

By Representative Stabins

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; amending s.  
3           232.246, F.S., relating to general requirements  
4           for high school graduation; authorizing a  
5           district school board to apply for a reduction  
6           or waiver of elective credit requirements;  
7           providing for approval by the State Board of  
8           Education; providing an effective date.

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10   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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12           Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section  
13   232.246, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

14           232.246 General requirements for high school  
15   graduation.--

16           (1) Graduation requires successful completion of  
17   either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12  
18   or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits  
19   shall be distributed as follows:

20           (a) Four credits in English, with major concentration  
21   in composition and literature.

22           (b) Three credits in mathematics. Effective for  
23   students entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year  
24   and thereafter, one of these credits must be Algebra I, a  
25   series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level  
26   mathematics course.

27           (c) Three credits in science, two of which must have a  
28   laboratory component. The State Board of Education may grant  
29   an annual waiver of the laboratory requirement to a school  
30   district that certifies that its laboratory facilities are  
31   inadequate, provided the district submits a capital outlay

1 plan to provide adequate facilities and makes the funding of  
2 this plan a priority of the school board.

3 (d) One credit in American history.

4 (e) One credit in world history, including a  
5 comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of  
6 all major political systems.

7 (f) One-half credit in economics, including a  
8 comparative study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of  
9 all major economic systems. The Florida Council on Economic  
10 Education shall provide technical assistance to the department  
11 and local school boards in developing curriculum materials for  
12 the study of economics.

13 (g) One-half credit in American government, including  
14 study of the Constitution of the United States. For students  
15 entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and  
16 thereafter, the study of Florida government, including study  
17 of the State Constitution, the three branches of state  
18 government, and municipal and county government, shall be  
19 included as part of the required study of American government.

20 (h)1. One credit in practical arts career education or  
21 exploratory career education. Any vocational course as  
22 defined in s. 228.041(22) may be taken to satisfy the high  
23 school graduation requirement for one credit in practical arts  
24 or exploratory career education provided in this subparagraph;

25 2. One credit in performing fine arts to be selected  
26 from music, dance, drama, painting, or sculpture. A course in  
27 any art form, in addition to painting or sculpture, that  
28 requires manual dexterity, or a course in speech and debate,  
29 may be taken to satisfy the high school graduation requirement  
30 for one credit in performing arts pursuant to this  
31 subparagraph; or

1           3. One-half credit each in practical arts career  
2 education or exploratory career education and performing fine  
3 arts, as defined in this paragraph.

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5 Such credit for practical arts career education or exploratory  
6 career education or for performing fine arts shall be made  
7 available in the 9th grade, and students shall be scheduled  
8 into a 9th grade course as a priority.

9           (i) One-half credit in life management skills to  
10 include consumer education, positive emotional development,  
11 nutrition, prevention of human immunodeficiency virus  
12 infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome and other  
13 sexually transmissible diseases, benefits of sexual abstinence  
14 and consequences of teenage pregnancy, information and  
15 instruction on breast cancer detection and breast  
16 self-examination, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, drug  
17 education, and the hazards of smoking. Such credit shall be  
18 given for a course to be taken by all students in either the  
19 9th or 10th grade.

20           (j) One-half credit in physical education to include  
21 assessment, improvement, and maintenance of personal fitness.  
22 Participation in an interscholastic sport, whether at the  
23 freshman, junior varsity, or varsity level, for a full season,  
24 shall satisfy the one-half credit requirement in physical  
25 education.

26           (k) Nine elective credits.

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28 School boards may award a maximum of one-half credit in social  
29 studies and one-half elective credit for student completion of  
30 nonpaid voluntary community or school service work. Students  
31 choosing this option must complete a minimum of 75 hours of

1 service in order to earn the one-half credit in either  
2 category of instruction. Credit may not be earned for service  
3 provided as a result of court action. School boards that  
4 approve the award of credit for student volunteer service  
5 shall develop guidelines regarding the award of the credit,  
6 and school principals are responsible for approving specific  
7 volunteer activities. A course designated in the Course Code  
8 Directory as grade 9 through grade 12 which is taken below the  
9 9th grade may be used to satisfy high school graduation  
10 requirements or Florida Academic Scholar's Certificate Program  
11 requirements as specified in a district's pupil progression  
12 plan.

13 (4)

14 (c)1. District school boards are authorized and  
15 encouraged to establish requirements for high school  
16 graduation in excess of the minimum requirements; however, an  
17 increase in academic credit or minimum grade point average  
18 requirements shall not apply to those students enrolled in  
19 grades 9 through 12 at the time the district school board  
20 increases the requirements.

21 2. For the purpose of reducing school overcrowding,  
22 resolving a financial crisis, or adopting a change in academic  
23 focus, a district school board may apply to the State Board of  
24 Education for a reduction or waiver of the elective credit  
25 requirements for high school graduation specified in paragraph  
26 (1)(k). State board approval shall be based on school district  
27 need and soundness of the school district plan for  
28 modification of requirements for high school graduation.

29 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1 of the  
30 year in which enacted.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Authorizes a district school board to apply to the State Board of Education for a reduction or waiver of elective credit requirements for high school graduation. Provides for approval based on school district need and soundness of the school district plan for modification of high school graduation credit requirements.