

April, 2008

TO: All holders of the Policy Manual of the Pinellas County School Board

FROM: Allen Mortimer, Director of Planning and Policy

SUBJECT: **SUPPLEMENT NO. 44 TO THE POLICY MANUAL OF  
JUNE 30, 1998**

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Please update your Policy Manual as follows:

**REMOVE PAGE(S)**

5-39 thru 5-42  
5-45 thru 5-50  
5-59 thru 5-60  
5-63 thru 5-64  
5-67 thru 5-70

**INSERT PAGE(S)**

5-39 thru 5-42  
5-45 thru 5-50  
5-59 thru 5-60  
5-63 thru 5-64  
5-67 thru 5-70

**5.13 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS: HIGH SCHOOL**

The change in policy will reduce the number of credits required to graduate from a 4x4 schedule high school from 29 credits to 24 credits making the graduation requirement the same for students in all of the district's seventeen high schools.

**5.15 REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS AND CLASS RANKING: HIGH SCHOOL**

The change in policy will align the final exam requirement of the six period schedule and the 4x4 schedule so that both use the criteria of a class grade of A or B rather than an overall 3.0 GPA. Also clarifies the forgiveness policy when a student wishes to replace a grade with a grade earned in an advanced or honors version of the course being forgiven.



**(6) Correspondence Credit Provisions:** Students who have completed two full years in high school may earn one (1) credit per school calendar year by correspondence under the following conditions:

(a) Prior approval is obtained from the principal.

(b) The correspondence course is taken from the University of Florida or a school, which is accredited by a regional accrediting agency under the governance of National Study of School Evaluation to grant high school credit for correspondence course work.

(c) The student presents an official transcript indicating successful course completion to the high school principal or designee.

(d) A maximum of two credits may be earned via correspondence for high school graduation.

**(7) Acceptance of Early Admission to College Credits:** A student who enters college prior to graduation from high school may be awarded a high school diploma upon successful completion of the first year of college, provided that prior arrangements have been made with the school principal and the student meets all the provisions of the Pinellas County Schools Early Admissions to College application PCS Form 2-2446. In order to be eligible to receive a Pinellas County high school diploma the student must have been enrolled in a Pinellas County high school for the entire semester prior to participation in the early admission program. (See also 5.13 (5)(b)).

**(8) Transfer of Area Vocational and Technical School Credit:** High school students attending specialized courses at area vocational or technical schools shall be given credit for such courses toward graduation requirements.

**(9) Acceptance of Adult High School Credit:** When a student sixteen (16) years of age or older withdraws from a regular day high school program and enters an adult high school program and later desires to re-enter a regular day high school, the student shall be re-admitted with the permission of the principal, and the school shall accept the transfer of all credits earned in state-approved adult high schools, provided all other Board requirements are met and provided further that the student will be enrolled for at least one full semester before graduation from the regular day high school to which the student wishes to return.

**(10) In order to have credits awarded:** A student who wished to have credits transferred to a Pinellas County high school from any educational institution as outlined in subsections (2) through (8) of this policy shall provide an official transcript of completed course work in such educational institution. The official transcript(s) shall include the grading scale used by the transferring school(s).

Statutory Authority: 1001.32(2), 1001.41, 1001.42, 1001.43 F.S.

Laws Implemented: 230.22, 232.03, 232.032, 232.25 F.S.; 6A-1.095 SBE Rules..

History: New 7/28/65; Amended 11/17/71, 2/27/74; Revised 12/18/74; Amended 8/23/78, 7/11/79, 8/27/80, 12/3/80, 6/10/81, 7/13/83, 2/8/84, 12/18/85, 6/25/86, 9/24/86, 9/23/87, 5/25/88, 2/8/89, 9/27/89, 1/24/90, 6/13/90, 8/8/90, 1/9/91, 4/8/92, 6/23/93, 6/27/95, 1/10/96, 6/30/98, 6/29/99, 10/10/00, 12/9/03, 6/21/05, 7/31/07

Note: Former (portion) 6Gx52-8.17 (changed 6/30/98)

**5.13 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS: HIGH SCHOOL**

**(1) Graduation Defined:** Graduation from a Pinellas County high school implies that students have satisfactorily completed the prescribed high school core curriculum in accordance with the provisions of 5.11 and that they have satisfactorily passed any examinations and other requisites set by the State Board of Education and the Pinellas County School Board. These requirements are based on the assumption that a high school education represents the successful completion of a four (4) year program of studies, with enough flexibility to allow qualified students other alternatives for graduation. High school credits earned in grades 7 and 8 will apply to graduation requirements but will not be used for acceleration of graduation.

**(2) Standard Diploma:** (See also paragraph (f) Progress Toward Graduation Based on 4x4 High School Schedule)

*(a) Number of Credits Required for Graduation:* The minimum number of credits required for graduation from a four-year program in high school is twenty-four (24). Students may also select the three-year eighteen (18) credit standard college preparatory program or three-year eighteen (18) credit career preparatory program (for eighteen (18) credit options see subsection (n) GPA Requirement and paragraph (4) Accelerated Graduation). Students in their third year in the eighteen (18) credit option program may participate in senior activities directly related to graduation but are not eligible for participation in other senior activities or privileges.

**1. Graduation Program Options**

- a. Four-year twenty-four (24) credit program.
- b. Three-year eighteen (18) credit standard college preparatory program.
- c. Three-year eighteen (18) credit career preparatory program.

