

The Opt Out Florida Network Guide

2015/2016

Opting Out is an act of civil disobedience in protest of all that is wrong with public education. That "thing" that brought you all here may be different but we must unite to take back our classrooms, return autonomy to our teachers, remove the high stakes attached to testing and to insist on "all for ALL children".

*Any act of civil disobedience comes with risks and unknowns; opting out of standardized tests is no different. We will never guarantee no pushback or consequences to your standing up in protest. We will never promise anything, except one thing..... **If you do nothing, nothing will change.***

Find your connection to the bigger picture. This is not about just your student, your teachers or your schools. Stand in defiance for all children, all teachers and all schools. We must take them back from those looking to destroy and profit from the forced failures.

Steps to Opt Out

Resources

Refusing a Paper Based Test

Refusing a Computer Based Test

NR2

Alternative Assessment

Portfolio Request Letter

Third Grade Resources

Test Questions Every Parent Needs To Ask

State of Florida Testing Calendar

High School Graduation Requirements by Cohort

What Opt Out Is Not

This Document is for informational purposes only and in no way represents legal advice.

15/16 Steps to Opt Out

1. **Have conviction in your reason to opt out.** This could include: The test is written with tricks and distractors that are intended to fail 30% of our students every year. You advocate for multiple measures of assessment. You disagree with the weight put on a single test including, teacher pay, school grades, retention, remediation or the denial of a diploma. You disagree with the federal intrusion on local decision and policy. It does not matter what your reason is, you just need to feel strongly about it. You must understand that **opt out is an act of civil disobedience** in protest of what is wrong with our public schools. This will help you get through the process and the possible push back.
2. **Look at all the resources, and research to determine what tests you want to opt out of (FCAT, FSA, etc.).** You will need to decide for yourself what risk level is acceptable to you and your family. Understand the risk to G.P.A. should you opt out of End of Course Exams.
3. **Determine what kind of opt out will work for you.** A student can refuse the test (see Instruction to refuse a computer based test and paper based test). Or, you can keep your child home during the testing window. If you keep your child home, research and be mindful of your district's truancy policy beforehand. The actual testing window can last as long as 4 weeks because of testing make-up days and you do not want to be found truant. (Note: A scheduled dentist or doctor appointment is considered an excused absence in many districts, so this might be a good time to plan those). Whether you refuse the test or keep your child home during the test, the ultimate goal is to achieve a score of NR2, or non-attemptedness. This is not the same as receiving a 0.
4. **Determine if you need to write an opt out letter.** If you are opting out of the third grade FSA, you may choose to ask the classroom teacher to keep a portfolio demonstrating your child's mastery of content standards (see Portfolio Letter to Teacher and Principal for example). Portfolios are considered an acceptable alternative assessment in the state of Florida. Your opt out letter should inform the school of your instructions to have your child **refuse** the test. Do not ask for permission to opt out – tell them you are opting out. The only real reason to write a letter is to gauge push back from school or district personnel, or to see if they threaten you. You can still have your child show up on the day of testing and not take the test.

Remember: You are trying to get cooperation from the teacher and principal, so if you choose to write a letter, keep it "soft." There's no need to get tough unless you get push back.

Note: If you write a letter quoting constitutional laws of parental rights, you are likely to receive a response from your district's legal department. If you want to ask for alternative activities (the school is not obligated to do this) for your child after (s)he refuses the test, you will need to send a letter. You can also notify them that you will be picking up your child in the office after (s)he refuses.

5. **Be prepared for test day.** There are 2 options.

Option #1 - Stay home on test day: You may choose to keep your child home during test days, but if you do, ask school personnel how they handle testing make-up days. Some schools accept the family's wish to opt out, and they will not try to test your child during the make-up days. Other schools, however, might try to test your child on every make-up day. If your school does this, you may choose to keep your child home during the entire make-up period. Review your district truancy policy, and remember that you may be able to avoid excessive unexcused absences by scheduling doctor and dentist visits. The State of Florida now allows a 20 day window to administer the test.

