

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Dr. Eric J. Smith  
Commissioner of Education



**DPS:** 2009-019  
**Date:** January 20, 2009

## Technical Assistance Paper SBE 6A-1.094221: Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment and Use of Student Portfolio for Good Cause Promotion

### Summary:

This document provides guidance for revised SBE Rule 6A-1.094221: Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment and Use of Student Portfolio for Good Cause Promotion including information on the standardized reading assessments currently approved by the Department of Education, the process by which districts may request to use a different standardized reading assessment, and guidelines for the use of the student portfolio for good cause promotion.

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Issued by the  
Florida Department of Education

Division of Public Schools  
<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/>

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# Technical Assistance Paper

## Guidelines for SBE Rule 6A-1.094221: Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment and Use of Student Portfolio for Good Cause Promotion

### Introduction and Background

#### 1. What is the purpose of this technical assistance paper (TAP)?

Since the original development of SBE Rule 6A-1.094221, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Norm Referenced Test (NRT) has been eliminated from the FCAT assessment program, therefore requiring the revision of the rule to reflect this change. Revised SBE Rule 6A-1.094221 was approved by the State Board of Education on December 2, 2008.

Pursuant to State Board of Education (SBE) Rule 6A-1.094221, relating to the statewide public school student progression law eliminating social promotion, students who score at Level 1 on the Grade 3 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Reading may be promoted to grade four if the student scores at or above the 51<sup>st</sup> percentile on the Reading SAT 9 or at or above the 45<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Reading SAT 10, or demonstrates an acceptable level of performance on another alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the Department of Education. Districts may submit requests for the approval of an alternative standardized reading assessment to be used as a good cause exemption for promotion to fourth grade.

This technical assistance document will provide information regarding the standardized reading assessments which are currently approved by the Department of Education, the process by which districts will be able to submit for approval, standardized reading assessments to be used as a good cause exemption, as well as guidelines for utilizing the student portfolio for good cause promotion.

#### A. Alternative Standardized Reading Assessments

##### A-1. What alternative standardized reading assessments are currently approved by the Department of Education?

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

1. Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition (SAT 9)
2. Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT 10)

##### A-2. How may a district request to use a different standardized reading assessment?

Requests for the use of another standardized assessment must be provided to the Just Read, Florida! Office in writing by February 27, 2009. (This date is established for 2008-09 only. For future submission, the due date for district requests will be September 18, 2009.)

The request must include a letter on school district letterhead stating the name of the assessment and the reasons for making the request. In addition, appropriate documentation must be submitted to demonstrate that the assessment meets the criteria listed below, pursuant to 6A-1.094221(2)(a).

1. Internal consistency reliability coefficients of at least 0.85;
2. High validity evidenced by the alignment of the test with nationally recognized content standards, as well as specific evidence of content, concurrent, or criterion validity;
3. Norming studies within the last five (5) to ten (10) years, with norming within five (5) years being preferable; and
4. Measure of grade 3 achievement in reading comprehension.

It is recommended that the submission include the assessment's most recent technical manual, in which all of the required documentation may be found. An electronic copy of the complete technical manual may be submitted if available.

**A-3. What process will the Department use to determine approval of district submitted alternative standardized reading assessments for good cause promotion to fourth grade?**

The Just Read, Florida! Office and the Office of Assessment will review the submitted documentation on the alternative reading assessments based on the evidence of measuring reading comprehension content and the criteria specified in State Board Rule 6A-1.094221 (2)(a) and listed in question A-2 of this document. Notification of approval or non-approval will be provided by the Department to the district submitting the request within four (4) weeks of submission.

**A-4. What will be the required passing score on any new alternative assessment submissions?**

SBE Rule 6A-1.094221(2)(c) authorizes the Department to approve the required percentile passing score for each approved alternative standardized reading assessment based on an analysis of Florida student achievement results. If an analysis is not feasible, students must score at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the approved alternative standardized reading assessment.

Following the approval of a new alternative assessment, a school district may work with the Department to determine an appropriate method for conducting an analysis of student data. Districts should contact Sharon Koon in the Office of Assessment to discuss this process. However, please note that a district is NOT required to conduct an analysis of student data if it appears that setting the passing score at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile is appropriate.

**A-5. When can the alternative assessment be administered to students?**

The earliest the alternative assessment may be administered for student promotion purposes is following administration of the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. An approved standardized reading assessment may be administered two (2) times if there are at least 30 days between

administrations and different test forms are administered pursuant to SBE Rule 6A-1.094221(2)(d).

## **B. Use of Student Portfolio for Good Cause Promotion**

### **B-1. Will the third grade student portfolio still be available as a good cause exemption?**

Yes. To promote a student using a portfolio as a good cause exemption, there must be evidence that demonstrates the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. Such evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading.

The student portfolio must meet the following criteria:

- (a) Be selected by the student's teacher,
- (b) Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom,
- (c) Include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading have been met. Evidence is to include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty (60) percent literary text and forty (40) percent information text, and that are between 100-700 words with an average of 350 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards or teacher-prepared assessments.
- (d) Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 FCAT Reading. For each benchmark, there must be at least five (5) examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of "C" or above, and
- (e) Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.