**2. Selection of a Graduation Program Option**

a. Students make their initial selection of a graduation program option while in 8<sup>th</sup> grade during the spring high school registration process.

b. A student must achieve at least a level 3 on the most recent FCAT reading, mathematics and writing assessments in order to select an 18 credit accelerated graduation program option.

c. If a three-year eighteen (18) credit graduation program option is selected, the parent or guardian and student must both sign the *Standard Diploma Option Selection Form*. If the form is not signed to select an eighteen (18) credit graduation program option, then the student is automatically classified as a four year twenty-four (24) credit diploma graduation program student.

**3. Procedure for Changing the Graduation Program Option**

a. A student may change their graduation program option only once per year while in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. The change must be made during the spring registration for courses for the next school year. A parent or guardian's signature is required in order for a student to change their graduation program option. A student may not choose an 18 credit graduation option after the end of

the 9th grade year. New students to the district may choose an 18 credit graduation option until the end of the first semester of 10th grade.

b. During the 11<sup>th</sup> grade year (3<sup>rd</sup> year of high school enrollment), the school district's Dropout Prevention office or the Directors of School Operations may initiate a request for a change of graduation program option on behalf of a student due to extenuating circumstances. Such request must be approved in writing by the student's parent or guardian. During their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of enrollment in high school, a student-initiated request for a change of their graduation program option will not be approved.

#### 4. Failure to Complete the 18 credit Graduation Program within Three Years

a. A student who selects a three-year 18 credit graduation program option and does not meet the specific program requirements within three years, automatically reverts to the four-year 24 credit graduation program option.

b. An 18 credit student who does not score at level 3 or higher on the grade 10 FCAT writing assessment, or achieve 5 credits by the end of grade 9 or 11 credits by the end of grade 10 will be reassigned to the 24 credit program option.

**(b) Specific Credit Requirements for Graduation:** (See 1003.43(1) F.S. for specific content requirements of designated courses.)

1. A student entering ninth grade prior to 2007-2008 must complete the core curriculum by earning the following high school credits or complete the International Baccalaureate curriculum to be eligible for graduation:

*English* - 4 credits

*Social Studies* - 3 credits American history is required for one of the social studies credits. In addition, world history is required for one (1) credit, American government for one-half (1/2) credit, and economics for one-half (1/2) credit.

*Mathematics* - 3 credits (Includes one credit of algebra 1, a series of equivalent courses or a higher level mathematics course if the algebra requirement was satisfied prior to ninth grade for students entering grade 9 in 1997-98 or subsequent years.)

*Science* - 3 credits Upon completion of the JROTC Naval Science program, including Naval Science I, II, and III, students may substitute on a curriculum equivalency basis one JROTC credit for Physical Science (2003310) to satisfy one of the three science requirements. Agriscience Foundations I counts as one of the three required science credits.

*Physical Education* - 1 credit. Includes 1/2 credit of personal fitness and 1/2 credit of a physical education course that consists of both basic knowledge and skill related activities.

A student entering ninth grade during 1999-2000 and subsequent years can satisfy a full credit of physical education by participating in an interscholastic sport approved by FHSAA for two full seasons at the junior varsity or varsity level and passing a competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or better. Students will have only one opportunity to pass the test. Satisfactory completion and approval of PCS Form 2-2782 is needed for this substitution. Satisfying the personal fitness and the physical education course in this manner does not decrease the minimum number of credits needed for graduation since no course credit or grade is earned through sports.

Beginning with the 2002-03 school year students may participate in a marching band class or a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity to satisfy the requirement of 1/2 credit of a physical education course. Beginning with the 2003-04 school year, completion of a JROTC class that includes a significant component of drills will satisfy the requirement of the 1/2 credit of a physical education course. Students must earn a "C" or higher in the class. Participation in marching band or JROTC may **not** be used to satisfy the personal fitness 1/2 credit requirement or the adaptive physical education requirement under an IEP or 504 plan.

All High School physical education courses should be staffed by certified physical education teachers. Physical education shall consist of physical activities of at least a moderate intensity level and for a duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing capabilities of students. The physical education program will reflect the following program outcomes that are developmentally appropriate for the high school student:

- a. Students will demonstrate competency in many movement forms and proficiency in a few forms of physical activity.
- b. Students will apply movement concepts and principles to the learning and development of motor skills.
- c. Students will understand that regular participation in physical activity provides a major component in personal fitness and wellness.
- d. Students will achieve and maintain a health enhancing level of physical fitness.
- e. Students will demonstrate responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity.
- f. Students will understand how participating in physical activity promotes inclusion and an understanding of the abilities and cultural diversity of people.
- g. Students will understand that physical activity provides the opportunity for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and communication.

*Life Management Skills* - 1/2 credit with content as defined in 1003.43(1)(i) F.S. Upon completion of the Army JROTC Leadership Education and Training courses I and II or the Marine Corp JROTC Leadership Education courses I and II, students may substitute, on a curriculum equivalency basis, one JROTC credit for .5 credit of health life management skills. These courses must contain all requirements specified in Sections 232.246 and 233.067 F.S.