Option #2 - Refuse the test on test day: Your child may go to school and refuse the test on test day. Florida gives paper tests and computer tests, and the refusal process is different for each one. Ask school personnel which test your child will be taking, and then see "instructions for refusing a paper test" or "Instruction to refuse a computer based test". Once a student breaks the seal on a paper test, or once (s)he breaks the seal virtually on a computer test, the student will receive a score of NR2 or non-attemptedness. Note: Some subject-based tests last only one day, and some last two days. If your child is opting out of a **paper based** subject test that is scheduled to last *more than one day*, (s)he only needs to refuse it on the first day in order to get an NR2 for that particular test.

6. **Know that every opt out case is different.** Schools have historically handled opt outs differently. Some schools make students sit and stare. Some schools allow students to go to other classrooms to read or work on schoolwork. Many have allowed students to be picked up by parents. You will need to work this out with your school. If these options are in your plan, you will want to confirm your arrangement through email. Always communicate through email so you can keep a written record. YOU make the plan. Don't count on the school to do that for you. If you opt out it is YOUR responsibility to work all of this out.

7. **Third grade and Tenth grade are "high risk" years.** Both of these grade levels have special circumstances. For third grade, please find Third Grade Resources within this guide. For tenth grade please find the graduation requirements for your student's cohort. Understand that when they opt out of tenth grade ELA FSA, they must take SAT or ACT and achieve a concordant score. As of today's date of 10/26/15 the concordant scores are, SAT reading is 430, ACT reading is 19. We anticipate these numbers to change and will update. You should check the FLDOE website for the most current information.

Resources

Florida Education Statutes can be found online.

<http://www.fldoe.org/policy/edu-laws-legislation>

Chapter 1008

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Part I: ASSESSMENT, K-20 (ss. 1008.02-1008.30)

Part II: ACCOUNTABILITY, K-20 (ss. 1008.31-1008.46)

HB 7069

<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7506/urlt/Information-on-House-Bill-7069.pdf>

Opt Out Webinar in partnership with ConversationEd from 8/14

<http://conversationed.com/webinar/>

The Opt Out Florida Network on Facebook for statewide news and information

<https://www.facebook.com/TheOptOutFloridaNetwork>

The Opt Out Florida Network on Wordpress (here you can find district Facebook groups)

<https://theoptoutfloridanetwork.wordpress.com/>

Check your district website for the Pupil Progression Plan and District Testing Calendar.

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How to refuse a paper based test (PBT)
This includes notes from the 2014/15 school year.

Procedure letter for test refusal.....used for third grade but could be any paper test. Sent to teacher and principal two days before the test. Edit to serve your students needs.

The procedure he has been instructed to follow is:

He will sit for the test.

He will politely refuse to sign the Test Rules Acknowledgement.

He will "break the seal" on the FSA test.

He will slide the test away.

If he is prompted to sign the acknowledgement or to begin the test he is to say "no thank you". Only one reminder is needed, anything more would be coercion.

At that time he should be sent to the office where I will be waiting to take him to his dentist appointment on the 14th and home on the 17th.

Upon test refusal, he cannot be asked to make up the test. This will accommodate valuable instruction time. Because he will not take day 1 of testing, day 2 is automatically invalidated.

Therefore, on day two, for each test, I will keep him home during the test window and bring him in late. I do not wish to cause any disruption to your testing procedures. I do need to know what time testing will end.

ADDITION 3/4/15: after the first week of FSA paper testing we have some new information. Some students are being asked to sign the outside folder and to fill in name and district before they can get to the color tab to break the seal. This is fine and does not interfere with a refusal.

This procedure will score his test as NR2 "did not meet attemptedness criteria" per the Florida Department of Education and Cyndi Landers at OCPS Assessment.

Please see the attached account of another parent and principal here in OCPS. The principal gained this information from Cyndi Landers, OCPS Assessment Department.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with my request.

I received a call yesterday from my children's school. Next week, they will only be made to refuse two days, not all four.

This is how it must happen if a student is to be considered to have refused:

1. They will be read the instructions.
2. They will be asked to sign the Test Rules Acknowledgement, which reads: "I understand the testing rules that were just read to me. If I do not follow these rules, my test score may be invalidated." Prior to testing, test administrators will read the rules to students, and students must acknowledge that they understand the testing rules by signing their names under the statement. The last portion of the testing rules read to students

before they sign the acknowledgment reads, "After the test, you may not discuss the test with anyone. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, or posting online, for example, on websites like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram." If students are found sharing information about test items, even without the intent to cheat, their tests will be invalidated. All students are required to sign this contract. Even 8 year olds.

