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Dr. Tony Bennett
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Technical Assistance Paper Third-Grade Student Progression

Summary: The purpose of this Technical Assistance Paper (TAP) is to provide school districts with updates and changes relative to third-grade student progression policies, including information on alternative assessments, promotion criteria and resources.

Contact: Mary Jane Tappen
Deputy Chancellor for Curriculum, Instruction and Student Services
Florida Department of Education
850-245-0509
Mary.Tappen@fldoe.org

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Third Grade Student Progression

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A. GENERAL INFORMATION

A-1. What FCAT 2.0 Reading score does a third-grade student need to achieve for promotion to fourth grade?

FCAT 2.0 Reading scores affect students in grade 3 for promotion and retention purposes. Students in grade 3 must score a Level 2 or higher on FCAT 2.0 Reading, with achievement levels ranging from 1-5, to be promoted [Section 1008.25(5), Florida Statutes (F.S.)]. In order to achieve Level 2 or higher, students will need a score of 182 on the reading developmental scale. The scale scores range from 140-260. It is possible for a third-grade student to be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted prior to the beginning of their fourth-grade year using a good cause exemption; however, some districts may have additional requirements for promotion as part of their local Student Progression Plan adopted by their local school boards.

A-2. What promotion options are available for grade 3 students who have not achieved a Level 2 on FCAT 2.0 Reading?

Some students in grade 3 who score Level 1 on FCAT 2.0 Reading may be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted to fourth grade [Section 1008.25(6), F.S.]. This is called a “good cause exemption.” Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

- Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who have had less than two years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program;
- Students with disabilities whose Individual Educational Plan (IEP) shows that it is not appropriate for them to take the FCAT 2.0 Reading;
- Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on a state-approved alternative standardized reading test;
- Students who demonstrate mastery (equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the FCAT 2.0 Reading) of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) through a teacher-developed portfolio;
- Students with disabilities who take the FCAT 2.0 Reading and whose IEP or 504 Plan states that they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years, but who still show a deficiency in reading and were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3;
- Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years, but who still have a deficiency in reading and have already been retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3 for a total of two years.

A-3. Will students scoring Level 1 on the FCAT 2.0 Reading be retained in other grades or only in third grade?

Third grade is the only grade at which there is state-mandated retention for public school students [Section 1008.25(5)(b), F.S.]. School districts must establish a comprehensive program for student progression that includes specific levels of

performance in reading, writing, science and mathematics for each grade level, including the levels of performance on statewide assessments, below which a student must receive remediation or be retained within an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and takes into account the student's learning style. The promotion/retention policy for all grade levels must be specified in the district's Student Progression Plan.

A-4. Can a student be promoted to fourth grade without an FCAT 2.0 Reading score?

Third-grade students must demonstrate proficiency in reading on an approved assessment in order to be promoted to fourth grade, unless exempted for good cause. Students may be promoted using a score from one of the alternative assessments (C-2) or the FCAT 2.0 Reading. In accordance with Section 1008.25(5), F.S., **if the student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at Level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment test in reading for grade 3, the student must be retained, unless exempted for good cause.** The criteria for good cause is described in Section A-2.

A-5. What are the guidelines/requirements that districts must implement to meet the needs of third-grade students identified with a reading deficiency who have not been previously retained in third grade?

Teacher-Student Ratio	Same as other students.
Reading Instructional Time	90-minute reading block in a smaller group size setting or one-on-one. Rule <u>6A-6.054</u> , Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)
Materials	<p>Core/State Identified Reading program that is research based and has proven success teaching the five components of reading.</p> <p>Differentiated Materials Research-based materials that reinforce the initial instruction.</p> <p>Intervention Materials Research-based materials that teach areas of deficits as determined by a diagnostic measure. This instruction should take place in addition to the 90-minute reading block. Section 1008.25(7)(b)7., F.S.</p>
Screening	Options may include, but are not limited to, Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) 10, FCAT 2.0, program-based materials or Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR). Section 1008.25(7)(b)7., F.S.
Progress Monitoring	Progress monitoring should be more frequent for these students than for non-retained students and should be

	ongoing and weekly. This can be as simple as a Common Core Reading Program (CCRP) or Supplemental Reading Program (SRP) weekly test, timed readings or observations. Per Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S., schools must progress monitor students with a reading deficiency a minimum of three times per year. This includes a baseline, midyear and an end-of-year assessment. FAIR ongoing progress monitoring (OPM) components are progress-monitoring tools and can be used for these students.
Diagnostic	A diagnostic measure should be given to students if differentiation and immediate intensive intervention are not working. Section 1008.25(4)(a), F.S.
Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP)	A PMP must be developed and implemented for any student who is not meeting the district or state requirements for proficiency in reading. Section 1008.25(4)(b), F.S.

