

# The School District of Gulf County

## **Parent Guide**

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# How to Use This Guide

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BY SUPERINTENDENT TIM WILDER

Your child's education is a responsibility shared by the district and family during the child's entire educational experience. A first step, toward ensuring that those of us who have children in school will know the basics of what it takes for our students to progress from grade to grade and earn a high school diploma, is to be informed and to monitor the child's progress.

This guide is based on the "New Generation Sunshine State Standards," the "Grade Level Expectations," and the "Student Progression Plan" which govern grades, tests, attendance, courses, how struggling students receive assistance, and how students who excel are challenged.

The guide defines terms educators use, gives examples of skills and subjects your child will be taught in each grade, explains what will happen if your child falls behind and what help is offered, and suggestions as to what, we as parents, can do at home.

Nothing we write can substitute for the best way to find out what's happening with your child's education:

- Talk to your child about school every day.
- Dump out the book bag and look at what he/she is learning.
- Go over school work every day.
- Meet with the teacher face-to-face.
- Attend school functions that allow you to learn about the school.
- Ask questions.
- Meet with the principal.
- Stay involved.

This guide also gives advice about whom to call if you have more questions.

We hope this guide will be helpful. Please feel free to contact my office about this guide or any questions concerning our schools.

Tim Wilder  
150 Middle School Road  
Port St. Joe, FL 32456

SUPERINTENDENT  
850-229-8256 ext. 106

BUSINESS SERVICES & POLICIES  
850-229-8256 ext. 104

INSTRUCTION & PROGRESSION  
850-229-6940 ext. 120

TRANSPORTATION  
850-227-1744

ESE & PRE-K PROGRAMS  
850-229-6940 ext. 126

ASSESSMENT  
850-229-6940 ext. 134

**PROGRESS MONITORING PLAN:**

This is a plan that parents and teachers work together on to develop when a child is having trouble keeping up with the skills required in the child's current grade. This plan is used to measure progress.

**NEXT GENERATION SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS:**

In Florida, these standards (SSS) are what your child is expected to know at each grade level. Teachers are expected to teach this material. Report card grades are based on these standards. They are developed by the state and measured by a test called the FCAT which is given to every public school student in grades 3 through 11.

**FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT TEST:**

Also known as the FCAT, this is a series of tests given during a week in March to every public school student in Florida who is in grade 3 through 11. During four days of testing, students actually take two different types of tests, each with a math, a reading and science section.

**STANFORD 10 ACHIEVEMENT TEST (SAT 10):**

The SAT 10 is a nationally normed test that is given to students in grades K-2 and measures student achievement in reading and math.

**EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:**

Through this program, which is also known as ESE, students with disabilities receive an education designed through an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) to meet their specific needs. ESE students seeking regular diplomas take the same tests and are graded on the same scale as other students.

**STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN (SPP):**

The SPP is a long technical document detailing federal, state, and local rules concerning attendance, course of study, report cards, promotion and retention, testing, grading, academic standards, transfers, credits, honors, diplomas, scholarships, accelerated learning, and related topics. It is reviewed annually by the School Board. The full plan is available in hard copy at every school and on the district website.

**RETENTION:**

This refers to students who do not progress to the next grade level at the end of the year due to poor academic performance.

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

These are school sanctioned activities like clubs or athletic teams that happen either before or after school.

**PROFICIENCY:**

The student has the skills, knowledge, and motivation to successfully master academic requirements.

**DEFICIENCY:**

The student is unable to master academic requirements.