3. Students refusing may push the Test Rules Acknowledgment away AND MUST NOT SIGN IT. The Test Administrator is supposed to notify the school's Test Coordinator, so there may be a little commotion if the school has not been prepared for this. PER the test Instruction Manual - If they ask the student to sign it and they refuse, they should make a note of the refusal to sign and move on.

4. After they are instructed to open their test and start testing, they must break the seal on the test and refuse – they should simply push the test away and say, "No thank you." Any additional prompting from test administrators may be considered coercion or intimidation. The test security breach is what precludes them from having to sit for the makeup test. The student should NOT write on the test.

5. ** At my children's school** after they refuse, on the two days they refuse, they may be removed from the classroom if the parent requests it, so I will take them out of school for about an hour and return them in time to resume class after testing is completed for the day. No sense making them sit and stare just because they can cope. Parents need to determine how their child will cope for the four days, if required.

6. Because refusing Day 1 test invalidates Day 2, my children's school will not require the kids to refuse on Day 2 also I could just take them to school late, since they would not be made to refuse. But they will be allowed to go to a non-testing classroom – Kindergarten, First grade, etc., so they'll just go to school and actually learn and be useful during testing.

So I will not have to keep them out of school for the entire testing window and they won't have to miss regular instruction. Sanity.

AND – Per our school administration, "This is from Cynthia Landers," who is the person in charge of the OCPS Student Assessment Dept. This is a pretty big deal considering how literally OCPS has interpreted the test administration rules until now. It's a pleasant surprise to see common sense being put into practice, especially with our younger students.

How to refuse a computer based test (CBT)

Computer Based Test Refusal Instructions:

- Log onto test.
- When prompted to adjust preferences such as font size, volume, etc., fill out appropriate information
- When prompted, hit: "Yes, start my test."
- Go to question 1
- Hit "End Test"
- *In the event that the "End Test" does not appear, type one letter and the button should be visible, then hit "END TEST"*
- If you receive a prompt like, "Are you sure you want to submit this test?", Hit "YES"
- You have successfully "Opted Out" AND "participated"

At this point you must decide if you will pick up your student or if they will sit and stare. Some districts have directives to allow students to leave the room or to read a book. It is your responsibility to work this out.

From: Black, Jenny
Sent: Monday, June 23, 2014 12:07 PM
To: Assessment
Subject: RE: SASS Feedback Form (Cindy Hamilton)

Ms. Hamilton,

A student logs into a computer-based test using a login ID and test code which is unique to their student profile. The student must visit the Welcome Screen, respond to the Testing Rules Acknowledgment, and enter the Test Group Code prior to being entered into the actual test items. Currently, the test items are not mandatory. A student could leave any and every item blank. A student must answer at least six questions to receive a score. If the student answers 5 or less questions, they will receive an NR2, which means the student "Did Not Meet Attemptedness Criteria."

Please let us know if you have any other questions.

Thanks,

Jenny Black
Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment
Florida Department of Education
850-245-9470
jenny.black@fldoe.org

Original Message-----

From: Tovine, Gina H.
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2014 1:00 PM
To: Roach, Judge R.
Cc: Jara, Jesus F.
Subject: Fwd: Question

Mr. Roach please see the answer below.

Thanks

Gina

>

> The NR codes indicate that no data are reported for the student because too few questions were answered or the assessment was invalidated. An assessment marked NR2 means that the assessment experience did not meet the attempt criteria. Students who score NR2 are not included in school or teacher accountability.

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>

> Brandon McKelvey, Ph.D.
> Senior Director
> Accountability, Research and Assessment
> Email: Brandon.McKelvey@ocps.net

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Alternative Assessment is provided by the State of Florida (check your district Progression Plan for details on what your district has adopted)

Third Grade

Portfolio: Many districts, by policy/progression plan, do not start a portfolio until the student shows reading deficiency. For purposes of opting out you want this started once you make your decision to opt out. So ask nicely!! Some districts have refused to provide a portfolio until after a student fails the test.