A-6. What are the guidelines/requirements for meeting the needs of third-grade students who have been retained once in third grade?

Teacher-Student Ratio	Reduced Student-Teacher Ratio. Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S.
Teacher Quality	Provide students with a high-performing teacher as determined by student-performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals. Section 1008.25(7)(b)5., F.S.
Reading Instructional Time	90-minute reading block which includes small group instruction. Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S. Intervention in addition to 90-minute reading block. Section 1008.25(7)(a), F.S.
Materials	<i>Should be provided a different curriculum from the year before. This may be a change in supplemental and intervention materials. There is not a requirement to change the CCRP.</i> Core/State Identified Reading program that is research based and has proven success teaching the five components of reading. Differentiated Materials Research-based materials that reinforce the initial instruction.

	<p>Intervention Materials Research-based materials that teach areas of deficits as determined by a diagnostic measure. This instruction should take place in addition to the 90-minute reading block. Section 1008.25(7)(b)7., F.S.</p> <p>Differentiated Instruction should be treated as immediate intensive intervention with prescribed materials for the students' deficits.</p> <p>Immediate Intensive Intervention (iii) Materials should continue to be used during iii after the 90-minute block. Section 1008.25(7)(a), F.S.</p>
Screening	Options may include, but are not limited to, SAT 10, FCAT 2.0 Reading, program-based materials or Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR). Section 1008.25(7)(b)7., F.S.
Progress Monitoring	Progress monitoring should be more frequent for these students than for non-retained students and should be ongoing and weekly. This can be as simple as a CCRP or SRP weekly test, timed readings or observations. Per Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S., schools must progress monitor students with a reading deficiency a minimum of three times per year. This includes a baseline, midyear and an end-of-year assessment. FAIR ongoing progress monitoring (OPM) components are progress-monitoring tools and can be used for these students.
Diagnostic	Every child is required to be given a diagnostic measure to identify the student's specific reading deficiency. Section 1008.25(7)(a), F.S.
Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP)	A PMP must be developed for all students retained. The PMP must be driven by a diagnostic assessment. Section 1008.25(7)(b)1., F.S.
Portfolio	Any child retained in third grade must have an ongoing portfolio that meets the state portfolio requirement. Section 1008.25(7)(b)1., F.S.
Summer Reading Camps	Required for students scoring Level 1 on FCAT 2.0 Reading; optional for others. Section 1008.25(7)(a), F.S. Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S.
Requirements prescribed by school district which may include, but are not limited to:	
Tutoring and Mentoring	A trained volunteer or mentor may be assigned to each student, and/or someone may be assigned to tutor each student on deficit areas.

	Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S.
Transition Classes	<p>In the district Student Progression Plan, language should be included describing the district's midyear promotion procedures. Students should be provided on-grade-level work for the subject areas that are not at risk. Third-fourth grade transition classes are an option.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S.</p> <p>The district will provide students who have been retained in grade 3 and have received intensive instructional services but are still not ready for promotion, as determined by the school district, the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such settings shall specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency. Section 1008.28(7)(b)10., F.S.</p>
Extended School Day	<p>Provide an after-school program with research-based materials and certified teachers to tutor and remediate students.</p> <p>Saturday school with research-based materials and certified teachers to tutor and remediate students.</p> <p>Extended year with research-based materials and certified teachers to tutor and remediate students.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S.</p>

A-7. What are the guidelines/requirements for meeting the needs of third-grade students who have been retained in third grade two times?