*Performing Arts/Practical Arts* – 1 credit

Either:

1 credit of performing fine arts selected from music, dance, drama, an art form requiring manual dexterity, speech or debate

or

1 credit of practical arts/career and technical education or exploratory career and technical education

or

3. Job preparatory programs which have been identified as being the equivalent of Business English I (#1001440), Business English II (#1001450), Business Mathematics (#1205540), Pre-Algebra (#1200300) General Science (#2002310), and Anatomy and Physiology (#2000350) are listed below:

a. Business English I: Accounting Operations 8203300, Administrative Assistant 8212000, and Business Supervision and Management 8215100.

b. Business English I and/or Business English II: Administrative Assistant 8212000.

c. Business Mathematics: Administrative Assistant 8212000, Business Computer Programming 8206300, PC Support Services 8207200, Business Supervision and Management 8215100, Accounting Operations 8203300, Academy of International Business 8216100.

d. Pre-Algebra: Electronics 8730000.

e. General Science: Nursery & Floriculture Operations 8121200, Environmental Horticulture 8121500, Natural Resources & Forest Ecology 8118200 and Animal Science 8106100.

f. Anatomy and Physiology: Allied Health Assisting 84171310, Electrocardiograph Aide 84171610, First Responder 84171710, Home Health Aide 8417190, Nursing Assistant 84172110 and Health Unit Coordinator 84171810.

4. A student who completes a job preparatory program and substitutes part of that program for Business Mathematics, Business English, Business English II, General Science or Anatomy and Physiology may not take these courses and receive additional credit.

#### 5. Business Technology Education Program Guidelines

a. Business English I and Business English II are yearlong courses for vocational students. Students who earn a full credit in both of these courses may substitute them for English III and IV. Students who earn credit only in Business English I must take English III as their fourth English credit. Students who complete only one semester of Business English I must take one semester of English III to complete their third English credit and a full year of English IV to complete their fourth English credit.

b. Business Mathematics satisfies one year of the mathematics requirement for graduation. Since Business Mathematics is a level 1 course (waiver required) and does not prepare a student to meet the algebra requirement for graduation, it is recommended that students take this course as their third mathematics credit only when a more rigorous course would not be appropriate. Business Technology Education program completers may use course substitution for this course as outlined in the Florida Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments.

c. In determining program completers in Business Education, Keyboarding and Business Skills (8200320) and Computer and Business Skills (8200330) may be combined as a substitute for Business Systems and Technology I (8209020).

d. The first semester or a full year of Word Processing I (8212010) may be substituted for the second semester of Business Systems and Technology I (8209020) provided the equivalent

Student Performance Standards have been met.

e. Practical Computer and Business Skills (8200330) may substitute for the first semester of Business Systems and Technology II (8209030) provided the equivalent Student Performance Standards have been met.

**(d) Exceptional Student Requirements:** Exceptional students must meet the requirements outlined for high school students in the general education program to earn a standard diploma. Additional policies pertaining to exceptional student education are located in the Pinellas County Schools Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students Handbook as referred in policy 5.17 Exceptional Student Education. Access to a standard diploma for any exceptional student means that:

1. Exceptional students may enroll in any general education or exceptional student education course that is described in the Pinellas County Course Code Directory to meet graduation requirements. Courses with special diploma performance standards will count only as elective credit toward a standard diploma.

2. Course accommodations are provided as needed in regular and vocational courses as specified on the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Accommodations cannot change course performance standards.

3. Test accommodations for classroom, district and state test administration procedures are provided as needed in regular and vocational courses as specified on the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

4. Exceptional students (except gifted, vision impaired, or speech impaired only) may pursue a Special Diploma if they are unable to meet standard diploma requirements. The diploma decision must be made by the IEP team no later than the end of the first semester of eighth grade. This decision is reviewed at least annually by the IEP team. The decision may be changed, understanding that it may increase the amount of time required prior to graduation (see also 5.13 (5)).

**(e) Progress Toward Graduation in Regular High School Schedule:**

1. Progress toward graduation in grades 9-12 shall be based on passing the FCAT, mastery of subject matter by earning the required 24 credits and earning the required cumulative unweighted 2.0 GPA. Students progress through high school each year at their own pace. When a student accumulates a minimum of eighteen (18) high school credits and completes three full years of high school, senior or 12th grade status will be granted.

2. Students scoring below Level 2 on FCAT Reading or Mathematics, below 4.0 on FCAT Writing or the district writing test, or below Level 2 on FCAT Science or the district science test will receive remediation and may be retained. Additional diagnostic assessments aligned to FCAT will be administered. Upon subsequent evaluation, if the documented deficiency has not been remediated in accordance with the academic improvement plan, the student may be retained.

3. No students may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

***(f) Progress Toward Graduation Based on a 4x4 High School Schedule:***

1. Progress toward graduation based on a 4x4 high school schedule is the same as the regular high school schedule (see (2)(e) above).

2. Students enrolled in a 4x4 schedule must meet all other requirements specified in paragraph (2) Standard Diploma.

**(g) Full Time Enrollment Requirement in Regular Schedule High School:** Students shall be enrolled full time for at least six (6) credits during a school calendar year. A school calendar year includes first semester, second semester and coursework completed prior to July 1st of each year. Students may earn six (6) credits in the regular high school program, including Florida Virtual School, and additional credits in the Extended Learning Program, adult school, the Florida Virtual School or college dual credit. A student may also earn credit in a regionally accredited public or private summer term program. During a grading period, a student must be enrolled in and attending at least four (4) courses at the high school in order to be a Pinellas County student. Home education students may not enroll in more than three (3) courses (see also policy 6.22 Home Education).

Credits earned in summer term, the Extended Learning Program, the Florida Virtual School, college dual credit or adult school may not be used for the purpose of accelerating graduation except for students in the Early Graduation Option program or an approved Pinellas County Schools Dropout Prevention Program.

