

Middle School Student Progression Plan

2020-2021



St. Johns County Schools will inspire good character and a passion for lifelong learning in all students, creating educated and caring contributors to the world.

St. Johns County School District Student Progression Plan Introduction

To ensure that St. Johns County School District is meeting the needs of students and in response to legislation, the St. Johns County School Board has established a comprehensive program for student progression which includes the following:

- standards for evaluating each student's performance, including how well he or she masters the performance standards approved by the State Board of Education,
- specific levels of performance in reading, writing, science, mathematics, social studies for each grade level, including the levels of performance on statewide assessments*,
- appropriate alternative placement for a student who has been retained two or more years, and
- procedures for informing each student and his or her parents/legal guardians of the student's academic progress

The St. Johns County School District Student Progression Plan is a contract delineating what a student must know and be able to do to be promoted and what the district will do to help the student meet the requirements for promotion. The plan and the procedures for its implementation reflect clearly that promotion is based on student mastery of grade level/course standards.

The plan establishes procedures to achieve parent/legal guardian understanding, cooperation and support of the student's placement. School attendance procedures as described in the district's Attendance Policy are considered as part of the Student Progression Plan.

The district program for student progression is based upon local goals and objectives that are compatible with the state's plan for education. Pertinent factors considered by the teacher before recommendation that a student progress from one grade to another have been prescribed by the district School Board in its plan.

The Student Progression Plan is governed by state statutes and district policy. All procedures listed in the Student Progression Plan are subject to change due to School Board or legislative action. The Student Progression Plan is updated yearly and posted on the district website.

Students will be placed in programs and levels best suited to meet their academic needs and Customized Learning Path (CLP), with consideration given to their social, emotional and physical development.

Decisions regarding student promotion, retention and special placement are primarily the responsibility of the individual school's professional staff. District and state regulations place the responsibility for decisions regarding student placement with the principal and the Multi-Tiered System of Support Team or its equivalent. **There is no provision for voluntary retention or placement based solely on student or parental preference, [F. S. 1008.25](#).**

It is the responsibility of the School Board and district administration to provide students with effective instructional and support programs that accomplish the following:

- monitor student progress,
- promote continuous achievement,
- make provisions for individual differences,
- promote students' assuming responsibility for their own learning and attendance
- provide effective, engaging instruction and support, and
- document instruction in, and student mastery of, the standard

*A student scoring below grade level must receive instructional support or be retained in an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and addresses the student's learning needs.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8) STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

I. ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, PROMOTION, PLACEMENT & TRANSFERS

A. Admission

Admission Requirements

For information about admission, please visit the District website at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/student/enrollment.

B. Enrollment and Grade Level Placement

Placement within Zoned School

The Customized Learning Path (CLP) is unique to each student and is based on his or her academic and career needs. Placement that facilitates optimum learning for each student shall be determined by established principles of growth and development, by the academic and career interests of the student and by acquisition of subject area skills and competencies. 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.

State Policy on Transfer of Students in the Middle Grades as stated in School Board Rule [SBR 6A-1.09942](#)

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:

- (1) 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
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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/legal guardian:
 - (a) Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee;
 - (b) Demonstrated performance in courses taken at other public or private accredited schools;
 - (c) Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally-normed standardized subject area assessments;
 - (d) Demonstrated proficiencies on the FSA; or
 - (e) 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)(c) and (d) of this rule if required."

Specific Authority [1003.4156\(3\)](#), [1003.25\(3\) FS](#). Law Implemented [1003.25\(3\) FS](#). History—New 10-20-08.

Placement for Students with Disabilities enrolled in Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

Students with disabilities shall be placed in appropriate courses as dictated by their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Specially designed instruction will be provided by an ESE teacher or other service provider in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as determined by the IEP team. In most cases, this will be in the regular education classroom with their non-disabled peers but some ESE students may require instruction in a separate environment for some portion of the day. See the [Exceptional Student Education section](#) of this document for more information.

School-to-School Placement

Whenever grade level placement of a student involves a movement from one school to another school, the processing of that movement shall begin with the Intervention Team or its equivalent of the sending school and end with the principal, or designee, of the receiving school. The receiving principal shall do the following:

- review the recommendation,
- conduct investigative activities as deemed necessary,
- render a decision, and
- notify those who have a need to know.

The referring school shall have tried interventions prior to seeking placement of a student in another school. Such interventions will be briefly described on the referral form. A student entering late is an exception to this requirement. Parents/legal guardians shall be invited to attend any meeting discussing school-to-school placement.

Requirements for Information Prior to Placement

Each student at the time of initial registration for school placement must note previous school expulsions, arrests resulting in a charge, arrests pending, and juvenile justice actions the student has had. Schools have the authority to honor the final order of expulsion or dismissal of a student by any in-state or out-of-state public district school board, private school or lab school, for an act which would have been grounds for expulsion according to the SJCS Code of Student Conduct, according to the following procedures:

- A final order of expulsion shall be recorded in the records of the receiving school.
- The expelled student applying for admission to the receiving school shall be advised of the final order of expulsion.

The superintendent or designee may recommend to the School Board that the final order of expulsion be waived and the student be admitted to the school district, or that the final order of expulsion be honored and the student not be admitted to the school district. If the student is admitted by the School Board, with or without the recommendation of the district school superintendent, the student may be placed in an appropriate educational program at the direction of the School Board.

Placement of Dependent Children of Active Duty Military Personnel [1000.36 F.S.](#)

Dependent children of active duty military personnel moving into the district outside of normal application periods who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria for special academic programs shall be given special consideration for admission to such programs even if the program is being offered through a school other than the student's home zoned school.

Placement of Students on Community Control

For information regarding procedures when students are placed on community control, please refer to Florida [Statute 948.101](#), *Terms and Conditions of Community Control* and [Florida Statute 948.03](#), *Terms and Conditions of Probation*. [Florida Statute 948.03](#) specifically states that the court shall determine the terms and conditions of probation. Conditions specified in this section do not require oral pronouncement at the time of sentencing and may be considered standard conditions of probation. These conditions may include that the probationer or offender in community control shall:

- report to the probation and parole supervisors as directed, and
- permit such supervisors to visit him or her at his or her home or elsewhere.

Placement of Pregnant, Married or Parenting Students

Students who become or have become married and students who are pregnant shall not be prohibited from attending school. These students and students who are parents shall receive the same educational instruction or its equivalent as other students but may **voluntarily** be assigned to a class or program suited to their special needs. Pregnant or parenting teens may participate in a teenage parent program. Pregnant students may attend alternative education programs or adult education programs, provided that the curriculum allows the student to continue to work toward a high school diploma.

Parent/Legal Guardian Role with Placement Decisions

State law provides the authority for placement of students with the school district. Placement is based on professional educators' evaluations of how well the student is meeting the levels of performance for student progression. Such evaluations take into account whether or not the student has the knowledge and skills to move on successfully to the more difficult work of the next grade or course. Parents/legal guardians may discuss a placement with school officials and ask for an explanation of the placement, and they may review the evidence the school used to make the placement. **There is no provision for voluntary retention or placement based solely on student or parental preference, [F. S. 1008.25](#).**

Parent/Legal Guardian Request for Change in Placement

Florida Statute [1003.3101](#) gives a parent/legal guardian the right to request his or her child be transferred to another classroom teacher based on (1) the teacher's out-of-field certification status or (2) personal preference. This statute does not give the parent/legal guardian the right to choose a specific classroom teacher. Teachers with out-of-field certification are named on our district website 30 days before the beginning of the semester. Parents/legal guardians may complete a Teacher Change Request form, which is also available on the district website and at schools. When the form is returned to the school, the parent/legal guardian will be contacted to schedule a conference (required). After the conference, the principal will either approve or deny the request with the rationale for the denial in writing. Schools must approve or deny the transfer within two weeks of receiving the request. 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.

Placement in Intensive Reading [1003.4156\(1\)\(b\) F.S.](#), [1003.4282 F.S.](#)

For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or 2 on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) in English Language Arts (ELA), the student may be enrolled in an Intensive Reading (IR) course the following year or a content-area course in which reading strategies are delivered based on a diagnosis of the student's specific reading needs. Intensive Reading courses shall be designed and offered pursuant to the District's Comprehensive Reading Plan (CRP). Please refer to the section on reading support in this document and to the CRP at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/cs/crp/>.

Placement from Accredited Schools in Grades 6-8

Students enrolling in grades 6-8 from an accredited public, private or charter school shall be placed in a grade consistent with the recommendation of the sending school and the support information provided that documents student progress and mastery of standards.

Placement from Home Education or Unaccredited Schools in Grades 6-8

Students seeking initial placement in grades 6-8 from a home education program or an unaccredited charter, public or private school shall be evaluated by the local school to determine the most appropriate grade level placement. Criteria to be considered shall include age and maturity, standardized achievement test results, state assessment results, progress as it relates to the Florida Standards and benchmarks, previous records from public or private schools and evidence from the student's portfolio of work and achievement while in home education.

In no instance shall the placement be automatic, based solely on the recommendation of the unaccredited public or private school, home educator, or age. The placement decision is subject to review and revision after school personnel have had the opportunity to observe the student's work. Should there be reasonable suspicion of a student's grades, initial assessments may be required to determine grade placement.

Instructional Support for Math [1003.4156 F.S.](#)

For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FSA for mathematics, the student may receive support the following year. Support may be provided within the student's regularly scheduled math class or through an Intensive Math (IM) course. Please refer to the section on remediation in this document.

Termination of School Placement at Age 16

A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age, provided the student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district School Board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the student and the student's parent/legal guardian.

The following steps must also be taken:

- The school shall notify the student's parent/legal guardian of receipt of the student's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment.
- The student's school counselor or other school personnel shall conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and actions that could be taken to keep the student in school.
- The student shall be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including, but not limited to, adult education and GED test preparation.
- The student shall complete a survey to provide data on student reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep student enrolled.

Placement of Homeless Students

The federal **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), ensures that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth. Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment based on homelessness alone.

Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless. If, due to a loss of housing, a child must live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground, on the street, in abandoned buildings, or doubled-up with relatives or friends, then he/she is eligible to receive services provided under the McKinney-Vento Act.

A homeless student shall be permitted to enroll immediately, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. This includes, but is not limited to, records such as previous academic records, medical and immunizations records, and proof of residency. A homeless child shall be granted a temporary exemption from entrance requirements for 30 school days. For detailed information, see www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/homeless.

Placement of English Language Learners

Per federal law, all children in the United States are entitled to equal access to a basic public elementary and secondary education regardless of their or their parents'/legal guardians' actual or perceived national origin, citizenship, or immigration status. The school district may not inquire into a student's immigration status nor keep records or lists pertaining to immigration status. The following process will be followed:

1. Do not ask about a student or their parent's/legal guardian's immigration status,
2. Follow SJCS D enrollment guidelines as for any student,
3. Follow SJCS D documentation of residency policy, and
4. Follow SJCS D documented guardianship policy (if necessary).

Please note that if the student meets the definition of homeless, per the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the student must be enrolled immediately. Understanding that each situation is unique, please contact the Student Services Department in order to make the best decision for the student.

C. Transfers and Withdrawals

Students transferring into the district once the school year has begun shall be assessed in reading and math to determine reading proficiency and to ensure proper course placement and instructional support. Students will be placed into middle or high school courses based on mastery of the appropriate Florida Standards in accordance with the student's Customized Learning Path (CLP) and based on the transferring school's transcript of work completed.

Couse Weightings for Transfer Students State Board Rule 6A-1.09941

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. Students transferring credits into St. Johns County School District will be subject to the current course credit weighting approved by the St. Johns County School Board and in alignment with Florida DOE course code directory. If a letter grade is assigned, that grade is entered in our system, even if the grading scale from which the student transferred is not equivalent to St. Johns County School District's grading scale. If only a numerical grade is provided and no grading scale is provided, our scale is applied to the student record.

An official transcript sent by mail or electronically signed by a school administrator, must be on school letterhead and/or embossed with the school seal. An official transcript must clearly identify the school, the student, course number, date(s) course taken, credit earned and grade in each course. Students who transfer with credits from a private school in which the course title does not correspond with a course title found in the Florida Course Code Directory, will be awarded credit using the appropriate Transfer credit found in the Florida Course Code Directory.

