring or mentoring.
- transition classes containing 3rd and 4th grade students.
- extended school day, week, or year.
- summer reading camps.
- Provide students who are retained with a high-performing teacher as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals.
- In addition to required reading enhancement and acceleration strategies, provide parents of students to be retained with at least one of the following instructional options that may include, but are not limited to:
 - supplemental tutoring in scientifically evidence based reading services in addition to the regular reading block, including tutoring before and/or after school,
 - a Read at Home plan as outlined in the PMP which includes strategies for parents that can be utilized at home to help their child succeed in reading,
 - a mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.

Summer Reading Camp

Retained third grade students must be provided intensive interventions in reading to improve the student's specific reading deficiency and prepare the student for promotion to the next grade. These interventions must include participation in the school district's summer reading camp, which must incorporate evidence-based, explicit, systematic, and multisensory reading instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and other strategies prescribed by the school district. Third grade students participating in the school district's summer reading camp must be provided with a highly effective teacher as determined by the teacher's performance evaluation under s. 1012.34, F.S., and the teacher must also be certified or endorsed in reading.

(s. 1008.25(7), F.S.)

2. Mid-Year Promotion for Retained 3rd Graders

Midyear promotion of a retained 3rd grade student may occur once the student has demonstrated the ability to read at or above grade level and is ready to be promoted to 4th grade. Tools that may be used in reevaluating any student retained may include subsequent assessments, alternative assessments, and portfolio reviews in accordance with State Board of Education Rules. Such mid-year promotions of retained grade 3 students should occur during the first semester of the academic year. To be eligible for mid-year promotion, a student must demonstrate that he or she:

1. Is a successful and independent reader as demonstrated by reading at or above grade level;
2. Has progressed sufficiently to master appropriate fourth grade reading skills; and
3. Has met any additional requirements, such as satisfactory achievement in other curriculum areas, as determined by the policies of the district school board.

The criteria for students promoted on or before November 1 must provide a reasonable expectation that the student has mastery of grade 3 reading skills as presented in the Language Arts Florida Standards. Evidence is as follows:

1. Satisfactory performance on locally selected standardized assessment(s) measuring Language Arts Florida Standards;
2. Satisfactory performance on a state-approved alternative assessment as delineated in Rule 6A-1.094221, F.A.C., and described in Section C of this TAP; or
3. Successful completion of portfolio elements that meet all of the following requirements:
 - a. Be selected by the school district;
 - b. Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
 - c. Include evidence of mastery of the standards assessed by the grade 3 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment. Evidence can include successful completion of multiple-choice items and text-based responses, chapter or unit tests from the district adopted core reading curriculum or the state-provided third grade student portfolio. Portfolios should contain fifty (50%) percent literary and fifty (50%) percent informational texts; and
 - d. Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

The criteria for students promoted after November 1 must provide reasonable expectation that the student's progress is sufficient to master appropriate grade 4 level reading skills. These students must demonstrate proficiency levels in reading equivalent to the level necessary for beginning of grade 4. A retained third grade student is eligible for mid-year promotion if the student scores Level 2 or above on PM1 of the Grade 3 FAST ELA Reading and there is evidence the student is progressing sufficiently to master appropriate fourth grade reading skills.

The Progress Monitoring Plan for any retained third grade student who has been promoted mid-year to grade 4 must continue to be implemented for the entire academic year and, if necessary, for additional school years.

(s. 1008.25(7), F.S., and Rule 6A-1.094222, F.A.C.)

A fifth-grade student may not be considered for midyear promotion to sixth grade due to the academic requirements to complete middle school.

Elementary ACCEL Options

Polk County Schools provides academically challenging curricula and accelerated instruction to eligible elementary school students. Eligibility requirements and procedures have been established by the district. According to § 1002.3105, F.S., ACCEL options include, but are not limited to, whole grade and midyear promotion, subject matter acceleration, virtual instruction and the Credit Acceleration Program (CAP).

For the majority of students, in-class differentiation provides the learning opportunities needed for advanced students to be challenged. The students' commitment, desire for the program and maturity level must be considered as well as meeting the eligibility requirements. Parent permission is necessary for ACCEL options.

School principals are required to inform parents and students of the available ACCEL options and the student eligibility requirements. Any student participating in an ACCEL option, by parent request, must do so with a performance contract executed by the student, parent, and principal (Contact School for form).

The principal has the responsibility for final decisions regarding placement based upon evidence of meeting all initial acceleration criteria identified above.

The following procedure must be followed to consider a student for any ACCEL option:

- The student's parent must submit a written request to the principal/designee of the student's school of enrollment.
- The parent/guardian must meet with the principal or designee to review the request and the student's eligibility for acceleration.
- If the request is granted based upon eligibility at the parent's request, the parent/guardian and student must agree to a performance contract prior to acceleration being granted.

a. Subject-Matter Acceleration and Eligibility Requirements

A parent request must be submitted in writing to principal/designee prior to end of the first nine weeks at the beginning of the school year. Subject-matter acceleration places the student with students at a more advanced grade level (on campus or virtual) for one or more subjects for a part of a day without being assigned to a higher grade, or the student works for part of a day on material above grade level for one or more subjects within his/her regular classroom.

The following minimum requirements must be met in order to be considered eligible for subject-matter acceleration. Any exception to the eligibility

requirements must be approved by the Superintendent or designee.

- **Assessment Results:**
 - Grades K–3: Mastery of the state standards for ELA and/or mathematics as demonstrated on a district-adopted assessment with a district-determined cut-score will determine eligibility for further assessments
 - Grades 4–5: Mastery of the state standards for ELA and mathematics as demonstrated by earning the highest achievement level on the state assessments. (may be waived for special exceptions and approved by the Superintendent or designee).
- **Subject Grades:** Subject grades equivalent to an A (90% or higher) for the subject area(s) may be considered for acceleration.
- **Attendance:** No more than **3 unexcused** absences in a period of 30 calendar days or no more than **5 unexcused** absences in a period of 90 calendar days.
- **Additional standardized assessment:** Score at the 93rd national percentile on a district-issued national standardized assessment in the subject area.

b. Full-Year Acceleration and Eligibility Requirements

A parent request for consideration for possible promotion must be submitted in writing to principal/designee by May 31st for the following school year. Full-year acceleration advances the student at the end of the school year from one grade to a grade higher than normal matriculation allows. The following are the minimum requirements to be considered eligible for full-year promotion. Any exception to the eligibility requirements must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer or designee.

- **Assessment Results:**
 - Grades K, 1, and 2: Mastery of state standards in ELA and mathematics as measured by assessments.
 - **Grade 3:** Full year acceleration is not allowable for students in grade 3 because of state testing requirements.
 - Grades 4–5: Mastery of the state standards for ELA and mathematics as demonstrated by a Level 4 or 5 on the state assessment.
- **Subject Grades:** Subject grades equivalent to A's (90% or higher) in all core subjects (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies).
- **Attendance:** No more than 5 absences in a period of 30 calendar days or no more than 10 absences in a period of 90 calendar days.
- **Conduct:** Grades of "E" or "G" on the student's report card for the current or previous school year.
- **Teacher Recommendation:** A positive recommendation from the student's current grade level teachers.
- **School Counselor Recommendation:** A positive recommendation from the student's current school counselor.
- **Additional standardized assessment:** Score at the 93rd national percentile or higher on a district-issued national standardized assessment (to occur during the summer).

c. *Mid-Year Acceleration and Eligibility Requirements*

A parent request for consideration for possible promotion must be submitted in writing to principal/designee by November 30th for the following school year. Full-year acceleration advances the student at the end of the school year from one grade to a grade higher than normal matriculation permits. The following are the minimum requirements to be considered eligible for full-year promotion. Any exception to the eligibility requirements must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer or designee.

- Assessment Results:
 - Grades 1 and 2 Mastery of state standards in ELA and mathematics as measured by assessments.
 - Grade 3: Full year acceleration is not allowable for students in grade 3 because of state testing requirements.
 - Grades 4–5: Mastery of the state standards for ELA and mathematics as demonstrated by a Level 4 or 5 on the state assessments.
- Subject Grades: Subject grades equivalent to A's (90% or higher) in all core subjects (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies).
- Attendance: No more than 5 absences in a period of 30 calendar days or no more than 10 absences in a period of 90 calendar days.
- Conduct: Grades of an "E" or "G" on the student's report card for the current or previous school year.
- Teacher Recommendation: A positive recommendation from the student's current grade level teachers.
- School Counselor Recommendation: A positive recommendation from the student's current school counselor.
- Additional standardized assessment: Score at the 93rd national percentile or higher on a district-issued national standardized assessment.

In addition to meeting the above eligibility criteria for Full-Year and Mid-Year Acceleration, please note:

- A Kindergarten student may not be considered for whole year or mid-year promotion to first grade. Pursuant § 1003.21 F.S. the student must have attained the age of 6 years on or before September 1 of the school year and has satisfactorily completed the requirements for kindergarten.
- A second grade student may be considered for mid-year promotion to third grade with the expectation that the student will take the third grade state Reading assessment and/or other state mandated test. If he/she scores a level 1, he/she has the same rights and privileges for exemptions as any other third grader. If he/she scores at the minimum state designated proficiency level or above on the required state Reading assessments, the student will be eligible for promotion to 4th grade at the end of the year.
- A fifth grade student may not be considered for mid-year promotion to sixth grade due to the course requirements to complete middle school.

3. Parent Requests for Acceleration Operations Appeals Process

If a parent request is not granted by the school, the parent may submit a written

appeal to the superintendent or designee explaining why the request should be approved. The decision of the superintendent or designee is final.

Eligibility for Elementary ACCEL							
Grade Level	Assessment Results	Grades of "A" in Core Academics	When the Assessment is Administered	High performance on district determined qualifying norm-referenced assessment	Subject Matter	Mid-Year	Whole Year
K	ELA/Mathematics Unit Test	X	End of Quarters: 1, 2 and 4		X		
1 - 2	ELA/Mathematics Unit Test District Assessment 93%	X	End of Quarters: 2 and 4	X	X	X	X
3		X	End of Quarters: 2 and 4	X	X**		
4	Highest achievement level on the state assessment District Assessment 93%	X	End of Quarters: 2 and 4	X	X	X	X
5	Highest achievement level on the state assessment District Assessment 93%	X	End of Quarters: 2 and 4	X	X		X

Note:

** Mathematics and science only due to statutory requirements for grade 3 ELA state testing.

~ If testing occurs in the summer, the grade level used for the testing will be the rising grade level.

7. Remediation and Progress Monitoring

A student who is not meeting the school district or state requirements for satisfactory performance in English Language Arts and mathematics must be covered by one of the following plans:

1. A federally required student plan such as an individual education plan;

2. A schoolwide system of progress monitoring for all students, except a student who scores Level 4 or above on the English Language Arts and mathematics assessments may be exempted from participation by the principal; or
3. An individualized progress monitoring plan. (§ 1008.25 (4) (b) F.S.).

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Students in Kindergarten - grade 2 whose diagnostic or progress monitoring assessments in reading and/or mathematics indicate they are performing below grade level shall receive Tier 2 supplemental interventions which specifically addresses the targeted learning outcomes and provide students with additional time and support needed to master the specific skills, knowledge, and behaviors identified at Tier 1 to be essential to future success. Supplemental interventions are focused on specific learning targets, and placement into Tier 2 interventions must be timely, targeted, flexible, and should be guided by team-created common assessments aligned to grade-level essential standards. Tier 3 intensive interventions address the needs of students who enter the school year lacking the foundational skills needed to be able to learn at high levels. The focus is not on a specific learning standard, but on a series of skills that enable a student to comprehend instruction, access information, demonstrate understanding and behave appropriately.

Students in grades 3–5 who score at Level 1 or Level 2 on state assessments or below criterion on progress monitoring assessments in reading, and/or mathematics shall require Tier 2 supplemental interventions which specifically address essential grade-level standards. When a student is identified as not having mastered an essential learning outcome by the end of a unit, additional time and support must be provided without missing critical new core instruction. Tier 3 intensive interventions are required *in addition to* Tier 2 if a student is lacking universal foundational skills that include the ability to decode and comprehend grade-level text, write effectively, apply number sense, comprehend the English language, and consistently demonstrate social and academic behaviors. Because universal/foundational skills are developed over time, targeted students should receive this intensive remediation as part of their instructional day.

The student's proficiency shall be reassessed by district-adopted assessments at the beginning of the grade following the intensive instruction, and the student shall continue to be provided intensive instruction until the deficiency is remediated. Schools shall monitor progress frequently and adjust interventions based on data. Progress monitoring of students identified as having a deficiency in reading, writing, math or science shall identify the following:

- Specific skills and knowledge (learning targets) that remain unmastered, and group students by the target for intervention
- Determine who will provide the intervention, when, where, and how often the remedial instruction is to be offered
- Introduce students to the learning target. Begin instruction, intervention, or both; select an appropriate measure of progress
- analyze results, modify intervention if necessary, and discontinue intervention(s) once mastery has been achieved
- Analyze results and identify students in need of continued, intensified, or both interventions

1. Progress Monitoring for Students with Substantial Reading Deficiencies

Any student in Kindergarten through grade 3 who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading based upon screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring or assessment data; statewide assessments; or teacher observations must be provided intensive, explicit, systematic and multisensory reading interventions immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency.

Schools may not wait for a student to receive a failing grade at the end of a grading period to identify the student as having a substantial reading deficiency and initiate intensive reading interventions. In addition, a school may not wait until an evaluation conducted pursuant to s. 1003.57, F.S., is completed to provide appropriate, evidence-based interventions for a student whose parent submits documentation from a professional licensed under Chapter 490, F.S., which demonstrates that the student has been diagnosed with dyslexia. Such interventions must be initiated upon receipt of the documentation and based on the student's specific areas of difficulty as identified by the licensed professional. A student who has a substantial reading deficiency must be covered by a federally required student plan, such as an individual education plan or an individualized progress monitoring plan, or both, as necessary. s. 1008.25(4)(c), F.S.

A K-3 student is identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading if any of the following criteria are met:

- A. The student scores at the lowest achievement level/benchmark as identified by the publisher during a universal screening period, on an assessment listed in the district's approved District K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan, and those students scoring at the lowest achievement level/benchmark on the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system pursuant to s. 1008.25(8), F.S.;
- B. The student scores at the lowest achievement level/benchmark as identified by the publisher during progress monitoring administration at any time during the school year, on an assessment listed in the district's approved District K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan, and beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, and those students scoring at the lowest achievement level/benchmark on the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system pursuant to s. 1008.25(8), F.S.; or
- C. The student has demonstrated through consecutive formative assessments or teacher observation data, minimum skill levels for reading competency in one or more of the areas of phonological awareness; phonics; vocabulary, including oral language skills; reading fluency; and reading comprehension.

The coordinated screening and progress monitoring system, Grades 3-10 FAST ELA Reading, assesses end of the year grade-level expectations during each progress monitoring period. Therefore, for PM1 and PM2, it is highly likely there will be an increase in students scoring at the lowest achievement level (Level 1). Because the Grades 3-10 FAST ELA Reading assesses end of the year grade level expectations, a grade 3 student who scores at the lowest achievement level may not actually have a substantial reading deficiency. Therefore, for PM1 and PM2, it is recommended that districts use percentile scores to more accurately identify grade 3 students with a substantial reading deficiency. Percentile scores will be calculated by the Florida Department of Education and will be provided to districts at the close of each testing window. The district will follow state guidelines regarding percentiles that should be used to identify substantial reading deficiencies.

2. Content of Remedial Instruction

All remedial instruction shall include effective, standards-driven instruction.

If a student in any grade K–3 has been identified as having a deficiency in language arts, his/her progress monitoring must identify the specific areas of deficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, oral language, vocabulary and/or comprehension; the desired levels of performance in these areas; and the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance (§ 1008.25 (5) (a), F.S.). Schools shall provide tri-annual monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance using the district's identified progress monitoring assessments in fluency and silent reading comprehension.

Intensive instruction in reading shall be continued until a student's reading deficiency is remediated and shall include the following components:

- daily small-group instruction,
- diagnosis/prescription targeted to specific skill development,
- variety of opportunities for repetitions (repeated exposures),
- smaller chunks of text or content,
- guided and independent reading practice,
- skill development and practice integrated into all activities,
- frequent monitoring, and
- criterion-based evaluation of success.