**(h) Full Time Enrollment Requirement in 4x4 High School Schedule:** Students shall be enrolled full time for at least eight (8) credits during a school calendar year. A school calendar year includes first semester, second semester and coursework completed prior to July 1st of each year. Students may earn eight (8) credits in the regular high school program, including Florida Virtual School, and additional credits in the Extended Learning Program, adult school, the Florida Virtual School or college dual credit. A student may also earn credit in a regionally accredited public or private summer term program. During a grading period, a student must be enrolled in and attending at least three (3) courses at the high school in order to be a Pinellas County student. Home education students may not enroll in more than two (2) courses (see also policy 6.22 Home Education).

(Continued on next page)

Credits earned in summer term, the Extended Learning Program, the Florida Virtual School, college dual credit or adult school may not be used for the purpose of accelerating graduation except for students in the Early Graduation Option program or an approved Pinellas County School Dropout Prevention Program.

*(i) Credit Requirements for Students Transferring from Out-of-State:* If a student enters from out-of-state with fewer than six (6) credits, but is classified as a tenth grade student, the student must earn eighteen (18) additional credits to graduate. If a student enters from out of state with fewer than twelve (12) credits but is classified as an eleventh grade student, the student must earn twelve (12) additional credits to graduate; these credits must include as many required subjects as possible in order to give greater emphasis to the academic subjects. If a student enters from out-of-state with fewer than eighteen (18) credits but is classified as a twelfth grade student, the student must earn six (6) additional credits to graduate; these credits must include as many required subjects as possible in order to give greater emphasis to the academic subjects. Credit requirements of students transferring between schools offering the 4x4 schedule will be handled in the same manner with eight credits required per year. For each such student transferring from out-of-state, "OUT-OFSTATE TRANSFER" should be entered in the comment section of the student academic history screen to explain the possibility of a student's graduating with fewer than the regularly required number of credits for graduation. (See also 5.12 Acceptance of Credits (2)).

*(j) High School Students in Adult High School:* With the approval of the high school principal/designee, 24-credit standard diploma high school students who are within one (1) month of their sixteenth (16th) birthday or older may enroll in adult high school credit courses if any of the following apply:

1. A student who is in his third or fourth year of high school, is behind in earned credits, and cannot earn all needed credits in day school in time to graduate with his class, may enroll in a required subject area course he has not taken before for subject area credit.

2. A student who is in his third or fourth year of high school, is behind in earned credits and cannot earn all needed credits in day school in time to graduate with his class, may enroll in an elective course he has not taken before for elective credit.

3. A student needs forgiveness for a failed course.

4. A student with an un-weighted GPA of less than a 2.0 may enroll to replace a "D" grade with a grade of "C" or higher on a space available basis only.

5. Course work is needed to meet requirements of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Certificate or the Early Graduation Option program (EGO).

6. Under extenuating circumstances with approval of the principal and Director of School Operations.

*(k) High School Students in the Florida Virtual School:* With the approval of the high school principal/designee and the student's parent, high school students may enroll in course work during or beyond the regular school day/year through the Florida Virtual School. High schools may also build Florida Virtual School courses into their master schedules during the school day.

1. A student may not be enrolled simultaneously in the same course at both their school and the Florida Virtual School. Students should enroll in Florida Virtual courses at the beginning of a semester. While students await acceptance in a Florida Virtual School course, they must be enrolled full time in a Pinellas County school.

2. Although Florida Virtual School may have institutional drop/add procedures and timelines, students must be enrolled in a full schedule in Pinellas County Schools and may not drop a Florida Virtual School course that results in less than a full course load. Florida Virtual School “W/F” codes will be treated as a grade of “F” on a student’s transcript.

3. During a grading period, a student must be enrolled in and attending at least four (4) courses at a regular schedule high school and three (3) courses at a 4x4 high school in order to be a Pinellas County student.

***(l) Additional Credit for Dropout Prevention Students:*** A student enrolled in a Department of Education approved Pinellas County Schools Dropout Prevention Program may earn additional credit if enrolled in course modification classes and/or an after school work experience program and may be eligible to graduate in less than twelve (12) years (grades 1-12). Students enrolled in the school who have previously been retained one or more grades may be eligible to participate in an upgrade program. If a student is in an eighth grade upgrade, the student will be classified as a ninth grader and enrolled in high school credit courses which may include approved course modifications if the student remains at the discovery school for the entire year. Eighth grade students at the school not eligible for the upgrade program may earn up to 1.5 non-academic high school credits.

***(m) Summer Term Credits:*** A student may earn high school credit by successfully completing a summer term course in a regionally accredited public or private summer term program.

The summer grades of students are acceptable as credit needed to meet graduation requirements provided the program meets the 120 class hours required by the State Department of Education and that the students shall have successfully completed an examination given by the school granting the credit.

***(n) GPA Requirement***

1. Students entering 9th grade before the 1997-98 school year must have a 1.5 unweighted GPA for all 24 credits required by state law for high school graduation. These students entering 9th grade before 1996-97 must, in addition to maintaining a minimum unweighted GPA of 1.5 for all courses required for graduation, either (1) maintain an unweighted GPA of 2.0 for all credits earned toward high school graduation requirements after July 1, 1997, or (2) if it is to the student’s advantage, choose the option of a 2.0 unweighted overall GPA for all high school courses in the student’s educational program, except those to which a forgiveness policy has been applied.

2. Students entering 9th grade during 1997-98 through 1999-2000 must achieve a cumulative unweighted grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale for all credits required for graduation to be eligible for a diploma. For diploma purposes, a grade point average of 1.950 or higher will be rounded to a 2.0.