An unofficial transcript is one that is hand-delivered by a student or parent/legal guardian, is delivered to a school administrator in an open envelope or is on plain paper.

Promotion of Late-in-the-Year Transfer Students

The promotion of students transferring into St. Johns County during the last grading period shall be determined primarily by the grades and records received from the sending school.

State End-of-Course Assessments for Transfer Students - See State Assessments for Transfer Students

D. Attendance

Parent/legal 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.

For specific information about attendance, please see the Student Code of Conduct on the District website: <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/schoolservices/conduct/>.

II. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

A. Charter School

Charter schools are public schools that are operated by the governing board of a non-profit organization under the sponsorship of the St. Johns County School Board. The grade levels, targeted student population and services of a charter school are defined by the charter contract established between the School Board and the non-profit organization.

For information regarding specific SJCS D charter school contracts, please contact the SJCS D Charter Schools Office at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/charter/>.

Promotion and Retention of Charter School Students

Charter schools are held to the same standards and responsibilities as other public schools in regard to promotion and retention. Any authorized customization of these requirements would be found in the charter contract between the charter Board and the St. Johns County School Board.

B. Foreign Exchange Students

Admission of foreign exchange students is limited to students in grade 11.

C. Home Education [1002.41 F.S.](#)

For information, visit FLDOE Office of Independent and Parental Choice Website at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/other-school-choice-options/home-edu/>. To register for home education, contact the office of Home Education in the St. Johns County School District by phone or at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/homeeducation/>. Students entering St. Johns County School District and requesting credit for a home education program must follow the Validation of Transfer Credit process specified by [6A-1.09941, F.A.C.](#) .

Home Education Student Participation in Public Schools [1006.15 F.S.](#), [1002.41 F.S.](#)

Legally registered home education students may participate in public school interscholastic extracurricular programs at the public school which the student would be assigned according to the district school board attendance policy. Home education students are given opportunity to participate, but they must meet the same eligibility requirements as other students in public and private schools. As an example, any public or home education student who does not have the required GPA is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities. All students have to comply with the Florida Statutes and the FHSAA Bylaws to be eligible to participate. All students are required to meet the requirements established in state law, FHSAA regulations and their respective schools of participations. Home education students may submit FHSAA EL7 Verification of Student Registration with Public School District Home Education Office form (<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/homeeducation/>) to the office of Home Education no less than one week prior to the participation deadline. Home education students must register with the school in which they intent to participate in interscholastic and intrascholastic activities prior to participation in the activity, [FS 1008.25](#).

Although public schools are under no obligation to provide home education students access to classes, programs, services, or other educational opportunities, home education students may submit a request to the school principal to participate in academic classes at their assigned school if space is available. Home education students approved for district classes are subject to school board approval. If home education students are approved and participate in academic classes, they will be expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct and participate in required state and district assessments, the same as regular full-time students. If the student cannot attend and participate in required testing, they may not be eligible for academic classes. Noncompliance may result in the withdrawal from class.

Students enrolled in a Home Education program may participate in statewide assessments. Each district's Home Education office is required, per s. 1002.41, Florida Statutes, to provide students with the date, time, and location for the administration of each assessment. If this information is not received, students/parents/legal guardian should reach out to their local Home Education office.

If such student chooses to take their course(s) via virtual instruction, they may take their state student assessments at their zoned school. If this happens, the home education student must contact the home education department by their set date to register. SJVS does not arrange statewide testing for home education students, nor does SJVS receive scores once testing is complete.

Note that statewide assessments are optional for Home Education students. The results of the assessment do not affect the student's final course grade, nor should the results be used for promotion/retention purposes.

Home education students must register with the school in which they intend to participate in interscholastic and intrascholastic activities prior to participation in the activity. Legally registered home education students may participate in public school interscholastic extracurricular programs at the public school which the student would be assigned according to the district school board attendance policy. Home education students are given opportunity to participate, but they must meet the same eligibility requirements as other students in public and private schools. As an example, any public or home education student who does not have the required GPA is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities. All students have to comply with the Florida Statutes and the FHSAA Bylaws to be eligible to participate. All students are required to meet the requirements established in state law, FHSAA regulations and their respective schools of participations. Home education students may submit FHSAA EL7 Verification of Student Registration with Public School District Home Education Office form (<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/homeeducation/>) to the office of Home Education no less than one week prior to the participation deadline.

For dual enrollment information for home education students, http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18379/urlt/dual_enrollment_faq.pdf.

D. Hospital/Homebound

Programs for Students in Need of Homebound or Hospital Services

A homebound or hospitalized student is a student who has a medically diagnosed injury, a chronic physical/psychiatric condition, or has repeated intermittent illness due to a persisting medical problem. For more information, please see [page 29](#).

E. The Academics, Performance, Excellence (APEX) Program at St. Johns Technical High School

The APEX Program at St. Johns Technical High School customizes and delivers an appropriate learning path for each student in a supportive and responsive environment. Students who might not otherwise experience success are encouraged to develop a strong work ethic while exploring vocational opportunities and achieving high standards in character and academics. Information is also available at the district website: <http://www-sjths.stjohns.k12.fl.us/Apex>.

Alternative Placement for Students Retained Two or More Years

An alternative placement shall be offered for a student who has been retained two or more years. The alternative placement shall provide the student with intensive, differentiated instruction designed to remediate the student's academic deficiencies and shall include opportunities for the student to be placed in small group instructional settings. The alternative placement shall, under most circumstances, be at the student's home zoned school but may involve placement at a district-designated site. The alternative placement may not be a placement in a regular program at a higher grade.

F. Virtual Education

Virtual coursework is available but not required at the middle school level. However, the successful completion of one virtual course is required for the standard 24-credit diploma. Approved high school virtual courses completed in middle school fulfill the graduation requirement.

Florida Statute [1006.15](#) provides student rights relative to the eligibility of full-time Florida Virtual School/St. Johns Virtual School students to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities at their home-zoned public school.

Additional information on Florida Public Virtual Schools is available at the FDOE Virtual Instruction webpage <http://www.fldoe.org/Schools/virtual-schools>. The first choice for virtual school for St. Johns County students is St. Johns County Virtual School (SJVS); Information is available at <https://stjohnsvirtual.com>.

A Florida Virtual School (FLVS) student may be able to take industry certification exams, national assessments, and statewide assessments offered by the district at what would have been their school of enrollment per the district zoning policy. The FLVS student must contact their zoned school to make the necessary arrangements.

Placement/Acceleration in St. Johns Virtual School (SJVS) or Florida Virtual School (FLVS)

As stipulated by the Florida K-20 Education Code ([s.1002.20 F.S.](#)), parents/legal guardians have the right to choose educational options such as SJVS or FLVS for their children. A student's full-time school may not deny access to virtual courses. SJVS is the provider of first choice for virtual instruction; however, in situations in which SJVS cannot fulfill the need, students may qualify to access the services of FLVS.

The School Board shall provide students with access to enroll in courses available through SJVS or FLVS and shall award credit for successful completion of such courses. Access may be available to students during or after the normal school day and for FLVS, throughout the summer. Students wishing to take courses from SJVS or FLVS must work closely with their school counselors to ensure that courses fit in their Customized Learning Path (CLP). Placement in a virtual course at any time will follow the district course request process. The Superintendent has designated the principal of the school as the final authority in the placement of students in programs or classes.

St. Johns Virtual School offers:

- Full time instruction for students in grades K-12 ([1002.37\(8\)\(11\) F.S.](#))
- Individual online courses for students (attending a SJCSO public school, private schools and home education) in grades K-12
- Curriculum for grades 6-12 provided by FLVS and Apex Learning.
- Curriculum for grades K-6 provided by K-12 and Pearson/Connexus.

SJVS offers two additional virtual options for district students in grades K-12 who meet eligibility requirements to enroll in full time and part time courses. Families may choose from options that include district operated (SJCSO instructors) or provider operated (contracted instruction). For more information, call 904-547-8080 or visit <https://stjohnsvirtual.com/> or <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/dis-virtual-options.stml>. The Florida Online Course Catalog may be found at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/fl-online-catalog.stml>.

SJVS or FLVS is appropriate for students who:

- have medical or behavior issues that may limit success in the traditional classroom,
- need a more flexible schedule due to training or other extra-curricular endeavors,
- need access to a course not offered at their school, or
- are home schooled.

Students enrolled in a SJVS/FLVS course which requires a state end-of-course assessment (EOC) are required to take the EOC in their district school of enrollment and the EOC is 30% of the grade in the class.

Full time SJVS students are public school students and are required to take all state assessments at St. Johns Virtual School.

Virtual schools must assess the reading ability of students scoring at Level 1 or 2 on the FSA in English Language Arts twice per year. ([State Board Rule 6A-6.054](#))

Enrollment

Students wishing to take advantage of courses offered by SJVS or FLVS must follow the procedure outlined below:

- The student must meet with the school counselor to determine if placement in SJVS or FLVS is academically appropriate for the student based on course prerequisites, the student's academic history and age, and appropriateness of the course for the student's Customized Learning Path (CLP).
- For students with disabilities, an IEP or 504 meeting will be held prior to determining whether placement in a SJVS/FLVS course is appropriate based on their individual needs.
- All petitions to take a course via SJVS or FLVS must be approved by the student's school counselor prior to the start of a new semester or summer school.
- Once a semester has begun, a student may not withdraw from a school course to enroll in the same course online without administrative approval.

- A student may not simultaneously be placed in the same course concurrently at a district middle or high school and at SJVS or FLVS.

Schools shall make every effort for a student to access SJVS/FLVS coursework on site for a student whose CLP indicates that placement in a SJVS or FLVS course during the school day is appropriate.

Awarding of New Credit

Students should seek counseling from guidance department personnel prior to pursuing new credit outside of their zoned school. Curriculum is reviewed to ensure course alignment prior to course approval. New credit shall be awarded by a St. Johns County high school for pre-approved high school courses taken in an accredited public, private or virtual school by students provided EOC assessment requirements have been met. For a list of accreditation agencies see <http://www.advanc-ed.org/oasis2/u/par/search>.

III. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

A. Regular Program—Course Requirements [1003.4156 F.S.](#)

To be promoted to grade 9, students are required to successfully complete the following courses in grades 6-8:

- Three middle school or higher courses in language arts, which emphasize literature, composition, and technical text
- Three middle school or higher courses in mathematics
- Three middle school or higher courses in social studies.
 - One semester which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.
 - Additionally, a career and education planning course must be completed in either grades 6, 7 or 8th grade. The course must be internet based, customizable to each student and include research bases assessment to assist the students in determining educational and career options. [1003.4156 F.S.](#)
- Three middle school or higher courses in science
- The equivalent of one class period per day of physical education for one semester of each year.

One of the social studies 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. A student transferring into middle grades after the beginning of the second term is not required to meet this requirement if three social studies courses or two year-long courses that include civics have already been completed.

Each student’s performance on the state Civics End-of-Course (EOC) assessment will be 30% of the final grade in the course. Students with disabilities may qualify for a waiver of the EOC requirement. Please see [page 32](#) – Statewide Assessment for more information.

The physical education requirement shall be waived for students who meet one of following criteria: ([1003.455 F.S.](#))

- The student is enrolled or required to enroll in a remedial course.
- The student’s parent/legal guardian indicates in writing to the school district that
 - ❖ the parent/legal guardian requests that the student enrolls in another course from among those courses offered as options by the school district, based upon availability at the students’ school of attendance or
 - ❖ the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement.

Students are required to receive 300 minutes of instruction during the school day. Physical activities outside the school day do not release students from the 300 minutes of instruction requirement. A student must take an approved, alternative middle school course if physical education course is waived.

District Initiatives include:

- document-based questions (DBQs)
- electives as appropriate to the student's Customized Learning Path (CLP),
- the Character Counts! Program is integrated into all subject areas, and
- all middle school students are encouraged to take part in service learning/volunteer opportunities.

Required instruction ([1003.42 F.S.](#)) is detailed in the Appendix.

Grade-Level Classification Requirements

- Classification for 6th Grade - promotion from 5th grade
- Classification for 7th Grade - successful completion of 6th grade language arts, mathematics, science and social studies
- Classification for 8th Grade - successful completion of 7th grade language arts, mathematics, science and social studies

Additional Requirement:

- the equivalent of one class period per day of physical education for one semester of each year for students enrolled in grades 6 through 8, unless student is eligible for a state-approved waiver.