SAT 10

IOWA

Tenth Grade

Concordant scores (as of 10/15) on SAT (430) or ACT (19)

For Algebra I EOC a concordant score on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT)

These tests can be taken anytime during the four years of high school. If you plan a 10th grade opt out, the student can achieve these concordant scores before and after the FSA and Algebra I EOC. Take them early and you will be prepared!

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Sample Portfolio Request Letter

September 1, 2015

Dear Ms. Crabtree,

I respectfully request that a portfolio assessment be created this year to demonstrate Darla's achievements and skills. The state's high stakes test, that is required of my child, does not inform her teacher's instruction. True accountability demands that we look at the whole child.

The only tool that will fully demonstrate a child's achievements and skills is a teacher-developed portfolio. It provides a clear picture of the whole child and reflects the authentic teaching and learning that occurs in our school.

The portfolio should contain samples of work completed independently in the classroom and which reflect the requirements as outlined by Just Read Florida or the school district. At the end of each marking period, I would like to monitor the progress of the portfolio.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Parent's Full Name
CC: Principal's Name

Third Grade Resources:

Opt Out Florida Third Grade Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/optoutfloridathirdgrade/>

Just Read Florida

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/third-grade-guidance.stml>

Successful Opt Out with links to supporting documents

<https://optoutorlando.wordpress.com/2015/05/30/sammy-addo-i-did-my-job-as-a-third-grader-2/>

Test questions EVERY PARENT needs to ask:
(From a veteran teacher)

For principals:

1. How many standardized tests does my child have to take this year?
2. Where do these tests originate?
3. What is the specific academic purpose for each one?
4. How will these tests affect my child's academic future or standing?
5. For each test, does the teacher see individual student results and have a chance to adjust individual instruction to help each student?
6. Who sees the scores, where will they be recorded, and for what purpose?
7. Do the scores become part of my child's record?
8. Who in the district instructed you to give these tests?

For school superintendents:

1. Identify by name and frequency each standardized test your district requires in each grade.
2. Explain where these tests originate and, for each, explain its specific academic purpose and the year it started.
3. Which tests are State mandated and which are required by the District?

For school board attorneys:


1. Explain your district's policy on opting out of/refusing standardized tests and cite its legal foundation.

For school board members:

1. How do you view the academic purposes for standardized testing?
2. Are you familiar with all the standardized tests your district requires, and their academic purposes?
3. Are you willing to initiate a parent/teacher review of the use of testing in your district?

FLORIDA STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

2015–2016 SCHEDULE

 Florida Standards Assessments (FSA)	
FSA English Language Arts and Mathematics	
Dates	Assessment
October 12–16, 2015	Paper-Based Accommodations: English Language Arts Grade 10 Retake – Writing & Reading Components
October 12–23, 2015	Computer-Based: English Language Arts Grade 10 Retake – Writing Component
October 12–30, 2015	Computer-Based: English Language Arts Grade 10 Retake – Reading Component
February 29–March 11, 2016	Paper-Based: Grades 4–7 English Language Arts – Writing Component Computer-Based (and Paper-Based Accommodations): Grades 8–10 & Retake English Language Arts – Writing Component
March 28–April 8, 2016	Paper-Based: Grade 3 English Language Arts Grades 3 and 4 Mathematics
March 28–April 8, 2016	Computer-Based (and Paper-Based Accommodations): English Language Arts Grade 10 Retake – Reading Component
April 11–22, 2016	Paper-Based Accommodations: Grades 4–10 English Language Arts – Reading Component Grades 5–8 Mathematics
April 11–May 6, 2016	Computer-Based: Grades 4–10 English Language Arts – Reading Component Grades 5–8 Mathematics
FSA End-of-Course Assessments	
Dates	Assessment
September 14–18, 2015 November 30–December 4, 2015 April 18–29, 2016 July 11–15, 2016	Paper-Based Accommodations: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2
September 14 – 25, 2015 November 30–December 18, 2015 April 18–May 13, 2016 July 11–22, 2016	Computer-Based: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2