3. Duration of Remediation

Each student who does not meet minimum performance expectations for the statewide assessment tests in ELA, science, and mathematics must continue remedial instruction or supplemental instruction until expectations are met or the student graduates from high school or is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

4. Parent or Guardian Refusal for Remediation

The school district has the authority and responsibility to advise a student's course of study. Statute requires a school to develop an intervention plan in consultation with the parent or guardian, but it does not require parent or guardian approval, nor does it give the parent or guardian the right to veto a plan for intervention. The school is held accountable for the student's success and may implement an intervention plan without a parent's or guardian's approval. Students who require an IEP, however, must have parent or guardian approval of the plan.

If the parent or guardian refuses to participate in the remedial strategies detailed in the intervention plan because he or she believes the strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent or guardian may appeal to the principal. The principal shall provide a hearing officer, and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the principal. Consistent with school board rules and in accordance with state statute § 1012.28 (5) F.S., the Superintendent has designated the principal of the school as the final authority in the placement of students in programs or classes.

The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading based upon screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, assessment data, statewide assessments or teacher observations, must be notified in writing of the following:

1. That his or her child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading, including a description and explanation, in terms understandable to the parent, of the exact nature of the student's difficulty in learning and lack of achievement in reading.
2. A description of the current services that are provided to the child.
3. A description of the proposed intensive interventions and supports that will be provided to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.
4. That if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.
5. Strategies, including multisensory strategies, through a read-at-home plan the parent can use in helping his or her child succeed in reading.
6. That the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment is not the sole determiner of promotion and that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion.
7. The district's specific criteria and policies for student portfolios and the evidence required for a student to demonstrate mastery of Florida's academic standards for English Language Arts. A school must immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio when a student in grade 3 is identified as being at risk of retention or upon the request of the parent, whichever occurs first.
8. The district's specific criteria and policies for mid-year promotion. Mid-year promotion means promotion of a retained student at any time during the year of retention once the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.

9. Information about the student's eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative under s. 1003.485, F.S., and information on parent training modules and other reading engagement resources available through the initiative.
10. **The process to request and receive a New Worlds Reading scholarship, subject to available funds (s. 1002.411, F.S.).**

After initial notification, schools should notify the parent monthly of the student's progress in response to the intensive interventions and supports. Communications must be in writing and must identify any additional interventions or supports that will be implemented to accelerate their child's progress if the interventions and supports already being implemented have not resulted in improvement.

Additionally, each school district shall provide written notification to the parent of a student who is retained in grade 3 that his or her child has not met the achievement level required for promotion and the reasons the child is not eligible for good cause exemption. This notification must comply with the aforementioned notification for parent of a student with a substantial deficiency in reading and must include a description of proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.

(s. 1008.25(4), F.S., 1008.25(5), F.S., s. 1008.25(7), F.S., s. 1002.411, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.053, F.A.C.)

5. Allocation of Remedial Resources (§ 1008.25 (3)(a)(3)(b) F.S.)

Allocation of remedial and supplemental instruction resources for students shall occur in the following priority:

- students who are deficient in reading by end of grade 3, then
- students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion.

XI. MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Program of Study: General Requirements for Grades 6, 7 and 8

Pursuant § 1003.4156, F.S., in order for a student to be promoted to high school from a school that includes middle grades 6, 7, and 8, the student must successfully complete the following 12 courses:

Middle Grades Curriculum (Grades 6–8)	
Courses	Required number of courses
English Language Arts	3
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3

1. Language Arts

Three years of successful completion of language arts are required for promotion to high school. A middle grades student who scores below proficient on the statewide, standardized assessment for English Language Arts may be enrolled in and complete a remedial course the following year. Remediation courses will be determined by the student's test score and progress monitoring data related to decoding and text efficiency.

2. Mathematics

Students are required to successfully complete three middle grades or higher courses in mathematics for promotion to high school. A middle grades student who scores below Achievement Level 3 on the state mathematics assessment may receive remediation the following year determined by the student's test score and progress monitoring data related to mathematics skills. Each school that includes middle grades must offer at least one high school level mathematics course for which students may earn high school credit.

Students who pass course work for the high school Algebra I Honors course but fail the Algebra I End-Of-Course (EOC) assessment will receive credit for the course provided their final course grade, which includes the EOC as 30 percent, is a passing grade. Students who pass the course work for Algebra I Honors in middle school with a C or D but fail to pass the Algebra I EOC before they enter high school will retake Algebra I Honors in their freshman year in high school. Students must pass the Algebra I End-Of-Course (EOC) assessment or earn a comparative score on a state approved assessment to meet graduation requirements.

3. Science

Students are required to successfully complete three middle grades or higher courses in science.

4. Social Studies

Three years of successful completion of middle grades or higher courses in social studies is required for promotion to high school. One of these courses must be at least a one-semester civics education course that includes the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States. (If a student transfers into a Florida public school after the beginning of the second semester of eighth grade, the student is not required to meet the Civics education requirement for promotion). Each student's performance on the statewide, standardized assessment in Civics education constitutes 30 percent of the student's final course grade.

5. Physical Education and Health

In accordance with §1003.4156, F.S., students are required to enroll in one semester of physical education in grades 6 through 8. Students may waive the requirement if they meet any of the following criteria:

- The student is enrolled in a remedial course.
- The student's parent/guardian requests in writing that the student enroll in another course from among the courses offered as options by the school district by completing the *Middle School Physical Education Waiver*.
- The student's parent/guardian indicates in writing that the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement through the *Middle School Physical Education Waiver* and completion of the *Physical Activity Log*.

Click here for the [Physical Education Wavier](#).

Click here for the [Physical Activity Log](#).

The comprehensive health education curriculum for students in grades 7 through 12 must include a teen dating violence and abuse component including, the definition of dating violence and abuse, the warning signs of dating violence and abusive behavior, the characteristics of healthy relationships, measures to prevent and stop dating violence and abuse, and community resources available to victims of dating violence and abuse.

School districts must annually provide a minimum of five (5) hours of data-driven instruction to students in grades 6-12 related to civic and character education and life skills education through resiliency education using the health education standards adopted in Rule 6A.1.09401 F.A.C.

6. Elective Program

The remainder of the middle school experience will include elective courses. Electives may include but are not limited to: Fine Arts, World Languages, Technology, and Physical Education.

B. Enrollment and Assignment of Transfer Students

6A-1.09942 State Uniform Transfer of Students in the Middle Grades.

The purpose of this rule is to establish uniform procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and courses for students entering Florida's public schools composed of middle grades 6, 7, and 8 from out of state or out of country. The procedures shall be as follows:

- Grades earned and offered for acceptance shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if required by the receiving school's accreditation. If validation of the official transcript is deemed necessary, or if the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, successful completion of courses shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in subsection (2) of this rule.
- Validation of courses shall be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and should be passing each required course at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have courses validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in subsection (3) of this rule.
- Alternative Validation Procedure. If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives identified in the district student progression plan shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal, and parent:
 - Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee;
 - Demonstrated performance in courses taken at other public or private accredited schools;
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally-normed standardized subject area assessments;
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on a statewide, standardized assessment; or
 - Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school.

1. Transfer of Credits with an Official Transcript

Transfer of Credits with an Official Transcript: Courses/Credits from the previous school shall be honored when submitted on an official transcript. An official transcript is a document on school letterhead and/or embossed with the school seal. It shall be sent electronically or by mail and include the signature of a school administrator of the school where the credit was earned. It should clearly identify the school, the student, the course, date the course was taken, credit earned, and grade in each course. An official transcript may be hand delivered if it is in a sealed and embossed envelope (§1003.25(3), F.S.; 6A-109941 FAC). Home Education parents are responsible as the school administrator to provide to the school a transcript which provides the information noted above. The parent may type or hand-write this information, sign, and date.

2. Transfer of Credits without an Official Transcript

Students transferring into the Polk County Public Schools without an official transcript will be required to validate their current course or grade placement within the first forty-five days of enrollment and verified through the following:

- District Assessment;
- Classroom performance and achievement data level from grade level/subject tests such as teacher-made or final quarterly exams, minimum grade equivalent score on a district approved reading assessments and/or district approved math assessment;
- Portfolio evaluation;
- Recommendation of the school principal.

Schools are encouraged to contact K – 12 School Counseling Department for support.

3. Grade Level Placement

- Polk County Public Schools will honor the middle school grade level placement for a transfer student enrolling from another school district or state. However, the student will be required to successfully complete the twelve academic core courses for promotion to high school, as mandated by the Florida Department of Education, § 1003.4156, F.S.

C. Grading System

According to §1003.43, F.S., grades will be reported by letter grade or numerical score in recording student progress as follows:

Letter Grade	Numerical Score	Description
A	90–100	Outstanding Progress
B	80–89	Above-average Progress
C	70–79	Average Progress
D	60–69	Lowest Acceptable Progress
F	0–59	Failure

The grading system and interpretation of letter grades used for students in public schools in grades 6–12 shall be as follows:

- Grade "A" equals 90 percent through 100 percent, has a grade-point average value of 4, and is defined as "outstanding progress."
- Grade "B" equals 80 percent through 89 percent, has a grade-point average value of 3, and is defined as "above-average progress."
- Grade "C" equals 70 percent through 79 percent, has a grade-point average value of 2, and is defined as "average progress."
- Grade "D" equals 60 percent through 69 percent, has a grade-point average value of 1, and is defined as "lowest acceptable progress."
- Grade "F" equals 0 (zero) percent through 59 percent, has a grade-point average value of 0 (zero), and is defined as "failure."
- Grade "I" equals 0 (zero) percent, has a grade-point average value of 0 (zero), and is defined as "incomplete."

Students who enroll in school or class late shall be allowed to make up the classwork. In order to receive full semester credit, a student must be enrolled in any school a minimum of forty-five days.

D. Honor Roll Format

The Honor Roll for all Polk County Middle and High Schools will be calculated and listed on the basis of grade point average (GPA) for each nine weeks. School procedures for yearly honor awards based on grade point average will be published in the school's student handbook. Weighted grades as defined by the Student Progression Plan apply to grades 9 –12. Regardless of GPA, no student may be on the Honor Roll who has made a D or an F during the current grading period. The following divisions for Honor Roll are recommended:

3.000 - 3.199	Honor Roll
3.200 - 3.499	Honor Roll with Honors Recognition
3.500 - 3.999	Honor Roll with High Honors Recognition
4.000 - above	Honor Roll with High Honors with Distinction

E. High School Courses Taken in Middle School

Students in middle grades may enroll in selected senior high school courses for the purposes of pursuing a more challenging program of study. Such courses are considered when computing grade point averages and rank in class. Credits earned will be applied toward the total credits needed for graduation, college admission, or for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements. All high school credit courses taken in the middle school will be included in their high school transcript. Factors to be considered in taking high school courses in the middle school include the impact on the students' GPA and subsequent rank in class, the possible lack of recognition by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for senior high school courses taken in a grade below grade 9, and the benefit of retaking a course in which skills have not been mastered. Courses taken will remain a part of a student's middle school record, as well as the student's high school record. The student will earn the high school credit if they meet the minimum grade required for both semesters of the course, including any associated state or district mandated assessments.

Middle school students may retake the high school course if they earn a C, D, or F in the high school course while in middle school. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student's grade point average. Any course grade not replaced according to a district forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation.

If a middle school student's cumulative course average is **less than 75%** at the end of the first quarter grading period, the school administrator will request a conference with the teacher and parent/guardian to develop an individual Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) to monitor the student's improvement. A second conference will be scheduled at the end of the first semester to reassess performance and course placement of the student for the remainder of the school year.

F. Grading System and Reporting Procedures

1. Promotion and Retention

Academic subjects required for promotion per the Florida A++ Legislation are defined as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Pursuant § 1003.4156 F.S., in order for a student to be promoted to high school from a school that includes middle grades 6, 7, and 8, the student must successfully complete 12 core academic courses to include 3 courses in each of the following academic areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (to include Civics).

If at any time, a student is not successful in completing a course, the school will immediately enroll the student in a grade or course recovery program. The school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will convene to develop and implement a plan with supports for the student. The plan will specifically address areas of needs, appropriate supports and interventions. The school must monitor the student's progress and the effectiveness of the supports provided to the students and document the outcomes.

At the end of each nine week grading period, if a student is not meeting the state or district requirements for promotion in the courses of ELA, mathematics, science or social studies a Progress Monitoring Plan must be put into place immediately to support remediation, monitored throughout the school year, and placed in the student's cumulative folder. § 1008.25, F.S.

Parents must be notified when, during a reporting period, it is apparent that the student is failing or in danger of failing. In addition to report cards and interim reports, notifications may include letters, documented telephone calls, emails, and/or parent conferences. The opportunity for a conference with the teacher or principal must be provided to the parent of any student who may be retained.

The school's promotion and retention committee will review all students' data who do not meet the requirements for promotion.

Student Promotions

- 6th grade students with at least 2 core course completions and 1 year in middle school may be promoted to grade 7
- 7th grade students with at least 4 core course completions and 2 years in middle school may be promoted to grade 8
- 8th grade students must have successfully completed all 12 core academic courses to include 3 courses in each of the following academic areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (to include Civics).

All student retentions must be submitted to the Regional Superintendent who will review the student's data with the district's promotion and retention team. The Superintendent or his or her designee shall make the final determination regarding promotion.

2. Transitional Courses for Middle Grades (Over Age)

In accordance with state statute (§ 1008.25, F.S.), an alternative education program option for students in grades 6–8 who are two or more years overage and underperforming is available in identified schools to address all of the barriers to graduation through a comprehensive approach. By leveraging federal, state, and local funding sources, this program will provide individualized support to help students **graduate on time and be ready to fulfill their college and career goals**. Eligible students will be identified through a referral process. This alternative path for progression has been designed to provide students who have been unable to meet promotional requirements in the basic instructional program the opportunity to remediate and achieve grade level proficiency. Students will be provided intensive instruction in numeracy and literacy using research-based, structured curriculum with measurable outcomes.

3. Alternative Programs for Over-Aged Students to Qualify for Promotion

The district provides alternative programs for students who have multiple retentions to support an accelerated progression. See Special Programs Section.

G. Assessment

Pursuant § 1008.22, F.S., the primary purpose of the student assessment program is to provide student academic achievement and learning gains data to students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and school district staff. This data is to be used by districts to improve instruction; by students, parents, and teachers to guide learning objectives; by education researchers to assess national and international education comparison data; and by the public to assess the cost benefit of the expenditure of taxpayer dollars.

Participation in the statewide, standardized assessment program aligned to the core curricular content established in the state standards is mandatory for all school districts and all students attending public schools. All statewide, standardized assessments use developmental scale scores or scaled scores and achievement levels.

Pursuant § 1008.22 F.S., participation in the assessment program is mandatory for all students attending public schools.

XII. HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Florida Department of Education link:

<https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7764/urlt/GradRequireFSA.pdf>

Physical Education and Health: Health Opportunities through Physical Education (HOPE) is the one credit required physical education course which includes the integration of Health Education and Physical Education Standards and Benchmarks. Approved waivers from the Florida DOE for the required HOPE course include the following:

Participation in and successful completion of two years in a R.O.T.C. class (Year 1 waiver #1500450, Year 2 waiver # 1500460) waives the full one credit physical education requirement AND the full one credit performing arts requirement (waiver # 1500480).

Participation in and successful completion of two seasons of an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level and the completion of the *Interscholastic Athletic Participation Acknowledgement Form*. (Season 1 waiver #1500410, Season 2 waiver #1500420).

The one required credit of Physical Education including the integration of health can also be earned by completion of Personal Fitness through Polk Virtual School or Florida Virtual School **and** one of the following options

Participation in and successful completion of one semester of band with a grade of “C” or better that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity. (Waiver 1500440)

Participation in and successful completion of a year-long dance class with a grade of “C” or better;

Click this link to access the [Interscholastic Athletic Participation Acknowledgement](#).