Student grade level classification or course placement at the end of the first semester will determine which Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) or Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA) is administered.

Course Prerequisites and Corequisites

Many courses listed in the St. Johns County High School Course Catalog have prerequisites and corequisites. These prerequisites and/or corequisites must be honored unless student petition and the ensuing conversation with a school counselor indicate that an exception needs to be made based on data and a student's Customized Learning Path.

Course Placement

Core course placement is based on a review of pre and/or co-requisite courses, current grades, state assessment scores and teacher recommendations.

Exemptions from Instruction [1003.42\(3\) F.S.](#)

Any student whose parent/legal guardian presents a written request to the principal shall be exempted from instruction on reproductive health or any disease, including HIV/Aids, its symptoms, development and treatment. A student so exempted shall not be penalized by reason of the exemption. The exemption must be requested annually.

Students may be excused from conducting biological experiments upon written request of a parent/legal guardian. ([1003.47 F.S.](#))

Any student whose parent/legal guardian presents a written request to the principal shall be exempted from a proposed supplemental literary study, the content or presentation of which causes parent/legal guardian concern. The student so exempted shall be provided an alternative selection and shall not be penalized by reason of the exemption.

Replacement of Middle School Courses

Course replacements for middle school students shall be made on a case-by-case basis upon petition to the middle school principal. Upon completion of a possible replacement course for a previously failed middle school course, students/parents/legal guardians must supply documentation consisting of the following items:

- proof of the accreditation status of the school at which the replacement course was completed, (See listing of regional accreditation agencies in Awarding of New Credit section. <http://www.elearners.com/resources/agencies.asp>.)
- documentation of mastery of the appropriate benchmarks of the Florida Standards for the replacement course
 - ❖ a portfolio of work representative of the content of the course, or
 - ❖ Academic Recovery Lab record.

Academic Recovery Lab

A review of student academic and attendance records will be conducted prior to the start of school and at the end of each semester. Students meeting the criteria listed below shall be considered for an opportunity to participate in the Academic Recovery Labs:

- students who are two or more years older than their peers,
- students who are performing two or more years below grade level,
- students who are not mastering specific skills,
- students in need of remediation beginning after the first interim report,
- students who are in danger of failing at the end of the first semester,
- students with an IEP, or
- students who have a grade of F at the semester.

The middle school principal, upon receipt and verification of the required documentation of mastery, shall approve the replacement course, and the student's record shall be amended to reflect the replacement grade. When the student's record is amended to reflect the replacement grade, the student may be reclassified from 6th to 7th or 7th to 8th grade. In the event of insufficient verification evidence, the grade for the course failed shall remain.

B. Academic and Career Plans [1003.4156 F.S.](#)

School-to-Work Transition

All elementary, middle, and high schools shall document the manner in which they have prepared students to enter the workforce, including information regarding the provision of accurate, timely career and curricular counseling to students.

This information shall include a delineation of available career opportunities, educational requirements associated with each career, educational institutions that prepare students to enter each career, and student financial aid available to enable students to pursue any postsecondary instruction required to enter that career.

Schools shall also delineate school procedures for identifying individual student interests and aptitudes which enable students to make informed decisions about the curriculum that best addresses their individual interests and aptitudes while preparing them to enroll in postsecondary education and enter the workforce.

Beginning in grade 6, students shall receive information which includes recommended high school coursework that prepares students for success in college-level work. The information shall be made known to parents/legal guardians and students annually through inclusion in the school's handbook, manual, or similar documents or other communications regularly provided to parents/legal guardians and students.

C. Advanced Courses/Honor Roll

Each middle school offers Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options: whole-grade and mid-year promotion, subject matter acceleration, virtual instruction in higher grade-level subjects including dual enrollment for students who are eligible, and the Credit Acceleration Program. ACCEL options do not supersede the promotion requirements of [1003.4156 F.S.](#) Program specifics are available through each school's guidance department. Such placement shall be made after review by guidance personnel and administration. ([1002.3105 F.S.](#)) Students who are enrolled in an accelerated above grade level course must take the state and district assessments associated with that course.

Prerequisites for Dual Enrollment [1007.271 F.S.](#)

- Students must first meet district qualifications for honors course placement to be considered for dual enrollment.
- Students must demonstrate readiness for college-level coursework if the student is to be enrolled in college courses.
- *Career* dual enrollment is limited to students enrolled in courses/programs leading to industry certification.
- Public school students must have a 3.0 unweighted GPA for *college-credit* dual enrollment courses, or a 2.0 unweighted GPA for *career certificate* dual enrollment courses.
- Exceptions to the required GPAs may be granted if the school and community college agree and the terms of the agreement are contained within the dual enrollment articulation agreement.
- Participation in the *career* early admission program shall be limited to students who have completed a minimum of four semesters of full-time secondary enrollment, including studies undertaken in the ninth grade.
- A High School GPA may not be required for home education students to participate in dual enrollment courses who meet the minimum score on a common placement test or other qualifying placement test adopted by the State Board of Education which indicates that the student is ready for college-level coursework.

Qualifying Placement Test Scores to Enroll in Dual Enrollment English and Math at St. Johns River State College		
	English Composition (ENC 1101)	Math-Intermediate Algebra (MAT 1033)
ACT	Reading 19	Math 19
SAT	Reading 24, 460*	Math 24, 460*
CPT	Reading 83 Writing 83	Elementary Algebra 72
PERT	Reading 106 Writing 103	Math 114

*University of North Florida

High School Credit in Middle School [1003.4156 F.S.](#), [1008.22\(3\)\(c\)2.a. F.S.](#)

Middle school students may be enrolled appropriately in high school credit-earning courses. Courses will adhere to high school grading policy which may be found in the high school program section of the Student Progression Plan.

Students taking Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, or an equivalent high school course in middle school must take the EOC assessment and it will be 30% of the final grade in the course. Passing the Algebra 1 EOC assessment is a graduation requirement. Students with disabilities may qualify for EOC waivers. For more information, please see the Exceptional Student Education section of this document.

Middle school students earning high school credit shall simultaneously be credited with meeting the requirements for the appropriate corresponding pre-grade 9 courses. High school courses taken below grade 9 are included in student's cumulative GPA and may be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements and Bright Futures award requirements.

Credit Acceleration Program [1003.4295 F.S.](#)

The Credit Acceleration Program (CAP) is created for the purpose of allowing a student to earn high school credit in courses required for high school graduation through passage of an end-of-course assessment administered under s. [1008.22](#), an Advanced Placement Examination, or a College Level Examination Program (CLEP). Notwithstanding s. [1003.436](#), a school district shall award course credit 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.

The requirements and eligibility process is as follows:

- The EOC will be administered only at the times established by the state assessment calendar.
- The score necessary to earn credit will be determined by the state and applied in all situations.
- Only credit (no grade) will be earned by meeting the passing score on the EOC.
- If a student takes the EOC and does not earn credit, the student will not be eligible to apply for further CAP testing for the same course until additional preparation has been documented and evaluated.
- Guides to preparing for the Florida Algebra 1, Geometry and Biology End-of-Course assessments provide sample questions and resources and are accessible on line at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/isse/> and at all middle and high schools.

Single Course Acceleration (except math)

In order to allow students to progress on their own Customized Learning Paths (CLPs), the following procedures allow for demonstration of mastery and **single course acceleration**. It is necessary to complete the District's Course Acceleration Checklist/Request available from the school counselor and at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/cs/acceleration-options/>. 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.

All students are eligible for single course acceleration after demonstrating mastery of the current grade level course standards. When a student is accelerated, he/she is still responsible for mastering all standards in the current grade level course and will be required to take all state and district assessments. Integrated curriculum standards such as literacy and social studies may be missed through acceleration yet included on future assessments. In addition, math and science topics are presented only once rather than being repeated year after year. Therefore, the parent should consider carefully the full academic and social ramifications of acceleration and confer with the school counselor to determine if single course acceleration is appropriate for the student based on the student's academic history, teacher recommendation, ability to work independently and the long range academic, social and emotional effect of acceleration. The Course Acceleration Request should be completed by the end of the first quarter.

St. Johns Virtual School (SJVS) is the provider of first choice for virtual instruction; however in situations in which SJVS cannot fulfill the need, students may qualify to access the services of Florida Virtual School (FLVS).

Procedure for Course Acceleration (except math)

- A teacher or parent/legal guardian who believes a student might be a candidate for course acceleration shall contact the school counselor and share classroom evidence and FSA performance in support of the student's possible assignment to the next grade level course.
- The school counselor shall review the classroom evidence of potential course mastery and complete the **Course Acceleration Checklist** with the parent/legal guardian.
- If testing is authorized by the parent/legal guardian on the **Course Acceleration Checklist**, the school counselor shall notify the principal and obtain the appropriate assessments from the Instructional Services department.
- The teacher shall administer the recommended assessments and consult with the Curriculum Specialist to determine if the student demonstrates mastery, defined as 80% or better.
- If the student achieves a mastery score of 80% or above, the teacher shall note the areas that the student has not yet mastered and instruct the student in those areas prior to or while the student is taking the next course in the sequence.
- The principal and school counselor shall complete and submit the **Course Acceleration Checklist/Request Form** to the Director for Instructional Services.
- The Director for Instructional Services will review the documentation of mastery and make a final determination of single course acceleration and shall notify the school within five days of the decision.
- If virtual school is required for the next course level, the Director of Instructional Services will send the **Course Acceleration Checklist/Request Form** to the Director of Guidance and Programs of Choice for registration.

- If the acceleration is to a virtual school, the progress of the student in the new course shall be monitored by the virtual teacher.
- If the acceleration is to another teacher's classroom, the sending teacher shall monitor the student's mastery of the items not mastered on the assessments and keep the teacher of the accelerated course apprised of the student's progress on the missed items.

Accelerated students take state assessments at the level they have received instruction and FSA and course performance data is used to determine appropriate placement for the student in the next school year.

Eligibility for Honor Roll in Middle School

Middle school honor roll, as defined by the St. Johns County School District, is comprised of students who earn the grades of A or B for a particular grading period. Students who earn honor roll may receive the St. Johns County School District Honor Roll Card.

Advanced Course Placement Criteria

The following criteria represent consensus of all middle school and district administrators:

Honors or Advanced Course Placement

The St. Johns County School District criteria for honors or advanced course placement are any **one** of the following:

- ❖ **Grades - A grade of C or better in the previous honors course or a grade of A in the previous standard course**
- ❖ **FSA - Level 4 or 5 in appropriate area and not less than a Level 3 in any area**
 - ❖ on Mathematics FSA for placement in honors mathematics classes
 - ❖ on Reading FSA for placement in honors English, social studies and science or foreign language
- **PSAT – A score of 480 or higher on the appropriate assessment**
 - ❖ Math score for mathematics honors class placement
 - ❖ Reading and/or language for English, social studies, science and foreign languages honors class placement
- **Norm Referenced Test - Stanine of 7, 8, or 9 on an appropriate assessment**
 - ❖ Math score for mathematics honors class placement
 - ❖ Reading and/or language for English, social studies, science and foreign languages honors class placement

Please Note: Students with level 1 or 2 on their ELA- FSA will be placed in courses that provide targeted or intensive reading interventions and the students may not qualify for an honors level course.

Academic performance and teacher recommendation may be considered in student placement. 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.

Middle School Mathematics Placement Criteria

It is important to understand the content of advanced math courses when considering acceleration by "skipping" any sequential math course. The Florida mathematics standards are designed as a progression of learning from one grade level to another. If a student "skips" any of the math standards as part of a math course, these topics are not taught again, but are foundational for higher level mathematics courses. Therefore, students given the opportunity to choose this progression will be given district developed supplemental summer work on the "skipped" content to be completed before entering the appropriate advanced math course enrolled in the fall of the upcoming school year.

Specific math placement criteria were developed and are shown in the math course progression chart that follows.

is a graduation requirement. Students with disabilities may qualify for an EOC waiver. For more information, please see Exceptional Student Education section of this document.

State Assessments for Transfer Students

Students transferring into the district once the school year has begun shall be assessed immediately in reading and math to determine reading proficiency and to ensure proper course and remedial instruction placement.