FLORIDA STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

2015–2016 SCHEDULE

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) Assessments	
Reading Retakes and Science	
Dates	Assessment
October 12–16, 2015 and March 28–April 1, 2016	Paper-Based Accommodations: FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake
October 12–30, 2015 and March 28–April 8, 2016	Computer-Based: FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake
April 11–May 6, 2016	Paper-Based: Grades 5 and 8 Statewide Science Assessment
End-of-Course Assessments	
Dates	Assessment
October 12–16, 2015	Paper-Based Accommodations: Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
October 12–30, 2015	Computer-Based: Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
November 30–December 11, 2015	Paper-Based Accommodations: Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
November 30–December 18, 2015	Computer-Based: Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
March 28–April 1, 2016	Paper-Based Accommodations: Algebra 1 Retake
March 28–April 8, 2016	Computer-Based: Algebra 1 Retake
April 18–May 20, 2016	Paper-Based Accommodations: Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
April 18–May 20, 2016	Computer-Based: Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
July 11–15, 2016	Paper-Based Accommodations: Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History
July 11–22, 2016	Computer-Based: Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, U.S. History

FLORIDA STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

2015–2016 SCHEDULE

Other Statewide Assessments	
Dates	Assessment
August–October, 2015	Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screening (FLKRS) (Administered within the first 30 instructional days of the school year)
August 2015–June 2016	Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) (optional – K-12)
August–December, 2015	ACT Plan®
October 14 and 28, 2015	Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT)
January–March, 2016	National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Arts: Grade 8 Math and Reading Pilot Digitally Based Assessments: Grades 4 and 8 Writing Pilot Digitally Based Assessment: Grades 8 and 12
February 8–March 25, 2016	Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0) Alternate ACCESS for ELLs
February 29–April 15, 2016	Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA) Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Grades 4-8 Writing Field Test (all students) Grades 5 and 8 NGSSS Science
April 4–29, 2016	Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA) Grades 9-10 English Language Arts Grades 9 and 10 Writing Field Test (all students) End-of-Course Assessments (Algebra 1, Biology 1, Geometry)
May 2016	Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

Students Entering Grade Nine in the 2012-2013 School Year

Academic Advisement Flyer—What Students and Parents Need to Know

What are the diploma options?

Students must successfully complete one of the following diploma options:

- 24-credit standard diploma
- 18-credit Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) option
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma curriculum

What are the state assessment requirements*?

Students must pass the following statewide assessments:

- Grade 10 reading (or ACT/SAT concordant score)
- Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) if Algebra I is taken after 2010–2011 or a comparative score on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.)

Students must participate in the following EOC assessments:

- Algebra I (if enrolled after 2010-2011)
- Biology I (if enrolled after 2010-2011)
- Geometry (if enrolled after 2010-2011)
- U.S. History (if enrolled after 2011-2012) and performance on the EOC constitutes 30 percent of the final course grade

What are the graduation requirements for students with disabilities?

Two options are available only to students with disabilities. Both require the 24 credits listed in the table and both allow students to substitute a career and technical (CTE) course with related content for one credit in ELA IV, mathematics, science and social studies (excluding Algebra I, Geometry, Biology I and U.S. History).

- Students with significant cognitive disabilities may earn credits via access courses and be assessed via an alternate assessment.
- Students who choose the academic and employment option must earn at least .5 credit via paid employment.
- Certain students may earn a special diploma.

* Policy adopted in rule by the district school board may require for any cohort of students that performance of a statewide, standardized EOC assessment constitute 30 percent of a student's final course grade.

What are the requirements for the 24-credit standard diploma?

4 Credits English Language Arts (ELA)
4 Credits Mathematics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of which must be Algebra I and one of which must be Geometry ▪ Industry certifications that lead to college credit may substitute for up to two mathematics credits (except for Algebra I and Geometry)
3 Credits Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of which must be Biology I, two of which must have a laboratory component ▪ An industry certification that leads to college credit substitutes for up to one science credit (except for Biology I) ▪ An identified rigorous computer science course with a related industry certification substitutes for up to one science credit (except for Biology I)
3 Credits Social Studies
1 credit in World History 1 credit in U.S. History .5 credit in U.S. Government .5 credit in Economics
1 Credit Fine and Performing Arts, Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts
Eligible courses are specified in the Florida Course Code Directory at http://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/ccd .
1 Credit Physical Education
To include the integration of health
8 Elective Credits
1 Online Course
Students must earn a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

What is the distinction between the 18-credit ACCEL option and the 24-credit option?