## FOR A QUICK ANSWER CALL:

### Prekindergarten Programs

Port St. Joe – 850-227-1221

Wewahitchka – 850-639-2476

District Coordinator – 850-229-6940

### Health Exams & Immunizations

Gulf County Health Department

Port St. Joe - 850-227-1276

Wewahitchka - 850-639-2644

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Although most students start school when they enter kindergarten, Gulf County does have several prekindergarten programs for students as young as age 3. In order to enter kindergarten, a child must have turned 5 on or before September 1. Enrolling in school for the first time is easy. All you need is proof of your child's age, a medical examination, contact information in case of emergency, and your address. In certain grades, including kindergarten, you will also have to provide documents showing that your child's immunizations are up to date. By law, children up to age 16 must come to school and parents may be prosecuted if children don't attend. Your child can't succeed in school if attendance isn't regular. Too many absences could affect your child's academic performance and prevent your child from moving on to the next grade.

## Immunizations

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Students must have all required immunizations unless granted a waiver for religious reasons as allowed by state statute.

Meningococcal Vaccine- Be aware that there is vaccine recommended for students age 2-10 years (MPSV4) and for children ages 11-18 years of age (MCV4) – and will help prevent bacterial meningitis, an infection of fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. For further information go to [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

## Parents Right to Know

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At the beginning of each school year, a local educational agency that receives funds under Title I shall notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving funds under this part that the parents may request, and the agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessional and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition to the information that parents may request under subparagraph (A), a school that receives funds under this part shall provide to each individual parent.

- Information on the level of achievement of the parent’s child in each of the State academic assessments as required under this part; and
- Timely notice that the parent’s child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

To request this information, please contact the Principal.

## **Next Generation Sunshine State Standards**

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### **WHAT TEACHING, GRADES, AND TESTS ARE BASED ON**

You may have heard about the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in media stories about education or from teachers and officials at your child’s school. These standards are developed and revised by the state, cover every academic subject, and are followed by every public school in Florida. They state what your child is expected to know at different grade levels. Classroom instruction in every subject is based on these standards and teachers’ grades show how well students are performing according to the standards.

Each spring standardized tests are given in Gulf County public schools to measure how well students have learned the SSS. These tests, which measure writing, reading, math and science achievement, are often referred to as the FCAT, or Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test. Your child’s performance on this test can affect whether or not he/she moves on to the next grade. All students who want to earn a standard high school diploma must be able to pass the FCAT. Though public schools are sometimes criticized for “teaching” the FCAT, in reality teachers are teaching the standards that are measured by these tests. These are skills your child will use throughout life. If you’d like to read these standards for yourself, go to [www.fldoe.org](http://www.fldoe.org) and click on Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

### **WHY STUDENTS ARE TESTED, WHAT THE RESULTS MEAN**

Throughout your child’s school years, standardized tests will be taken, including the FCAT in grades 3-11. Students in K-2 take the Stanford 10, a norm referenced test. Standardized tests show how your child is doing compared to others in our state and track progress over time. Your child’s teacher has all the testing records for your child and uses them to see if there’s a problem that requires additional help or a different way of teaching. Tests also help teachers identify students’ strengths in order to provide more challenging academic opportunities. Schools use testing results to develop school-wide and individual plans for improving academic performance. All testing results are available to parents.

- Students’ FCAT Scores are assigned a level:

Level 5 Highest level that can be achieved and indicates that the student can handle the most challenging material.

Level 4 Shows performance above grade level.

Level 3 Indicates a student is learning on grade level.

Level 2 Yellow flag that a student needs to work harder and receive extra help at home and at school.

Level 1 Red flag that the child is performing far below grade level and may not be promoted to the next grade.

The FCAT also includes a writing test in grades 4, 8, and 10, which is given in February of each year. This test requires students to write about an assigned topic. Students are expected to score 4.0 or better.

- Norm-referenced tests compare your child to others across the nation. Results are commonly reported as a percentile. If a student scores at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile on a norm-referenced test, it means that he did better than 75 percent of the students in the same grade level taking the same test. It does not mean that he answered 75 percent of the questions correctly.