3. Students entering 9th grade during 2000-2001 and subsequent years must achieve a cumulative unweighted grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale to be eligible for a

diploma. All high school courses taken will be included in the GPA calculation unless the grade has been forgiven. For diploma purposes, a grade point average of 1.950 or higher will be rounded to a 2.0.

4. Students selecting the 18 credit three-year Standard College Preparatory graduation program options must earn at least a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.

5. Students selecting the 18 credit three year Career Preparatory program must earn at least a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

**(o) *Statewide Assessment Program:*** Each student must meet the requirements of the Statewide Assessment Program and must earn a passing score in reading, mathematics and writing as measured by the FCAT to be eligible for a diploma. The FCAT also serves as the assessment of a high school student's readiness to enter the workforce. Exceptional students are eligible for test administration accommodations as specified on their Individual Education Plan. Students with disabilities, whose abilities cannot accurately be measured by the statewide assessment test, may be determined eligible for a waiver of the FCAT requirement for graduation (See 5.17 Exceptional Student Education Procedures and Assessment). In order to select an 18 credit graduation option, a student must achieve at least a level 3 on the most recent FCAT reading, mathematics and writing assessments.

**(p) *Elective Credits:*** Remedial and compensatory courses taken in grades 9-12 may only be counted as elective credit. Credits for electives for a standard diploma may not include more than a total of nine (9) credits of remedial and compensatory courses, nor more than one (1) credit for exploratory vocational, nor more than three (3) credits for practical arts family and consumer sciences classes. ESE students pursuing a special diploma may earn additional elective credits.

**(q) *Dual Credit Program:*** The Pinellas County School Board has established articulation agreements with St. Petersburg College (SPC), the University of South Florida and the University of Florida. The SPC agreement enables our high school students to take college courses on the high school campuses or on a St. Petersburg College campus. Students who satisfactorily complete the requirements of the courses within the program receive college credit by complying with the District board of Trustees rules and high school credit prorated according to the college credit hours for each college course successfully completed.

1. To be eligible to participate in the dual credit program, a student must be a sophomore, junior, or senior attending a public high school in Pinellas County who has demonstrated prior academic achievement by attaining at least an unweighted 3.0 grade point average for academic dual credit or an unweighted 2.0 GPA for technical dual credit. Participating sophomores must be in need of a college course in order to meet specific graduation requirements. The University of South Florida agreement provides for early admission into the Honors College only. Students entering the Honors College must have an unweighted minimum GPA of 3.8.

2. Approved dual credit courses are listed in the current Pinellas County High School Course Code Directory. Courses may be added or deleted throughout the year by the mutual agreement of the College President and the Superintendent of Pinellas County Schools.

3. If a high school does not have enough students to form a dual credit class on the high school campus, two options are available to eligible students:

(d) The student is a resident of Pinellas County and has met all of the following:

1. Is enrolled in a dropout prevention, dropout retrieval, in-school GED, exceptional student program funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP); or is court ordered to a GED class; or has been withdrawn from regular day school for at least three (3) months.
2. Has been counseled as to the educational alternative appropriate to the student's needs.
3. Has obtained a pretest score of 500 or better on all five (5) parts of the official GED pretest.

**(10) Unauthorized Diplomas:** The granting of diplomas other than those approved by the Board is not allowed.

**(11) Final Semester Attendance Requirement for Diploma Eligibility:**

(a) Students who transfer out of the Pinellas County school system before the last full semester of their senior year and do not return to this school system to complete the last semester of their senior year shall not be eligible for a diploma from a Pinellas County public school.

(b) A student who transfers out of the Pinellas County school system during the last full semester of their senior year shall not be eligible for a diploma from a Pinellas County public high school unless the student has transferred to a school district with a policy which will not allow that district to grant a diploma to a student who was not enrolled for the entire semester prior to graduation. In this instance our school district will work with the receiving high school to verify the student's final grades, GPA, and diploma eligibility.

(c) Students who transfer into a Pinellas County high school during their senior year must be enrolled full time in Pinellas County School's courses for the entire semester prior to graduation in order to be eligible for a diploma from a Pinellas County public school. These courses may not be taken through Florida Virtual School. However, a Pinellas County high school diploma may be granted to a student transferring in from a school district with a policy, which will not allow that district to grant a diploma to a student who was not enrolled for the entire semester prior to graduation.

**(12) Mid-term Graduation Ceremonies:** Mid-term graduation ceremonies shall not be held in high schools.

**(13) Code of Conduct for High School Graduation Ceremonies:**

(a) It is the intent of the Board to set guidelines for high school graduation ceremonies that will help make graduation a dignified occasion, worthy of the time and effort students and parents have expended to accomplish the goal of students' graduating from high school. It is imperative that students, parents, teachers and school administrators take an active part in implementing this code.

***(b) Student Rights and Responsibilities:***

*1. Student Rights:*

a. Each graduating senior has the right to expect a dignified ceremony, worthy of recognizing the effort that has been applied in achieving graduate status.

b. Each graduating senior has the right to be properly recognized before family and friends without interference from any source.

2. *Student Responsibilities:* Students attending graduation ceremonies are expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

a. Students shall abide by all rules of dress and conduct as developed by the school.

b. Students shall avoid any behavior that would cause discomfort or embarrassment to any other graduate or the family or friends or a graduate.

c. Students shall follow all directions given by members of the school staff or administration.

*(c) Student Conduct at Graduation:* All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will contribute to the best interests of the graduating class. School authorities have jurisdiction over all students during the graduation ceremonies. The Board's current Code of Student Conduct shall apply to all participants and student spectators attending the graduation ceremonies.