- 3 elective credits instead of 8
- Physical education is not required
- Online course is not required

All other graduation requirements for a 24-credit standard diploma must be met (per section 1003.4282(10)(d)1.-5., Florida Statutes [F.S.]).

What are the requirements for standard diploma designations?

Scholar Diploma Designation
<p>In addition to meeting the 24-credit standard high school diploma requirements, a student must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Earn 1 credit in Algebra II; ▪ Earn 1 credit in statistics or an equally rigorous mathematics course; ▪ Pass the Biology I EOC; ▪ Earn 1 credit in chemistry or physics; ▪ Earn 1 credit in a course equally rigorous to chemistry or physics; ▪ Pass the U.S. History EOC; ▪ Earn 2 credits in the same world language; and ▪ Earn at least 1 credit in AP, IB, AICE or a dual enrollment course. <p>A student is exempt from the Biology I or U.S. History assessment if the student is enrolled in an AP, IB or AICE Biology I or U.S. History course and the student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes the respective AP, IB or AICE assessment; and ▪ Earns the minimum score to earn college credit.
Merit Diploma Designation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet the standard high school diploma requirements ▪ Attain one or more industry certifications from the list established (per s. 1003.492, F.S.)

Can a student who selects the 24-credit program graduate early?

Yes, a student who completes all the 24-credit program requirements for a standard diploma may graduate in fewer than eight semesters.

What is the credit acceleration program (CAP)?

This program allows a student to earn high school credit if the student passes a statewide course assessment without enrollment in the course. The courses include the following subjects:

- Algebra I
- Geometry
- U.S. History
- Biology I
- Algebra II

Where is information on Bright Futures Scholarships located?

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program rewards students for their academic achievements during high school by providing funding to attend a postsecondary institution in Florida. For more information, visit

<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/>.

What are the public postsecondary options?

SUS (State University System)
<p>Admission into Florida's public universities is competitive. Prospective students should complete a rigorous curriculum in high school and apply to more than one university to increase their chance for acceptance. To qualify to enter one of Florida's public universities, a first-time-in-college student must meet the following minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High school graduation with a standard diploma ▪ Admission test scores ▪ 16 credits of approved college preparatory academic courses ▪ 4 English (3 with substantial writing) ▪ 4 Mathematics (Algebra I level and above) ▪ 3 Natural Science (2 with substantial lab) ▪ 3 Social Science ▪ 2 World Language (sequential, in the same language) ▪ 2 approved electives <p>http://www.flbog.edu/forstudents/planning</p>
The Florida College System
<p>The 28 state colleges offer career-related certificates and two-year associate degrees that prepare students to transfer to a bachelor's degree program or to enter jobs requiring specific skills. Many also offer baccalaureate degrees in high-demand fields. Florida College System institutions have an open door policy. This means that students who have earned a standard high school diploma, have earned a high school equivalency diploma or have demonstrated success in postsecondary coursework will be admitted to an associate degree program.</p> <p>http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/index.shtml</p>
Career and Technical Centers
<p>Florida also offers students 46 accredited career and technical centers throughout the state, which provide the education and certification necessary to work in a particular career or technical field. Programs are flexible for students and provide industry-specific education and training for a wide variety of occupations.</p> <p>Career and Technical Directors</p>

Where is information on financial aid located?

The Office of Student Financial Assistance State Programs administers a variety of postsecondary educational state-funded grants and scholarships. To learn more, visit <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/>.

Students Entering Grade Nine in the 2013-2014 School Year

Academic Advisement Flyer—What Students and Parents Need to Know

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Students must successfully complete one of the following diploma options:

- 24-credit standard diploma
- 18-credit Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) option
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma curriculum

What are the state assessment requirements?

Students must pass the following statewide assessments:

- Grade 10 ELA (or ACT/SAT concordant score)
- Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) or a comparative score on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.)

Students must participate in the EOC assessments and the results constitute 30 percent of the final course grade. These assessments are in the following subjects:

- Algebra I* ▪ Biology I
- Geometry* ▪ Algebra II (if enrolled)*
- U.S. History

* Special Note: Thirty percent not applicable if enrolled in the 2014-2015 school year.