If a student transfers into a Florida high school from out of country, out of state, a private school, or a home school, and the student's transcript shows credit received in Algebra 1 or an equivalent course the credit shall be honored. However, the student must pass the statewide, standardized Algebra 1 EOC assessment *in order to earn a standard high school diploma* unless the student earned a comparative score, passed a statewide assessment in Algebra 1 administered by the transferring entity, or passed the statewide mathematics assessment the transferring entity uses to satisfy the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

(list: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab2_3.asp
https://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab2_24.asp)

If a student's transcript shows a credit in high school reading or English Language Arts II or III, *in order to earn a standard high school diploma*, the student must take and pass the Grade 10 FSA ELA assessment, or earn a concordant score.

If a transfer student's transcript shows a final course grade and course credit in Geometry, Biology I or U.S. History, the transferring course final grade and credit shall be honored without the student taking the requisite statewide, standardized EOC assessment and without the assessment results constituting 30 percent of the student's final course grade. Transfer students must pass Florida's EOC assessments for the scholar designation (see cohort requirements in Appendix)

There are two options for students who enter school mid-year with a .5 credit in Algebra 1, Biology, Geometry, or equivalent courses which have a state EOC assessment:

- Option 1
The parent/legal guardian/student may decide to keep the half credit and grade that is on their records. The state EOC would then be worth 30% of ONLY their second semester. The student would earn two half credits, one they came in with and the other from the second semester using the state EOC grade for 30% of the grade for only the second semester.
- Option 2
Quarters 1-4 are each worth 17.5% and the state EOC would be 30% of the final grade. The student would use the grades for the first two quarters only with no .5 credit awarded and take the state EOC for 30% of the final grade to earn a year (1.0) credit. The important point with this option is not to award the .5 credit for transfer grades for the first semester. If a full credit is not earned at the end of the year, we must still award the half credit they came with, as we cannot take away credits earned. These options should be discussed with the parent when the student enters school.

If a student in an EOC course withdraws from the district and is going out of state:

- If it is at the semester, the student is awarded .5 credit if earned.

If a student in an EOC course withdraws for the district and goes out of state and then returns to SJCS D the same year:

1. Student can keep the .5 credit and the EOC is 30% of the second semester only, OR
2. Student can use the grades from the out of district school (trailed grades) and the EOC is 30% of the whole year.
3. The school gives the parent/legal guardian a letter to sign documenting their choice. The student never loses the original .5 credit.

Algebra 1 EOC information

Because passing the Algebra 1 EOC is a graduation requirement, it is important to understand the possible scenarios for an algebra I student:

Course	EOC:	<i>The EOC is always 30% of the final grade.</i>
Passes	Fails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final course grade is included in the GPA Credit in the course is awarded The student must retake and pass the EOC or earn a comparative score to fulfil graduation requirements Student is eligible to attend the Summer Algebra 1 Program The final course grade is re-averaged once the EOC is passed
Fails	Passes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final course grade is included in the GPA Credit in the course is awarded If the student chooses to participate in grade forgiveness, the EOC grade must be used as 30% of the final grade. Should the student retake the EOC (optional), the higher of the two test scores will be used as 30% of the final grade.
Fails	Fails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final course grade is included in the GPA The student must retake and pass the EOC to fulfil graduation requirements Student is eligible to attend the Summer Algebra 1 Program The final course grade is re-averaged once the EOC is passed

If an algebra I student participates in the Summer Algebra 1 Program:

- The student will earn a 0.5 elective credit if attendance and participation requirements are met
- If the student passes the EOC, but still qualifies for grade forgiveness in the course after re-averaging the grade with the new EOC score, the student will receive a 75% as a final course average (grade forgiveness).

EOC Retake Policy

If the student failed the EOC, retake is permitted:

- For grade forgiveness
- To qualify for the scholar diploma designation

If a student is repeating the class, either brick and mortar, recovery lab or SJVS, the student may re-take the EOC. The higher of the two scores will be used for grade calculation.

No Assessment Exemptions Based on Attendance

Schools shall not exempt students from academic performance requirements, such as final exams, based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance. A student's attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement.

Assessment Opportunities for Private School Students

Private school students are eligible to take state developed End of Course Exams and other standardized assessments through the St. Johns County School District if the students register their zoned public school of attendance during the designated registration period.

Support Requirements [1008.25\(4\)\(a\) F.S.](#)

Each student who does not meet specific levels of performance in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics must be evaluated to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for providing academic supports to improve the student's performance.

Reading Support [1008.25\(4\)\(9\) F.S.](#)

All schools offer supplemental learning/ support opportunities. Student eligibility is based primarily on reading performance as determined by each school's collective evaluation of data, which could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- FSA
- Progress monitoring tools
- Class grades

- Class formative and summative assessment
- Teacher recommendation or anecdotal evidence

See appendix for St. Johns County Comprehensive Reading Plan.

Content of Instructional Support

All instructional support shall include effective, research-based, standards-driven instruction. Each school shall use the materials listed in its section of the district's Comprehensive Reading Plan as resources for support in reading. Any additional resources must be scientifically research-based and approved by the Curriculum Services Department prior to use. Instructional support in reading shall be continued until a student's reading deficiency is remediated and shall include the following components:

- prescriptive targeted instruction for 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

Progress Monitoring [1008.25\(4\)\(b\)1,2,3 F.S.](#)

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

- a federally required student plan such as an individual education plan (IEP),
- a school-wide system of progress monitoring for all students, or
- individualized progress monitoring.

Schools shall monitor the progress of students needing reading intervention three times during the year and adjust interventions based on data.

Parent/Legal Guardian Refusal for Support through Progress Monitoring and a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

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

If the parent/legal guardian refuses to participate in the support strategies detailed in the MTSS because he or she believes the strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent/legal 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. For more specific requirements, refer to the District's Comprehensive Reading Plan on the SJCS website at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/cs/crp>.

IV. GRADING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Importance of Grading

Grading, in its purest form, is the way in which we communicate a student's understanding of a concept, or concepts, in a course they are taking. Through grades, we are able to ascertain where a student stands on the learning continuum and provide feedback on the proficiency of students as it relates to course and/or content area standards. Grades should be objective and formed by assessments directly related to the standards in a course. In

conjunction with goals and scales, grades provide the most useful way to form a roadmap from which students can grow.

It is in the interest of all students, teachers, and parents/legal guardians for there to be common grading expectations, throughout Middle schools in St. Johns County. This allows students to understand expectations, and teachers to heighten collaboration through the Professional Learning Communities process. District common grading practices are designed to be fair, consistent and grounded in best practice.

The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) and the Florida Standards for English Language Arts and Math specify what students should know and be able to do in each course/subject at every grade level. In a standards-based system, grades should be an indication student learning through their level of proficiency as determined by summative and formative assessments. Following are definitions of terms used in describing common high school grading expectations.

The goal is for all students to be able to demonstrate their learning of course standards at or beyond the proficiency level. Proficiency is the level of learning most closely associated with a grade of "C".

The district has established that every secondary instructor will have at least two graded **summative assessments** per grading period, and at least two graded **formative assignments** completed prior to each summative assessment. Whenever possible, two required summative assessments will be developed, administered and graded as common assessments. The District expectation is for teachers working as subject specific Professional Learning Communities to develop two common summatives for each grading period. The total number of required graded assignments equates to six per grading period.

Formative assignments are measures used throughout the learning process to provide feedback that promotes learning and informs instruction. Formative assignments:

- Are aligned to the learning progression on a scale
- Are generated by a wide variety of methods
- Can be graded or not graded
- Provide usable feedback for students and teachers
- Are a checkpoint or snapshot of progress
- Are aligned to the summative in terms of skill, standard, rigor and format

Example of **formative assignments** include, but are not limited to:

- Exit tickets
- Informal teacher questions
- Draft written work
- Performance in progress
- Student response via whiteboards, clickers or other instructional tools
- Learning logs
- Conversation with a student
- Quizzes

Summative assessments evaluate student learning aligned to specific standards at the end of a defined instructional period. Summative assessments:

- Are aligned to the learning progression on a scale.
- May be administered in a variety of formats.
- Are graded.
- Are predictors of marking period grades.
- Used to determine proficiency.
- Are more comprehensive than formative assessments.
- Are aligned to formative assessments in terms of skill, standard, rigor and format.

Examples of **summative assessment** include but are not limited to:

- Formal conversations with the students

- Final version of a written work
- Test
- Final version of a performance/presentation
- Final version of a project/research paper
- End of a course exams
- Semester exams
- Summative quarter exams

Retake and Remediation Parameters:

- Summative assessments developed at a school by a teacher or PLC must be available for students to retake.
- Retake summative assessments must be available for standards where proficiency has not been demonstrated; the entire assessment may not apply. This decision is a teacher and/or PLC decision.
- Students must engage in learning opportunities (remediation) prior to retaking a summative assessment, which must include teacher feedback.
- Summative retake assessments do not have to be in the exact format as the original summative assessment.
- Students have the opportunity to retake a Summative Assessment where the original score earned was less than 85%.
- Students can earn up to and including 85% on a retake Summative Assessment in Middle or High school.
- Summative assessments are only to be retaken and rescored once.
- Summative assessment retakes must occur within a pre-determined time-period such as a unit or a quarter as determined by the PLC team.
- Students will receive the higher score of the original and retake summative assessments.
- If a summative assessment has a deadline (for example: research paper or presentation) and the due date is missed, the student may complete the assignment for no higher than an 85% and within a timeline established by the teacher or PLC.
- **The expectation is that all students earn a grade that reflects his/her proficiency on standards represented in a course. If a student refuses to attempt work despite school intervention, a zero has been earned.**

As part of this process:

- INC should be used as placeholder in summative and formative categories until work is completed
- PLC teams will share students as necessary to promote learning and retake opportunities
- It is optimal for students to retake assessments before or after school so as not to miss further instruction. However, if the student cannot attend before or after school due to transportation, students will be afforded the opportunity to take summative assessments during the school day.

Cheating on a Summative Test

Discipline for cheating is established as per the Code of Conduct as a level II offense and should be administered via the Dean. Students will receive a zero; however, students are eligible for a retake. Students must engage in learning opportunities before retaking the summative assessment. Students will earn up to and including 85% on the retake assessment. Students may also be answerable to specific consequences outlined in programs of choice such as organizations or clubs such as the Junior National Honor Society.

Weighted Category

Middle schools have a uniform standard for the weighted categories in a grade book. The categories are summative and formative. The total value of all summative assessments will be 70% of the final grade, for formative assignments, 30% of the total grade. Homework assignments may include HW in the assignment title to maintain and differentiate them from other formative assignments.

Category	Summative	Formative
Weighting	70%	30%

Some assessments in Middle School have their own weighting within a category by district policy or due to state statute. For example, the required middle school Civics course has a state developed EOC which is worth 30% of the final grade for the course. Additionally, any high school course taught in a middle school follows the grading guidelines for high school courses. For example, a student who takes Algebra 1 in middle school will have a district developed midterm exam worth 10% of the semester grade and will take a state Algebra 1 EOC worth 30% of the final grade. Middle school courses, other than those with state EOC exams will have a final exam worth 10% of the semester grade. Middle school courses will not have a mid-term exam.

State Grading Scale [1003.437 F.S.](#)

The following grading scale is used by all schools in St. Johns County:

Grades	Descriptor
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

Grade Forgiveness of High School Credit by Middle School Students

Middle school students who have taken high school courses may receive grade forgiveness if they have earned a grade or the numerical equivalent of a C, D or F. In such cases, the district forgiveness policy must allow the replacement of the grade with a grade or the numerical equivalent of a C or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. For a grade of A or B, the course and grade cannot be forgiven; it will appear on the student’s high school transcript and will be used in the calculation of high school grade point average and for Bright Futures.

If a student fails the Algebra 1 EOC, the student may attend the summer algebra program and earn a .5 credit elective to prepare to re-take the Algebra 1 EOC (passing is a graduation requirement).

EOC Retake Policy

If the student failed the EOC, retake is permitted:

- For grade forgiveness
- To qualify for the scholar diploma designation

If a student is repeating the class, either brick and mortar, recovery lab or SJVS, the student may re-take the EOC. The higher of the two scores will be used for grade calculation.

Grade Forgiveness and EOC Retake Policy

A high school student who is retaking an EOC course for grade forgiveness and has already taken the EOC is encouraged to retake the EOC but is not required to do so. If the student does not retake the EOC, then the previous EOC results must be averaged into the grade for course average. Grade forgiveness does not mean a new grade without the EOC averaged in.

