

CS/HB 453

2026

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to requirements for a standard high school diploma; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; providing that completion of 2 years of marching band satisfies both the physical education and performing arts requirements for a standard high school diploma; providing that students with disabilities may participate in the Special Olympics to meet the physical education requirement for a standard high school diploma; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (f) of subsection (3) and paragraph (b) of subsection (8) of section 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

(3) STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; COURSE AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(f) One credit in physical education.—Physical education must include the integration of health. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education. A district school board may not require that

26 the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th
27 grade year. Completion of 2 years of marching band shall satisfy
28 the one-credit requirement in physical education and ~~or~~ the one-
29 credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be
30 used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the
31 requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual
32 education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Completion of one semester
33 with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, in a
34 physical activity class that requires participation in marching
35 band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a dance
36 class shall satisfy one-half credit in physical education or
37 one-half credit in performing arts. This credit may not be used
38 to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement
39 for adaptive physical education under an IEP or 504 plan.
40 Completion of 2 years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps
41 (R.O.T.C.) class, a significant component of which is drills,
42 shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education
43 and the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit
44 may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or
45 the requirement for adaptive physical education under an IEP or
46 504 plan.

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

50 (b) The following options, in addition to the other

51 options specified in this section, may be used to satisfy the
52 standard high school diploma requirements, as specified in the
53 student's individual education plan:

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

57 a. A combination of course substitutions, assessments,
58 industry certifications, other acceleration options, or
59 occupational completion points appropriate to the student's
60 unique skills and abilities that meet the criteria established
61 by State Board of Education rule.

62 b. A portfolio of quantifiable evidence that documents a
63 student's mastery of academic standards through rigorous metrics
64 established by State Board of Education rule. A portfolio may
65 include, but is not limited to, documentation of work
66 experience, internships, community service, and postsecondary
67 credit.

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

73 3. For a student with a disability for whom the IEP team
74 has determined that mastery of academic and employment
75 competencies is the most appropriate way for a student to

76 demonstrate his or her skills:

77 a. Documented completion of the minimum high school
78 graduation requirements, including the number of course credits
79 prescribed by rules of the State Board of Education.

80 b. Documented achievement of all annual goals and short-
81 term objectives for academic and employment competencies,
82 industry certifications, and occupational completion points
83 specified in the student's transition plan. The documentation
84 must be verified by the IEP team.

85 c. Documented successful employment for the number of
86 hours per week specified in the student's transition plan, for
87 the equivalent of 1 semester, and payment of a minimum wage in
88 compliance with the requirements of the federal Fair Labor
89 Standards Act.

90 d. Documented mastery of the academic and employment
91 competencies, industry certifications, and occupational
92 completion points specified in the student's transition plan.
93 The documentation must be verified by the IEP team, the
94 employer, and the teacher. The transition plan must be developed
95 and signed by the student, parent, teacher, and employer before
96 placement in employment and must identify the following:

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

99 (II) The criteria for determining and certifying mastery
100 of the competencies;

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

103 (IV) A description of the supervision to be provided by
104 the school district.

105 4.3. Any change to the high school graduation option
106 specified in the student's IEP must be approved by the parent
107 and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an
108 independent reviewer selected by the parent as provided in s.
109 1003.572.

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111 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules under ss.
112 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this subsection, including
113 rules that establish the minimum requirements for students
114 described in this subsection to earn a standard high school
115 diploma. The State Board of Education shall adopt emergency
116 rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54.

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