One Online Course: Students may satisfy the online learning requirement required for a 24 credit diploma upon successful completion of the online component within the hybrid HOPE course, (15063200)

Polk County Public Schools does not recognize gap years during high school. There are many benefits students may gain by taking a gap year, however, gap years during high school are not permitted. Students are encouraged to participate in a traditional gap year that occur between the completion of a student’s senior year in high school and their first year in college.

Many students are on an accelerated academic track and earn high school credits in English and mathematics while enrolled in middle school resulting in students earning the minimum number of required credits for graduation prior to a student’s junior or senior year; however, all high school students are expected to enroll in and earn an English course and a mathematics course each year of high school. Requests for an exemption from an English and/or mathematics course must be submitted in writing to the school principal. Exemptions must be approved by the school principal, regional

superintendent, content-specific senior director, and the chief academic officer. Requests must be submitted no later than two weeks prior to the start of the school year and must include an academic reason for the exemption. Approval/denial will be sent to the high school principal no later than the last day of summer break.

For a 24 Credit and ACCEL Program: One credit in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or practical arts is required. The practical arts course must incorporate artistic content and techniques of creativity, interpretation, and imagination. Eligible practical arts courses are identified in the Course Code Directory. To determine if a college course offered through dual enrollment may satisfy the Fine or Performing arts graduation requirement please contact Career and Technical Education.

B. Grading System and Reporting Procedures

Determination of Standard Mastery

A student will have demonstrated mastery of student performance standards for a district approved course by earning a passing score in the course. This score (minimum of 60 percent) and the procedures to be used to determine semester and yearly averages will be in accordance with the procedures as outlined in the Student Progression Plan. Accommodations and modifications must be in place for students with disabilities and English Language Learners, as indicated on the student's IEP and LEP, respectively.

1. Eligible Students – Mastery of Performance Standards

Students must be present for at least 135 hours of bona fide instruction to be eligible for a full credit (67.5 hours for a half credit). Students who do not meet the minimum instructional time requirement for earning credit may be denied credit. Please refer to the Attendance section of the Student Progression Plan for additional information.

C. Assessment

Student assessment and promotion in Polk County's public schools are based upon an evaluation of each student's achievement in terms of appropriate instructional goals. The basis for making the determination should reflect consideration of the following: progress tests, classroom assignments, daily observation, standardized tests, state assessment, and other objective data. The primary responsibility for determining each student's level of performance and ability to function academically, socially and emotionally at the next grade level is that of the classroom teacher, subject to review and approval of the principal.

Students enrolled in Biology, US History, Geometry, and Algebra 1 will take a state End-Of-Course (EOC) exam. Exam results will be 30% of the student's overall grade.

In accordance with section (s.) 1008.22, Florida Statutes (F.S.), all students enrolled in grade 10 are required to participate in the grade 10 ELA assessment and all students enrolled in Algebra 1 or an equivalent course are required to participate in the Algebra 1 EOC assessment, regardless of whether they have a passing concordant or comparative score on file.

Click the Statewide Assessments Information link below:

D. Civic Literacy Requirement

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, students taking United States Government will be required to take the assessment of civic literacy pursuant to section [§ 1007.25\(4\), Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#). Students who earn a passing score on the civic literacy assessment in the high school course will be exempt from the postsecondary civic literacy assessment as required by s. 1007.25(4), F.S.

E. Graduation Requirements for Certain Students in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, students who have been enrolled in an ESOL program for less than two school years and have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except the passage of any must-pass assessment under [§1003.4282](#) or [§1008.22, F.S.](#), or alternate assessment, may meet the requirement to pass the statewide, standardized grade 10 English Language Arts assessment by satisfactorily demonstrating grade-level expectations on formative assessments, in accordance with State Board of Education rule.

F. Maximum Age for High School Students

High school students pursuing a standard high school diploma must be able to graduate from high school prior to their 20th birthday. Permission for students to attend high school to pursue a regular high school diploma after their 20th birthday will be made on an individual basis at the Superintendent's or designee's discretion.

A student with a disability who does not qualify for a waiver or exemption may choose to remain in school until achieving a standard diploma or reaching age 22, whichever occurs first.

G. Career and Technical Education

According to the FLDOE, the **Career & Technical Education (CTE) Programs** department is responsible for developing and maintaining educational programs that prepare individuals for occupations important to Florida's economic development. Programs are organized into different career clusters (Agri-science, Business, Hospitality, Education, etc.) and are available in middle school, high school, district technical schools, and the Florida College System throughout the state. With the help of partners in education, business and industry, and trade associations, each program includes the academic and technical skills required to be successful in today's economy.

A listing of available programs in Polk County can be found here <https://polkschoolsfl.com/cte/> or by contacting the Career and Technical Education office. Students in the CTE Programs are eligible for industry certification exams, as well as dual enrollment opportunities. Information about eligible industry certifications can be found at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/cape-secondary/>. This list changes frequently and should be consulted as a reference for program planning.

These **CTE Programs** serve as the foundation for the development of **Career Academies**. The goal of a Career Academy is to increase student achievement and graduation while focusing on career preparation. The academy setting allows for completions within the CTE program in a small learning communities while equipping students with job skills ready for college or career. See page [79] for specific information about applying to and attending a Career Academy or Pre-academy.

CTE students are eligible to participate in Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs), which are co-curricular in nature and an extension of classroom curriculum.

Schools interested in developing or closing a CTE program or transitioning to a Career Academy must complete the Opening/Closing of a CTE Program/Academy form found here: [CTE Program/Academy Form](#)

H. Course Substitutions

1. Career Education Course Substitutions

A course that has been used to substitute in one subject area may not be used to substitute for any other subject area. Course substitutions may not count towards State University System admissions requirements.

§ 1003.4282, F.S., authorizes the substitution of up to two (2) mathematics credits (MA) and one (1) equally rigorous science (EQ) credit towards the high school graduation for a student receiving a passing core on an industry certification examination. Only one substitution per industry certification attained is allowed. It is important to note that one qualifying industry certification attainment equates to one substitution credit. A student would need to earn three distinct industry certifications tied to college credit in order to earn the maximum three substitution credits (two for math, one for science). The courses that are tied to Math and Science course substitution may be found at

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z_rByLIVjHUCQcA5UIWVZMfRp8YYrtvg/edit?usp=sharing&oid=108256328303048337069&rtpof=true&sd=true

The eligible industry certifications that are tied to statewide college credit may be found at

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/industry-certification.stml>

I. Community Service Program

High school students may receive one-half credit (for each 75 hours served) in a voluntary public service elective course (05003700) or in a voluntary school/community service course (21043300) for a maximum of 1 credit. For both programs, students are required to complete a Community Service Plan that describes the social problem being served, the plan for personal involvement and a final evaluation of the service experience. A maximum of one credit may be earned for community service. For more information on community service and high school credit, awards, and hours that may be counted, please see the Community Service Program brochure.

The time (hours) high school students dedicate to course-based service-learning activities may be counted toward meeting community service requirements for graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

Information and applications for community service projects may be obtained by contacting the school counselor and/or visit: <https://www.fldoe.org/>

J. Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

For more information regarding Florida Bright Futures, please click on the below link or visit <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPHome/SAPHome?url=home>

K. Acceleration Mechanisms

During the course registration process, the parents of students in or entering high school will be notified of the opportunity and benefits of accelerated mechanisms. §1007.27, F.S. requires a variety of acceleration mechanisms be available for **secondary students attending public educational institutions**. The intent of acceleration is to shorten the time necessary for a student to complete the requirements associated with both a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree, broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, or increase the depth of study available for a particular subject. Acceleration mechanisms shall include, but are not limited to, dual enrollment and early admission as provided for in § 1007.271, F.S., advanced placement, the International Baccalaureate Program, and the Advanced International Certificate of Education Program. Students of Florida public secondary schools enrolled in accelerated mechanisms shall be exempt from the payment of any fees for administration of the examination regardless of whether or not the student achieves a passing score on the examination.

Advanced Placement (AP) shall be the enrollment of an eligible secondary student in a course offered through the AP program administered by the College Board. Postsecondary credit for an AP course shall be limited to students who score a minimum of 3, on a 5-point scale, on the corresponding AP Examination. Students enrolled and completing AP courses are required to complete the associated AP exams and portfolios unless parent/guardian requests withdrawal from AP course before the end of the first quarter of a year-long course, or prior to March 1st for second semester courses. Students failing to take an AP exam for a completed AP Course after the exam has been ordered from College Board may have to take a teacher-created Final Exam that may count as much as 30% of the student's semester grade.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Program shall be the curriculum in which eligible secondary students are enrolled in a program of studies offered through the IB Program administered by the International Baccalaureate Office.

The Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (pre-AICE) programs are international curricula and examination programs modeled on the British pre-college curriculum and "A-Level" exams. The AICE and pre-AICE programs are administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate.

The Dual Enrollment program is an acceleration program that allows high school students to simultaneously earn credit toward high school completion **and/or** a career certificate, or an associate or baccalaureate degree at a Florida public institution (§ 1007.271, F.S.). Student eligibility requirements for initial enrollment in college credit dual enrollment courses must include a 3.0 unweighted high school grade point average and the minimum score on the college placement test, or an approved alternative to common placement testing as outlined in the amendment to Rule 6A-10.0315 (Florida Administrative Code), adopted by the State Board of Education which indicates that the student is ready for college-level coursework. Student eligibility requirements for continued enrollment in college credit dual enrollment courses must include the maintenance of a 3.0 unweighted high school grade point average and the minimum postsecondary grade point average established by the postsecondary institution. Student eligibility requirements for initial and continued enrollment in career certificate dual enrollment courses must include a 2.0 unweighted high school grade point average. More specific information is available in the Dual Enrollment Articulation Agreements between the post-secondary institution and the Polk County School Board.

Credit from Institutions without a Board-approved Articulation Agreement

PCPS supports students in their desire to pursue specific areas of study outside beyond what may be provided with partner institutions. However, dual enrollment credit will only be posted to a student's high school academic record when there is a board-approved articulation agreement with the post-secondary institution awarding credit. Students may submit a written request for high school credits to be posted from a non-partner institution. The request must be submitted to the Regional Superintendent for High Schools at least four weeks prior to the start of the course/program. The Superintendent or their designee will make the final decision.

It is the responsibility of the student to provide post-secondary transcripts from credit-awarding institutions to colleges/universities when applying for admissions.

Students who participate in enrichment programs will not receive school credit.

L. Rank in Class and Grade Point Average (GPA)

Courses in Ranking

All courses taken which are not repeated in pursuit of a diploma option must be used in the determination of grade point average for class ranking. All courses counted toward fulfillment of graduation requirements must be a letter grade and/or numerical score as described in the Student Progression Plan.

Repeated courses may be (a) courses failed, retaken, and completed with a passing grade, or (b) courses repeated to improve a grade. Upon successful completion of a previously failed course, the passing grade will be recorded as the official grade for the course. Likewise, a course repeated to improve a grade shall have the higher grade recorded as the official grade for the course. Note: While replaced or improved grades are not utilized in the calculation of the student's grade point

average, an “X” designation will be assigned to these courses and appear on the transcript indicating that the course was repeated and passed or improved.

1. Procedures for Determining Minimum GPA Required for Graduation

A student must have a cumulative unweighted grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 for all courses for graduation. All courses attempted and not repeated shall be used in the calculation of the GPA with point values for semester letter grades used as follows:

A = 4.0	B = 3.0	C = 2.0	D = 1.0	F = 0.0
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This GPA shall be calculated through the district grading system at the end of each semester beginning as soon as the student takes and completes a high school credit-bearing course and shall be cumulative based on semester grades. Any student with a GPA below 2.0 should be provided assistance in achieving a 2.0 GPA through appropriate counseling on Polk County's forgiveness grade policy, extended school year programs, peer tutors, school and/or teacher sponsored help sessions, study skills classes, and after school tutorial programs.

Determination of GPA is made only to three places past the decimal with no rounding up or down (e.g., a GPA of 1.999 will not meet the 2.0 requirement). Semester letter grades will be used for computing GPA.

The following point values shall be used for computing GPA:

All Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Courses and Advanced International Certificate of Education as listed in the Florida Course Code Directory and dual enrollment college courses in which there is an honors or AP course in that subject area. (Weighting Factor 1.0)

A = 5.0	B = 4.0	C = 3.0	D = 2.0	F = 0.0
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Courses labeled Honors, Advanced or Pre-IB in the Florida Course Code Directory or the District Course Catalog and other courses designated as weighted.

A = 4.5	B = 3.5	C = 2.5	D = 1.5	F = 0.0
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Dual enrollment college courses must be recorded on the student's transcript according to the Florida common course numbering system for state community colleges and state universities.

All courses attempted and not repeated for graduation for a regular diploma shall be included in this calculation. There shall be no difference in the courses used in this calculation and the courses used to determine the minimum GPA (2.0) for graduation.

For courses failed, retaken, and completed with a passing grade, or for courses repeated to improve a grade, refer to other sections of the Student Progression Plan.

GPA and ranking shall be computed at the end of each semester, and again at the end of the twelfth grade, or when necessary for issuing transcripts. Final class ranking shall be posted on the student's automated transcript. Class rank shall be determined as follows:

Rank approx. 1	4.000 Joe Doe 1
	4.000 Mary Smith 1
Rank approx. 3	3.978 Julie Jones 3
	3.978 Tom Johnson 3
	3.978 Sam Williams 3
Rank approx. 6	3.800 Lucy Ayers 6

Although 3.800 is the third highest GPA in this example, there are five higher GPAs which makes the 3.800 the sixth highest ranking.

M. Graduation Honors for Standard Diploma Students

For graduation purposes this section applies to all students earning a standard diploma including students earning a standard diploma through Access Points.

Honors shall be determined by the following weighted grade point averages:

4.000 or higher	Honors with Distinction
3.500–3.999	High Honors
3.200–3.499	Honors

The class ranking at the end of the twelfth grade shall be used for determining honors at graduation, or when necessary for issuing transcripts. Each school will have a valedictorian and a salutatorian with other special honors optional. The individual high school may add additional honors categories. However, students receiving honors recognition must have at least a 3.200 weighted GPA. To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian, a student must have been enrolled at that school for at least the entire twelfth grade, to include receiving grades from the school all four grading periods of the senior year. Full-time Early Admission students will not be eligible to be valedictorian or salutatorian. Their class rank, however, is not affected.

Valedictorian and salutatorian are honorary titles given to the top honor students of a class who have not excluded themselves from being eligible for this honorary title by other provisions of this Plan (transfer students not enrolled the entire senior year, full time early admission students). Unless excluded by other provisions of this Plan, a student who obtains rank 1 is valedictorian and a student who obtains rank 2 is salutatorian. A tie for rank 1 produces co-valedictorian and no salutatorian. The rank 3 student, in the case of co-valedictorian, may be called an honorary salutatorian. Unusual circumstances involving valedictorian and salutatorian not covered specifically in writing in this Plan are to be referred to the Regional Superintendent or designee for final decision. This decision will be reached in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools and the principal of the students' school (School Board Policy 5000-5430). Students graduating under an 18-credit option will be included in the overall class ranking for their graduation year. All courses taken which are not repeated must be used in the determination of grade point average for class ranking. Students receiving either a 24-credit diploma or an 18-credit diploma are eligible to be valedictorian or salutatorian.

Rank in class shall be used for purposes of college admission, scholarship and/or financial aid application, and identifying honor graduates. Rank in class shall be given for the above purposes when requested by a college. Rank in class should only be given to students who request their rank. An aggregate list by rank shall not be disseminated and shall be used only for the purposes stated above (Reference School Board Policy 5430).

Marching order at graduation is as follows: Valedictorian, Salutatorian, balance of honor graduates earning a standard diploma in rank order and balance of the class in alphabetical order. Honor regalia shall be awarded to any student who earns a 3.2 GPA or higher, regardless of diploma or certificate designation.