If the student’s final average with the EOC assessment included as 30 percent results in a course grade of “D” or “F” (or a “C” for middle school students) the options for the student include one of the following:

- Retaking a semester of the course
- Retaking the entire course
- Retaking the EOC assessment for that course; and
- Retaking both the course and the EOC assessment to improve the student’s final course grade.

A student may retake an EOC to qualify for the scholar designation or as part of a grade forgiveness program.

For Algebra 1 only, *if the student participated in the Summer Algebra 1 Program and qualifies for grade forgiveness after recalculating the grade with the new EOC score*, the passing EOC score is considered to be evidence of sufficient mastery of standards, and the final grade of C (75) is granted for grade forgiveness.

Grade Challenge Procedure

Grading is primarily the responsibility of a teacher as long as the grade is determined in a manner that is consistent with state and district policies. Any concern a student/parent/legal guardian has with a final grade should be brought to the immediate attention of the teacher of record who awarded the grade. A final grade is defined as a grade documented at the end of a grading period and/or an end of the course cumulative grade.

If the teacher of record is unavailable, or if the student/parent/legal guardian wish to appeal the teacher's decision, they must supply a written summary of the concern including any evidence that would serve as justification for the appeal, to the school principal for consideration and a final decision.

In the event that the school principal is unavailable, the appeal would go to the appropriate District Director of Curriculum for consideration and final decision.

All grade challenges must be completed during the school year in which the grade was awarded, and prior to the first day of the next school year. Exceptions to this timeline would only be granted by the principal or Director of Curriculum if new and substantive information directly related to the challenge is presented.

A. Progress Reports

Report Cards [1003.33 F.S.](#)

Report cards provide the student and the student's parents/legal guardians with an objective evaluation of scholastic achievement with indicators of progress. Report cards shall clearly depict and evaluate the following:

- the student's mastery of Florida Standards,
- the student's academic performance in each class or course in grades K through 12 based on examinations as well as other appropriate performance items,
- the student's performance at his or her grade level
- the student's conduct and behavior, and
- the student's attendance, including absences and tardies.

All schools shall use the district's approved report card as the primary means of reporting student progress. Report cards shall be issued at the end of each grading period on uniform dates as adopted annually on the official school year calendar. Students transferring into the district after the midpoint of a reporting period may be assigned grades based on records/grades from the sending school.

Students with Disabilities

- A student's placement in an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program may not be designated on the report card due to [FERPA \(Family Education Rights and Privacy Act\)](#).
- Students with disabilities must receive a report regarding progress toward IEP goals and objectives along with the report card. The final report card for the year shall contain a statement indicating end-of-the-year status or performance, or non-performance, at grade level; acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance and promotion or non-promotion.
- Students may not be discriminated against in grading because of their disability.
- Teachers may not unilaterally decide to use an individual grading system for a student with disabilities.
- A student with a disability shall not be penalized with a lower grade for using accommodations.

In very limited cases where the district report card would be ineffective in communicating progress of an ESE student, an alternate to the district report card, approved by the Director for Exceptional Student Education, may be used.

Interim Progress Reports [1008.25 F.S.](#)

Interim progress reports shall be issued to all students in grades 1-12 at the midpoint of each regularly established grading period on uniform dates as adopted annually on the official school calendar. Interim reports may be done via parent/legal guardian conferences as well as through reporting forms. Students with disabilities must receive a report or parent/legal guardian conference regarding progress toward IEP goals and objectives in accordance with the interim report.

Annual Reporting of Student Progress in Local Newspaper [1008.25\(8\)\(b\) F.S.](#)

Each year, by September 1, the district shall publish in the local newspaper and report in writing to the State Board of Education, the following information on the prior school year:

- the provisions of the law relating to student progression and the district School Board's policies and procedures on student retention and promotion,
- by grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3-10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the reading portion of the FSA,
- by grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades 3-10,
- information on the total number of students who are promoted for good cause by each category of good cause, and
- any revisions to the district School Board's policy on retention and promotion from the prior year.

District Report on Enrollment and Completion of High School Courses Completed in Middle School

Schools shall report in Florida's Automated System for Transferring Records (FASTER) the enrollment and completion with a grade C or higher all high school courses taken by middle school students.

B. Promotion Requirements [1003.4156 F.S.](#)

To be promoted to grade 9, students are required to successfully complete the following courses in grades 6-8:

- Three middle school or higher courses in language arts, which emphasize literature, composition, and technical text
- Three middle school or higher courses in mathematics
- Three middle school or higher courses in social studies.
 - One semester which must include the study of state and federal government and civics education.
 - Additionally, a career and education planning course must be completed in either grades 6, 7 or 8th grade. The course must be internet based, customizable to each student and include research bases assessment to assist the students in determining educational and career options.
[1003.4156 F.S.](#)
- Three middle school or higher courses in science
- The equivalent of one class period per day of physical education for one semester of each year.

Middle school students enrolled in civics must take the civics End-of-Course (EOC) assessment and the score earned will be 30% of the final grade in the course. If a student transfers into a Florida public school after the beginning of the second term of eighth grade, the student is not required to meet the civics education requirement for promotion if the student's transcript documents passage of three courses in social studies or two year-long courses in social studies that include coverage of civics education. If this is not the case, the student must be immediately enrolled in civics, participate in the civics EOC and the results of the EOC must constitute 30% of the course grade ([1008.22 F.S.](#)).

Students with disabilities may qualify for an EOC waiver. For more information, please see the [Exceptional Student Education](#) section of this document.

Eighth Grade Students who did not successfully complete Middle School Promotion Requirements

Students in grade eight who do not successfully complete course work required to enter high school must receive individual counseling regarding their academic options before the close of the school year. This academic counseling must include information regarding summer remediation programs at a high school site, at the middle school, virtually, or some combination of these and/or other options.

Academic counseling must include contact with the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student. A planning document describing options to which the student and family has agreed must be produced and maintained at the school site and shared with the appropriate high school. This plan must be progress monitored during the summer to determine if the student is making adequate progress on the remediation plan. The summer remediation plan can be added to an existing MTSS plan.

When appropriate, application can be made to St. Johns Technical High School with acceptance based upon a review of the application applying standard criteria for admission and space availability.

Eighth grade students missing only one course to qualify for high school, who do not successfully remediate the course during the summer, will attend their zoned high school (school of instruction) while maintaining their status as an eighth-grade middle school student (school of enrollment). This arrangement will exist until the student successfully completes the single middle school course needed. At this time, the status of the student's enrollment would be changed to the high school (school of enrollment and of instruction would now be the same).

Students who are missing several required courses that are unable to remediate them in the summer should repeat the missing middle school courses at their zoned middle school.

No Social Promotion/Administrative Placement [1008.25\(6\)\(a\) F.S.](#)

Florida statute prohibits the assignment of a student to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion or administrative placement at the next grade level without regard for student mastery of the appropriate Florida Standards. A student fails to meet the state portion of levels of performance for student progression when the student fails to achieve Level 3 on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) in reading, mathematics and/or science. As the FSA is not the sole determiner of promotion or retention, the Intervention Team or its equivalent shall base a promotion or retention decision on the preponderance of evidence reviewed.

Promotion of Students with Disabilities in the Exceptional Student Education Program

Students in the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program who are following the general education program, take the state assessment (FSA), and are working toward a standard diploma, fall under the same guidelines for promotion as regular education students. Promotion of ESE students who are following the Access Points for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities will be recommended to the principal by the IEP team and based on the achievement of the students' goals and objectives.

Promotion under Unique Circumstances

In limited, unique circumstances, a student may be promoted without meeting the specific assessment performance levels prescribed by the district and the state. Promotion may be recommended by a principal working with the Intervention Team or its equivalent if the student is able to demonstrate mastery of the Florida Standards through alternate assessments with the preponderance of evidence indicating that the student's achievement is equivalent to the designated levels of performance for student progression.

Promotion of Late-in-the-Year Transfer Students

The promotion of students transferring into St Johns County during the last grading period shall be determined primarily by the grades and records received from the sending school.

C. Mid-Year Promotion

Mid-Year Promotion of Retained Students from 6th to 7th or 7th to 8th

In middle school, mid-year promotion is defined as promotion of a retained student at any time during the year of retention once the student has successfully completed the four (4) core grade academic requirements (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) of the preceding grade level. Student grade level classification or course placement at the end of the first semester will determine which grade level Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) is administered.

D. Retention [1008.25\(2\)\(b\) F.S.](#)

Retention may occur when the school's instructional staff, through its MTSS Team or its equivalent, determines that the student demonstrates the need for additional time to attain appropriate academic knowledge and skills in order to meet required district and/or state performance standards.

A student who is retained must be provided with instructional experiences different from those in the previous year's program, taking into consideration the student's individual learning needs and learning style. Only in exceptional cases will a student be assigned to any one grade more than two consecutive years. The district shall provide an appropriate alternative placement for a student who has been retained two or more years. There is no statutory provisions for voluntary retention.

Retention of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are following the general education program, take the state assessment (FSA), and are pursuing a standard diploma are affected by the same guidelines for retention as are students in general education. For students with disabilities who are following the Access Points for Students with Significant Disabilities, the principal or designee will make the final determination regarding retention after considering input from the IEP Team.

Options for Students Not Meeting Promotion Standards [1008.25\(2\)\(c\) F.S.](#)

There are two options if a student does not meet district or state promotion standards. Those options are as follows:

- remediate before the beginning of the next school year and promote based on the student's demonstrated mastery of appropriate grade level expectations/standards, or
- retain in a different program that takes into account a student's unique academic needs and learning style.

E. Homework

The book [Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement](#) by Marzano, Pickering and Pollock (2001) identifies nine instructional strategies that have a probability of enhancing student achievement at all levels. The following strategies are in the order of effect sizes:

1. Identifying similarities and differences
2. Summarizing and note taking
3. Reinforcing efforts and providing recognition
5. Homework and practice
6. Non-linguistic representations
7. Cooperative learning
8. Setting objectives and providing feedback
9. Generating and testing hypotheses
10. Questions, cues and advance organizers

As homework is a proven strategy in improving student achievement, it is important to look at the recommendations from the research. The research study identifies four areas to guide teachers in assigning homework: (1) the effect size of homework on student achievement, (2) purposes for homework, (3) the importance of providing feedback to students and (4) parental involvement. Assigning homework from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school should follow a normal predictable progression.

Homework Recommendations for Middle Schools

1. Amount

The amount of homework assigned at the middle school level has an effect size on academic achievement producing a possible gain of up to 24 percentile points, although smaller gains are more typical (Marzano, 2001). The St. Johns School District Office for Instructional Services recommends that students in grades 6- 8 receive 10 minutes of homework per grade level for a standard level class. A standard sixth grade student should have no more than a total of 60 minutes of homework, a seventh-grade student 70 minutes, and an eighth grade student 80 minutes. Honors and advanced classes will require an additional time commitment as they prepare students for reading, writing and research at the college level. High school courses taught at the middle school should follow a standard that reflects the grade level of when that course would have normally been taught. For example, an eighth-grade student taking high school courses such as Algebra 1 and Biology could expect to have closer to 90 minutes of total homework time per night instead of 80 because they are taking high school courses normally taught at ninth grade.

2. Purpose

Homework should have a specific purpose, be familiar and connected to the standards being studied, and be relevant. The purpose could be for students to (1) *practice or rehearse*, to begin (2) *preparation for the introduction of new content*, or to (3) *deepen knowledge and understanding* (Marzano, 2001). If new content or skills are the subject of a homework assignment, the assignment should have significant and specific feedback from the teacher. Homework assignments can be differentiated; that is, teachers could assign some high cognitive level work for the students who understand and can apply new concepts readily. This helps students to think more critically and creatively on a much broader and deeper scale. Assigned homework for an elementary student could typically be reading each night and 3-5 math problems *differentiated* (Marzano, *The Art and Science of Teaching*, “Chunking Content into Digestible Bites”, 2007).