## TESTS YOUR CHILD WILL TAKE

You have heard a lot about the FCAT and the other “standardized” tests your child has to take at school. You may wonder why so much attention is being paid to these tests. The FCAT is only one of many standardized tests that your child will take during their school years. These tests are given for a variety of reasons. They help collect information on individual students as well as on entire schools. Here is a list and description of the standardized tests given to students in all Gulf County Schools between kindergarten and fifth grade.

NAME OF TEST	GRADE	PURPOSE OF TEST
FAIR:	K-10	This test helps teachers select the best reading instruction strategies for students.
SAT 10: Stanford Achievement Test	K-2	To test students in reading and math. This test compares scores of Gulf County students with those of other students in the United States.
FCAT: Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test	3-10	The FCAT consists of a number of tests given to different grades. These test on reading, mathematics, science and writing. The FCAT measures how well students are meeting the Florida Sunshine State Standards.

## HOW FCAT AFFECTS PROMOTION / RETENTION

Third grade students who score Level 1 on the FCAT must be retained and must attend a Summer Reading Camp. After completing the reading camp and if certain criteria are met, the student may be promoted for good cause. FCAT and Stanford 10 are just part of the promotion/retention at other grades.

## WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD BE LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Every child in the State of Florida should be learning the same things in the same grades. Here are some of the important skills outlined in the Florida Sunshine State Standards that your child should be learning at school between kindergarten and grade five.

- Writes stories, poems, letters and simple reports.
- Edit own writing, correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Read books, magazines and stories and be able to explain what they have read.
- Listen to and understand stories, songs, and poems.
- Learn to read a map, graph, and table.
- Do hands-on projects in school such as creating simple models, charts, books, and science experiments.
- Learn to apply math to the real world.
- Study about other countries.
- Study the history of Florida and the United States.
- Understanding the basic structure of the U.S. Government.
- Use a computer for simple writing assignments, and to supplement reading, math and science skills.

## HOW TO FIND OUT IF YOUR CHILD IS LEARNING THESE THINGS

- Pay attention to what your child is learning in school. Look regularly at your child's homework assignments and samples of work they bring home. Ask your child's teacher for a copy of the "syllabus" or outline of the course of study for the year or grading period. Look at the school books that your child brings home. When you visit your child's school, look at the students' work on the classroom walls.
- You can also look at the list of Sunshine State Standards which describe exactly what your child should be learning at each grade level. The standards can be viewed at the Florida Department of Education web site at [www.fldoe.org](http://www.fldoe.org) Select the "Site Index" and then "Curriculum."
- If you have questions or concerns about what your child is learning in class, make an appointment to meet the teacher. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you think your child is not being taught what is listed in the Florida Sunshine State Standards for the his/her grade.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Physical education may be waived if the student needs intensive remediation or if the parent requests a waiver because of a schedule conflict with a desired elective.

# Middle School Curriculum

## COURSES YOUR CHILD WILL TAKE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

During the middle school years of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, students have to complete specific courses in order to be promoted to high school. These courses include three levels each of math, language arts, reading, science, physical education and social studies. Students must earn 12

credits in the core courses of English, math, science and social studies to meet state requirements for promotion. The district includes reading as a requirement. Students also take electives. Students who are retained may take credit recovery courses in order to be promoted. Students who are in danger of retention may take basic skills intensive courses instead of electives. Parents may request a P.E. waiver if there is a schedule conflict with a desired elective such as band. Certain immunizations are required for students depending on the grade they are entering. Please make sure your child's immunizations are up to date and that the school has a copy of the record.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR CHILD FALLS BEHIND**

If your child is struggling to perform at grade level in a particular subject or fails a course, you will receive a letter asking you to come in for a conference. At that time, progress monitoring will be discussed with the parent and will outline what type of extra help your child needs and how he will get it. We will also discuss what your child will need to be able to do academically in order to be on par with his grade level. Parents of students who are still struggling at the end of the second nine weeks will receive a letter notifying them of the possibility that their children may be retained at the end of the school year. Parents who have been closely following their student's academic progress will already be communicating regularly with teachers and are unlikely to be surprised. Middle schools students who participate in extracurricular activities must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average and pass five subjects for the last grading period.