Seniors having achieved a 3.8 or higher GPA at the end of their 7th semester shall be awarded a Superintendent's Scholar Award. First and foremost, students must be a non-charter, PCPS student on track to receive a Polk County Public School's diploma **AND** they must be on-time or early graduates (meaning in the 8th semester of high school or earlier)

- Traviss-with zoned school
- Ridge-with zoned school
- Gause-with Gause and the Gause principal
- Acceleration-with Acceleration and the Acceleration principal
- *Fresh Start-non-Polk County diploma*
- *West Area Adult-no participation*
- *East Area Adult-no participation*
- Bill Duncan-with zoned school
- Don Woods-with zoned school
- REAL-with REAL and REAL principal
- Polk Virtual-with PVS and PVS principal
- Doris Sanders-with Doris Sanders and awarded at the Doris Sanders graduation ceremony*
- Karen Siegel-with Karen Siegel and awarded at the Karen Siegel graduation ceremony*
- Jean O'Dell-with Jean O'Dell and awarded at the Jean O'Dell graduation ceremony*

*students at center schools may be beyond their 8th semester of high school

Graduation Ceremony Eligibility Criteria

Traviss Technical College and Ridge Technical College students may graduate with their zoned schools. Students at alternative sites who earn a Polk County diploma may graduate with their zoned school if the zoned school principal approves. Charters are invited to participate in Hall of Fame, but do not participate in Superintendent Scholars.

N. Retaking a Course to Improve a Grade

Forgiveness policies for required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F," or the equivalent of a grade of "D" or "F," with a grade of "C" or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. Forgiveness policies for elective courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F," or the equivalent of a grade of "D" or "F," with a grade of "C" or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in another course.

The only exception to these forgiveness policies shall be made for a student in the middle grades who takes any high school course for high school credit and earns a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F” or the equivalent of a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F.” In such cases, the district forgiveness policy must allow the replacement of the grade with a grade of “C” or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student’s grade point average. Any course grade not replaced according to a district forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average required for graduation.

Rule 6A-1.0955(3), FAC, requires each school district to keep a record of courses taken and a record of achievement, such as grades, unit, or certification of competence. Student records cannot be altered at any time unless it has been determined that the information is inaccurate or in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student. All courses and grades must be included on the student’s transcript. The authority for the school board to adopt a forgiveness policy does not provide the authority to alter a student’s record to delete the forgiven course and grade. The forgiveness policy authorization is for the express purpose of assisting students in meeting the requirements necessary to graduate from high school, including a minimum grade point average and successful completion of academic credit or curriculum requirements. The school board does not have the authority to purge that student’s record to delete the first grade. All forgiven courses must be included on a student’s transcript as an accurate reflection of the student’s record of achievement.

The only exception to the Forgiveness Policy shall be made for a student in the middle grades who takes any high school course for high school credit. The high school course can be retaken while in high school even if the original grade earned was equivalent to a C.

O. Early Graduation

A student may choose the option of an early graduation (less than eight semesters) if the student meets the requirements of §1003.4282 F.S. for a 24 credit diploma program or meets the requirements of §1002.3105 F.S. for an 18 credit diploma program and earns a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. The student shall be awarded a standard high school diploma if the diploma program options are met.

Students may request permission to graduate early. Early graduation is an opportunity for very capable students to complete their high school academic requirements early. Students must complete all credit requirements as outlined in § 1003.4282(3)(a)-(e) F.S.

After reviewing the student’s plan with the counselor, the student must submit the district’s request form to the principal that will include signatures from the student’s current teachers indicating the student is on target and will pass the course in time for early graduation. The principal will evaluate the district’s request form before presenting the student’s request to the District designee by the deadline listed below:

Graduation Dates	Application to Principal	Application to District
December	October 1 st	October 15th
May	March 2 nd	March 15th

All early graduates are eligible to return and walk with their class in the May ceremony, unless the high school principal, for Student Code of Conduct infractions, revokes that privilege.

P. Credit Acceleration Program (CAP)

A student may earn high school credit in Algebra I, Geometry, U.S. History or Biology I if the student passes the statewide, standardized end-of-course (EOC) assessment without the requirement of enrolling in or completing the course.

A student is allowed to earn high school credit in courses required for high school graduation through the passage of an Advanced Placement (AP) examination or a College Level Examination Program (CLEP). Course credit shall be awarded to a student who is not enrolled in the course, or who has not completed the course, if the student attains a passing score on the corresponding end-of-course assessment, Advanced Placement Examination, or CLEP. The school district shall permit a public school or home education student who is not enrolled in the course, or who has not completed the course, to take the assessment or examination during the regular administration of the assessment or examination. §1003.4295 F.S.

Q. Grade Classification in Grades 9-12

Students who, for educational or personal reasons, wish to graduate earlier than this 4-year/24 credit plan, may elect to do so. Upon approval by the high school principal or designee, the early graduation request will be forwarded to the Regional Superintendent for final approval. All graduating students must meet all requirements set by Florida Statute in order to graduate.

Definition of grade classification as it relates to class privileges and activities will be determined by the school principal and/or Superintendent's designee.

Grade Level	Minimum Credits for Grade Promotion (24 Credit Diploma Option)	Minimum Credits for Grade Promotion (18 Credit Diploma Option)
9	N/A (Promoted from 8 th Grade)	N/A (Promoted from 8 th Grade)
10	5 credits + 1 year of High School	5 credits + 1 year of High School
11	11 credits + 2 years of High School	11 credits + 2 years of High School
12	17 credits + 3 years of High School	14 credits + 2.5 years of High School

Exemptions:

- 24 Credit Diploma Option students may be promoted to 12th grade classification at the end of the 5th Semester (mid-year), with prior approval from the Regional Superintendent or district designee.
- 18 Credit ACCEL Diploma Option students may be promoted to 12th grade classification at the end of the 5th Semester (mid-year), with prior approval from the Regional Superintendent or district designee.

R. Optional Sixth Period Day

Students who, for educational or personal reasons, wish to graduate earlier than this 4-year/24 credit plan, may elect to do so. Upon approval by the high school principal or designee, the early graduation request will be forwarded to the Regional Superintendent for final approval. All graduating students must meet all requirements set by Florida Statute in order to graduate.

Definition of grade classification as it relates to class privileges and activities will be determined by the school principal and/or Superintendent's designee.

XIII. OTHER PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Home Education Students

Pursuant § 1002.41 F.S. a Home Education program is not considered a school district program but is registered with the school district solely to comply with the state's compulsory attendance requirements. In accordance with §1002.41 F.S. a parent must provide notice in writing with the full legal name, address and birthdate of any child to be enrolled as a student in a home education program. Polk County Schools will then register the student without requiring any additional information or verification from the parent unless the student chooses to participate in a district school program or service. The district will not assign a grade level nor include any personal student information in any district or state databases. The only exception will be for students that choose to participate in a district program or service, or students that choose to participate in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. An appropriate grade level will be determined and assigned after consultation with the student's parents and an appropriate district designee.

All home education students who participate in public school academic or athletic events must comply with the Polk County School entrance requirements. See Home Education sections in the General Section for enrollment and placement procedures for students entering the school district with no previous schooling or lack of records. Home Education students shall be placed academically as any other student who seeks to enter a public school. Home Education students may enroll in regular education programs on a part-time basis. In elementary school, the student may enroll in Physical Education (P.E.), music, or art. In secondary school, the student may take up to any three (3) courses. The deadline for home education students to enter into course(s) at Polk County Public Schools' brick and mortar site will be the Monday of the week that interims are scheduled to go home for Quarter 1.

Students enrolling from home education may be placed on probation until the school determines that the student can be successful at the grade in which they have been placed.

Senior High students may enroll at the discretion of the principal and/or Superintendent's designee. *Students with disabilities may receive exceptional student education related services and a maximum of three (3) periods of direct instruction on a part-time basis at the school site while enrolled in home education.*

Acceptance of Home Education credits for high school students will be determined in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09941 and are as follows:

1. Credits and grades earned and offered for acceptance shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if required by the receiving school's accreditation. If validation of the official transcript is deemed necessary, or if the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, credits shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in subsection (2) of this rule.
2. Validation of credits shall be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and should have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have credits validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in subsection (3) of this rule.
3. Alternative Validation Procedure. If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal, and parent:
 - a. Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee. Portfolio items to consider may include:
 - A log of instructional time reflecting 75 hours for each semester (half-credit course) and 150 hours for each year (full credit course);
 - Course outline reflecting the state performance standards for each course (science lab component must be included); samples of student work for each course; grade book for each course; transcript grades;
 - End of course tests and test results for each course; standardized test results;
 - b. Written recommendation by a Florida certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal;
 - c. Demonstrated performance in courses taken through dual enrollment or at other public or private accredited schools;
 - d. Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally normed standardized subject area assessments;
 - e. Demonstrated proficiencies on the State Assessment; or
 - f. Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school. Students must be provided at least ninety (90) days from date of transfer to prepare for assessments outlined in paragraphs (3)(d) and (3)(e) of this rule if required.

Enrollment and Eligibility: Students may be enrolled as full-time or part-time students. Eligibility will be based on FHSA requirements as outlined in the *Interscholastic Extracurricular Activities* section.

Advanced Placement Exams: A student registered with the district as Home Education who desires to take a specific AP Exam at the end of the school year is expected to take that AP Exam at their zoned high school, assuming the zoned high school offers the AP course and exam.

If an AP Exam requested by a Home Education student is not offered at the student's zoned high school, the student may request to take the exam at a different school in the

district. If there are no schools in Polk County offering the specific AP Exam, the student should contact the Office of Acceleration and Innovation Curriculum Specialist for assistance.

A parent or guardian **must submit a written request to participate in AP testing to a school administrator prior to the final ordering deadline** established by *College Board* (deadline is mid-November each year).

Home Education students who request an AP Exam must pay the **non-refundable** cost of ordering the exam to the district by making a check payable to *Polk County Public Schools* and present payment to the high school at which the student will take the exam. Any additional applicable fees (late fee, restock fee, etc.) are also the responsibility of the Home Education student.

Graduation: Any Florida home education student who has earned 17 high school credits and wants to graduate with a Polk County High School Diploma, *must be enrolled in their zoned high school by the first day of school of their senior year and meet all graduation requirements.*

School Review Committee: School Review Committee will be composed of 1) Principal or Assistant Principal for Curriculum from the school where the student wishes to enroll; 2) School Counselor; and 3) other *Ad Hoc* members as requested by the principal or as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee. The School Review Committee will determine credits to be awarded based on compliance the student records have with the grade level expectations of State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09941. The School Review Committee will determine if the student qualifies for class rank recognition and honors at graduation. Acceptance of Home Education credits for middle school students will be determined in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 6A-f8.

B. Compulsory Attendance Exemptions

Certificates of Exemption: A student within the compulsory attendance age limit who holds a valid certificate of exemption issued by the Superintendent shall be exempt from attending school.

Term: A certificate of exemption shall cease to be valid at the end of the school year in which it is issued.

Conditions: Students entitled to such certificates and the conditions upon which they may be issued are as follows:

- ***Handicapped:*** Children within the compulsory attendance ages who are physically or mentally handicapped to such an extent as to render inadvisable their attendance at school may be issued a certificate of exemption by the Superintendent based upon the recommendation of the County Health Officer.
- ***Family Need:*** Students who have reached the age of fourteen (14) and completed the eighth grade may be issued a certificate for employment by the office of the Superintendent based upon family need if recommended by the student's principal.
- ***Juvenile Court:*** The Superintendent may issue a certificate of exemption upon receipt of a recommendation from the judge of the Juvenile Court

C. Absences

1. Excused Absences

An excused absence is defined as an absence that has the sanction of the parent and the school. The following absences are acceptable and will be excused:

a. *Personal Illness*

A student shall be excused for absences caused by personal illness. A note explaining the absence which has been signed by the parent must accompany the student on return to school, or a telephone call from the parent if required by the principal § 1003.24(4), F.S. A student may be excused for a continued or repeated illness for up to ten (10) attendance days during a school year. After any 10 absences, a doctor's verification will be required for any future absences to be excused for the remainder of the school year. A Medical Documentation for Excessive Absences form can be used for documentation of a student's ongoing treatment for a medical condition. Students who are pregnant will be exempt from minimum attendance requirements for absences related to pregnancy or parenting.

B. *Illness or Death in the Immediate Family*

A student shall be excused for absences caused by serious illness or death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as parent, brother, sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, legal guardian or person in loco parentis, or member of the household. A note explaining the absence that has been signed by the parent must accompany the student on return to school.

C. *Religious Holidays*

A student shall be excused from attendance in school in grades K–12 on a day or days or particular time of day and shall be given the opportunity to make up any work missed due to that student's observance of a religious holiday.

- Prior Notice: The parent shall give written notice to the principal or teacher not more than five (5) days prior to any absence.
- Written Excuse: A written excuse for such absences pursuant to this rule shall not be required upon return to school.

D. *Educational Trips*

Such trips shall be planned by the parent and teacher and prearranged and approved by the school administration. The student shall prepare and submit a written report of the trip to the teacher.

E. *Trips with Parents*

Such trips shall be prearranged and approved by the school administration. If such trips are not prearranged, the absences shall not be excused unless the trip was necessitated by an emergency. The principal or designee will make the final determination.

F. *School Sponsored Activities*

A student shall be excused from attendance at school to participate in school sponsored activities such as athletic functions, band, club trips, etc., if such

activities have been prearranged with the school administration. These students are to be counted in attendance at said school for this period of time.

G. Judicial Actions

- **Subpoena/Summons:** A student shall be excused for any absence due to court appearance provided the principal or designee has been furnished a copy of the subpoena or court summons.
- **Juvenile Detention Center:** A student shall be excused for any absence due to placement in the Juvenile Detention Center

H. Military Dependent School Age Student

A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services (as defined by *Section 1000.36, Article V (E), F.S., Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children*), and has been called to duty for, or is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted additional excused absence **at the discretion of the school superintendent or designee.**

i. Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Appointments for a therapy service provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst certified pursuant to Florida law for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder including, but not limited to, applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

2. Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that does not meet the criterion of an excused absence listed in section C. Students cannot be suspended out of school for unexcused absences. Truancy is defined as the absence of a student within the compulsory attendance age, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent. A habitual truant is any student who has a total of fifteen (15) unexcused absences from school during any (90) calendar day period, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent. The student may be referred to Youth and Family Alternatives and/or the circuit court as provided by law if the parents and attendance problem solving team are unable to resolve the student's nonattendance.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to inform the student and his/her parents of the record of excessive absences as well as the District's intent to notify Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, if appropriate.

Students who have reached the age of fourteen (14) and completed the eighth grade maybe issued a certification for employment by the Office of the Superintendent based upon family need if recommended by the student's principal.

The Superintendent is authorized to file a truancy petition under § 984.151 F.S. if a student has accrued at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown within a ninety (90) calendar day

period or has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a ninety (90) calendar day period.

D. Makeup Work

Makeup work should be appropriate instructional assignments consistent with the *Student Progression Plan*. Students are expected to make up all work missed because of excused absences. Students and parents have the responsibility to request makeup work from their teachers on the first class meeting upon returning to school.

Work missed during the student's first three (3) days of unexcused absences during a semester is expected to be made up. This includes absences caused by an out-of-school suspension.

The student will have no fewer than the number of days absent plus two to complete and hand in work for credit. For example, if a student is absent two days, he/she will have four days after returning to school to hand in work for credit. The teacher may permit additional time for makeup work to be completed and turned in for credit.

High school students receive a minimum of 67 1/2 hours of bona fide instruction in accordance with accreditation standards in order to be eligible for the awarding of credit of a half credit. Failure to do so may result in the loss of credit regardless of grade earned.

E. Adult Education

1. Program Description and Mission

Adult Education and Family Literacy in Polk County has demonstrated a commitment to serving undereducated and educationally disadvantaged adults 16 years of age and older. Estimates indicate approximately 78 percent of Polk's population is over the age of 16 with 29 percent of them functionally illiterate. It is the ongoing mission of Adult Education to enhance, improve, and expand the delivery of educational services and to provide adults with sufficient basic education and work force preparation that will enable them to benefit from job training and retraining programs. Adult education programs include:

- **Adult Basic Education (ABE)** which provides classes in reading, mathematics and language skills from zero grade level through 8.9 grade level.
- **Adult High School (AHS)** programs provide classes for eligible students to facilitate the awarding of a high school credential earned in the regular adult high school program.
- **General Educational Development (GED)** preparation classes are available for students with basic skills of 9.0 grade level or higher who are seeking a State of Florida High School diploma. An innovative district GED program targets at-risk high school students by providing GED preparation, life skills, and employability skills.

