

III. PROMOTION AND PLACEMENT IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

A. Promotion, Placement, and Retention

To decide whether students have met the minimum level of achievement required in the M-DCPS CBC, which incorporates the SSS, and to receive credit toward promotion, teachers will consider all available data. This will include standardized test results, progress tests, daily assignments, teacher observation, and other objective information. The student's mastery of the content of the course in which the student is enrolled, as determined by the teacher, is a further condition for passing the course. There are mechanisms which make it possible for students to benefit from the advantages of a semester system without the disadvantages of major rescheduling at midyear or midyear promotions. (See Appendix E)

Teachers should observe continually and carefully assess each student's performance throughout the school year to determine if expected achievement levels are being met. Under no circumstances should student performance be judged solely on the basis of a test(s).

Students must meet School Board-approved and state-mandated course requirements. The Secondary School Redesign Act, also known as the "A++ Plan for Education," was passed by the Florida Legislature and signed into law by the Governor and became effective on July 1, 2006. In order to increase the rigor and relevance of the middle high school experience and to prepare middle school students for senior high school, the requirements contained in this legislation became effective with entering sixth graders in the 2006-2007 school year. (See pages 65-66 of this plan.)

Promotion for ELLs and ELLs with disabilities is to be based on the student's performance in the dominant language while the student is in the process of becoming independent in English. Retention of ELLs requires the review and recommendation of the ELL committee. Retention of a student with disabilities who is also ELL (ESE/ESOL) requires the review and recommendation of the IEP team.

Language Arts Through ESOL instructional time for ELLs must be equal to the time non-ELLs are required to participate in the regular English language arts/reading program. The courses M/J Language Arts (1,2,3) Through ESOL mirror the course descriptions for regular middle school Language Arts. In addition, all secondary ELLs, i.e., ESOL Levels I-IV are required to take a second period of Developmental Language Arts Through ESOL.

Students in grades 6 - 8 may retake failed courses by utilizing the following options:

- By means of middle school course recovery, students in grades 7 or 8 who have failed a language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies course are eligible to retake the course in a modified time frame. A student can be promoted to the next grade level, where, in addition to taking the current grade level language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies course, the student will take the failed course in a concentrated one semester format. The middle school course recovery option can be delivered in either a computer-based or traditional classroom instructional model or a combination thereof.
- Modified/flexible student schedules during the regular school day or placement in alternative models developed by schools to meet these criteria, e.g., Early Bird, Extended School Day, Saturday Academy.
- Students in Grades 6 and 7 who pass four (4) or five (5) courses at each grade level, including language arts or mathematics, are to be placed in the next grade level and double blocked in the regular school year or enrolled in alternative models.

Students who pass less than 4 courses are retained in the same grade, interventions are continued, and progress must be monitored as specified in the school-wide PMP. Prior to a recommendation for a second retention, a student is to be referred to a SST for consideration of placement in an alternative program or initiation of the comprehensive SST collaboration process.

B. Required Program of Study

1. Required Courses for Students in Middle School

It is required that all students in the middle school receive instruction in the state and district grade level objectives and competencies approved in mathematics, language arts/ESOL, social science, science, physical education, and career exploration as well as in a range of exploratory/elective areas, including but not limited to music, art, foreign language, and career and technical education.

For students who entered grade 6 in 2006-2007 and thereafter, promotion to senior high school requires that the student successfully complete the following academic courses:

- three middle school annual courses in English. These courses are to emphasize literature, composition, and technical text. (M/J Language Arts Through ESOL must be taken by ELLs. These courses meet the state requirement.)
- three middle school annual courses in mathematics.
- three middle school annual courses in science.
- three middle school annual courses in social science.

- one semester of physical education in grades 6, 7, and 8 beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. This requirement may be waived if a student is enrolled or required to enroll in a remedial course or if the student's parent indicates in writing a request that the student enroll in another course or that the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement. Parents are to be notified of the waiver options before scheduling the student to participate in physical education. Students may elect additional physical education courses.
- a middle school course which incorporates career and education planning, to be completed in 7th grade. This course will culminate in completion of an electronic Personalized Education Planner (ePEP), which must be signed by the student, the student's guidance counselor, and the student's parent. Students with disabilities can elect to complete an ePEP related to the requirements for a standard high school diploma or a special diploma plan, but they must complete the ePEP to be promoted.