## **HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD DO BETTER**

- Require your child to read something of personal interest for 30 minutes each day.
- Involve your child in activities involving measurement where directions must be read and followed: building, assembling items, and converting measurements.
- Provide a place and time for your child to study everyday.
- Link privileges to performance.
- Poor performance at middle school is sometimes caused by poor attendance. If grades or test scores begin to dip, stay in close touch with school officials regarding tardiness or truancy.
- Attend the parent nights for your child's grade level. Meet the teachers, ask them for an outline of what will be covered in each course.
- Dump out the backpack every day to see what the school is sending home.
- Ask to see your child's Planner, a tool for keeping track of assignments.
- Attend meetings of the School Advisory Council where parents and teachers plan ways to improve student performance.

## **High School Curriculum**

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If your child has been educated in a Florida public school, he/she has probably taken the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test every spring since the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. All students, including ESE students, must pass the reading and math portions of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade FCAT in order to be eligible to receive a standard high school diploma. Unless the Department of Education or the legislature changes the criteria, students must get a 300 in reading and a 300 in math in order to pass the test. Those who don't pass the 10<sup>th</sup> grade FCAT the first time can retake it four more times while in high school. **26 Credits are Required by the District.**

# High School Credits \*State Requirement 24 Credits

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SUBJECT AREA	GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS OF 26-CREDIT PROGRAM (GCSB)	GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS OF THREE-YEAR 18-CREDIT COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM	GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS OF THREE-YEAR, 18-CREDIT CAREER PREPARATORY PROGRAM
<b>ENGLISH</b>	4 credits, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature	4 credits, with major concentration in composition and literature	4 credits, with major concentration in composition and literature
<b>MATHEMATICS</b>	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra I or its equivalent and one of which must be in geometry or its equivalent, or a higher-level mathematics course	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra I or its equivalent and one of which must be in geometry or its equivalent, or a higher-level mathematics from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission (SUS)	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra I or its equivalent and one of which must be in geometry or its equivalent, or a higher-level mathematics from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission (SUS)
<b>SCIENCE</b>	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component	3 credits in science, two of which must have a laboratory component
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	1 credit world history 1 credit United States history .5 credit United States government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit United States history .5 credit United States government .5 credit economics	1 credit world history 1 credit United States history .5 credit United States government .5 credit economics
<b>FOREIGN LANGUAGE</b>	Not required for high school graduation, but required for admission into state universities	2 credits in the same language or demonstrated proficiency in a second language	Not required
<b>FINE ARTS OR PERFORMING ARTS, SPEECH, DEBATE, OR PRACTICAL ARTS</b>	1 credit in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or practical arts (eligible courses specified in Course Code Directory)	Not required	Not required
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	1 credit in physical education to include the integration of health	Not required	Not required
<b>ELECTIVES</b>	10 credits	2 credits	3 credits in single vocational / career education program and 1 elective credit
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26 CREDITS</b>	<b>18 CREDITS</b>	<b>18 CREDITS</b>
<b>STATE ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS</b>	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing score the FCAT (ACT or SAT [Scholastic Aptitude Test])	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing score the FCAT (ACT or SAT [Scholastic Aptitude Test])	Passing scores on the Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Reading or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with the passing score the FCAT (ACT or SAT [Scholastic Aptitude Test])
<b>GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) REQUIREMENTS</b>	Cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale	Cumulative GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits	Cumulative weighted GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in required courses and weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points or its equivalent in each of the 18 required credits

## STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to enter one of Florida's public universities, a student must:

- Meet the following minimum requirements:
  - High school graduation with a standard diploma
  - Grade point average in high school academic core courses (minimum 2.5 GPA required)
  - Admissions test scores (minimum requirements)
    - SAT: Reading 460/Math 460/Writing 440
    - ACT: Reading 19/Math 19/English/Writing 18