Teacher-Student Ratio	<p>Reduced Student-Teacher Ratio.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S.</p>
Reading Instructional Time	<p>180-minute reading block with at least a 90-minute segment of uninterrupted time.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S.</p>
Materials	<p>Should be provided a different core curriculum from the year before.</p> <p>Core/State Identified</p> <p>Reading program that is research-based and has proven success teaching the five components of reading and accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year.</p> <p>Differentiated Materials</p> <p>Research-based materials that reinforce the initial instruction.</p>

	<p>Intervention Materials</p> <p>Research-based materials that teach areas of deficits as determined by a diagnostic measure. This instruction should take place in the reading block.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S.</p>
Screening	<p>Options may include, but are not limited to, SAT 10, FCAT 2.0 Reading, program-based materials or Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR).</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)7., F.S.</p>
Progress Monitoring	<p>Progress monitoring should be more frequent for these students than for non-retained students and should be ongoing and weekly. This can be as simple as a CCRP or SRP weekly test, timed readings or observations. Per Section 1008.25(7)(b)8.,F.S., schools must progress monitor students with a reading deficiency a minimum of three times per year. This includes a baseline, midyear and an end-of-year assessment.</p> <p>FAIR ongoing progress monitoring (OPM) components are progress-monitoring tools and can be used for these students.</p>
Diagnostic	<p>Every child is required to be given a diagnostic measure to identify the student's specific reading deficiency.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(a), F.S.</p>
Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP)	<p>A PMP must be developed for all students retained. The PMP must be driven by a diagnostic assessment.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)1., F.S.</p>
Portfolio	<p>Any child retained in third grade must have an ongoing portfolio that meets the state portfolio requirement.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)1., F.S.</p>
Transition Classes	<p>In the district Student Progression Plan there should be language that describes the district's midyear promotion procedures. Students should be provided grade-level work for the subject areas that are not at risk.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S.</p> <p>Third-fourth grade transition classes are an option.</p> <p>Section 1008.25(7)(b)2., F.S.</p> <p>The district will provide students who have been retained in grade 3 and have received intensive instructional services but are still not ready for promotion, as determined by the school district, the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting. Such settings shall specifically be designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency. Section 1008.28(7)(b)10.,</p>

	F.S.
Instructor	A high-performing teacher as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory on performance appraisals. Section 1008.25(7)(b)5., F.S.
Speech Language Pathologist	Provide intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientifically research-based program, including use of a speech language therapist. <i>Note: This provision does not mandate the use of a speech language pathologist, but rather allows the speech language pathologist to be involved in designing the Intensive Accelerated Class and, through multi-stream funding, perhaps work with certain students whose diagnosed reading deficiencies might best be addressed by a speech language pathologist.</i> Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S.
Reporting Options	Report progress-monitoring data three times during the school year through the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN) if using the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) or through the Student Automated Database if using a different progress monitoring measure. Section 1008.25(7)(b)8., F.S.

B. STUDENT PORTFOLIOS FOR THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS

B-1. Why would a teacher use a student portfolio?

Section 1008.25(6), F.S., states that a student who scores a Level 1 on the Grade 3 FCAT 2.0 Reading may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through a student portfolio that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS).

B-2. Are there guidelines provided by the state for the third-grade student portfolio?

Yes. As provided in the updated Rule 6A-1.094221, F.A.C., to be accepted as meeting the portfolio option for demonstrating mastery of the required reading skills, the student portfolio must

- Be selected by the student's teacher;
- Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
- Include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment have been met. This includes multiple choice items and passages that are approximately 60 percent literary text and 40 percent information text that are

between 100-700 words with an average of 500 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the NGSSS or teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the NGSSS;

- Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the NGSSS Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment. For each benchmark, there must be at least three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of 70 percent or above; and
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

Additionally, note that the Just Read, Florida! Office developed a Third-Grade State Portfolio in partnership with the Bay County School District. There are an array of assessments per benchmark at the 3.6-3.9 reading level and the 4.0-4.5 reading level from which teachers may select for the student portfolio. A Third-Grade Portfolio CD was provided to each district in 2010. Contact your district for more information pertaining to the Third-Grade State Portfolio.

B-3. Do the same portfolio guidelines apply to ESE students?

The state portfolio guidelines apply to all students, including ESE students.

B-4. Is the student portfolio the only tool used for good cause exemption and/or promoting a third-grade student to fourth grade in the middle of the year?