F. Parent/Legal Guardian and Student Notifications

[1008.25\(8\)\(a\) F.S.](#)

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Student’s Annual Progress

Each year, schools shall provide parents/legal guardians with a report of the progress of the student toward achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, science, and mathematics, including the student’s results on each statewide assessment test. This report traditionally accompanies the last report card of each year but may be sent at an earlier date as determined by the school. In addition, progress reporting information shall be provided to parents/legal guardians.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Student Retention

Parents/legal guardians shall be notified in writing when it is apparent that the student may need to be retained. Documentation shall be kept, and an acknowledgment of such notification shall be obtained. Ongoing communication with the parents/legal guardians shall be maintained.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Remediation

Parent/legal guardian notification shall be documented when a student is being remediated in reading, writing, science and/or math and is being considered for retention. School personnel shall use available resources to achieve parent/legal guardian understanding and cooperation regarding a student’s remediation, progress monitoring plan, and possible retention. Parents/legal guardians shall be informed of student progress via quarterly report cards and conferences as deemed necessary by the school.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Student Assignment to Remedial Classes in Middle School

Parents/legal guardians of middle school students with Level 1 or Level 2 FSA scores in reading and/or math shall be notified when their student is placed in an intensive reading or intensive mathematics class in lieu of an elective or in a content-area class focused on reading strategies. The notification shall explain that placement in the course is based on the student’s need to master Florida Standards in reading and/or math as evidenced by a score of Level 1 or Level 2 on the most recent FSA.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Career Course Curriculum and Activities

Each middle school shall inform parents/legal guardians about the required career education course curriculum and activities.

Parent/Legal Guardian/Student Notification of Graduation Program Options

Beginning in 2011-2012, [HB 1255](#) requires that each school provide students in grades six through twelve and their parents/legal guardians with information concerning the three-year and four-year high school graduation options. The information shall include a timeframe for achieving each graduation option.

Teacher Notification of Students on Community Control

If a juvenile on community control attends a regular educational school program, then the identity of the juvenile and the nature of the felony offense shall be made known to each of the student's teachers and appropriate district staff.

V. EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION (GRADES 6-8)

The St. Johns County School District actively seeks to locate exceptional students and maintains information on those students screened and identified as "exceptional." The term "exceptional student" includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- students with autism spectrum disorder
- students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing
- prekindergarten children who are developmentally delayed
- students who are dual-sensory impaired
- students with emotional or behavioral disabilities
- students who are gifted
- students who are homebound or hospitalized
- students with intellectual disabilities
- students with orthopedic impairment
- students with other health impairment
- students with specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia
- students with speech and/or language impairments
- students with traumatic brain injury
- students who are visually impaired

If you suspect your child has a disability, contact your child's school. The school will gather information which may include the student's social, emotional, physical, psychological, academic and communication behaviors and abilities. Information is collected through screening instruments, checklists, teacher observations, standardized tests, and from such individuals as parents/legal guardians, teachers, psychologists, audiologists, social workers, physicians, other professional personnel, and the student. Students are screened for vision, hearing, speech, language, and academic achievement early in the process of identifying a suspected disability. If a student is recommended for further testing, the parent/legal guardian will be asked to provide written consent prior to the evaluation.

A. Admission and Placement of Students of Students with Disabilities

Eligibility for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Services

All students having difficulty meeting promotional requirements shall be monitored carefully by the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Intervention Team or its equivalent. Eligibility for Exceptional Student Education may be considered upon completion of appropriate interventions and activities. State law requires that students who struggle with reading, math, language, or behavior that interferes with learning must have been on an intervention plan for a reasonable amount of time prior to beginning the referral process for Exceptional Student Education. St. Johns County has defined the reasonable length of time as a minimum of 45 school days for most students. Exceptions do apply in extreme/emergency situations, and when sensory impairments exist. Evaluation must be completed within 60 calendar days after receipt of parent/legal guardian consent for evaluation (excepting school

holidays). Eligibility for Exceptional Student Education is determined by the staffing committee in accordance with current eligibility criteria as defined in the *Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P)* located on the Florida Department of Education website at <http://beess.fcim.org/sppDistrictDocSearch.aspx>.

Placement for Students with Disabilities

Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams determine the appropriate ESE program placement for ESE students based on their individual needs. School administrators use this information to determine classroom(s) and teacher(s) to which the student will be assigned. Specially designed instruction will be provided by an ESE teacher or other service provider in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as determined by the IEP team. In most cases, this will be in the regular education classroom with non-disabled peers but some ESE students may require instruction in a separate environment for a portion of the day. A continuum of services is provided throughout the district.

School to School Placement

All students new to the district, should enroll at their home zoned school. An IEP team will review the current IEP to determine if the services can be provided at the home zoned school. If the services required cannot be provided at the home zoned school, the school's Local Education Agency (LEA) representative will contact transportation to determine which school with the services that the student may need will require the shortest time spent on the bus. The LEA will also contact this school to facilitate an IEP meeting to discuss the appropriate placement.

For students who have been receiving services in the district, but an IEP team has determined that the level and intensity of services required can no longer be provided at the home zoned school, the LEA will work with the ESE District Review Committee (DRC) to review the current placement and services being provided. The DRC will provide input to the IEP team about possible instruction/interventions that may be implemented to determine whether the student's needs can continue to be met in the home zoned school, or the DRC may indicate that the resources at the current/home zoned school appear to have been exhausted. The LEA at the student's current/home zoned school will contact transportation to determine which school with the services that the student may need will require the shortest time spent on the bus. The LEA will then contact this school to schedule an IEP meeting to discuss appropriate placement. Decisions on student placement, i.e. the ESE services that a student needs, are made by the IEP team. Decisions regarding the location of that placement are the responsibility of the district/school administrators and their designees.

Parents/legal guardians are invited to attend any meeting discussing school-to-school placement. The admission and placement procedures for the enrollment of students into Exceptional Student Education (ESE) are documented in the *Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P)* located on the Florida Department of Education website at <http://beess.fcim.org/sppDistrictDocSearch.aspx>.

B. Curriculum and Instruction

Instructional Accommodations

Accommodations are changes to the way a student with disabilities accesses curriculum, demonstrates learning, or how he or she is tested. Accommodations do not change the content of the standards, but may require a change of instructional methods, materials, assignments, time demands and schedules, learning environments, and special communications systems or assistive technologies. These accommodations must be identified and documented on the student's IEP.

Most students with disabilities can achieve general state content standards pursuant to rule [6A-1.09401](#), F.A.C. Effective accommodations must be in place to support involvement of students with disabilities in general education. Students with disabilities who are using general state content standards to attain a standard diploma will have to meet the same requirements as do regular education students. The student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) will address his or her areas of academic need and accommodations to the general curriculum. Students with disabilities participate in the district's K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan and supplemental and intensive instructional supports as appropriate.

The general state content standards are the foundation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all Florida students. Students with significant cognitive disabilities utilize Access Points to access the general curriculum. Access Points consist of foundation skills that are clearly linked to the general education content. They reflect the essence or core intent of the standards that apply to all students in the same grade, but at reduced levels of complexity.

IEP Teams are responsible for determining whether students with disabilities will be instructed on Florida Standards and assessed with the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)/End of Course (EOC) assessments or on Access Points and assessed with the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSA)/End of Course (EOC) assessments based on criteria outlined in [Rule 6A-1.0943\(5\)](#), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). For more information regarding the decision-making process, [see section D - Statewide Assessment](#) – Assessment of Students with Disabilities. Parents/legal guardian must sign consent for their student to receive instruction on Access Points and be assessed using the FSAA.

C. Reporting Student Progress

Progress Monitoring of IEP Goals

All parents/legal guardians will be notified of their child’s achievement during the school year with at least the same frequency as that of a non-disabled peer enrolled in the same school. Progress toward IEP goals will be reported to the parent/legal guardian at the time designated on the IEP.

Report Cards and Grading

- A student's placement in an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program may not be designated on the report card due to [FERPA \(Family Education Rights and Privacy Act\)](#)
- ESE students must receive a report regarding progress toward IEP goals and objectives along with the report card. The final report card for the year shall contain a statement indicating end-of-the-year status regarding at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, and promotion or non-promotion.
- Students may not be discriminated against in grading because of their disability. Teachers may not unilaterally decide to use an individual grading system for a student with disabilities.
- An ESE student shall not be penalized with a lower grade for using accommodations.

D. Statewide Assessment - Assessment of Students with Disabilities

All students, including Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students and students with disabilities receiving accommodations under Section 504, must participate in the state’s assessment and accountability system. Students with disabilities who are following the general education program and pursuing a standard diploma shall participate in the same state and district assessments as their general education peers, including the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and End of Course (EOC) assessments. If students with disabilities receive testing accommodations, the accommodations must be listed in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan and utilized regularly during classroom instruction and assessment. Allowed accommodations are listed in the procedures manual for each specific assessment.

[Florida Statute 1008.22\(3\)\(c\)2](#) states that students with disabilities may be eligible for a waiver of statewide, standardized assessment results for the purpose of receiving a course grade and standard high school diploma. To be considered for a waiver, the following criteria must be met:

1. The student must be identified as a student with a disability, as defined in [s.1007.02,F.S.](#):
The term “student with disability” means a student who is documented as having an intellectual disability; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a speech or language impairment; a visual impairment, including blindness; and emotional or behavioral disability; an orthopedic or other health impairment; an autism spectrum disorder; a traumatic brain injury; or a specific learning disability, including but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, or developmental aphasia.
2. The student must have an individual education plan (IEP).

3. The student must have taken the statewide, standardized assessment with appropriate, allowable accommodations at least once.
4. In accordance with [s.1008.22\(3\)\(c\)2, F.S.](#), the IEP team must make a determination of whether a statewide, standardized assessment accurately measures the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations for students with disabilities.
5. The IEP team must meet to determine whether the statewide assessment results should be waived.

The Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA) is designed for students whose participation in the general statewide assessment is not appropriate, even with accommodations. The Florida Standards Alternate Assessment measures student academic performance on the Florida Standards Access Points (FS-AP) in language, mathematics and science. Access Points are written specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities and reflect the essence or core intent of the standards that apply to all students in the same grade, but at reduced levels of complexity.

IEP Teams are responsible for determining whether students with disabilities will be assessed with the FSA or with the FSAA based on criteria outlined in Rule [6A-1.0943\(5\)](#), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) The IEP team should consider the student's present level of educational performance in reference to the Florida State Standards. The IEP team should also be knowledgeable of FSA guidelines and the use of appropriate testing accommodations. In order to be eligible to participate in the FSAA, the following criteria must be met:

- The student has a significant cognitive disability;
- Even with appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, assistive technology, or accessible instructional materials, the student requires modifications, as defined in paragraph [6A-6.03411\(1\)\(z\)](#), F.A.C., to the grade-level general state content standards pursuant to Rule [6A-1.09401](#), F.A.C.;
- The student requires direct instruction in the academic areas of English language arts, math, social studies and science based on access points in order to acquire, generalize, and transfer skills across settings; and
- The parent/legal guardian has been notified and provided information regarding the implications of this decision by receipt of *Parental Consent Form: Instruction in State Standards Access Points Curriculum and Florida Alternate Assessment Administration*.

Extraordinary Exemption from Statewide Assessments

A student with a disability who has a circumstance or condition that leads to results that reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills rather than the student's achievement of the benchmarks assessed by a statewide standardized assessment may be allowed an extraordinary exemption from participating in the assessment per [s. 1008.212, F.S.](#) The IEP team, which must include the parent/legal guardian, determines if the student is eligible for an extraordinary exemption and submits documentation to the superintendent. The request for exemption must be approved by the SJCS superintendent and the commissioner of education. A specific process and timeline must be followed as outlined in [Rule 6A-1.0943\(5\)F.A.C.](#)

Exemption for Students with Medical Complexity

A student with a disability may be allowed an exemption from participation in statewide standardized assessments because of the student's medical complexity per [s. 1008.22\(10\), F.S.](#) Medical complexity is defined to mean a student who is medically fragile and needs intensive care because of a condition such as a congenital or acquired multisystem disease; has a severe neurological or cognitive disorder with marked functional impairment; or is technology dependent for activities of daily living and lacks the capacity to perform on an assessment. The IEP team, which must include the parent/legal guardian, determines if the student is eligible for an extraordinary exemption and submits documentation to the superintendent. The request for exemption must be approved by the SJCS superintendent and the commissioner of education.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Non-Participation in Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)

The school must notify the student's parents/legal guardians in writing that their child is not participating in the statewide assessment (FSA) and provide the parent/legal guardian with information regarding the expected proficiency levels in reading, writing, math, and science. The school is also responsible for administering an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards.