**OR**

- Qualify for the Talented 20 program

**OR**

- Be selected through a "student profile assessment" that considers other special factors (e.g., special talents)

**The 18 high school credits required for SUS admission are:**

- 4 English (3 with substantial writing)
- 4 mathematics (Algebra I level and above)
- 3 natural science (2 with lab component)
- 3 social science
- 2 foreign language (in the same language)
- 2 approved electives (in certain combinations)

## THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to enter an associate degree program at one of Florida's colleges, a student must:

- Graduate with a standard high school diploma
- OR**
- Earn a high school equivalency diploma
- OR**
- Have previously demonstrated competency in college credit postsecondary coursework

**OR**

- Earn a College Placement Test (CPT) eligible Certificate of Completion

**AND**

- Demonstrate achievement of college-level communication and computation skills (per standardized test scores to enroll in credit-bearing education courses)

**The 18 high school credits recommended for admission to the Florida college system are:**

- 4 English (3 with substantial writing)
- 4 mathematics (Algebra I level and above)
- 3 natural science (2 with lab component)
- 3 social science
- 2 foreign language (in the same language)
- 2 approved electives (in certain combinations)

For those students interested in non-degree certificate program or baccalaureate degree programs, please see an admissions counselor as requirements may vary.

## BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS FOR 2014 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

These are subject to change with each legislative session.

- 16 Credits in college preparatory courses in the following areas:
  - 4 English (3 with substantial writing)
  - 4 mathematics (Algebra I level and above)
  - 3 natural science
  - 3 social science
  - 2 foreign language (sequential, in the same language)
- Up to two additional credits from courses in the academic areas listed above and/or AP, IB, AICE fine arts courses to raise the GPA
- A 3.5 weighted GPA in the above courses, 75 hours community services, and a best composite score of 1290 on the SAT Reasoning Test (based on the combined Critical Reading and Math sections only) or 29 on the ACT (excluding the writing section) to be a Florida Academic Scholar (FAS)
- A 3.0 weighted GPA in the above courses and a minimum score of 1050 on the SAT or 23 on the ACT to be a Florida Medallion Scholar (FMS)

For other ways to qualify for Bright Futures, visit

<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf>

## FLORIDA GOLD SEAL VOCATIONAL SCHOLARS AWARD (GSV)

- 16 credits in the following areas:
  - 4 English
  - 4 mathematics (including 1.0 Algebra I equivalent or higher geometry)
  - 3 natural science
  - 3 social science (United States history, world history, United States government, and economics)
  - 1 fine, OR 1 identified practical art, OR .5 credit in each
  - 1 physical education to include the integration of health
- A 3.0 weighted GPA in the core credits required for graduation\*
- 3 career and technical education credits in one vocational program taken over at least 2 academic years with an unweighted 3.5 GPA in those courses
- A minimum section score listed below on *each* section of *either* the CPT, SAT, or ACT (*sections of different test types may not be combined*)
  - CPT: Reading 83/Sentence Skills 83/Algebra 72
  - SAT: Reading 440/Math 440
  - ACT: English 17/Reading 18/Math 19

\*College or career preparatory diplomas may be used to qualify for GSV, with appropriate career and technical education electives.

<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/gsvrequire.htm>

### HOW TO KNOW IF YOUR CHILD MAY BE RETAINED AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

If your child scores below Level 3 or below 30 percentile or if your child's teacher believes that your child is falling behind and is in danger of being retained, you will be notified in writing by a letter asking you to sign it and send it back. This letter will ask you to call and set up a conference at a time convenient to you. At this time, school officials and parents will work together to develop strategies that address where your child is having trouble and what can be done at home and at school to promote academic success. The school's goal is to avoid retention by involving the parent in a plan that will help the child catch up during the school year. Students performing below grade level will receive periodic progress reports and remediation opportunities will be offered.