No. The student portfolio and an alternative assessment are the two state-approved options for good cause exemption and midyear promotion. The student must be offered both options. However, the student must only demonstrate proficiency on one of the options in order to receive a good cause exemption or be promoted midyear.

B-5. If a teacher is monitoring the progress of a student, is a portfolio needed?

A portfolio provides ongoing information on how a student is performing on tested benchmarks. There are specific requirements of necessary elements that must be included in a portfolio used for promotion (please refer to question A-5 of this document for the requirements). If a teacher chooses to follow the rigor of the state portfolio requirements, a portfolio may be used for progress monitoring as well as promotion.

B-6. Can parts of the FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment be used as part of the portfolio for good cause exemption or midyear promotion?

No. Reporting categories do not provide enough information to determine whether a student has mastered that particular area of the NGSSS.

B-7. Can parts of the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) be used as part of the portfolio for good cause exemption or midyear promotion?

No. The FAIR tasks are adaptive in nature and are designed to provide teachers screening, diagnostic and progress monitoring information for the purpose of informing instruction to meet student needs through differentiating instruction. The FAIR tasks do not meet the state portfolio requirements as described in question A-5 of this document.

C. ASSESSMENT

C-1. What are the third-grade FCAT 2.0 Reading scale scores?

2012-13 Third-Grade FCAT 2.0 Reading Levels				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
140-181	182-197	198-209	210-226	227-260

C-2. What alternative assessment may be administered at the end of the year OR at the end of Summer Reading Camp to determine if a student qualifies for good cause exemption and promotion to fourth grade?

Rule 6A-1.094221(1)(a), F.A.C., authorizes the use of the following nationally norm-referenced test in the determination of a good cause exemption for promotion to fourth grade:

- Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT 10)

The rule also provides that a district may request to use a different standardized reading assessment following the procedures outlined in the *Technical Assistance Paper SBE 6A-1.094221: Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment and Use of Student Portfolio for Good Cause Promotion*. At this time, three other standardized alternative assessments have been approved by the department as a result of a district review request; and would, therefore, also be approved for district use.

- Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Complete Battery, Form A or C, Level 9, Reading Comprehension
- Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Core Battery, Form A or C, Level 9, Reading Comprehension
- Terranova, Third Edition Complete Battery, Level 13, Reading

The acceptable levels of performance on the alternative assessments for grade 3 for the 2013-2014 school year.

- To promote a student using the SAT 10 as an alternative assessment for good cause exemption, the grade 3 students scoring a Level 1 on the FCAT 2.0 Reading must

- score at or above the 45th percentile.
- For districts choosing to use the ITBS or Terranova, the cut score is at or above the 50th percentile.

Districts are strongly encouraged to administer the alternative assessment at the end of summer camp. The earliest the alternative assessment may be administered for student promotion purposes is following administration of the grade 3 FCAT 2.0 Reading. An approved standardized reading assessment may be administered two times if there are at least 30 days between administrations and different test forms are administered.

C-3. What are some ways to informally monitor student progress to inform instruction?

Options for informal progress monitoring may include, but are not limited to, teacher observation, CCRP weekly assessments, Supplemental Intervention Reading Program (SIRP) assessments, Comprehensive Intervention Reading Programs (CIRP) and the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR).

C-4. Do all students who have been retained twice in third grade need to be progress monitored?

Yes. All students who have been retained twice in third grade are required to be progress monitored. This may be accomplished through registration on the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN) and using the FAIR or using district-selected progress monitoring tools for reporting through the Student Database system. Access to the PMRN and FAIR is provided free of charge to districts by the Florida Department of Education.

C-5. Can students other than students retained twice in third grade be entered on the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN)?

Yes. All students in grades K-12 can be entered on the PMRN if schools are administering the FAIR. This registration and subsequent reporting services are free of charge.

C-6. Can a district accept SAT 10 scores from another state for retention/promotion determination?

Yes. The student must demonstrate mastery by scoring at least at the 45th percentile on the SAT 10. District established policies for placement and promotion should also be considered.

D. STUDENTS RETAINED TWICE IN THIRD GRADE AND TRANSITIONAL CLASSROOMS

D-1. What happens to a student who has been retained twice in third grade who moves to another school that does not have any students retained twice in third grade or the instructional opportunities for that student?