Parent/Legal Guardian Notification of Classroom Instructional Accommodations Not Allowed on Statewide Assessments

If a student is provided with instructional accommodations in the classroom that are not allowable as accommodations in the statewide assessment program, as described in the test manuals, the school must:

- inform the parent/legal guardian in writing, and
- obtain parent/legal guardian consent to utilize classroom accommodations not allowed on state-wide assessments, and
- provide the parent/legal guardian with information regarding the impact on the student's ability to meet expected proficiency levels in reading, writing, and math. This notification is documented on the student's individual educational plan.

E. Promotion, Assignment, and Retention of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are following the general education program, take the Florida Standards assessment (FSA) and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments and are working toward a standard diploma, fall under the same guidelines for promotion as non-disabled students. For students who are following the Access Points for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, the principal or designee will make the final determination regarding promotion or retention after considering input from the IEP team.

F. Additional Programs

Extended School Year

Extended School Year is specially designed instruction and related services beyond the normal school year of the district. These services are provided to a student with a disability, who the IEP team determines needs these services in order to receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). ESY is available at no cost to the parent/legal guardian. Specific requirements and procedures must be followed. Refer to the *Exception Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P)* located on the Florida Department of Education website at <http://beess.fcim.org/sppDistrictDocSearch.aspx>.

Hospital Homebound

A homebound or hospitalized student is a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric condition that is acute or catastrophic in nature, or 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. The medical diagnosis shall be made by a licensed physician who is qualified to assess the student's physical or psychiatric condition.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for specially designed instruction and related services as a student who is homebound or hospitalized if the following criteria are met:

1. A licensed physician must certify the student;
 - a. 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;
 - b. is confined to home or hospital; and
 - c. will be able to participate in and benefit from an instructional program.
2. The student is under medical care for illness or injury that is acute, catastrophic, or chronic in nature.
3. 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.
4. The student is in kindergarten through twelfth grade and is enrolled in a public school prior to the referral for homebound or hospitalized services, unless the student has been determined eligible as a student with a disability.
5. The child is three through five years of age and has been determined eligible as a student with a disability.

6. A parent, legal guardian, or primary caregiver signs a parental agreement concerning homebound or hospitalized policies and parental cooperation.
7. The student demonstrates a need for special education.

VI. ENGLISH for SPEAKERS of OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

Assessment

Students in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program are commonly referred to as English Language Learners (ELLs). In general, all ELLs participate in the state's assessment and accountability system. As part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), all ELLs shall be assessed annually in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Placement

ELLs shall be placed in appropriate courses designed to provide ESOL instruction in English and mathematics, science, social studies and computer literacy.

The ELL Committee, which is composed of the principal or designee, the district ESOL teacher when necessary and/or feasible, the primary language arts teacher, the school counselor, and any other instructional personnel responsible for the instruction of ELLs, shall make recommendations concerning the appropriate placement, promotion and retention of ELLs. Parents/legal guardians of students being reviewed shall be invited to participate in the meetings.

Criteria to be utilized in making appropriate placement decisions include the following:

- academic performance and progress of a student based on formal and/or alternate assessments in English and/or the student's native language,
- age of the student,
- progress, attendance and retention reports, and
- number of years the student has been enrolled in the ESOL program.

Promotion

Promotion of an ELL is based on satisfactory student performance in reading, writing, mathematics and other requirements as set by the district and the state. ELLs not meeting district promotion criteria due to their limited English proficiency may be recommended for promotion by the Intervention Team or its equivalent, which will meet jointly with the ELL Committee. The student's parent/legal guardian shall be invited to attend.

The other academic progress and benchmark mastery of an ELL in reading, writing and mathematics, and on requirements set forth by the district and the State of Florida, are determined through appropriate modifications to formal and informal assessments and on modifications to instruction provided to the ELL.

Retention

Retention of an ELL is based on unsatisfactory performance in reading, writing and mathematics as determined by the Intervention Team or its equivalent, in conjunction with the ELL Committee. Students cannot be retained based solely on lack of English language proficiency.

For more information on the ESOL Plan, please visit the St Johns County School District ESOL website at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/esol/>.

Appendix

A. Reading Intervention Guide

See <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/cs/crp/> for the Comprehensive Reading Plan

B. Middle School Course Sequence

C. Middle School Computer Education Progression

D. Required Instruction

A. Intervention Reading Plan

B. 2020-2021 SJCS D Reading Intervention Guide MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students identified with a substantial reading deficiency (as outlined in the Comprehensive Reading Plan Decision Tree) should receive an intervention. The course where the intervention is provided must be coded. Targeted Reading Intervention= Code A Intensive Reading Intervention= Code B *Code B courses must be taught by a reading certified or endorsed teacher. Consider historical FSA data when determining the best placement for all students. Students with disabilities are not limited to ESE courses. Call Instructional Services (547-7626) for assistance with unique situations.						
Grade Level	Student Characteristic "IF"	Course "THEN"	Code A	*Code B		
6-8 Decision Tree data to consider (FSA and iReady)	Students (including SWDs) with Level 2 on the ELA FSA and i-Ready reading score falls in the one-grade level below OR on-grade level range of 5 th : 542-640 6 th : 566-653 7 th : 583-669 8 th : 594-684	M/J ELA 6 th : 1001010 7 th : 1001040 8 th : 1001070	X			
	Students on a Tier 2 MTSS reading plan					
	Students (including SWDs) with Level 2 on the ELA FSA and i-Ready reading score falls two or more grade-levels below 5 th : <541 6 th : <565 7 th : <582 8 th : <593	M/J Intensive Reading 1000010 Or Unique Skills Curriculum & Learning: 6-8 (ESE only) 7863040		X		
	Students with Level 1 on the ELA FSA					
	Students on a Tier 3 MTSS reading plan					
	Students with disabilities on Access Points Standards who have a reading goal on their IEP	Access M/J Language Arts 6: 7810011 7: 7810012 8: 7810013		X		
	Students with disabilities on Access Points Standards who have a reading goal on their IEP	M/J Intensive Reading 1000010 or Unique Skills Curriculum & Learning: 6-8 7863040			X	
	ELL students without an MTSS plan or without an IEP	M/J Intensive Reading 1000010 or Developmental Language Arts 1002181			X	
CODE A Courses: Student is receiving targeted reading intervention through small group differentiation in the ELA course.		CODE B Courses: Student is receiving targeted reading intervention through small group differentiation in the ELA course AND intensive reading interventions in a course listed above.				

SJCSD Decision Tree – Middle School (6-8)
Supports for Intervention of Students with Reading Deficiencies

Area of Intervention	Intervention Support (<i>intensive, explicit, systematic, multisensory</i>)	
IF a student has an instructional need in the skill area of...	THEN MTSS teams <i>consider</i> using one of the following resources for...	
	Tier 2 INSTRUCTION	MODIFIED INSTRUCTION Tier 3
Basic Reading Skills: Phonics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barton • Phonics for Reading • Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing (LiPS) • Wilson Reading Systems (2-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words (SIPPS) <i>Plus or Challenge</i>
Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast Forward • Re-reading Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Naturally • Rewards
Oral Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral Conferencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visualizing and Verbalizing
Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRISS, NGCAR-PD, or WICOR strategies • iReady Online Instruction • Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)- Purple (4-5) and/or Teal (6-8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Coach • Read 180 • Ready Toolbox • Targeted small group instruction
Listening Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferencing after reading with student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visualizing and Verbalizing
Written Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)- Purple (4-5) and/or Teal (6-8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing conferences with feedback

C. Middle School Course Sequence

For Honors or Advanced Course Placement: Grade “C” or better in previous honors course, grade “A” in the previous standard course with teacher recommendation, SSA Level 4 or 5 but not less than 3 in any area.

Language Arts			
	6 th	7 th	8 th
Standard	M/J Language Arts I	M/J Language Arts II	M/J Language Arts III
Advanced	M/J Language Arts I Advanced	M/J Language Arts II Advanced	M/J Language Arts III Advanced

Mathematics			
	6 th	7 th	8 th
Standard	Grade 6 Mathematics	Grade 7 Mathematics	Grade 8 Pre-Algebra
Advanced	Grade 6 Mathematics Advanced	Grade 7 Mathematics Advanced Algebra 1 Honors*	Algebra 1 Honors* Geometry Honors**

Accelerated pathways require supplemental work to be completed during the summer.

Algebra 1 Honors* Must pass the FSA Algebra 1 EOC and the FSA EOC grade is 30% of the final course grade. (Honors carries a 0.5 bonus weighting.)

Geometry Honors** Must take FSA Geometry EOC and the FSA Geometry EOC grade is 30% of the final course grade. (Honors carries a 0.5 bonus weighting.)

Science				
	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th
Standard	M/J Comprehensive Science 1	M/J Comprehensive Science 2	M/J Comprehensive Science 3	Environmental Science
Advanced	M/J Advanced Comprehensive Science 1	M/J Advanced Comprehensive Science 2	M/J Advanced Comprehensive Science 3 or **Honors Physical Science	Biology Honors or Physical Science Honors
Highly Advanced	#M/J Comprehensive Science Accelerated Honors 1	##M/J Comprehensive Science Accelerated Honors 2	*Biology Honors	Chemistry Honors or Physics Honors

#Students enrolled in M/J Comprehensive Science Accelerated Honors 1 must be concurrently enrolled in M/J 6th grade Advanced Math and have a scaled score of 344 or higher on Florida State Assessment for Reading in Grade 5.

##Students enrolled in M/J Comprehensive Science Accelerated Honors 2 will take the Statewide Science Assessment and must be concurrently enrolled in Algebra 1 Honors.

*Students enrolled in Honors Biology must be concurrently enrolled in Geometry Honors in order to keep the student on an advanced track in HS. All students enrolled in Honors Biology must take the state Biology End of

Course exam and it constitutes 30% of the student grade for the year. Students who take the Biology End of Course exam at the middle school DO NOT take the 8th grade Statewide Science Assessment.

** Students in Honors Physical Science in grade 8 must take the 8th grade Statewide Science Assessment. In order to keep these students on an advanced track for Science in HS, a student in Honors Physical Science in grade 8 should be concurrently enrolled in Algebra 1 Honors, or a higher math course.

Social Studies			
	6th	7th	8th
Standard	M/J World History	M/J Civics-EOC is 30% of final grade	M/J US History and Career Planning
Advanced	M/J World History Advanced	M/J. Civics Advanced-EOC is 30% of final grade	M/J US History Advanced and Career Planning

ELECTIVES

Music/Performing Arts			
	6th	7th	8th
Standard*			
General Music	Music Technology	Music Technology	Music Technology
Band	M/J Band 1 or M/J Instrumental Ensemble 1	M/J Band 2 M/J Instrumental Ensemble 1 M/J Instrumental Techniques 1	M/J Band 3 or M/J Band 4 M/J Instrumental Ensemble 2 M/J Instrumental Techniques 2
Keyboard	M/J Keyboard 1	M/J Keyboard 1	M/J Keyboard 1
Guitar	M/J Guitar 1	M/J Guitar 2	M/J Guitar 3
Orchestra /Strings	M/J Orchestra 1	M/J Orchestra 2	M/J Orchestra 3
Chorus	M/J Chorus 1	M/J Chorus 2	M/J Chorus 3
Dance	M/J Dance 1	M/J Dance 2	M/J Dance 3
Theater	M/J Acting 1 M/J Basic Theatre (MC) M/J Theater 1 Musical Theater 1	M/J Acting 2 M/J Basic Theatre (MC) M/J Theater 2 Musical Theater 2	M/J Acting 1 or 2 M/J Basic Theatre (MC) M/J Theater 3 or 4 Musical Theater 3
Advanced*			
Music	M/J Band 2 or M/J Instrumental Ensemble 2 M/J Orchestra 2	M/J Band 3 or M/J Instrumental Ensemble 3 M/J Orchestra 3	M/J Band 4 M/J Orchestra 4

Theatre	M/J Theatre 2	M/J Theatre 3	M/J Theatre 4
Dance	M/J Dance 2	M/J Dance 3	M/J Dance 4