Students may be retained for any of the following reasons:

#### GRADE K

- An average less than S in reading and math and unable to demonstrate proficiency on the district approved sight word list (80%)

#### GRADES 1-5

- Less than 60 average in on-grade level classroom work in each academic subject (reading, math, science, language arts, social studies, 80% of first grade sight word list)
- An NRT score below the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading and math or below 3 on the FCAT
- Student's portfolio does not document Level 3 work in reading and math

#### GRADES 6-8

- Score of less than Level 2 on the FCAT
- 60 or below average on grade level classroom work
- Failure to receive a passing final grade in core courses

#### GRADE 9-12

- High school students failing to earn the appropriate number of credits and/or GPA for their grade level will be retained. The guidelines for this may be found in the Gulf County Student Progression Plan at [www.gulf.k12.fl.us](http://www.gulf.k12.fl.us)

**Parents concerned about their children's academic progress should be in close touch with teachers. Parental support and involvement is essential for student success.** The School Board does not allow "social promotion." This means that students can only advance to the next grade on the basis of academic performance, not age, size, or other reasons. Research shows that it is far worse for a child's self-esteem and his/her academic future to be socially promoted than to give him/her a second chance at the same grade level. Giving a student an extra year of preparation in elementary school can often prevent dropping out in frustration later or failing to pass the FCAT and graduation from high school with a standard diploma.

Home Education – Gulf County allows students to attend a home education program. Details of the program for students between the ages of 5-16 are available upon request from the Instructional Services office. A student seeking to enter or re-enter Gulf County School District from a home education program must meet all entrance requirements that any other students must meet. The student shall be placed academically as any other student that seeks to enter public school below the ninth grade. Special considerations are outlined in the School Board adopted program to award credits for grade 9 and above. State law requires all students to verify completion of kindergarten before entering First grade.

Private Schools – Gulf County School District collaborates with the private schools to serve all students.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS**

**Gifted Students:** The State of Florida decides who is gifted based on IQ test scores. The state sets the cut-off score. Programs are provided at all schools.

**Advanced Placement:** Gulf County offers courses that are comparable to introductory college classes. If students achieve high scores in exit exams following these Advanced Placement (AP) courses, they can earn college credits that are transferable to almost any public or private college in the United States. Course standards, teacher qualifications, and examinations are controlled by The College Board, a national academic organization. Courses are provided via the FLORIDA Virtual School.

**Dual Enrollment:** Juniors, seniors, and, in some cases, sophomores, can receive community college credit for certain courses taught either on the high school campus or at the community college. Community college dual enrollment credits are accepted at Florida public universities, but may not be accepted at private schools or outside of Florida. Consult with guidance counselors or at the college to get additional information.

**Honors Courses:** In secondary schools, this means the classes are more challenging than standard courses. No college credits are earned, but weight is given to the numeric GPA.

**Accelerated Promotion:** In some rare instances elementary and middle school students who have already mastered all the subjects being taught are ready to “skip a grade.” The principal makes these decisions after reviewing academic records and consulting with parents and teachers. Guidelines are found in the Student Progression Plan.

**Honors Graduates:** Candidates for Honor Graduate shall meet the following requirements: High Honor graduates must have a grade point average of 3.850-4.00 on a 4.0 scale. Honor graduates must have a grade point average of 3.50-3.849 on a 4.0 scale. A weighted numeric average may be used to determine local class ranking and the salutatorian and valedictorian.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR LEARNING WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities may be placed in the Exceptional Student Education Program. At the time your child is placed in this program, educators will evaluate him/her and complete a document called an Individual Education Plan or IEP. There are several diploma or certificate options available to students in the ESE program, ranging from a standard high school diploma to a certificate of completion. By state law, a student with a disability must still pass the FCAT to earn a standard high school diploma unless the student qualifies for a waiver. Students in the ESE programs are entitled to stay in school until they reach the age of 22. For questions, accommodations, complaints or appeals regarding services in your child’s school, contact your child’s principal. For district policies and practices, contact the District ESE Office at 229-6940 ext. 126.