Statutory Authority: 1001.32(2), 1001.41(2), 1001.42(23), 1003.03, F.S.

Laws Implemented: 1003.428, 1003.43, F.S.; 6A-1.095 SBE Rules..

History: New 7/12/50; Amended 3/15/53, 7/13/55, 5/22/57, 7/22/59, 7/12/61, 7/28/65, 7/31/68, 11/17/71, 2/27/74; Revised and Amended 12/18/74; Amended 8/23/78, 5/23/79, 8/13/80, 12/3/80, (Subsection (6) temporary provision for allowing students under age 18 to take GED after 7/1/83, under certain conditions, adopted as an emergency policy 8/10/83; expired automatically 11/8/83; present subsection adopted 1/12/83) Amended 2/8/84, 1/30/85, 8/14/85, 9/11/85, 12/18/85, 3/19/86, 4/9/86, 6/25/86, 12/10/86, 5/27/87, 9/9/87, Subsection (4) "Credit by Examination" repealed 11/11/87; Amended 11/25/87, 2/24/88, 5/25/88, 11/9/88, 2/22/89 (Emergency), 3/29/89, 5/24/89 (Emergency), 6/28/89, 7/26/89, 8/9/89, 6/13/90, 8/8/90 (Emergency), 9/12/90, 1/9/91, 7/10/91, 4/8/92, 8/26/92, 1/13/93, 2/24/93, 8/11/93, 3/9/94, 8/9/94, 6/27/95, 1/10/96, 4/24/96, 10/8/96, 1/28/97, 9/9/97, 1/13/98, 6/30/98, 2/09/99, 6/29/99, 10/12/99, 8/15/00, 1/16/01, 7/31/01, 12/10/02, 12/9/03, 11/9/04, 2/22/05, 10/24/06, 12/12/06, 5/8/07, 7/31/07, 4/15/08

Note: Former 6Gx52-8.24 (changed 6/30/98)

## 5.14 HIGH SCHOOL MAGNET PROGRAMS

(1) The high school magnet programs constitute essentially a "school within a school". Students choosing to participate in social and extra-curricular activities shall do so in the magnet host school.

(2) Students attending a magnet program must be enrolled full time in the magnet host school. Magnet students must complete academic graduation requirements by completing magnet courses and may not substitute dual credit correspondence or on-line courses for magnet courses.

(3) All high school career academy and magnet programs are four-year twenty-four credit standard diploma option programs. A student who chooses an eighteen (18) credit, three-year standard diploma option may not participate in a career academy or magnet program.

(4) Students who enter a magnet program are expected to remain in that program for that school year. Students who voluntarily withdraw or who no longer meet eligibility requirements must telephone the District Call Center or a Family Education and Information Center for a school

*1. Six period schedule:*

a. The student has a provisional course grade of "C", "D", or "F" for the term. Students who have a course grade of "A" or "B" are not required to take the exam except as may otherwise be provided herein. Students not required to take the exam must maintain the required grade through the remainder of the term. The provisional semester grade will be based on the grades earned for the first two grading periods plus the first four weeks of the third grading period.

b. A student enrolled in the same course during two terms of the same school year is required to take at least one final exam in that course.

c. Second semester seniors are not required to take final exams in any course in which the student earned a provisional "A" or "B". Exams are required in courses in which the student earned a provisional "C", "D" or "F" grade.

*2. 4x4 schedule:*

a. The student has a provisional course grade of "C", "D", or "F" for the term. Students who have a course grade of "A" or "B" are not required to take the exam except as may otherwise be provided herein. Students not required to take the exam must maintain the required grade through the remainder of the term. The provisional quarter grade will be based on the cumulative grades through the end of the seventh week of the quarter.

b. A student enrolled in the same course during two terms of the same school year is required to take at least one final exam in that course.

c. Fourth quarter seniors are not required to take final exams in any course in which the student earned a provisional "A" or "B". Exams are required in courses in which the student earned a provisional "C", "D" or "F" grade.

(Continued on next page)

3. *Both 6 period and 4x4 schedules*

a. Students not required to take a final exam may elect to take their final examinations to improve the final grades. A final grade shall not be reduced as a result of the examination grade, should the student elect this option.

b. Students enrolled in the Hospital/Homebound Education Program are required to take final exams in all courses regardless of the attained GPA because of the already shortened instructional time.

c. If a school requires final exams for specific Advanced Placement courses, the school should clearly communicate this in their school's curriculum guide.

d. Any student who has been enrolled in a Pinellas County public high school for less than the entire term is required to take all exams. A student with 10 or more absences for any reason (excused or unexcused) per semester in a class on a 6 period day schedule or 5 or more absences for any reason (excused or unexcused) per quarter in a class on a 4x4 schedule is required to take a comprehensive final exam. A waiver of this provision may be granted by the principal as provided for in policy 4.01 CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT section (5) STUDENT ATTENDANCE: High School Grading and Attendance. Students qualifying for early exams must meet the district's minimum attendance policy including the days of absence that occur at the end of the term.

**(d) IB Exams as Final Exams** -Students in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program are not required to take final examinations in those courses for which they have taken an International Baccalaureate exam provided that they are not required to demonstrate mastery in order to earn course credit.

1. The final course grade for such International Baccalaureate students shall be computed by averaging the 4th, 5th, and 6th week grading periods. 2. In lieu of the regular examinations the International Baccalaureate students will attend their regular subject area classes for structured activities and/or projects during the examination time to complete the activities for the final grading period.