What is the credit acceleration program (CAP)?

This program allows a student to earn high school credit if the student passes a statewide course assessment without enrollment in the course. The courses include the following subjects:

- Algebra I ▪ Biology I
- Geometry ▪ Algebra II
- U.S. History

What are the graduation requirements for students with disabilities?

Two options are available only to students with disabilities. Both require the 24 credits listed in the table and both allow students to substitute a career and technical (CTE) course with related content for one credit in ELA IV, mathematics, science and social studies (excluding Algebra I, Geometry, Biology I and U.S. History).

- Students with significant cognitive disabilities may earn credits via access courses and be assessed via an alternate assessment.
- Students who choose the academic and employment option must earn at least .5 credit via paid employment.
- Certain students may earn a special diploma.

What are the requirements for the 24-credit standard diploma option?

4 Credits English Language Arts (ELA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ELA I, II, III, IV ▪ ELA honors, Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), International Baccalaureate (IB) and dual enrollment courses may satisfy this requirement
4 Credits Mathematics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of which must be Algebra I and one of which must be Geometry ▪ Industry certifications that lead to college credit may substitute for up to two mathematics credits (except for Algebra I and Geometry)
3 Credits Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of which must be Biology I, two of which must be equally rigorous science courses. ▪ Two of the three required credits must have a laboratory component. ▪ An industry certification that leads to college credit substitutes for up to one science credit (except for Biology I) ▪ An identified rigorous computer science course with a related industry certification substitutes for up to one science credit (except for Biology I)
3 Credits Social Studies
1 credit in World History 1 credit in U.S. History .5 credit in U.S. Government .5 credit in Economics with Financial Literacy
1 Credit Fine and Performing Arts, Speech and Debate, or Practical Arts [†]
1 Credit Physical Education [†]
To include the integration of health
[†] Special Note: Eligible courses and eligible course substitutions are specified in the Florida Course Code Directory at http://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/ccd .
8 Elective Credits
1 Online Course
Students must earn a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

What are the requirements for standard diploma designations?

Scholar Diploma Designation
<p>In addition to meeting the 24-credit standard high school diploma requirements, a student must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Earn 1 credit in Algebra II;▪ Earn 1 credit in statistics or an equally rigorous mathematics course;▪ Pass the Biology I EOC;▪ Earn 1 credit in chemistry or physics;▪ Earn 1 credit in a course equally rigorous to chemistry or physics;▪ Pass the U.S. History EOC;▪ Earn 2 credits in the same world language; and▪ Earn at least 1 credit in AP, IB, AICE or a dual enrollment course. <p>A student is exempt from the Biology I or U.S. History assessment if the student is enrolled in an AP, IB or AICE Biology I or U.S. History course and the student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Takes the respective AP, IB or AICE assessment; and▪ Earns the minimum score to earn college credit.
Merit Diploma Designation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Meet the standard high school diploma requirements▪ Attain one or more industry certifications from the list established (per section 1003.492, Florida Statutes [F.S.]).

Can a student who selects the 24-credit program graduate early?

Yes, a student who completes all the 24-credit program requirements for a standard diploma may graduate in fewer than eight semesters.

What is the distinction between the 18-credit ACCEL option and the 24-credit option?

- 3 elective credits instead of 8
- Physical education is not required
- Online course is not required

All other graduation requirements for a 24-credit standard diploma must be met (per s. 1003.4282(3)(a)-(e), F.S.).

Where is information on Bright Futures Scholarships located?

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program rewards students for their academic achievements during high school by providing funding to attend a postsecondary institution in Florida. For more information, visit <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/>.

What are the public postsecondary options?