## **Reporting to Parents**

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Report cards are issued each nine weeks to parents to provide an evaluation of their child's academic achievement and social and physical development. All parents will be notified each nine weeks of their child's achievement. In addition, all students will be issued a progress report at the mid-point of each grading period. Parents of students in grade 9 through 12 whose grade point average is less than 2.5 will be notified in writing each semester.

Parents are informed that students must successfully master standards on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade FCAT in order to receive a standard diploma upon completion of all district and state requirements for graduation.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

### **FIRST – 12<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	59 & Below

### **KINDERGARTEN**

E, S, N, U

## **Other Ways You Can Help Your Child**

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- Ask the teacher(s) for ideas on how you can help your child learn more at home.
- Show your support by visiting your child's school, attending special events or volunteering to assist in the classroom.
- Read with your child.
- Practice basic math facts with your child.
- Show an interest in what is done in school each day when your child gets home.
- Tell your child you believe he/she can do well in school. Offer praise and encouragement for achievement and improvement.
- Establish a daily routine.
- Monitor your child's activities after school, in the evening, and on weekends.
- Show your values by your actions.
- If you need help with a school-related problem, contact your child's teacher(s), the school counselor or the principal.
- Check report cards.
- Talk with teachers.
- Read information sent home.
- Set goals together.
- Teach respect for self, hard work, and responsibility.

- Be patient.
- Involve your child in a variety of activities.
- Be sure your child makes up work when absent.
- Obtain access to your child’s grades / attendance with a parent internet viewer account.

**SERVICES AVAILABLE TO PARENTS:**

For Counseling Services, Academic Advisement or College Planning you may contact your child’s Guidance Counselor at the following numbers:

Port St. Joe Elementary	DeEtta Smallwood	850-227-1221
Port St. Joe Middle	Andria Dixon	850-227-3211
Port St. Joe High	Ginger Bernal	850-229-8813
Wewahitchka Elementary	Ashley Davidson	850-639-2476
Wewahitchka Middle	Karen Turner	850-639-6840
Wewahitchka High	Karen Turner	850-639-2228

**Advisory Councils & Programs**

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**ESE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

A resource in the district to provide direction and offer solutions to educational issues of students with disabilities.

**SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

A resource in each school and to the principal to provide direction and offer solutions to educational issues. Members are elected by their peers and include a strong representation of parents and community members.

**VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

- Parents and community members are invited and encouraged to become volunteers in the school system. Call the school of your choice for information.
- Parent Inservice is provided by individual schools on topics pertinent to academic achievement and social growth.

**TITLE I ADVISORY COUNCIL**

A resource in the district to provide direction and offer solutions to educational issues of students receiving Title I services.

**Other Informational Resources At School**

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School Public Accountability Report (SPAR)	Title I Parent Involvement School Plan
School Improvement Plan	School Technology Plan
Student Progression Plan	Guidance Plan
Student Code of Conduct	District Safety Plan
District Strategic Plan	Instructional Materials Procedures Manual
School Advisory Council Handbook	K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan
English Speakers of Other Languages Plan	Title I Parent Involvement Plan