**(e) Early Exams** - If a secondary student in a school with a six period schedule withdraws or leaves school for the remainder of the year during the last ten (10) school days of the semester for a reason acceptable to the school principal, the student may be permitted to take early examinations. If a secondary student in a school with a 4x4 schedule withdraws or leaves school for the remainder of the year during the last five (5) days of the quarter for a reason acceptable to the school principal, the student may be permitted to take early examinations.

1. No early exams shall be administered prior to the last twelve (12) school days of each semester in six (6) periods per day schools and prior to the last six (6) school days of each semester in 4x4 schedule schools.

2. Students shall pay a reasonable fee per examination as established by the Superintendent. The teacher who prepared the examination and the person (a certified instructional professional) who administers the examination will each be paid one-half the fee per exam.

3. Early examinations shall not be given during regular school hours. Early examinations may be administered after school hours and on weekends.

4. In courses where the teacher chooses to give an oral/participation examination the exam

**(6) Forgiveness Policy:**

(a) A high school student who chooses to repeat a specific course to replace a "D" or "F" with a grade of "C" or higher will be given that opportunity in the regular school program to repeat the course. The repeated course can also be taken in the Extended Learning Program to replace an "F" grade or to replace a "D" grade if the student has less than a 2.0 unweighted GPA. The repeated course can also be taken in an adult education evening class to replace an "F" grade for students within one month of their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and older. Pending available space, students may choose to attend an adult education class to replace a "D" grade with a grade of "C" or higher if the student is working toward a 24-credit standard diploma and has an un-weighted GPA of less than 2.0.

Enrollment to replace a "D" grade is not guaranteed but is on a space available basis only. A high school course with a grade of "C" taken prior to the 2000-2001 school year may be repeated for forgiveness in the regular school program to obtain a higher grade, including replacing an "F" with a "D". Upon completion of such repeated course, only the higher of the two (2) grades will be used to compute the student's grade point average. "Forgiven grades", however, will be included on a student's transcript. Credit may be earned only one time for the course repeated. Any course grade not replaced according to this forgiveness policy shall be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average.

(b) Except as noted in this paragraph "specific course" means that the state course code number for the course being repeated is the same as the state course code number for the course being "forgiven" or an advanced or honors version of the course being "forgiven". Because there is more than one course/series of courses that can be used to meet the algebra requirement for high school graduation, a student may apply the grade forgiveness rule to one or both semesters of Algebra Ia for the first semester of Algebra I and vice versa and a student may apply the grade forgiveness rule to one or both semesters of Algebra Ib for the second semester of Algebra I and vice versa. A student must successfully complete one of the state-approved courses/series of courses to meet the algebra requirement for high school graduation. NOTE: Criteria related to receiving credit for only one of the courses/series of courses to meet the algebra requirement are outlined in the Florida Course Descriptions.

1. A grade of "C", "D" or "F" earned in Algebra I Honors in middle school may be replaced by earning a grade of "C" or higher in Algebra I in high school. A grade of "C", "D" or "F" earned in Geometry Honors in middle school may be replaced by earning a grade of "C" or higher in Geometry Honors in high school. A grade of "C", "D" or "F" earned in Physical Science Honors in middle school may be replaced by earning a grade of "C" or higher in Physical Science in high school.

**(7) Procedures For Ascertaining the Rank In Class Of Standard Curriculum Students:**

(a) Class rank will be computed based on all courses taken for high school credit through the first semester of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade year or through first semester of 11<sup>th</sup> grade for students in the eighteen (18) credit accelerated graduation option. Grades for courses taken in middle school, the Extended Learning Program, adult education, etc., awarding high school credit, will be used to calculate high school class rank. For the purpose of identifying class ranks of 1 and 2 (Valedictorian and Salutatorian), extra courses beyond those needed for graduation that were earned in middle school or outside the regular school day in grades 9-12 (24 in regular schedule high school and 29 in a 4x4

schedule high school) may be deleted from the class rank computation by student request in writing to the principal prior to the end of the first semester of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade year.

(b) Students transferring to or from a *4x4 schedule* school will be class ranked with all other students based on all courses taken. The principal (or designee) will determine the class rank status of transferring students and the decision will be final. In the event that the transfer negatively affects a current valedictorian or salutatorian status, co-honors will be bestowed.

(c) Rank in class will be computed at the end of each term including all course work completed prior to July 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year for all students. The final ranking is computed after the first semester of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade year.

(d) Grades earned in all courses (basic, regular, honors) will be weighted in determining final GPA, as provided in administrative procedures.

**(8) Valedictorian and Salutatorian Identification:** Each high school will identify a valedictorian and salutatorian based on class rank (see 5.15 (7) (a)) and students who qualify for summa cum laude, magna cum laude or cum laude status based upon the cumulative weighted grade point average as determined within this policy. Such selection does not provide that the students will address the graduating class. The choice of graduation speaker shall be made at the discretion of the principal. Students graduating with 18 credits in the accelerated graduation option are not eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

(a) **Honors Diploma:** Graduating seniors who achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.5 or higher shall be granted an Honors Diploma as prescribed by the Board and shall be designated in the graduation program.

**(9) Cum Laude Status:** Students must earn the following cumulative weighted grade point averages (not rounded) to qualify for cum laude status. High school seniors who become eligible for a cum laude status during the second semester of their senior year shall have their cum laude seals mailed to them.