Limited English and immigrant adults are served through **the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)** Program. The ESOL Program is designed to meet the students' needs in understanding and speaking English and prepares them to competently function and actively participate in their community and nation

2. Adult High School Graduation

An adult school diploma shall be awarded if a student has met the course requirements, mastered the basic skills, satisfactorily completed the State Assessment for ELA and Algebra I EOC, and received not less than two (2) credits in residence in the adult school granting the diploma. No person shall receive a diploma or certificate of completion on an earlier date than that on which the student would normally have graduated through regular attendance of the kindergarten through grade twelve program. The emphasis on time spent in class may be waived as long as objective evidence of subject matter attainment is evident.

a. Credit Requirements

A candidate for an adult school diploma must satisfactorily complete 24 credits. See *High School Section* for breakdown of credit requirements by content areas and minimum GPA requirements. The one-half credit in physical education is not required. One-half credit in an elective course must be substituted.

b. Acceptable Credit Toward Adult High School Diploma

The following apply toward an adult high school diploma:

- Credits from an accredited high school or credits from a non-accredited school.
- Credits completed in state approved adult classes.
- Credit for educational experiences in the armed forces.
- Credits for adult vocational courses.
 - Up to six (6) vocational credits from an adult technical center may be accepted toward an adult diploma.
 - Courses which have a time requirement will be evaluated using 180 hours for one credit. Competency-based courses shall carry the same amount of credits as those classes with the time requirements.
 - Credit for college courses and early advancement

c. Requirements for Adult School Certificate of Completion

An adult student who has met the course requirements, but who has not passed the state assessment requirements must choose to:

- Accept a Certificate of Completion or
- Elect to continue in the adult school until he/she is able to satisfactorily complete the basic skills and/or state assessment requirements.

d. State of Florida High School Diploma (GED)

Each adult center provides a comprehensive GED program for adult students ages 18 and over, and for out of school individuals ages 16 and/or 17, who met certain "extraordinary circumstance" requirements. In such cases where the student has completed all requirements for graduation except the attainment of a 1.5 cumulative grade point average, special assistance and counseling will be provided for the student to obtain a State of Florida High School Diploma. Individuals age 18 or older who are not currently enrolled in a regular high school program may apply to take the General Educational Development (GED) Test. Upon successful passage of this test, a State of Florida High School Diploma will

be awarded. Individuals ages 16 and 17 are not eligible to apply for testing unless they have received an approved age waiver.

The District may administer GED tests to students currently enrolled in approved alternative education programs. In addition, the district may award a standard high school diploma to students who pass the GED test in addition to the award of a State of Florida (GED) diploma. This graduation option is not intended to authorize early exit for at-risk students; it will be exercised only for students who are over age for grade or for seniors nearing program completion. Waivers for students who are enrolled in alternative education programs and who desire to take the GED must be approved by the Senior Director in Teaching and Learning.

F. Alternate Education Programs

Alternative Education Programs in Polk County are designed to serve disruptive, disinterested/unsuccessful students or those with unmet needs. Grading, promotion, administrative placement and graduation requirements are the same for alternative education students as for regular students unless the student has been properly staffed into an exceptional education program that establishes different requirements. In this case, the ESE guidelines will prevail. All alternative grades and parent school grades will be considered as equal when determining nine weeks or semester grades and promotions. When students transfer to a regular program from an alternative education program, grades will be transferred by means of a withdrawal form.

Disciplinary Programs

Students will be assigned to a disciplinary program in a separate center only after interventions implemented at the home school have failed to cause a change in a student's inappropriate behavior and after a conference/hearing/staffing is held

G. Credit/Course Completion Recovery Programs

Only accredited high school credit programs are recognized by the Polk County School Board. High school credit, up to a maximum of 4 credits per student, will be accepted from a district-approved accredited high school program at face value, if the student has received permission in advance from their high school principal to transfer in specific course credit. Beyond 4 credits may be earned with special permission of the Senior Director in Teaching and Learning. Only complete semester or final grades will be posted to a student's academic record.

H. Career Centers or Technical Colleges

Polk Career Centers are specialized, post-secondary institutions designed primarily to provide job preparatory and supplemental training to men and women who have completed high school or a General Educational Development (GED) program or who have left high school before graduation. Programs provided are directly related to actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment and suited to the needs of the local business community and the abilities of the student population. High school students who are 16 years of age or older may choose to enroll in the career center. Enrollment for high school students is on a space-available basis in order to obtain career education training that is not available at the home high school.

High school students must be enrolled in the regular high school diploma program or the Career Center District Diploma Option. Other students will be classified as adult students. Home high schools must send all notifications of student activities in writing to the attention of the career center Counselor. The career centers will accept 11th and 12th grade students throughout the school year. Orientation is offered for new students on a scheduled basis. Every effort will be made to place the student in the desired program as soon as possible.

I. Choice School Programs

1. Dual Language

Dual language is a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. The Dual Language Program seeks to promote the highest student achievement, English and Spanish language development and cross-cultural understanding to enable students to succeed in a culturally diverse world and become bilingual and bicultural.

The Dual Language model challenges students to learn content skills in a natural way using two languages. Students are taught half of the day in English and half of the day in Spanish. The goal is to promote high academic achievement, English and Spanish language development, and cross-cultural understanding.

Participation in the dual language program requires parents to commit and support student participation. Parents are expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly, has good behavior and is demonstrating academic progress.

2. Enrollment & Entrance Criteria:

- Enrollment in the Dual Language Program is optional and begins in kindergarten.
- Complete and return application by deadline.
- Students are tested in both languages to meet entrance criteria.
- Selection process is finalized.

3. Program Benefits:

- Students in dual language programs perform as well as their grade level peers by third or fourth grade and continue on to outperform native English-speaking grade level peers.
- Students become bilingual, and bi-literate (speak, read and write in both languages).
- Bilingual students demonstrate greater mental flexibility, creativity and problem solving skills.
- The best time to learn a second language is from birth to ten years old.

4. District Schools with Dual Language Programs:

Sandhill Elementary

1801 Tyner Road
Haines City, 33844
Phone: 863-419-3166

A school of choice or a program of choice is a school or program with a specialized instructional focus or theme. Schools of choice and programs of choice enable the Polk County school district to provide diversity and must not disadvantage the composition of the sending or receiving school. A program of choice affects or involves a limited number of the students in a given school or across schools. Programs of choice may serve a selected population, but participants must be selected by non-discriminatory procedures. Any such program may not be authorized except as described in Section II. Approved programs of choice shall have approved guidelines.

J. Early Admissions Programs

High school students in the eleventh (application for senior year) and twelfth grades may apply for Early Admission (full-time) to college excusing them from attendance from all or part of their remaining high school program.

Full-Time Early Admission

Admission to this program has the following five requirements:

- a. Completion of a minimum of 21 high school credits while maintaining a 3.2 grade point average (the GPA requirement may be waived by the Office of Acceleration and Innovation, Senior Director upon written request by the principal) and achieving satisfactory scores on the state assessments as prescribed by law. For early decision purposes, tentative approval may be authorized by the Superintendent pending successful completion of these requirements.
- b. Approval by the principal and counselor at the student's high school.
- c. Acceptance of the student by a post-secondary institution authorized by Florida Statutes or accredited by SACS.
- d. The superintendent or his/her designee gives final approval for full-time early admission.
- e. All requirements for high school graduation, including total course credits and specific course requirements for graduation must be met unless waived by the Office of Acceleration and Innovation, Senior Director.

This program is intended for use by students having completed their eleventh grade and intending to enroll in college in the fall of what would have normally been their senior year. Although it is not recommended, applicants may be considered the second semester of their senior year. Special consideration will be given to placement of a gifted student in full-time status earlier than their senior year provided that the school system and the respective college or university agree on that placement. Full-time Early Admissions may begin sooner than the senior year, at the discretion of the community college and the school district. (see Articulation Agreements). Students must meet freshman-level criteria established by colleges/universities.

The student must understand that should he/she fail to maintain a "C" average or its equivalent in college, and/or fail to maintain "full-time" student status for two college semesters or equivalent, he/she will be dropped, leaving the student with no high school diploma through the program.

Students successfully completing the Full-time Early Admission Program will be granted their high school diploma and may take part in their high school graduation ceremonies. Students' names and colleges will be noted on graduation lists and programs under the category "Full-time Early Admission Students" with appropriate

notation of high honors or honors if earned. Full-time Early Admission students will be considered for honors or high honors based on the high school grade point average in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) to include those courses and grades completed under the Full-time Early Admission Program. **Full-time Early Admission students are not eligible for the honorary title of Valedictorian or Salutatorian.** More specific information is available in the Dual Enrollment Articulation Agreements between the post-secondary institution and the Polk County School Board.

K. Foreign Exchange

Foreign exchange student programs have a twofold purpose – to improve the foreign students' knowledge of United States culture through participation in family, school, and community life, and to improve local knowledge of a foreign culture by allowing Polk County students and their communities to enhance their international understanding through this experience.

A student from a foreign country sponsored by an approved foreign exchange student program (CSIET), who fulfills eligibility requirements, including the written approval of the principal, is entitled to attend a Polk County high school.

1. Sponsors

Applications may be submitted to the Polk County Foreign Exchange Student Program by organizations designated under the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs by the U. S. Department of State (CSIET). Any organization applying must supply a notarized form with the name, address, and telephone number of a local representative who is a resident of Polk County or less than 120 miles from the county and can be contacted at all times in case of emergency or other problem.

Any approved foreign exchange student program that does not comply with the intent of the School Board of Polk County Foreign Exchange Policy criteria as cited herein will be suspended from placing students in Polk County Schools for not less than two (2) school calendar years. If an approved foreign exchange program is suspended, then reinstated, and then suspended for the second time, the foreign exchange program will be suspended permanently from placing students in Polk County Schools.

2. Eligible Students

The following eligibility requirements must be met:

- Student must agree to participate for a whole school year (Aug–June). Polk County Public Schools will not accept semester students. No exceptions will be made.
- Must be a minimum of 15 but not more than 18 years of age on the date of enrollment.
- Student can be enrolled in grades 10^t and 11^t only. Applications for admission intended to enroll students in 9th and 12th grade will be automatically declined.
- Student must have not finished more than 11 years of primary and secondary school, not including Kindergarten.
- Submit written evidence of English proficiency and/or recognized language assessment and submit a transcript translated into English of his/her secondary school.
- Must have appropriate medical insurance coverage.

- Must be accepted by a host family with evidence of written documentation of interview and home visit, signed and dated by the representative.
- Must provide statement stating the student has not completed requirements for graduation, received a diploma, or degree from high school in their country.
- Must provide original Florida Certificate of Immunization (HRS blue immunization form DH 680).
- Must provide a copy of the J-1 Visa or Passport.

3. Procedures for Admissions

- All required documents must be submitted to the District's World Languages and Foreign Exchange Office. Sponsoring organizations must not contact schools to submit documentation to enroll students. The contact between sponsoring organizations and schools will take place after the authorization of enrollment emitted by the World Language and Foreign Exchange Office. The documentation for enrollment will be sent by the District's World Languages and Foreign Exchange Office to the school electronically.
- The sponsoring organization must apply for and obtain written approval from the principal for admission of a foreign exchange student at least 2 months prior to the beginning of the school year.
- Written approval assures that a place will be held for a student for three (3) weeks or until a host family is identified, whichever shall occur first.
- Two sets of required materials must be submitted, the original for the school and one copy for the ESOL Department.

4. Required registration documents

- Signed copy of Application Checklist
- Copy of the approved Agency Representative Notarized Form
- Compliance with PCSB Policies and Procedures Agreement Form
- Host Family Information Form and (2) Letters of Reference
- Principal Approval Form
- Proof of residency of host family (This may be a utility bill for power, water, cable, sewer, or land-based telephone (not cellular) or rental agreement or lease, or closing document or tax statement with homestead exemption with host parent's name and home address on it.
- J-1 certificate of eligibility (Form DS-2019)
- Copy of passport
- Copy of English Proficiency Test
- Copy of official academic transcript in English
- Immunization record (DOH Form 680)
- Copy of physical
- Affidavit/proof of adequate health insurance coverage
- A notarized statement indicating the student will be in attendance the full academic year
- A notarized statement indicating the student has not completed the requirement for graduation or received a diploma or degree from high school in their country. Foreign exchange students are not eligible for a high school diploma.
- District Approval Form

If a student withdraws from Polk County before the end of the school year, please notify our office with the date and reason for the withdrawal. If a student transfers from one host family to another, please notify us and send the new host family information to our office. Please be prepared with all the necessary paperwork so our visiting students will not be delayed in entering our school system. Please note, the principal shall approve or deny student attendance based upon recommendation of coordinator of foreign exchange service and acceptance of student criteria by July. Approval shall also be based on space available.

Please note: The application shall include the student's school transcript translated into English, evidence of the student's English proficiency, pertinent information about the student and host family, evidence of acceptance by the host family, student's health record and assurance of appropriate medical insurance coverage.

At the time of application, it shall be determined whether the student will attempt to earn a regular high school diploma or an honorary diploma. Written approval or denial of admission will be given to the sponsoring organization by the principal.

The foreign exchange student, accompanied by a representative of the sponsoring organization and a member of the host family, will meet with the principal and a counselor for enrollment. Formal entrance to school will be at the beginning of the school year. An orientation designed to acquaint the student with the American school and with the rules governing the behavior of all students will be provided by the school staff. The student will be expected to follow school rules and to participate fully in the education program provided. The student should be in school attendance the first day of the school year.

It is the sponsor's responsibility to make all travel and accommodation arrangements for a foreign exchange student, including securing the host family. It is the sponsor's responsibility to resolve problems that arise between the student, the host family, and/or the school including, if necessary, the changing of host families or the early return home of the student because of personal difficulties. The principal shall notify the local representative of the sponsoring organization if the host family is reported to be neglecting the needs of the student.

All expenses for a foreign exchange student, including school and school-related expenses, are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization and the host family.

- The student may finance school-related expenses if the student is able.
- The student or host family shall pay for school lunches, admission to school activities, and items such as yearbook, school ring, and cap and gown.
- Any fund raising for the support of foreign exchange students shall be in accordance with School Board policies.

Foreign exchange students are not permitted to take employment during their stay in the United States. However, noncompetitive small jobs, not to exceed ten (10) hours a week such as tutoring, cutting grass, and baby- or people-sitting, will be allowed. Consequently, foreign exchange students will not be enrolled in cooperative programs.

The FHSA acknowledges the importance of permitting students visiting Florida through a recognized foreign exchange program to experience the benefits of participation in interscholastic athletic competition. To this end, the FHSA will permit a foreign exchange student to participate in interscholastic athletic competition under the following conditions:

- The foreign exchange student must be sponsored and placed with a U.S. host family by a legitimate international student exchange program that has been accepted for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) and recognized by the U.S. Department of State. The foreign program must assign students to host families by a method that ensures that no student, school or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic or other purposes. Neither shall the foreign exchange student be selected or placed on any basis related to his/her athletic interests or abilities.
- A foreign exchange student is considered placed with a host family when:
 - the school that the student attends had no input into the selection or assignment of the student;
 - no member of the school's faculty or staff or other individual, paid or voluntary, connected to the school's athletic program serves as the host family; and
 - the host family placement is approved by the national headquarters of the sponsoring organization.
- The foreign exchange student must possess a J-1 visa issued by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.
- The foreign exchange student must be in attendance at the school on the first day of the school year and must be enrolled in a full-year program, rather than a program of shorter duration such as a six-week, three-month or six-month program, etc.
- Any subsequent transfer by the student to a different school during the school year must correspond with a change in residence by the foreign exchange student and the host family with whom he/she was placed at the time of enrollment in the original school. If the transfer of schools occurs as a result of a move by the foreign exchange student to another host family, the foreign exchange student will be ineligible at the new school for the remainder of the school year.
- The foreign exchange student may be eligible for a maximum of one year at any school or combination of schools in this or any other of the United States commencing with his/her initial date of enrollment in a U.S. school.
- The foreign exchange student must not have completed the 12th grade (terminal grade) or its equivalent in either the U.S. or his/her home country. Foreign exchange students will not be eligible once they have completed the 12th grade or its equivalent in either the U.S. or their home countries.
- The foreign exchange student must meet all other eligibility standards of the FHSA Bylaws while a student at a member school.