For each year in which the student scores at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year.

For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year, which may be integrated into the student's required mathematics course.

GRADE	LANG. ARTS***	MATH	SOCIAL SCIENCE	SCIENCE	PHYS. ED.	ELECTIVES **	TOTALS
6	1	1	1	1	.5	1.5	6
7*	1	1	1	1	.5	1.5*	6
8	1	1	1	1	.5	1.5	6

* Students in grade 7 are required to enroll in a course listed in the *2009-2010 Course Code Directory*, which includes career and education planning.

** Students scoring at Level 1 and Level 2 on FCAT Reading will lose the opportunity to select an elective course and will be required to enroll in an intensive reading course. Students scoring at Level 1 and Level 2 on FCAT Math may also lose the opportunity to select an elective course.

*** M/J Language Arts Through ESOL as appropriate. All ELLs are required to take a second ESOL course. The M/J Developmental Language Through ESOL course will count as an elective credit.

2. Middle School Interdisciplinary Teams.

The interdisciplinary team is an essential middle school element. The functions of the interdisciplinary team shall include perpetuating academic excellence, exploring and infusing curriculum elements appropriate to the students on the team, fostering students' personal development, increasing basic skills mastery, infusing School-To-Career strategies throughout the curriculum, and promoting instruction in interdisciplinary units. Middle grades instructional units in mathematics, science, language arts, and social science may be provided through an interdisciplinary team design which ensures integration of the core curriculum and which reflects the CBC objectives and competencies.

3. Language Arts/Reading/Mathematics Instruction.

Developmental instruction in reading/mathematics may be required during grade 6 when student performance in grade 5 indicates a need for strengthening. These courses will be in addition to the regular language arts/mathematics courses and may be offered as electives. Students scoring at Levels 1 and 2 on the most recent administration of FCAT reading are to be enrolled in M/J Intensive Reading in addition to their required M/J Language Arts course in grades 6, 7, and 8. The district's K-12 CRRP requires each school to conduct a screening and diagnostic process to identify appropriate placement of Level 1 and Level 2 students in reading classes to be completed prior to the end of the school year. The K-12 CRRP also requires a daily double literacy block for all Level 1 or 2 FCAT reading students who have reading deficiencies in decoding and fluency (Intensive Reading Plus). All FCAT Level 1 and 2 students are required to be enrolled in an Intensive Reading or Intensive Reading Plus course with the exception of ELLs who are required to enroll in a M/J Developmental Language Arts Through ESOL course.

Students requiring further strengthening in mathematics should take the M/J Intensive Mathematics.

Reading strategies in the content areas are to be provided to students in all grades in the middle schools. These strategies should be in addition to those taught during language arts classes.

4. Required Topics of Study for Middle Grades.

The following topics are specifically required by Florida statutes, the Florida Board of Education, or the School Board, and they are embedded within various authorized middle school courses:

- Human Growth and Development (Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Substance Abuse Education (Science, grades 6,7, and 8)
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (including HIV/AIDS Education) (Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Economic Education (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Florida History, Government, and Geography (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- African American History (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Character Education (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Hispanic contributions to the United States (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Women's contributions to the United States (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- History of the Holocaust (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Multicultural Education (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- Sacrifices made by veterans in protecting democratic values (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- History and content of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution (Social Science, grades 6, 7, and 8)
- History of the U.S., including the period of discovery, early colonies, the War for Independence, the Civil War, the expansion of the U.S. to its present boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights movement to the present (Social Science, grade 8)

Students should also receive instruction in computer literacy. Instruction should be provided in critical thinking skills and other related skills in the context of mathematics, language arts/reading, science, social science, and elective courses.

5. Elective Courses.

For ELLs only one elective course is allowed since the second elective is the required M/J Developmental Language Arts through ESOL.

6. Establishment of Increased Requirements.

Individual schools may establish requirements greater than prescribed district requirements, subject to the approval of the Regional Superintendent and the Superintendent of Schools, or designee. An increase in academic requirements shall not apply to students in grades 6-8 at the time of the increase. In each instance, the school shall establish school-level procedures for waiving such requirements for students with a demonstrated educational need.