## Dates To Remember

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Aug. 2	Teachers Return	Nov. 24-26	Holiday/Thanksgiving	Mar. 29	Report Cards
Aug. 9	Students Return	Dec. 21	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> 9 Weeks Early Dismissal	Apr. 5	Gold Cards
Sept. 17	Gold Cards	Dec. 22 – Jan. 4	Holiday/Christmas	Apr. 20	Progress Reports
Sept. 6	Holiday/Labor Day	Jan. 5	Teacher Workday	Apr. 22	Early Dismissal
Sept. 9	Progress Reports	Jan. 14	Report Cards	Apr. 25	Holiday/Easter
Oct. 11	End 1 <sup>st</sup> 9 Weeks	Jan. 17	Holiday/MLK	May 23	Students' Last Day
October 18-20	Holiday/Fall Break	Jan. 24	Gold Cards	May 27	Teachers' Last Day
Oct. 25	Report Cards	Feb. 8	Progress Reports		
Nov. 1	Gold Cards	Feb. 21	Holiday/President's		
Nov. 15	Progress Reports	Mar. 11	End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> 9 Weeks		
Nov. 23	Early Dismissal	Mar. 14-18	Holiday/Spring Break		Summer Vacation!

## Gulf County Parent-Assessment Checklist

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The Gulf County Self-Assessment is designed to help parents determine how involved they are in promoting a positive education for their child. Please place a check by each response that you consider an area of need. This Self-Assessment is for your use and is not to be returned to your child's school.

### • FOCUS ON ATTITUDE

- I stress the importance of education and doing one's best in school to my child.
- I express my belief in my child's ability to be successful.
- I help my child set short and long term educational goals.
- I celebrate my child's academic accomplishments.

### • FOCUS ON ACADEMICS

- I support reading with age appropriate home activities.
- I assure that our home has a consistent time and place to do homework.
- I ensure that my child has access to material needed to complete assignments.
- I regularly discuss and ask to see work that my child is doing in school.
- I attend workshops on helping my children at home.

### • FOCUS ON BEHAVIOR

- I monitor the Internet, e-mail, chat sites and computer games used by my child.
- I monitor the television programs and videos viewed by my child.
- I teach and reinforce positive behaviors such as respect for self and others, hard work and responsibility.

### • FOCUS ON BUILDING RESPONSIBILITY

- I ensure that my child has a regular routine.
- I encourage my child to accept responsibility for his/her actions.

- \_\_\_ I ensure that my child is in attendance and on time to school each day.
- \_\_\_ I monitor and promote my child's participation in extracurricular and after-school activities.

• **FOCUS ON SCHOOL/HOME CONNECTIONS**

- \_\_\_ I communicate regularly with my child's teacher in person, on the phone, by email or through writing.
- \_\_\_ I prepare for and attend teacher conferences, Individualized Educational Plans, Academic Improvement Plans, or other individualized student meetings.
- \_\_\_ I attend open house, science fairs, plays, musical events, class trips, sporting events, career/college fairs, curriculum nights, or other school activities at every opportunity.
- \_\_\_ I volunteer in the school setting when possible.

## Resources For Families

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Florida Department of Education  
<http://www.fldoe.org/family/>

Office of Family Involvement  
<http://www.fldoe.org/family>

Bureau of School Improvement  
<http://www.flbsi.org>

National Parent Information Network  
<http://npin.org>

Partnership for Family Involvement  
<http://www.thefamilyworks.org>

Choice Office  
<http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org>

Parents Place  
<http://www.parentsplace.com>

Family Education Network  
<http://www.familyeducation.com>

Parent Smart  
<http://www.parentsmart.com>

Helping Children Learn to Read  
1-800-872-5327

Student Health  
<http://www.healthykids.org>

Meningococcal Disease  
<http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/bacterial/faqs.htm>

Partnership for Family Involvement (Florida)  
<http://www.floridapartnership.usf.edu/resources.html>

Florida Department of Health Immunization Schedule  
[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Disease\\_ctrl/immune/community/index.htm](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Disease_ctrl/immune/community/index.htm)

## How To Contact Us

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District School Board Office  
850-229-8256 or 639-2871

Instructional Services  
850-229-6940 or 639-2422

Port St. Joe Elementary  
850-227-1221

Wewahitchka Elementary  
850-639-2476

Port St. Joe Middle  
850-227-3211

Wewahitchka Middle  
850-639-6840

Port St. Joe High  
850-229-8251

Wewahitchka High  
850-639-2228