4. Athletic Eligibility

Students will be governed by the Florida High School Activities Association rules and regulations regarding participation in interscholastic athletic competition. Sponsoring organizations shall not knowingly be a party to seeking out or permitting placements initiated by a host family, a school, a student or his/her parents, or any other interested party based on athletic abilities.

5. Student Transfers

Out-of-county transfers will not be accepted. In a case of a host family relocation, the sponsoring organization will be directed to find another host family in the original district or to transfer the student to an organization on the approved list. Schools will accept in-district foreign exchange transfers as stated in School Board policy. The district's School Board will only provide transportation within the normally scheduled bus routes for students residing within the attendance zones of the school that the particular foreign exchange student attends.

6. Financial Support

School-related expenses are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization or the host family.

7. Compliance with Policies and Supervision

Each foreign exchange student is expected to comply with the policies of the Polk County School Board, including the Code of Student Conduct, and with all other legal provisions pertaining to the student.

It is the sponsoring organization's responsibility to resolve problems that arise among the student, the host family, and/or the school including, if necessary, the changing of the host family or the returning of the exchange student to his/her country in the event that any differences cannot be reconciled. The principal or designee will notify the ELA Senior Director and/or the district's Foreign Exchange Specialist of any suspected neglect of the student on the part of the host family. All legal and appropriate guidelines shall be followed to provide for the safety and well-being of the student. The ELA Senior Director and/or the district's Foreign Exchange Specialist will notify the sponsoring organization of any non-compliance status. At the end of each academic school year, an evaluation of participating sponsoring organizations will be completed by each high school Foreign Exchange Program contact person and forwarded to the ELA Senior Director and/or the district's Foreign Exchange Specialist.

Polk County School Board reserves the right to discontinue relations with exchange organizations that have demonstrated a lack of responsibility and responsiveness to district policies and/or student concerns.

L. International Baccalaureate Schools (IB)

1. Program Description

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, which includes the Florida Pre-International Baccalaureate program in grades 9 and 10, and IB Diploma Program in grades 11 and 12, is an internationally rigorous pre-university curriculum and globally standardized examination system that is recognized by colleges and universities throughout the world, offering the potential for college credit by examination.

The International Baccalaureate curriculum emphasizes the value of broad and balanced studies and challenges academically talented students beyond the traditional high school curriculum. Alongside in-depth understanding of a variety of subjects, students learn to deepen their higher order thinking and problem-solving

skills and develop a broader range of collaboration and communication expertise critical for success in university study and beyond. In addition to the depth and breadth of the IB curriculum, IB students may avail themselves of elective courses, including industry certification-earning academy courses.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program consists of advanced coursework in these core areas: Language and Literature, Language Acquisition (Spanish or German), Individuals and Societies, Science, Mathematics, and the Arts (or in a sixth IB subject of their choosing). The six IB subjects are further enhanced by core components such as the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge and Creativity, Activity and Service. Working in concert, the IB Subjects and core components provide a uniquely broad and balanced educational experience and pre-university preparation. International Baccalaureate Diploma Program requirements exceed minimum graduation requirements of Polk County Schools and the State of Florida. Students who complete the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program are exempt from some standard diploma course requirements, such as Physical Education, Performing/Practical Art, and the online course requirement. Additionally, students who earn the International Baccalaureate Diploma and have 100 community service or work hours, qualify for the highest level of the Bright Futures Scholarship, regardless of test scores or GPA. If a student withdraws from the International Baccalaureate Program, he/she will be required to complete all district and state requirements for graduation and requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

2. Admission Criteria

Admission to the International Baccalaureate Schools is determined by the completion of the International Baccalaureate School application and rank ordered scoring on a nationally normed and recognized standardized test administered to students in their eighth grade ~~year~~ in preparation for enrollment in ninth grade, or in their ninth grade year in preparation for enrollment in tenth grade.

Online testing applications for the IB Program will be available in the fall for eighth and ninth grade students. School Choice Application window dates, IB meeting dates and testing dates are available on the Polk County School Board website in November each year.

Official invitations to a High School IB Program are granted to students who apply and meet the middle school promotion and standardized test requirement. Eligibility for the specific IB Program site within the district (Bartow High School or Haines City High School) is determined by a student's resident address. Students whose residence changes to another part of the county may have their academic records reviewed for consideration in the alternate IB Program site.

Students who earn an Achievement Level 5 on the ELA FAST PM 3 in 7th grade AND Achievement Level 4 or 5 on the Algebra 1 EOC state test before 8th grade, and apply during the School Choice Application window, shall receive automatic acceptance in an International Baccalaureate School.

3. Program Requirements

A minimum 2.5 unweighted cumulative GPA must be maintained to remain in the Florida Pre-IB Program and the IB Diploma Program. Student performance and

motivation will be reviewed at regular intervals by the IB Head of School, the IB Diploma Program Coordinator and the IB faculty to recommend continuation in the IB Program or return to the student's zoned school. Each student in the Florida Pre-IB Program and IB Diploma Program must be scheduled for seven classes each day.

4. Weighting

All courses designated as Pre-IB courses in the Course Code Directory will have a 0.5 weighting. All courses designated International Baccalaureate in the Course Code Directory will carry a 1.0 weighting.

5. IB Dismissal

Due to the importance of a solid foundation in the rigorous and sequential IB curriculum, the academic progress of each IB student will be evaluated throughout the year. Students with two or more D's and/or F's, below program requirement, or not meeting IB Diploma Program curriculum requirements will be placed on academic probation, with a plan for resolving deficiencies. Those students not showing significant progress by the end of the 2nd semester may be dismissed from the IB Program, and, if dismissed, will be required to return to their zoned school.

M. Advanced International Certificate of Education Schools (AICE)

1. Program Description

The Cambridge AICE Diploma Program is an internationally rigorous curriculum and globally standardized examination system that is recognized by colleges and universities throughout the world. The Cambridge Advanced Curriculum emphasizes the value of broad and balanced studies and challenges academically talented students beyond the traditional high school curriculum. Alongside in-depth understanding of a variety of subjects, students learn to deepen their higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills and develop a broader range of collaboration and communication expertise critical for success in university study and employment.

The Cambridge AICE Diploma offers breadth across the curriculum and depth in core-academic subjects as well as student-selected elective areas. The Cambridge AICE Diploma is made up of individual Cambridge Advanced AS & A Levels, which have widespread international standing as educational qualifications. By demanding knowledge from three different subject groups, Mathematics & Sciences, Languages, Arts & Humanities plus the core compulsory subject, AS Level Global Perspectives & Research, the Cambridge AICE Diploma provides a broad, balanced, leading-edge curriculum. It maintains flexibility and choice by allowing students to choose subjects at different levels based on their interests and post-secondary goals. Course content is established by the Cambridge Advanced Curriculum and exceeds minimum graduation requirements of Polk County Schools and the State of Florida. If a student receives a Cambridge Diploma and completes a minimum of 100 hours of community service, the student qualifies for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. Students who complete the Cambridge Diploma curriculum will satisfy district and state graduation requirements. Completion of the Cambridge Diploma curriculum means that a student does not have to take

Personal Fitness, Physical Education, Practical Performing Arts, or an online course in order to satisfy state and local graduation requirements. All other state and local requirements are included in the Cambridge Diploma curriculum. If a student withdraws from the Cambridge Program, he/she will be required to complete all district and state requirements for graduation and requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

2. Admission Criteria

Admission to the Cambridge School is determined by the completion of the Cambridge online application and rank ordered scoring on a nationally normed and recognized standardized test administered to students during their 8th grade year in preparation for enrollment in 9th grade. Online testing applications for the Cambridge Program will be available for eighth grade students. ~~Open enrollment,~~ The School Choice Application window, Cambridge meeting, and testing dates are made available on the Polk County The School Board website in November each year. Official invitations to a high school Cambridge Program are granted to students who apply and meet the middle school promotion and standardized test requirement.

Eligibility for the specific Cambridge Program site within the district (Tenoroc High School or Winter Haven High School) is determined by a student's resident address. Students whose residence changes to another part of the county may have their academic records reviewed for consideration in the alternate Cambridge Program site.

Students who earn an Achievement Level 5 on the ELA FAST PM 3 in 7th grade AND Achievement Level 4 or 5 on the Algebra 1 EOC state test before 8th grade, and apply during the School Choice Application window, shall receive automatic acceptance in a Cambridge Program.

3. Program Requirements

A minimum 3.0 unweighted cumulative GPA must be maintained at the end of each semester, beginning in ninth grade, to remain in good academic standing. Students whose GPA follows below an unweighted GPA of 3.0 may be placed on academic probation for the following semester. During the semester of academic probation, student's performance and motivation will be reviewed by the Head of Program, and/or Cambridge Coordinator, or Counselor to recommend continuation in the Cambridge Program or return to the student's home school.

4. Weighting

Pre-AICE courses will have a 0.5 weighting. All courses designated as Cambridge AS or A Level in the Course Code Directory will carry a 1.0 weighting.

5. Cambridge Dismissal

Due to the importance of a solid foundation in the rigorous and sequential Cambridge curriculum, the academic progress of each student will be evaluated throughout the year. Any student with two or more Cs and/or a D or F will be given an academic plan for improving grades.

Progress will be re-evaluated at the end of the semester. Those students still necessitating an academic plan may be dismissed from the Cambridge Program and, if dismissed, will be required to return to their home school.

N. Visual and Performance Arts Program

The Lois Cowles Harrison Center for the Visual and Performing Arts (accredited as Harrison School for the Arts) was created to offer an enriched arts education for students with a demonstrated talent in the arts. The program is designed to develop both the general education and artistic skills of talented students interested in artistic careers, as well as an appreciation of the arts for those who may choose other fields.

Harrison School for the Arts is located adjacent to Lakeland High School. Students in the arts program are mainstreamed into Lakeland High School for their general academic classes. They are afforded the benefits of a wide range of both standard and honors courses, with opportunities for advanced placement credit in a variety of classes.

1. Admission Criteria

- A minimum cumulative weighted grade point average of 2.3 on a 4.0 scale is required at time of audition.
- A demonstrated talent as evidenced by an audition and/or portfolio with a favorable recommendation from the panel of expert judges.
- An interview process to determine a level of commitment to the arts program.
- Two favorable written recommendations.
- Written résumé – depicting school experiences, academic/artistic honors, personal interest/information, community involvement, and areas of artistic specialization.
- Final admission into the arts program is determined by the principal of Harrison School for the Arts.

2. Program Requirements

- A minimum 2.3 weighted cumulative GPA, satisfactory behavior, and regular attendance must be maintained while enrolled in the arts program.
- Consideration for continued enrollment at Harrison School for the Arts is reviewed at the end of each semester. If, at this review, a student has not achieved a minimum 2.3 weighted GPA for the current semester, the student will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. If at the end of the following semester the student does not have a semester weighted GPA of at least 2.3, the student may be dismissed from Harrison School for the Arts. Final determination of enrollment at Harrison School for the Arts will be at the discretion of the principal. Dismissal due to academic underperformance may occur at the end of a semester.
- As the course progression at Harrison has no way to remediate students in the arts course of study, failing a Harrison course may be grounds for dismissal from Harrison School for the Arts. In addition, a student who cannot recover missing/failed general academic credits needed for graduation while maintaining enrollment in their required arts courses may be dismissed from Harrison School for the Arts.
- Dismissal based on disciplinary infractions are determined by the severity of the infraction (per the Student Code of Conduct) and/or the frequency of

infractions (i.e., violating disciplinary probation).

- Students dismissed from the program may access the appeals committee that includes the principal of Harrison School for the Arts, Director of Fine Arts, and the Chief of High Schools.

3. Course of Study in the Arts Program

- Each student in the arts program must be scheduled as a full-time student with seven classes each semester. The student schedule each semester should include at least two arts courses. The final determination of a senior student's schedule at Harrison School for the Arts is that of the principal of Harrison School for the Arts.
- For the purpose of arts courses and general academics, students will be considered as dual-enrolled students at Harrison School of Arts and Lakeland High School.
- Freshmen students entering Harrison School for the Arts will be able to earn 28 credits under the academic plans listed in Section 2. Students entering Harrison after their freshmen year may need to earn credits through an alternative program in order to satisfy the general education requirements.
- Students who are graduated from Harrison School for the Arts will receive a high school diploma that reads "The Lois Cowles Harrison Center for the Visual and Performing Arts at Lakeland High School" and will graduate and march only at Harrison's Commencement. All academic honors, including Valedictorian and Salutatorian, will be designated and awarded through Harrison School for the Arts.
- Graduation exercises for Harrison School for the Arts will be held at a time not conflicting with Lakeland Senior High School graduation because of the dual responsibilities of staff at Harrison School for the Arts and Lakeland High School.
- A student seeking early admissions status at the college and/or university level, who wishes to be considered as a graduate from Harrison School for the Arts, must demonstrate through appropriate school records that he/she is continuing to pursue a field of artistic study. The student must provide verification from the school that an artistic curriculum is being pursued. A course of study should reflect full-time enrollment in the arts department of the college, university, or arts school.
- The prescribed arts curriculum at Harrison will include 10 credits in the student's specific art department. All seniors should take a minimum of three arts courses during their senior year.
- Because of the special commitment that is made in attending Harrison School for the Arts, parents or guardians and students are required to sign a contract that serves as an agreement and commitment to follow the policies that are a part of the Student Progression Plan and the Harrison School for the Arts Student Handbook.
- Appeals regarding the policies established by Harrison School for the Arts must be directed to the principal of the school. If the outcome of the appeal is not satisfactorily addressed by the principal, the appeal may come before an appeals committee that will include the principal of the Harrison School for the Arts the Director of Fine Arts, and the Regional Superintendent. It is assumed that students and parents will abide by the policies of Harrison School for the Arts as a part of the contractual arrangement with the school.

O. Magnet/Choice School Program Description

Magnet schools provide students a specialized focus or theme. These themes serve to attract students from other schools. The magnet schools in Polk County serve as a tool to voluntarily desegregate the schools in targeted communities. Through controlled admission procedures, pre-determined capacities are maintained. The result is a site-specific educational program that enhances the educational experiences of children while providing a multicultural environment and a special focus.

Authorization: Schools of choice or programs of choice must be authorized by the School Board following the School Board's consideration of a recommendation by the Superintendent or designee preceded by a review of each proposed school of choice or program of choice by a Review Committee. The Review Committee shall review each proposal to establish a school or program of choice in order to consider the impact of each school or program of choice on other previously established schools or programs of choice and impact on diversity and the adequacy and appropriateness of the educational services offered under each proposal.

1. Admission Criteria

Applications are accepted during a prescribed open enrollment period each year. All applications received during this open enrollment period are considered to be the same date for the purposes of establishing priority. A random sort will be executed by computer to select student from an applicant pool by grade. (For specific information see approved guidelines in school board policy 2370.02.) Applicants must reapply annually for the applicant pool. Students retained at a magnet school may remain at the magnet school.

Applicant pools will be maintained through the Office of Acceleration and Innovation. Students will be notified when a vacancy occurs at their grade level. Students will be selected randomly from the applicant pool. Applicants may request to have their name removed from the applicant pool.

Students applying for more than one school will be placed into the school(s) of first opportunity and when a parent/guardian accepts/denies a seat, the status for any other magnet and/or choice school will be canceled. Applicants should be prepared to accept placement into any school for which they have applied; however, they will have the opportunity to make a decision at the same time of the opening. Failure to accept at the time of the opening will result in removal from the applicant pool.

Magnet/choice schools are "zoned" to serve targeted communities. Magnet schools are zoned to serve communities as follows:

- Lawton Chiles Middle Academy (6–8), Crystal Academy of Science and Engineering (6–8), Lincoln Academy (K–5), Winston Academy of Engineering (K–5), Combee Academy of Design and Engineering (K-5), Blake Academy (K–8) and Rochelle School of the Arts (K–8) will serve the areas bound by the four Lakeland high schools; Kathleen, Lake Gibson, Lakeland High, Tenoroc* and George Jenkins.
- Bartow Elementary Academy (K–5), James E. Stephens Academy (K-5), Union Academy (6–8) and Summerlin Academy* (9–12) will serve the communities feeding into the secondary schools of Bartow, Lake Wales, Frostproof, Fort Meade and Mulberry.
- Brigham Academy (K–5), Fred G. Garner Academy (K-5), Jewett School

of the Arts (K–8), Jewett Middle Academy (6–8), and Lake Alfred Polytech Academy (6-8) will serve the communities feeding into the secondary schools of Auburndale, Tenoroc*, Winter Haven and Lake Region High School.