7. Senior High School Credit(s) for Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 may enroll in selected senior high school courses for the purposes of pursuing a more challenging program of study. Such courses are considered when computing grade point averages and rank in class (School Board Rule 6Gx13-5B-1.061). Up to six credits may be earned (with parental permission) in grades 6, 7, and/or 8, for courses taken prior to the 2007-2008 school year which may be applied toward the total credits needed for graduation, college admission, or for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements. During the time students are enrolled in designated high school courses, they are considered to be grade 9 students for those class periods. Students and their parents will be offered an opportunity in the fall of the student's freshman year to restrict the inclusion of credits earned in this way from appearing on the high school transcript. Factors to be considered in removing the courses from the high school record include the impact on the student's GPA and subsequent rank in class, the possible lack of recognition by the National Athletic Association (NCAA) for senior high school courses taken in a grade below grade 9, and the benefit of retaking a course in which skills have not been mastered. Courses taken will remain a part of a student's middle school record. Approval from the principal is required when transferring more than six credits. Credit may be earned in the courses listed below:

Algebra I Honors*
Geometry Honors*
Earth/Space Science Honors*®
Biology Honors*®
Computer Programming I & above*
Foreign Language I & above*
Spanish for Spanish Speakers I & above
Haitian Creole for Haitian Creole Speakers I & above
Language & Literature for International Studies 1, 2, 3, & 4 (French, German, Spanish)

- * Courses offered by The Florida Virtual School/Miami-Dade Virtual School. (See Appendix K for information concerning The Florida Virtual School/Miami-Dade Virtual School.)
- ⊗ Must meet science lab requirement

8. Mathematics and Science

Students should be encouraged to enroll in advanced/honors mathematics and science courses whenever appropriate. Students should begin this sequence early in order to follow a path leading to the successful completion of four credits of high school mathematics and a minimum of three credits of high school science.

Students who encounter difficulties in mathematics and science courses should be provided assistance through peer tutoring, teacher tutoring, before/after school programs, online tutorial programs, and/or Saturday school, where appropriate.

C. Student Performance Standards

The district-established student performance standards and specified performance levels as measured by district and state assessments are listed below. Students must meet at least one (1) or more of the district indicators in each subject and grade, or they must meet the specified level of performance on the state assessments.

Reading Grades 6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade "C" or better in the core Language Arts/English/ESOL course or • FCAT SSS Reading Achievement Level 2.
Writing Grade 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCAT Writing score of 3.0 or higher (grade 8 only).
Mathematics Grades 6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade "C" or better in the core mathematics course or • FCAT SSS Mathematics Achievement Level 2 or higher (grades 6-8).
Science Grade 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCAT SSS Science Achievement Level 2 or higher (grade 8 only).

D. Summary - Promotion and Placement Requirements in the Middle School

END OF GRADE	COURSES PASSED	STATUS
6	All Courses Passed	Promoted to Grade 7 Regular 7 th grade student
6	4-5 Courses Passed Must pass language arts* or mathematics and at least 3 other courses	7th Grade Student Placed in grade 7 and scheduled to repeat courses not passed as appropriate
6	Less than 4 Courses Passed in Grade 6	Retained 6th Grade Student
7	12 Cumulative Courses Passed 6 courses passed in grade 6 and 6 courses passed in grade 7	Promoted to Grade 8 Regular 8 th grade student
7	8-12 Cumulative Courses Passed 4 courses passed in grade 6 including language arts*, mathematics, science, and social science 4-5 courses passed in grade 7 including 7 th grade language arts* or mathematics, science or social science, and/or a course which incorporates career and education planning	8th Grade Student Placed in grade 8 and scheduled to repeat courses not passed as appropriate
7	7-8 Cumulative Courses Passed	Retained 7th Grade Student
8	15-18 Cumulative Courses Passed Must pass 3 courses each in language arts*, mathematics, science, and social science, including a course which incorporates career and education planning, and 3 additional courses The student must also have completed his/her ePEP.	Promoted to Grade 9
8	14 or Fewer Courses Passed	Retained 8th Grade Student

* M/J Language Arts Through ESOL as appropriate

E. High School Accelerated Graduation Options

Each school shall provide each student in grades 6 through 8 and their parents with information concerning the three-year and four-year high school graduation options described on pages 77-82 so that students and their parents may select the high school graduation option that best fits their needs in developing a postsecondary education or career plan.