State University System
<p>Admission into Florida's public universities is competitive. Prospective students should complete a rigorous curriculum in high school and apply to more than one university to increase their chance for acceptance. To qualify to enter one of Florida's public universities, a first-time-in-college student must meet the following minimum requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ High school graduation with a standard diploma▪ Admission test scores▪ 16 credits of approved college preparatory academic courses▪ 4 English (3 with substantial writing)▪ 4 Mathematics (Algebra I level and above)▪ 3 Natural Science (2 with substantial lab)▪ 3 Social Science▪ 2 World Language (sequential, in the same language)▪ 2 approved electives <p>http://www.flbog.edu/forstudents/planning</p>
The Florida College System
<p>The 28 state colleges offer career-related certificates and two-year associate degrees that prepare students to transfer to a bachelor's degree program or to enter jobs requiring specific skills. Many also offer baccalaureate degrees in high-demand fields. Florida College System institutions have an open door policy. This means that students who have earned a standard high school diploma, have earned a high school equivalency diploma or have demonstrated success in postsecondary coursework will be admitted to an associate degree program.</p> <p>http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/index.shtml</p>
Career and Technical Centers
<p>Florida also offers students 46 accredited career and technical centers throughout the state, which provide the education and certification necessary to work in a particular career or technical field. Programs are flexible for students and provide industry-specific education and training for a wide variety of occupations.</p> <p>Career and Technical Directors</p>

Where is information on financial aid located?

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Students Entering Grade Nine in the 2014-2015 School Year Academic Advisement Flyer–What Students and Parents Need to Know

What are the diploma options?

Students must successfully complete one of the following diploma options:

- 24-credit standard diploma
- 18-credit Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) option
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma curriculum

What are the state assessment requirements?

Students must pass the following statewide assessments:

- Grade 10 ELA (or ACT/SAT concordant score)
- Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) or a comparative score on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.)

Students must participate in the EOC assessments and the results constitute 30 percent of the final course grade. These assessments are in the following subjects:

- Algebra I*
- U.S. History
- Biology I
- Algebra II (if enrolled)*
- Geometry*

*Special Note: Thirty percent not applicable if enrolled in the 2014-2015 school year.

What is the credit acceleration program (CAP)?

This program allows a student to earn high school credit if the student passes a statewide course assessment without enrollment in the course. The courses include the following subjects:

- Algebra I
- Biology I
- Geometry
- Algebra II
- U.S. History

What are the graduation requirements for students with disabilities?

Two options are available only to students with disabilities. Both require the 24 credits listed in the table and both allow students to substitute a career and technical (CTE) course with related content for one credit in ELA IV, mathematics, science and social studies (excluding Algebra I, Geometry, Biology I and U.S. History).

- Students with significant cognitive disabilities may earn credits via access courses and be assessed via an alternate assessment.
- Students who choose the academic and employment option must earn at least .5 credit via paid employment.

What are the requirements for the 24-credit standard diploma option?

4 Credits English Language Arts (ELA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ELA I, II III, IV ▪ ELA honors, Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), International Baccalaureate (IB) and dual enrollment courses may satisfy this requirement
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What OPT OUT is not –

by Chris Cerrone , New York

OPT-OUT is:

1. **NOT an easy way out for students.** Opting out is not a method to go easy on our children to prevent failure in any way. Failing at a task can build character, look at some of our greatest inventors-they failed and tried and tried again.

2. **NOT an attack on our children's teachers.** Boycotting high-stakes tests is not a way to hurt our teachers, in fact most teachers support opting out because they see the harm in the testing culture that is controlling our schools.

3. **NOT an attack on our children's schools.** Opting out our children will save our schools from financial and educational harm caused by corporate high-stakes testing machine.

4. **NOT a protest against using tests in our classrooms.** Tests given by our teachers, grade levels and schools are *one way* to assess our children. Evaluating our children properly requires a variety of methods that our teachers complete on a daily basis. Sadly the high-stakes state exams focus on one test score to determine the progress and quality of our children, teachers and schools.

5. **NOT a way to avoid teacher evaluation.** As one test score should not judge a student, the same applies to our educators. Using a variety of methods with professional observation, peer mentoring and collaboration will help develop highly effective teachers.

Opting out IS a way to take back control of our schools. The latest policies such as Common Core and APPR teacher evaluations in New York State will lead to an explosion of high-stakes standardized tests. The time devoted to testing and test preparation will grow to previously unheard of levels in the next few years. Parents need to say no to the "testing culture" and say our children's education needs a diverse curriculum, creativity and critical thinking.

Posted by [Chris Cerrone](#) at [8/11/2012 09:19:00 AM](#)