- Bethune Academy (K–5), Dundee Elementary Academy (K–5), Dundee Ridge Academy (6–8), Daniel Jenkins Academy (6–8) and Davenport School of the Arts (K–8) will serve the communities feeding into the secondary schools of Davenport High School, Haines City High School and Ridge High School community.

*Summerlin Academy is open to all of Polk County, but transportation is limited.

*Tenoroc High School serves students in both Lakeland and Winter Haven. Parents should check their Magnet Zone on the district's ZoneFinder to determine which Magnet Zone their child is eligible to submit an application.

Students who are enrolled in the elementary magnet schools and are making satisfactory progress in academics and behavior will move automatically into the related zoned middle school magnet as listed below. For the purpose of student enrollment these schools are treated as a single site.

- Lincoln Academy into Lawton Chiles Middle Academy
- Winston Academy into Crystal Academy of Science and Engineering or Lawton Chiles Middle Academy
- CODE Academy into Rosabelle W. Blake Academy
- Bartow Elementary Academy into Union Academy Middle
- James E. Stephens Academy into Union Academy
- Brigham Academy into Jewett Middle Academy
- Fred G. Garner Academy into Lake Alfred Polytech Academy
- Bethune Academy into Daniel Jenkins Academy
- Dundee Elementary Academy into Dundee Ridge Academy.

Kindergarten applicants with siblings enrolled in the magnet/choice school of application who will be returning to that site for the upcoming school year will receive guaranteed admission for up to fifty percent (50%) of the available kindergarten seats within the school to be filled with siblings.

Children of full-time employees at the magnet school or choice shall be considered for admission into that magnet or choice school and shall remain even if the employee changes work locations.

Admission shall be by online application to the Senior Director of Acceleration and Innovation and in cooperation with other program administrators may involve nondiscriminatory screening that is publicized prior to application. (For specific information see approved guidelines in school board policy 2370.02.)

Attendance or enrollment in a magnet or choice school is based upon designated attendance areas.

2. Program Requirements

While there are no admission requirements, enrolling into a magnet/choice program or school requires a commitment on the part of the parent and student.

Magnet/choice students are expected to adhere to school and district policies, attend school regularly, and actively participate in courses while maintaining

satisfactory academic progress. This includes adherence to the school's uniform policy.

A recommendation for placement back into the zoned school may be made after intervention strategies have been implemented and documented; however, there may be occasions when the welfare of the classmates may take precedence in considerations for exiting a particular student while always including parent/guardian input as part of the process. Within 5 school days of dismissal from a magnet/choice program, a parent/guardian may appeal the dismissal to the Regional Assistant Superintendent as the final decision maker on behalf of the Superintendent for a fair and impartial review. This appeal process only addresses dismissal that occurs at the end of a semester.

Each magnet and choice school requires a certain level of parent involvement and a commitment from both the student and parent or guardian. Part of this commitment is communication with the school and includes, but is not limited to, conference participation and written/verbal communication.

3. Course of Study in The Magnet/Choice Schools

Each student in the magnet/choice school program will receive additional time in the area of the theme/focus of the school. Laboratories reflecting theme areas will also serve as enhancements for each student.

Magnet/choice middle school may offer an eight-period day utilizing the extra period to provide additional time in the theme/focus area.

The magnet/choice school instructional program requirements shall parallel those of zoned schools.

P. Fine Arts Co-Curricular Eligibility

a. All-County Music/Dance/Theatre/Visual Arts Eligibility

All-County Fine Arts events are co-curricular in nature and an extension of classroom curriculum. All students who participate in Polk All-County Fine Arts activities (band, chorus, orchestra, guitar, piano, dance, theatre, visual arts and elementary) must be enrolled in the school that registers the student for entry and must be enrolled in a class which corresponds with the All-County activity. This class must be offered during the school day and must be a course in the FLDOE course code directory.

b. Marching MPA Eligibility (Band/Auxiliary)

Marching Band season is culminated by the Marching Music Performance Assessment (MPA) and the Florida School Music Association (FSMA) provides oversight to this event. This requires that all students be enrolled in the school that registers the student for entry and the students must be a regular participating member of the ensemble.

c. Music Performance Assessments (Concert for band, chorus, and orchestra)

Music Performance Assessments (MPA) are the culminating events for yearlong study in band, chorus and orchestra, and the Florida School Music Association (FSMA) provides oversight to these events. This requires that all students be enrolled in the school that registers the student for entry and the students must be a regular participating member of the performing ensemble.

Q. Career Academies and Pre-academies

a. Program Description

Polk's Career Academies are small, personalized learning communities within a high school. Students enter the academy through a voluntary process; they must apply and be accepted with parental knowledge and support.

A Career Academy involves teachers from different subjects working together as a team. Staff teams work together to implement the key features of the academy and provide students with career training. Students may be grouped together for several periods every day with a core group of teachers, promoting a family-like atmosphere and resulting in close student-teacher ties. A Career Academy includes the following essential elements:

- A small learning community supported by a local advisory committee
- A career theme that may include a college-prep curriculum and lead to industry certification
- Partnerships with employers, the community, and post-secondary institutions

By design, these three central elements of a Career Academy lead to a school that is rigorous and relevant.

b. Admission Criteria

Incoming 6-10th grade students may apply to an academy or pre-academy at a school outside their zoned school.

Students who wish to enroll in an academy at their regularly zoned school do not need to complete an application in Focus and may enroll in their desired classes at the school. Transportation is not provided for students attending out-of-zone academies.

Applications are accepted during a prescribed open enrollment period each year. All applications received during this open enrollment period are considered to be the same date for the purposes of establishing priority. A random sort will be executed by computer to select student from an applicant pool by grade. (For specific information see approved guidelines in school board policy 2370.02.) Applicants who are not accepted into their academy of choice must reapply annually for the applicant pool.

At the close of the application period, the Career Academies Selection Committee will complete the lottery process for placement of students. After the lottery is complete, Schools will be given a list of ONLY the accepted Out of Zone students. Applicant pools will be maintained through the Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

Students will be notified when a vacancy occurs at their grade level. Students will be selected randomly from the applicant pool. Applicants may request to have their name removed from the applicant pool.

Students applying for more than one academy will be placed into the academy of first opportunity and the status for any other academy will be canceled. Applicants should be prepared to accept placement into any academy for which they have applied; however, they will have the opportunity to make a decision at the same time of the opening. Failure to accept at the time of the opening will result in removal from the applicant pool.

c. Program Requirements

While there are no admission requirements, all career academies and pre-academies require satisfactory behavior, attendance, and academic progress to remain in the program. This includes adherence to academy dress and uniform policies.

Students in a career academy must concentrate in or complete a CTE program of study in addition to their academic coursework. Students must remain in the originally accepted academy in order to remain in the out-of-zone school.

Out-of-Zone students enrolled in a Career Academy that closes, will be given the option to choose an alternate, comparable Career Academy where space is available. If no space is available, the student will be returned to his/her zoned school.

d. Weighted Courses

Many CTE courses are weighted as honors courses. Additionally, many pre-academies offer students the opportunity to earn high school credit in middle school. Career academies can also offer students the opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential or dual enrollment credit.

d. Career Academy Dismissal

All Out-of-Zone academy transfer students must sign the Career Academy Contract every school year. Students may be withdrawn back to their zoned school, with or without the support of the parent/guardian, if the student is found to be out of compliance with the Career Academy contract. Schools will follow due process and progressive discipline guidelines before withdrawing a student to their home school. Due process may include the student being placed on a probation agreement for Academics, Attendance, or Behavior.

XIV. Interscholastic Extracurricular Student Activities

A. Local Rules May Be More Stringent

In accordance with FHSAA Bylaw 9.1.1.1, schools and/or school districts may adopt rules more stringent than the FHSAA Bylaws and Policies.

B. Attendance Requirements

The Florida legislature has enacted a law § 1006.20(2)(a) F.S. which allows students to be eligible in the school in which he/she first enrolls each school year, or makes himself or herself a candidate for an athletic team by engaging in a tryout or practice prior to enrolling in any member school.

Any student who changes schools for any reason after first enrolling in the 9th grade must complete an Affidavit of Compliance with FHSAA Policy on Athletic Recruiting (GA4 Form). The new school is required to have the student and his/her parents/guardians read and sign the form in the presence of a notary. This form must remain on file with the school.

C. Attendance Exceptions

1. Home Education Student

§ 1006.15(3)(c) F.S. allows legally registered home education students to participate in interscholastic athletic competition at either their home-zoned public school or the public school the student would be allowed to choose under the provisions of Polk County's School Choice Policy. The student must (a) register as a home education student with the district, (b) register with the school of his/her intent to participate, (c) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as students attending the school, (d) certify to the school at the end of each semester that he/she meets the minimum academic requirements for participation, (e) meet all other eligibility requirements and (f) be registered with the FHSAA Office each year as a non-traditional student.

Home education students who wish to participate in athletics at their zoned public high school must meet all of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) eligibility requirements with the exception of being in regular attendance at the school. Any home education student who takes at least three (3) courses at the high school is considered a student of the school and not a home school student according to FHSAA regulations.

2. Charter School Student

§ 1006.15(3)(d) F.S. allows charter school students to participate in an interscholastic athletic program, not offered by the charter school, at their home-zoned public school or the public school the student would be allowed to choose under the provisions of Polk County's School Choice Policy. The student must (a) meet the minimum academic requirements for participation, (b) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as students attending the school, (c) register with the school of his/her intent to participate, (d) meet all other eligibility requirements and (e) be registered with the FHSAA Office each year as a non-traditional student.

3. Non-Member Private School Student

§ 1006.15(8) F.S. allows non-member private school students to participate in an interscholastic athletic program, not offered by the non-member private school, at either their home-zoned public school or the public school the student would be allowed to choose under the provisions of Polk County's School Choice Policy. The private school must (a) not be a member of the FHSAA, (b) not offer the sport in which the student wishes to participate and (c) not have an enrollment that exceeds 200 students. The student must (a) make all student records available upon request, (b) meet the minimum academic requirements for participation, (c) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as students attending the

school, (d) register with the school of his/her intent to participate, (e) meet all other eligibility requirements and (f) be registered with the FHSA Office each year as a non-traditional student.

4. Florida Virtual School Full-Time Public Program Students

§ 1006.15(e) F.S. allows a Florida Virtual Full-Time Public Program student to participate in interscholastic athletic competition at either their home-zoned public school or the public school the student would be allowed to choose under the provisions of Polk County's School Choice Policy. The student must (a) meet the minimum academic requirements for participation, (b) meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as students attending the school, (c) register with the school of his/her intent to participate, (d) meet all other eligibility requirements and (e) be registered with the FHSA Office each year as a non-traditional student.

5. District Approved Special/Alternative School Students

FHSA Bylaw 9.2.2.3 allows students who attend district approved special/alternative schools to participate in interscholastic athletic competition under the following provisions:

Students attending early admission educational institutions, Maynard Triviss Vocational-Technical Center, Ridge Vocational-Technical Center, Gause Academy of Leadership and Applied Technology, PACE Center for girls, Davenport Community Campus (Fresh Start), Polk Virtual School, REAL Academy and ESE Countywide are only eligible for extracurricular activities at their home-zoned school or the public school the student would be allowed to choose under the provisions of Polk County's School Choice Policy.

Students who are zoned for Fort Meade Middle-Senior High School (6-12), Frostproof Middle-Senior High School (6-12), and McLaughlin Academy of Excellence (6-12) and are accepted into the magnet program at Union Academy (6-8) are only eligible for extracurricular activities at their home-zoned high school.

Students enrolled in the Harrison Arts Center are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Lakeland Senior High School since the students attend Lakeland Senior High School for their required courses. These students are not eligible at their home-zoned school.

Students enrolled in the Bartow Senior High School International Baccalaureate Program and Summerlin Academy are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Bartow Senior High School since the students attend Bartow Senior High School for their elective courses. These students are not eligible at their home-zoned school.

Students enrolled in the Haines City High School International Baccalaureate Program are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Haines City High School since the students attend Haines City High School for certain courses. These students are not eligible at their home-zoned school.

Students enrolled in the Cambridge Program at Winter Haven High School are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Winter Haven High School since the students attend Winter Haven High School to participate in the Cambridge Program. These students are not eligible at their home-zoned school.

Students enrolled in the Cambridge Program at Tenoroc High School are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Tenoroc High School since the students attend Tenoroc High School to participate in the Cambridge Program. These students are not eligible at their home-zoned school.

Students enrolled in the Central Florida Aerospace Academy (CFAA) at Kathleen High School are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Kathleen High School since students attend Kathleen High School to participate in CFAA at Kathleen High School. These students are not eligible at their home zoned school.

Students enrolled in the Central Florida Aerospace Academy (CFAA) under the direction of Winter Haven HS are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Winter Haven High School since students attend Winter Haven High School to participate in CFAA at Winter Haven High School. These students are not eligible at their home zoned school.

Students enrolled in the 3DE Program at Kathleen High School are only eligible for extracurricular activities at Kathleen High School since students attend Kathleen High School to participate in the 3DE Program. These students are not eligible at their home zoned school.

6. Traditional Public School

FHSAA Bylaw 9.2.2.6 allows students who attend a traditional public school to participate in interscholastic athletic competition at another traditional public school within the district the student resides. If the current school does not offer that particular sport.

7. Public Transfer

FHSAA Bylaw 9.2.2.7 allows students who participated in a sport at their previous school, to continue to participate in that sport at the school for the remainder of the school year.

D. Transfer Regulations

A student who transfers from one school to another during the school year may seek to immediately join an existing team, if the roster for the specific extracurricular activity has not reached the identified maximum size and the student meets the requisite skill and ability to participate. The student must not have participated in the same sport at another school during the same school year. An FHSAA EL6 form must be completed via the FHSAA approved software platform. If the student began participating with their previous school, they may continue to be eligible for that sport only if the student meets one of the following:

- (a) Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders.
- (b) Children who have been relocated due to foster care placement in a different school zone.
- (c) Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent.

1. Polk County Public Schools Good Cause Policy

Students will exhibit satisfactory conduct in order to retain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities in Polk County Public Schools. Students attending an Alternative School cannot participate in extracurricular activities.

2. Disciplinary Actions – Extracurricular Activities/Athletics

For In-School Suspension: Students assigned to in-school suspension for the day shall be excluded from participating in extracurricular competition (games) from the date the in-school suspension begins until the end of the disciplinary action, and the student has attended a regular school day. Practice is acceptable.

For Out-of-School Suspension: Students assigned to out of school suspension shall be excluded from participating in all extracurricular activities from the date of the offense until completion of the disciplinary action, and the student has attended a regular school day. For the purpose of continuity, suspension shall begin the day the referral is finalized, and the consequences issued by the appropriate administrator.

For Level III or Level IV Offenses: Students who commit a level III or IV offense shall be excluded from participating in all extracurricular activities from the date of the offense until completion of the disciplinary action, and the student has attended a regular school day.

Students entering Polk County Public Schools from another school district or charter school must complete any disciplinary actions from the previous school district before the student is eligible to participate in any interscholastic school activity within Polk County Public Schools.

Special Note: Athletic Policies

A student not currently suspended from interscholastic extracurricular activities, or suspended or expelled from school, pursuant to a district school board's suspension or expulsion powers provided in law, including § 1006.07 F.S., 1006.08 F.S., and 1006.09 F.S., Florida Statutes is eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities.

A student may not participate in a sport if the student participated in that same sport at another school during that school year, unless the student meets the criteria in § 1006.15 (3)(h), F.S.

A student's eligibility to participate in any interscholastic extracurricular activity may not be affected by any alleged recruiting violation until final disposition of the allegation pursuant to § 1006.20 (2)(b), F.S.

If a player quits or is dismissed for disciplinary reasons from a team, he/she shall not be permitted to try out for the next season's sport at the same school until the season ends in the initial sport from which the athlete quits. For example: Quits football to try out for basketball. A season is defined as the first day of practice through the school's last FHSAA play-off game. (Sideline cheer Included.)