Regardless of when a student enters a school, he or she must be provided grade-level work for the subject areas in which the student has not reached proficiency [Section 1008.25(7)(b), F.S.]. Districts must provide all students retained twice in third grade, including transfer students, with intervention instruction and the option of being placed in a transitional instructional setting.

D-2. Does the Florida Department of Education offer suggestions in developing a transitional classroom?

Yes. The following are possible examples of a transitional classroom setting.

- Third-grade students who have been retained once in third grade, students who have been retained twice in third grade, and fourth-grade students who may be struggling with the fourth-grade reading curriculum and benchmarks.
- Students retained twice in third grade who receive intensive reading instruction on their level and fourth-grade curriculum in other subject areas.
- Fourth-grade class that includes students retained once or twice in third grade. The retained students can be pulled from a traditional classroom setting for their intensive reading instruction, which should be provided for the majority of the day (roughly three hours).

D-3. Will the Florida Department of Education provide guidance with selection of a Comprehensive Intervention Reading Program (CIRP) for students retained twice in third grade?

Yes. A resource for selection of a CIRP is the state approved 2007-2008 State Adopted Instructional Materials List for Reading, which may be accessed at http://www.fldoe.org/bii/Instruct_Mat/.

Lastly, the Doing What Works Clearinghouse publishes intervention reports that evaluate research on beginning reading curricula and instructional strategies for students in grades K–3 (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/Topicarea.aspx?tid=01>). These curricula and strategies are intended to increase skills in alphabetic principle, reading fluency, comprehension and general reading achievement.

D-4. Will the student preparing for midyear promotion be given fourth-grade instruction while in the transition class?

Yes. Students must be provided grade-level work for the subject areas that are not at risk [Section 1008.25(7)(b), F.S.]. All students should be supported in making continuous academic progress. This means teaching and learning for mastery and moving forward through the curriculum and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards as appropriate for the individual.

E. SUMMER READING CAMPS FOR THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS

E-1. How can teachers use assessments for the portfolio in Summer Reading Camps when the program used provides intensive reading but is not on grade level?

If the program is not on grade level, the assessments cannot be used to document mastery of third-grade benchmarks (please refer to question A-5 of this document for the portfolio requirements).

E-2. Are Summer Reading Camps available for students in grades other than third grade?

Summer Reading Camps must be offered to Level 1 students in grade 3 as specified in Section 1008.25(7)(a) and (b), F.S. If a district chooses to open the camp to other grade levels, the district may do so at its own discretion.

F. MIDYEAR PROMOTION FOR THIRD GRADE

F-1. What are the guidelines/requirements for midyear promotion?

Midyear promotions of retained third-grade students should occur during the first semester of the academic year. To be eligible for midyear promotion after November 1, a student must demonstrate mastery of reading skills consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade as presented in the scope and sequence of the school district's core reading program [Section 1008.25(7)(b), F.S., Rule 6A-1.094222, F.A.C.]. Evidence of demonstrated mastery is as follows:

- Successful completion of portfolio elements that meet state criteria; **or**
- Satisfactory performance on a locally-selected standardized assessment.

To promote a student midyear using a student portfolio, there must be evidence of the student's mastery of third-grade NGSSS Benchmarks for Language Arts and beginning mastery of the benchmarks for fourth grade. The student portfolio must meet the following requirements:

- Be selected by the student's teacher;

- Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and include only student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
- Include evidence of mastery of the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 FCAT 2.0 Reading assessment;
- Include evidence of beginning mastery of fourth-grade benchmarks that are assessed by the grade 4 FCAT 2.0 Reading. This includes multiple choice items and passages that are approximately 50 percent literary text and 50 percent information text and that are between 100-900 words with an average of 500 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum or teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the NGSSS. For each benchmark, there must be two examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of 70 percent or better; and
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

To promote a student midyear using a locally-selected standardized assessment, there must be evidence that the student scored at or above grade level in reading comprehension, as demonstrated by standard scores or percentiles, consistent with the month of promotion to fourth grade.

Additional district requirements for any midyear promotion criteria must be specified in the district's Student Progression Plan.