Summa cum laude - GPA greater than 4.0

Magna cum laude - GPA greater than 3.8 but less than or equal to 4.0

Cum laude - GPA greater than or equal to 3.5 but less than or equal to 3.8

With distinction - GPA greater than or equal to 3.25 but less than 3.5

**(10) Grading In Secondary Physical Education:** The grades received by students enrolled in secondary physical education classes will be determined by "weighting" the various areas of the program, such as participation, skill and knowledge except as otherwise provided, each student will be graded in all three (3) of the following areas, and each student's term grade will be determined by the percentage allocated to each of the following areas:

(a) **Participation:** Fifty percent (50%) of the student's grade will be determined on the basis of his participation, including the following:

1. The main areas of consideration for the portion of the student's class participation will include the following:

- a. Daily, active participation;
- b. Effort;
- c. Attendance (as per Board policy);
- d. Suiting out (Proper dress for the course);
- e. Cooperation and safety;
- f. Attitude-sportsmanship, self-control, courtesy, respect.

2. Also to be considered in the area of participation, but with lesser emphasis, will be punctuality or tardiness.

**(b) Skill:** Twenty-five percent (25%) of the student's grade will be determined on the basis of the skill the student exhibits, including the following:

1. *Skill tests;*
2. *Skill improvement/achievement;*
3. *Teacher observation of the student's application of skill in games or practice situations;*
4. *Tournament play/position.*

**(c) Knowledge:** Twenty-five percent (25%) of the student's grade will be determined on the basis of the knowledge the student exhibits, including the following:

1. *Quizzes (5-10 items for a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes);*
2. *Written tests (ten (10) or more items for fifteen (15) minutes to the entire period);*
3. *Reports;*
4. *Study questions;*
5. *Notebook*

**(d) Personal Fitness Course:** As required by law, the Personal Fitness Course will be weighted sixty percent (60%) for participation and forty-percent (40%) for cognitive skills.

Statutory Authority: 1001.32(2), 1001.41, 1001.42, 1001.43 F.S.

Laws Implemented: 232.2463, 232.24521, 232.246(5)(c) F.S.; 6A-1.0955(3)(a)7 SBE Rules..

History: New 7/12/50; Amended 3/15/53, 7/13/55; Repealed 5/22/57; Repromulgated 7/28/65; Amended 11/17/71, 2/27/74, Revised and Amended 12/18/74; Amended 8/10/77, 6/28/78, 8/23/78, 6/11/80, 3/11/81, 10/14/81, 9/14/83, 2/8/84, 4/11/84, 9/26/84, 9/11/85, 12/18/85, 9/24/86, 2/11/87, 9/9/87, 9/23/87, 2/8/89, 8/9/89, 8/8/90 (Emergency), 9/12/90, 12/12/90, 7/28/93 (Emergency), 8/25/93, 2/14/95, 5/22/96, 12/17/96, 1/28/97, 9/9/97, 6/30/98, 1/12/99,7/27/99, 9/12/00, 1/16/01, 7/31/01, 12/19/01, 1/15/02, 11/12/02, 12/10/02, 12/9/03, 7/31/07, 4/15/08

Note: Former 6Gx52-8.28 (changed 6/30/98)

## **5.16 PROMOTION/RETENTION GUIDELINES FOR INTERMEDIATE PROGRAMS AND DISCIPLINARY PROGRAM STUDENTS (Grades 6-8)**

### **(1) Intermediate School Students**

All Intermediate School students will have intensive reading and mathematics instruction. Social studies, language arts and science will be taught through an integrated class. Students will be enrolled in six (6) classes daily. The students will have one elective class daily. Electives include physical education, health, art, music and vocational classes.

#### ***(a) Unit Requirements***

1. Each Intermediate School student will be enrolled in six (6) classes for sixth through eighth grade.
2. Of the 18 units in the Intermediate Schools, fifteen (15) will be basic unit courses: Three (3) units each of mathematics, language arts, science, reading and social studies.
3. Of the remaining three (3) units in the Intermediate program, a minimum of 2/3 units will be a physical education course, and 1/3 units will be a health education course, the remaining two (2) units will be elective related arts or vocational courses.
4. Seventh and eighth grade students in yearlong electives may waive 1/3 physical education unit.

#### ***(b) Promotion Within the Intermediate Schools***

1. To be promoted from grade to grade within the Intermediate program, students must demonstrate mastery of grade level expectations.
2. Students who do not meet grade level expectations will follow district retention guidelines.
3. Students enrolled in the Intermediate school who have previously been retained one or more times or are two (2) years overage for grade may be eligible to participate in an upgrade program.
4. If a student who is enrolled in the Intermediate upgrade program withdraws from the Intermediate School to enroll in a regular district elementary or middle school prior to completing the upgrade, the student will no longer maintain his upgrade status. The Intermediate principal will determine the grade level of students transferring out-of-district through the administrative promotion procedure.

#### ***(c) Promotion from Intermediate Schools to High School***

1. Promotion of Intermediate school students is based upon their (1) achieving minimum standards as identified in program objectives and (2) earning the required number of units of credit. In cases in which minimum standards have not been met, the decision to promote a student to the next grade will be made by the school's principal and staff, based upon supporting data.
2. Promotion from an Intermediate school to a high school is contingent upon a student's passing not fewer than fifteen (15) basic units and two (2) elective units.

### **(2) Promotion and Retention Guidelines for Disciplinary Program Students**

#### ***(a) Pupil Progression for Disciplinary Program Students***

1. Each Disciplinary Program middle school student will be enrolled in a minimum of 300 minutes of instruction per day.
2. Each student will be enrolled in courses appropriate to his grade level and progression in the behavior improvement system.