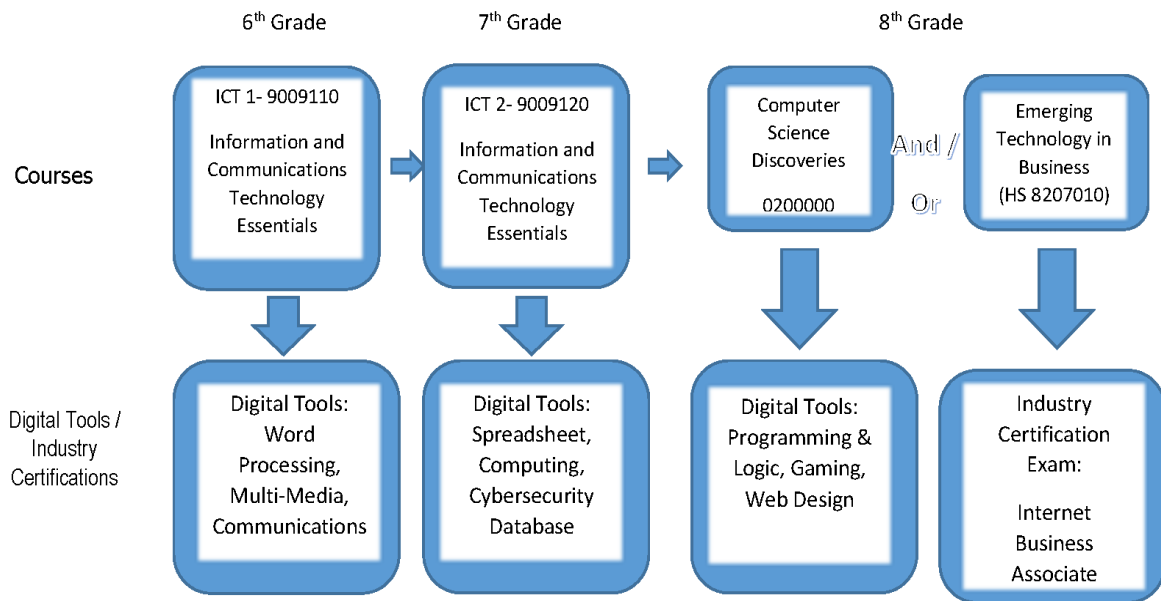
***Note: Not all courses are available at all schools.**

Visual Arts*			
	6th	7th	8th
Standard	M/J Two-Dimensional Studio Art 1 M/J Three-Dimensional Studio Art 1 M/J Exploring Two Dimensional Art (semester)	M/J. Two-Dimensional Studio Art 1 M/J Three-Dimensional Studio Art 1 M/J Exploring Three Dimensional Art (semester) M/J Visual Art 2	M/J Two-Dimensional Studio Art 2 M/J Three-Dimensional Studio Art 1 M/J Exploring 2D or 3D Art (semester) M/J Visual Art 3
Advanced	M/J Two-Dimensional Studio Art 1 M/J Visual Art 2	M/J Two-Dimensional Studio Art 2 M/J Digital Art & Design 1 M/J Visual Art 3 Creative Photography 1	M/J Digital Art & Design 2 Creative Photography 1 2D Studio Art 1 (MMS only)

Note: Elective art courses are not taught at every grade level during every semester. Scheduling varies per school.

World Language/Spanish			
	6th	7th	8th
Standard	M/J Exploratory Spanish	M/J Spanish Beginning	M/J Spanish Intermediate or Spanish 1(HS Credit) or Pre-AICE Spanish 1* (HS Credit)
Recommended Sequence *Pre-AICE Spanish 1 only at RJ Murray MS			

D. Middle School Computer Education Progression



6th grade ICT1, Digital Tools: Word Processing, Multi-Media, Communications (Use CIW curriculum)

7th grade ICT2, Digital Tools: Spreadsheet, Computing, Cybersecurity, Database (Use CIW curriculum)

8th CS Discoveries, Digital Tools: Programming & Logic, Gaming, Web Design (Use Code.org curriculum + CIW curriculum)

Emerging Technology in Business with CIW's IBA Industry Certification Exam (Use CIW curriculum)

E. Required Instruction

Introduction

The requirements for instruction are designed to conform to the vision, mission and objectives of St. Johns County Schools. The procedures herein are consistent with Florida Statute and recognize the unique characteristics and needs of St. Johns County students.

Based on State Standards

Instruction that complies with the State Board of Education adopted Student Performance Standards shall be offered in each school. These standards are incorporated into appropriate courses in all subject areas in grades K-Adult and are the basis for curriculum, instruction and evaluation of student performance in the district.

Equity in Classroom Instruction and Extra-Curricular Activities

Provisions shall be made for all students to participate fully in classroom instruction and extra-curricular activities. No student shall be denied participation because of age, sex, race, disability, religion, national origin, or for any other reason not related to his or her individual capabilities.

Federal Required Instruction

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day ([TITLE 36.1.A.1 § 106](#))

- September 17 is designated as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day.
- Constitution Day and Citizenship Day commemorate the formation and signing on September 17, 1787, of the Constitution and recognize all who, by coming of age or by naturalization, have become citizens.
- Proclamation.— The President may issue each year a proclamation calling on United States Government officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on Constitution Day and Citizenship Day and inviting the people of the United States to observe Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies.
- State and Local Observances.— The civil and educational authorities of States, counties, cities, and towns are urged to make plans for the proper observance of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day and for the complete instruction of citizens in their responsibilities. Educational agencies who receive federal funds are required to participate in the observance of Constitution Day.

In instances when September 17th does not fall on a school day, the observance of Constitution Day will occur on the school day prior or after.

State Required Instruction K-12 [1003.42 F.S.](#)

- (1) Each district school board shall provide all courses required for middle grades promotion, high school graduation, and appropriate instruction designed to ensure that students meet State Board of Education adopted standards in the following subject areas: reading and other language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, health and physical education, and the arts.
- (2) Members of the instructional staff of the public schools, subject to the rules of the State Board of Education and the district school board, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required that meet the highest standards for professionalism and historic accuracy, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction, the following:
 - (a) The history and content of the Declaration of Independence, including national sovereignty, natural law, self-evident truth, equality of all persons, limited government, popular sovereignty, and inalienable rights of life, liberty, and property, and how they form the philosophical foundation of our government
 - To educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the values on which this country was founded, the last full week of classes in September shall be recognized in public schools as Celebrate Freedom Week. Celebrate Freedom Week must include at least 3 hours of appropriate instruction in each social studies class, as determined by each

school district, which instruction shall include an in-depth study of the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence.

- To emphasize the importance of this week, at the beginning of each school day or in homeroom, during the last full week of September, public school principals and teachers shall conduct an oral recitation by students of the following words of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."
 - Student recitation of this statement shall serve to reaffirm the American ideals of individual liberty.
 - Upon written request by a student's parent, the student must be excused from the recitation of the Declaration of Independence. [1003.421F.S.](#)
- (b) The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States and amendments thereto, with emphasis on each of the 10 amendments that make up the Bill of Rights and how the constitution provides the structure of our government
- (c) The arguments in support of adopting our republican form of government, as they are embodied in the most important of the Federalist Papers
- (d) Flag education, including proper flag display and flag salute
- (e) The elements of civil government, including the primary functions of and interrelationships between the Federal Government, the state, and its counties, municipalities, school districts, and special districts
- (f) The history of the United States, including the period of discovery, early colonies, the War for Independence, the Civil War, the expansion of the United States to its present boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights movement to the present. American history shall be viewed as factual, not as constructed, shall be viewed as knowable, teachable, and testable, and shall be defined as the creation of a new nation based largely on the universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence
- (g) The value of the recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor will be incorporated into a school's character education program, and March 25th is designated as "Medal of Honor Day".

The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions. [HB 1213](#) requires districts to include education on anti-Semitism within Holocaust education and requires districts to annually certify and submit evidence this instruction was provided. The department shall prepare and offer standards and curriculum for the instruction. The department may contract with any state or nationally recognized Holocaust educational organizations to develop training for instructional personnel and grade-appropriate classroom resources to support the developed curriculum. The second week in November shall be designated as "Holocaust Education Week" in recognition that November is the anniversary of Kristallnacht.

- (h) The history of African Americans, including the history of African peoples before the political conflicts that led to the development of slavery, the passage to America, the enslavement experience, abolition, and the contributions of African Americans to society.

- (i) The elementary principles of agriculture
 - (j) The true effects of all alcoholic and intoxicating liquors and beverages and narcotics upon the human body and mind
 - (k) Kindness to animals
 - (l) The history of the state
 - (m) Comprehensive health education that addresses concepts of community health; consumer health; environmental health; family life, including an awareness of the benefits of sexual abstinence as the expected standard and the consequences of teenage pregnancy; mental and emotional health; injury prevention and safety; Internet safety; nutrition; personal health; prevention and control of disease; and substance use and abuse. The health education curriculum for students in grades 7 through 12 shall include a teen dating violence and abuse component that includes, but is not limited to, 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.
 - (n) Such additional materials, subjects, courses, or fields in such grades as are prescribed by law or by rules of the State Board of Education and the district school board in fulfilling the requirements of law
 - (o) The study of Hispanic contributions to the United States
 - (p) The study of women's contributions to the United States
 - (q) The nature and importance of free enterprise to the United States economy
 - (s) A character-development program in the elementary schools, similar to Character First or Character Counts, which is secular in nature. Beginning in school year 2004-2005, the character-development program shall be required in kindergarten through grade 12. Each district school board shall develop or adopt a curriculum for the character-development program that shall be submitted to the department for approval. The character-development curriculum shall stress the qualities of patriotism; responsibility; citizenship; kindness; respect for authority, life, liberty, and personal property; honesty; charity; self-control; racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance; and cooperation; The character-development curriculum for grades 9-12, shall include at a minimum instruction on developing leadership skills, interpersonal skills, organization skills, and research skills; creating a resume; developing and practicing the skills necessary for employment interviews; conflict resolution, workplace ethics, and enable students to become more resilient and self-motivated
- (3) Any student whose parent/legal guardian makes written request to the school 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. Course descriptions for comprehensive health education shall not interfere with the local determination of appropriate curriculum which reflects local values and concerns.
- (4) Instruction shall expand each student's knowledge, the understanding and the awareness of individuals with disabilities, the history of disabilities and the disability rights movement ([1003.4205, F.S.](#)).
- (5) SB 1096, the Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Education Act, passed by the 2010 Florida Legislature includes revisions to section [1003.41, F.S.](#) This legislation states that beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, the reading portion of the language arts curriculum shall include civics education content for all grade levels. The intent of this new legislation is that selected civics benchmarks be taught in the English language arts curriculum, not separately, but naturally woven in to fit whatever reading topics are taking place in the classroom.

(6) Mental and Emotional Health Instruction Requirements

Three State Board of Education rules related to health education topics have recently been approved for implementation beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. Comprehensive Health Education has included these topics as part of required instruction through section 1003.42 (2)(n), Florida Statutes, but did not include an instructional time requirement or the assurance mechanisms to support and verify instruction was being delivered.

- (a) **Mental & Emotional Health Education** – Rule 6A-1.094121, F.A.C., was approved by the State Board of Education on July 17, 2019. This rule establishes a minimum of five hours of required instruction related to mental and emotional health education for students in grades 6-12 and institutes procedures for school districts to document planning and delivery of instruction. Decisions about which course(s) will be used to deliver this instruction and curricula will be determined at the school district level. The rule will be in effect for the 2019-20 school year.
- (b) **Substance Use & Abuse Education** – Rule 6A-1.094122, F.A.C., was approved by the State Board of Education on August 21, 2019. This rule requires school districts to annually provide instruction to students in grades K-12 related to youth substance use and abuse health education, and institutes procedures for school districts to document planning and delivery of instruction. Substance use and abuse health education should advance each year through developmentally appropriate instruction and skill building using the adopted health education standards found at www.cpalms.org. Decisions about which course(s) will be used to deliver this instruction and curricula used will be determined at the school district level. The rule will be in effect for the 2019-2020 school year.
- (c) **Child Trafficking Prevention Education** – Rule 6A-1.094123, F.A.C., was approved by the State Board of Education on September 20, 2019. This rule requires school districts to annually provide instruction to students in grades K-12 related to child trafficking prevention and awareness, and institutes procedures for school districts to document planning and delivery of instruction. The child trafficking prevention education should advance each year through developmentally appropriate instruction and skill building using the adopted health education standards found at www.cpalms.org.