F-2. Can a third-grade student, potentially eligible for midyear promotion, be placed in a fourth-grade classroom and then promoted after demonstrating proficiency on the portfolio or an alternative assessment?

Yes. Districts need to meet the individual needs of students. This can be achieved through implementing creative multi-age grouping or a transitional-classroom setting.

F-3. Why would a decision be made about a student's placement before November 1?

The intent of the rule is to ensure that students are promoted midyear as soon as possible so they receive essential fourth grade instruction. For example, if a student has attended a Summer Reading Camp and demonstrated mastery of all benchmarks but one, the student could show proficiency in the deficit benchmark and then be promoted to fourth grade before November 1. After November 1, any student meeting specified state requirements can be promoted midyear (Rule 6A-1.094222, F.A.C.).

F-4. How many samples of proficiency are required for each benchmark in order for a student to be promoted midyear?

Prior to November 1, in any given school year, a student must have three examples of each benchmark successfully completed on the third-grade level (70 percent or above on each example) in order to be promoted midyear. After November 1, in any given

school year, the student must have successfully mastered the third-grade portfolio as well as mastered at least two examples of each tested benchmark consistent with the year and month of promotion for fourth grade (Rule 6A-1.094222, F.A.C.).

G. EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION (ESE)

G-1. Do the reading remediation requirements apply to a student who has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) with the primary exceptionality of speech impairment? For instance, is the district required to provide intensive remediation for more than two years in order for the student to qualify for the good cause exemption?

Yes. The relevant good cause exemption in statute [Section 1008.25(6)(b), F.S.] states that students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT 2.0 Reading and have an IEP or Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received the intensive remediation in reading as required for more than two years, but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3 are eligible for a good cause exemption. This applies to all students who meet these criteria; including students whose IEP reflects speech impairment as the primary exceptionality.

G-2. May a student with a disability who is reading below grade level and has never been retained be promoted using a portfolio that contains products reflecting below grade-level achievement?

No. The student must show proficiency at grade level by demonstrating mastery of the NGSSS. The expectations for students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT 2.0 Reading are the same as non-disabled students who participate in the FCAT 2.0 Reading. Portfolios reflecting below grade-level mastery are inappropriate to meet this requirement.

G-3. Are students with disabilities given any alternate means in which to achieve the goals needed in order to be promoted midyear?

All students who participate in the FCAT 2.0 Reading, including students with disabilities, are to follow the same guidelines disseminated by the Florida Department of Education. This requirement reflects high expectations and equality for students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

H. OPTIONS FOR PARENTS OF STRUGGLING READERS

H-1. Is information about third-grade progression available to parents?

Yes. A brochure for parents of Florida's third-grade students titled *Read to Learn* is available at <http://www.justreadflorida.com>. It is designed to help parents understand what Florida law says about reading requirements for third-grade students and promotion to fourth grade. It also describes what the school is required to do to help students who are reading below grade level.

H-2. What options are available for parents of retained third graders to ensure their child is given every chance for improvement?

The law requires the provision of one of the following [Section 1008.25(7)(b), F.S.]:

- Supplemental tutoring in scientifically research-based reading services, including tutoring before and/or after school;
- A "Read at Home" plan outlined in a parental contract, including regular parent-guided home reading; or
- A mentor or tutor with specialized reading training.

H-3. How can families and communities get more involved in reading programs?

The Just Read, Florida! Office provides parents with information about actively reading with their children during the summer months. Research shows that children who do not continue reading through the summer can lose a month or more of progress made during the school year. You can protect your child against summer reading loss by

- Reading to your child daily;
- Reading a lot of different materials;
- Discussing what you've read together;
- Asking your child questions about what was read; and
- Encouraging your child to write or draw in response to what they have read.

In addition, this summer the department is hosting a Summer Literacy Adventure. The Summer Literacy Adventure is geared toward helping children stay on target, stay motivated and stay excited about reading and literacy. During summer vacation, it is important for students to spend time reading and writing on a regular basis--whether the student is a beginning reader or a proficient reader. The Summer Literacy Adventure invites you to have students read as many books as possible. For more information about summer reading and the department's Summer Literacy Adventure, please visit www.justreadflorida.com.