The following includes a list of examples, such as, but not limited to, which may be considered for exclusion as eligibility standards to participate in extracurricular interscholastic activities:

- School attendance policy that may prevent a student from participating
- Alcohol/drug related behavior
- School/classroom discipline issues
- Principal discretion
- Social media issues
- Bullying
- Sportsmanship
- Dress code policy
- Eight Consecutive Semesters of Eligibility
- Age limit – A student who reaches the age of 19 prior to July 1st shall become permanently ineligible.
- Physical evaluation (EL2) and Consent and Release from Liability Certificate (EL3)
- Any other district policy which would remove or prevent a student from participating in extracurricular activities.

3. High School Eligibility

Academic Requirements: 2.0 grade point average required for academic eligibility. A high school student must have a cumulative 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 unweighted scale, or its equivalent, at the conclusion of each semester to be academically eligible during the next semester (§ 1006.15 (3)(a)1, F.S.). Final grades previously earned by the student from another school shall not be converted using the scale in calculating GPA. The grades from all courses required for graduation that a student takes, including those taken by the student before he/she begins high school, must be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA at the conclusion of each semester. For public school students, this includes the courses listed in § 1003.4282, F.S.

Academic eligibility/ineligibility is for one semester. A student who is academically eligible at the beginning of a semester will continue to be academically eligible for that entire semester. Likewise, a student who is academically ineligible at the beginning of a semester will continue to be academically ineligible for that entire semester, except as provided in by-law 9.4.5.1.2. The student's academic eligibility for each successive semester will depend upon his/her cumulative un-weighted GPA at the conclusion of the previous semester. 9.4.1.3 Attendance during previous two consecutive semester required. A student cannot be academically eligible if he/she has not attended school and received grades for all courses taken during the previous two consecutive semesters. (*FHSAA By-Laws.*)

All district high schools shall be members of the Florida High School Athletic Association Inc. (FHSAA) and shall be governed by the rules and regulations adopted by FHSAA. Students who participate in athletics shall meet eligibility requirements by FHSAA and the school board.

Special note: Athletic Student Transfer Eligibility

A student who transfers is immediately eligible as long as all other eligibility requirements are met. Students may not participate in the same sport in the same year at more than one school (unless one of the exceptions are met):

1. Children of active duty military whose move resulted from military orders
2. Children relocated due to foster care placement or McKinney-Vento Act
3. Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation, or serious illness or death of custodial parent
4. Good cause policy in district or charter (district placement)
 - a) Special assignment by Regional Superintendent, School Office, or Office of School Culture and Climate
 - b) Move to a new residence following the marriage of the student. The student immediately establishes a new residence that makes it necessary to attend a different school
 - c) Reassignment by District School Board or Charter School Board
 - d) Transfer of school within the first 20 days – i.e.: acceptance into a previously applied for magnet program
 - e) Any athletic appeal which will require the Office of Athletics Review Committee to intervene and make a decision on a case led by the Director of Athletics. All decisions will be given within 10 school days from the date of the appeal
 - f) Affidavit of residency will require county athletic Senior Director approval
 - g) Academy transfer before the season begins
 - h) Any student who participated in fall football season at one school and then is approved transfer to newly enrolled school per the district's enrollment policy, will be allowed to participate in spring football.

A qualifying transfer student will become eligible on his/her 6th day of attendance at the new school.

4. Hope Scholarship

If a student reports a violent incident or bullying pursuant to [§ 1002.40](#), F.S., and at the conclusion of the investigation or within 15 days of reporting the incident, the student may 1) enroll in another public school that has capacity or 2) request a FDOE scholarship to attend an eligible private school subject to available funding. A student who enrolls in a public school located outside the district is eligible for a transportation scholarship as provided in paragraph (11)(b) of the above reference statute. More information about Hope Scholarships is available in the Office of Acceleration and Innovation and on the website for Polk County Public Schools.

E. Academic Requirements

The following is the mandatory grading scale to be used when calculating a student's GPA:

- Grade "A" is 90 to 100 percent and has a GPA value of 4.0;
- Grade "B" is 80 to 89 percent and has a GPA value of 3.0;
- Grade "C" is 70 to 79 percent and has a GPA value of 2.0;

- Grade “D” is 60 to 69 percent and has a GPA value of 1.0;
- Grade “F” is 59 percent or less and has a GPA value of 0.

In accordance with § 1006.15(3)(a)1 F.S., students in grades 9-12 must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher to be eligible for extracurricular activities. A student's cumulative GPA is the unweighted average for all courses attempted since entering 9th grade. Students in grades 6-8 must earn a 2.0 GPA during his/her previous semester, in order to be eligible during the current semester.

FHSAA Bylaw 9.4.1.4 provides an exception for first semester 6th graders and first semester 9th graders, allowing all first semester 6th graders and first semester 9th graders to be eligible for extracurricular activities. Any 9th grade courses taken prior to entering high school will be calculated into the student's cumulative GPA at the conclusion of his/her first semester of 9th grade.

A student's academic eligibility for extracurricular activities will be calculated at the conclusion of each semester. A student whose academic eligibility changes between the first and second semesters, will become eligible/ineligible on the 6th day of the new semester.

Should a student fall below the required cumulative GPA at the conclusion of his/her first semester of 9th grade or the conclusion of his/her second semester of 9th grade, the student may enter into an Academic Performance Contract. The student, his/her parent and the member school Principal must sign the Academic Performance Contract, acknowledging that (a) the student did not participate during the semester immediately following academic ineligibility, (b) the student will/did earn a 2.0 in all courses taken during the semester immediately following academic ineligibility and (c) the student has/will enroll in summer school or its graded equivalent. Provided the student meets the terms of the Academic Performance Contract, he/she may participate in extracurricular activities during his/her first semester of 10th grade and/or second semester of 10th grade. The Academic Performance Contract may not be used during the 11th and 12th grades.

FHSAA Bylaw 9.4.1.3 requires that all students be in attendance and receive grades for all courses taken during the previous two consecutive semesters.

In accordance with § 1003.4282(5) F.S., a student may repeat a course in which he/she earned a “D” or “F”. When calculating a student's GPA, only one attempt of the same course should be included.

A student must not have completed the terminal grade of high school in the secondary education system of the U.S. or any other country. The terminal grade of the student is based on the graduation requirements of the country the student last attended school, including the completion of the GED or its equivalent.

Quick Reference to Eligibility

Grade Level/Target group	First Semester	Second Semester
Sixth Grade (Fort Meade, Frostproof, McKeel, McLaughlin, Roosevelt)	Regularly promoted to 6 th grade	2.00 GPA first semester 6 th grade

Seventh Grade (Fort Meade, Frostproof, McKeel, McLaughlin, Roosevelt)	2.00 GPA second semester 6 th grade	2.00 GPA first semester 7 th grade
Eighth Grade (Fort Meade, Frostproof, McKeel, McLaughlin, Roosevelt)	2.00 GPA second semester 7 th grade	2.00 GPA first semester 8 th grade
Ninth Grade (all high schools)	2.00 GPA 8 th grade and regularly promoted to the 9 th grade.	2.00 GPA first semester 9 th grade
Tenth Grade (all high schools)	Overall cumulative 2.00 GPA <u>OR</u> 2.00 GPA second semester 9 th grade <u>AND</u> attended Extended Learning Program	Overall cumulative 2.00 GPA <u>OR</u> 2.00 GPA first semester 10 th grade <u>AND</u> agree to attend Extended Learning
Eleventh Grade (all high schools)	Overall Cumulative 2.00 GPA	Overall Cumulative 2.00 GPA
Twelfth Grade (all high schools)	Overall Cumulative 2.00 GPA	Overall Cumulative 2.00 GPA

F. Limit of Eligibility

In accordance with [FHSAA Bylaw 9.5](#), a student A student is limited to eight consecutive semesters of eligibility beginning with the semester he/she begins ninth grade for the first time. This does not imply that the student has eight semesters of participation. After eight consecutive semesters, the student is permanently ineligible. in grades 6-8 may participate during their first year in each grade level.

G. Age Restriction

In accordance with [FHSAA Bylaw 9.6](#), a student who reaches the age of 19 prior to July 1st shall become permanently ineligible. A student who reaches the age of 19 on or after July 1st, and who has not exceeded his/her four-year limit of eligibility, may participate in interscholastic athletics during that school year.

H. Physical Evaluation/Consent and Release

§ [1002.20\(17\)\(b\) F.S.](#) requires students participating in athletics to have a physical evaluation each year. In Polk County, a student must obtain a physical evaluation no earlier than June 1st. All physical evaluations will expire on May 31st, regardless of the date on which the evaluation took place. Students are not permitted to attend any school-sponsored conditioning workouts, tryouts, practices or contests until a completed Physical Evaluation (EL2) has been accepted by and placed on file with the Athletic Director.

In accordance with [FHSAA Bylaw 9.8](#), all students must have a completed Consent and Release from Liability Certificate on file with the school. Students are not permitted to attend any school-sponsored conditioning workouts, tryouts, practices or contests until a completed Consent and Release from Liability Certificate (EL3) has been accepted by and placed on file with the Athletic Director.

I. Cheerleading Tryouts

Cheerleader (sideline cheer) tryouts may not be held at any until the first Monday

following the last school day. All students trying out must have the proper 2.00 GPA and have submitted all of the proper paperwork. Only those students who are currently enrolled at the school along with those students with approved transfers to that school may try out for the teams.

Tryouts for the Competitive Cheer squad are set by the FHSAA and can begin on earlier than week 16 of the FHSAA calendar. A student is NOT required to be on the sideline cheer team in order to try out for the competitive squad; these are two distinctly different squads.

J. Polk County Public Schools Athletics Policies and Procedures

A student is not enrolled at a school until he/she actually attends one day of school.

The only Polk County Public School a student can enroll in without receiving an out-of-zone transfer from the School Board is the school that the student is zoned for by the School Board or be accepted into a magnet program.

A parent/guardian may apply for an out-of-zone transfer from the School Board for one of the following reasons: medical, course availability, school employee or change of residence.

All out-of-zone transfers are for a maximum of one school year and may or may not be approved for the next school year by the School Board.

A student who first enrolls at his/her zoned school (attends one day of practice) and then receives an out-of- zone transfer will not be eligible at the out-of-zone school for any sports which they have already participated in.

A student who first enrolls at a FHSAA member private school (attends one day of practice) and then receives an out-of- zone transfer will not be eligible at the out-of-zone school for any sports which they have already participated in an official practice or tryout.

A student who first enrolls at his/her zoned school or at a non-zoned public school with an approved out-of-zone public school with an approved out-of-zone transfer (attends one day of practice) and then transfers to a FHSAA member private school will not be eligible at the FHSAA member private school for any sports which they participated in an official practice or tryout.

Any recruitment by a school employee or contractor in violation of FHSAA bylaws results in escalating punishments as follows: for a first offense, a \$5,000 forfeiture of pay for the school employee or contractor who committed the violation. For a second offense, suspension without pay for 12 months from coaching, directing, or advertising an extracurricular activity and a \$5,000 forfeiture of pay for the school employee or contractor who committed the violation. For a third offense, a \$5,000 forfeiture of pay for the school employee or contractor who committed the violation. If the individual who committed the violation holds an educator certificate, the FHSAA shall also refer the violation to the department for review pursuant to § 1012.796 F.S. to determine whether probable cause exists, and, if there is a finding of probable cause, the commissioner shall file a formal complaint against the individual. If the complaint is upheld, the individual's educator certificate shall be revoked for 3 years, in addition to any penalties available under § 1012.796, F.S. Additionally, the department shall revoke

any adjunct teaching certificates issued pursuant to § 1012.57, F.S., and all permissions under § 1012.39 F.S., and § 1012.43 F.S., Florida Statutes, and the educator is ineligible for such certificates or permissions for a period of time equal to the period of revocation of his or her state-issued certificate.

XV. APPENDICES

A. Appendix: Immunization Information

- **MEASLES, MUMPS AND RUBELLA (MMR)**

Must have been given on or after the child's first birthday. The minimum interval between the 2 doses of MMR is 28 days.

- **POLIO (3–5 doses)**

Kindergarten: If fourth dose of polio vaccine is administered prior to the fourth birthday, a fifth dose of polio vaccine is required for entry into kindergarten. The final dose of the polio series should be administered on or after the fourth birthday regardless of the number of previous doses.

First through twelfth grade: If third dose of polio was given on or after the fourth birthday, a fourth dose is not required.

- **DTP/DTaP (5 shots)**

If the fourth dose of DTP/DTaP was given on or after the fourth birthday, a fifth dose is not required. Students between ages 7 and 12 (before 7th grade) may be considered complete with three doses and evaluation by the Department of Health School Nurse.

- **Tdap** (one shot): One dose of Tdap is required for students entering, repeating or transferring into seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade. Tdap can be administered regardless of the interval since the last Td vaccine was given.
- **Td or Tdap:** Tdap is a requirement for grades 7–12.
- **Hepatitis B Series** (3 shots)
- **Hib:** Number of doses of Hib varies according to age and the type of vaccine received.
- **Varicella** (one shot or signed proof of disease): Varicella must have been given on or after child's first birthday.

Pre-K students must have started the series and have a current immunization certificate.

- **Certification of Immunization (DH 680)**

The form DH 680 will no longer be pre-printed on BLUE paper. The form can now be printed on plain white paper as long as it is printed from the Florida State Health Online Tracking System (FL SHOTS).

FL SHOTS is Florida's free, online immunization registry which all schools and childcare facilities are able to have access to. For more information on enrolling your school in FL SHOTS, visit www.flshots.com or call 1-877-888-SHOT.

FL SHOTS also has a Parent Record Retriever which allows parents to print the certified DH 680 from their home computer. Parents will only have access to their own child's records after the doctor's office provides them with a special PIN number. The form is legal and valid for admittance to schools and daycare facilities and may be printed on standard white paper.

- **Temporary Medical Exemption (DOE code 2)**
Must be filled in with a future expiration date. If date has passed, or is not filled in, certificate is not valid, and student should not be in school. This applies to all Temporary Medical Exemptions, regardless of grade level. Schools are to track students who enter on Temporary Medical Exemption, and exclude those students when certificates expire if a new certificate has not been presented.
- **Religious Exemptions** (form DH 681) are allowed. They must be obtained at a Health Department Clinic.

The above information is a guideline to be used as a quick reference for schools and non-medical personnel. For complete medical information, refer to a physician or the "Immunization Guidelines for School and Childcare Centers. Available website: www.immunizeflorida.com/schoolguide.pdf.

B. Appendix: ELL Matrix of Florida's Programs and Instructional Models ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

Matrix of Florida's Programs and Instructional Models for English Language Learners

Instructional Model/Approach ²			Academic Content	Language of Instruction	Student Composition
	Model	Program ¹			
1.) Sheltered - English	E	E or N	English/Language Arts: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing ³	English	Only students classified as English language learners
2.) Sheltered – Core/Basic Subject Areas	S	E or N	Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Literacy	English	Only students classified as English language learners
3.) Mainstream/Inclusion – English	I	E or N	English/Language Arts: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing ³	English	Students classified as English language learners and fluent English-

4.) Mainstream/Inclusion – Core/Basic Subject Areas	C	E or N	Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Literacy	English	Students classified as English language learners and fluent English-
5.) Maintenance and/or Developmental Bilingual Education	O	E, H, L or N	English/Language Arts: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing AND Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Literacy	English and Another language [Native language of ELLs enrolled in program]	Only students classified as English language learners
6.) Dual Language (Two-way Developmental Bilingual Education)	T	E, H, L or N	English/Language Arts: Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing AND Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Computer Literacy	English and Another Language ⁴	Students classified as English language learners and

¹ Denotes program approved by FDOE, regardless of instructional model/approach: ESOL is required, other programs may also be delivered, based on student need

² More than one model/approach may be implemented at any given school

³ Instruction must be aligned to areas of knowledge, standards, and benchmarks of the revised Reading and Language Arts Sunshine State Standards. Areas of knowledge are Reading Process, Literacy Analysis, Writing Process, Writing Applications, Communication & Information and Media Literacy.

⁴ Language of instruction may or may not be the native language of ELLs.

⁵ Fluent English-speakers includes former ELLs and native English speakers