

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to requirements for a standard high
3 school diploma; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; providing
4 that students with disabilities may participate in the
5 Special Olympics to meet the physical education
6 requirement for a standard high school diploma;
7 providing an effective date.
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9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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11 **Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (8) of section**
12 **1003.4282, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

13 1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school
14 diploma.—

15 (8) STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.—Beginning with students
16 entering grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year, this subsection
17 applies to a student with a disability.

18 (b) The following options, in addition to the other
19 options specified in this section, may be used to satisfy the
20 standard high school diploma requirements, as specified in the
21 student's individual education plan:

22 1. For a student with a disability for whom the IEP team
23 has determined that the Florida Alternate Assessment is the most
24 appropriate measure of the student's skills:

25 a. A combination of course substitutions, assessments,

26 industry certifications, other acceleration options, or
27 occupational completion points appropriate to the student's
28 unique skills and abilities that meet the criteria established
29 by State Board of Education rule.

30 b. A portfolio of quantifiable evidence that documents a
31 student's mastery of academic standards through rigorous metrics
32 established by State Board of Education rule. A portfolio may
33 include, but is not limited to, documentation of work
34 experience, internships, community service, and postsecondary
35 credit.

36 2. A student with a disability may participate in the
37 Special Olympics as a course substitution for the physical
38 education requirement under paragraph (3)(f). A student who
39 chooses this option must participate in the Special Olympics for
40 one school year, as determined by the student's IEP team.

41 3. For a student with a disability for whom the IEP team
42 has determined that mastery of academic and employment
43 competencies is the most appropriate way for a student to
44 demonstrate his or her skills:

45 a. Documented completion of the minimum high school
46 graduation requirements, including the number of course credits
47 prescribed by rules of the State Board of Education.

48 b. Documented achievement of all annual goals and short-
49 term objectives for academic and employment competencies,
50 industry certifications, and occupational completion points

51 specified in the student's transition plan. The documentation
52 must be verified by the IEP team.

53 c. Documented successful employment for the number of
54 hours per week specified in the student's transition plan, for
55 the equivalent of 1 semester, and payment of a minimum wage in
56 compliance with the requirements of the federal Fair Labor
57 Standards Act.

58 d. Documented mastery of the academic and employment
59 competencies, industry certifications, and occupational
60 completion points specified in the student's transition plan.
61 The documentation must be verified by the IEP team, the
62 employer, and the teacher. The transition plan must be developed
63 and signed by the student, parent, teacher, and employer before
64 placement in employment and must identify the following:

65 (I) The expected academic and employment competencies,
66 industry certifications, and occupational completion points;

67 (II) The criteria for determining and certifying mastery
68 of the competencies;

69 (III) The work schedule and the minimum number of hours to
70 be worked per week; and

71 (IV) A description of the supervision to be provided by
72 the school district.

73 ~~4.3.~~ Any change to the high school graduation option
74 specified in the student's IEP must be approved by the parent
75 and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an

76 independent reviewer selected by the parent as provided in s.
77 1003.572.

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79 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules under ss.
80 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this subsection, including
81 rules that establish the minimum requirements for students
82 described in this subsection to earn a standard high school
83 diploma. The State Board of Education shall adopt emergency
84 rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54.

85 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.