



Dear Parent/Guardian,

The intent of the third-grade progression statute is to ensure that students have the necessary reading skills to be successful in grade 4 and beyond, where the rigors of reading in the content areas increase. According to section 1008.25(5), Florida Statutes (F.S.):

To be promoted to fourth grade, a student must score a Level 2 or higher on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment required under section 1008.22 for grade 3.

The following plan describes several ways for students who do not meet this standard initially to be promoted to fourth grade.

If a student does not demonstrate proficiency on the statewide, standardize ELA assessment, they may attend the district *Summer Reading Camp* provided to ensure they receive additional instruction to catch up with their peers. There is also statutory language that prohibits the statewide ELA assessment from being the sole determiner of promotion and states that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion. Some third graders who score Level 1 on the statewide ELA assessment can be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted to fourth grade. This is called a **good cause exemption**. Good cause exemptions are only given to the following students:

- **Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on a state-approved alternative standardized reading or English Language Arts assessment approved by the State Board of Education;**
- **Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that he or she is performing at least at Level 2 on the statewide standardized assessment;**
- 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) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule 1008.212;
- Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide standardized assessment and whose IEP or 504 Plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading and English Language Arts for more than two years, but still demonstrates a deficiency and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3;
- Students who have received intensive reading intervention for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3 for a total of two years. A student may not be retained more than once in grade 3.

*Note: The two good cause exemptions that most frequently apply are noted in **bold** print and are described in more detail below.

Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment: An alternative standardized reading assessment is another opportunity given to students to demonstrate mastery of the state standards. Under section 1008.25(6), F. S. (Eliminating Social Promotion), students who score a Level 1 on the grade 3 statewide ELA assessment may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through an alternative standardized reading



assessment that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the state standards. The following local assessments have been approved by the State Board of Education as alternative standardized reading assessments that may be used for good cause exemption:

- SAT-10 (45th Percentile or above)
- I-Ready (50th Percentile or above)
- STAR Reading (50th Percentile or above)
- Amira (50th Percentile or above)

Student Portfolio - Under section 1008.25(6), F. S. (Eliminating Social Promotion), students who score a Level 1 on the grade 3 statewide ELA assessment may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through a student portfolio that he or she is reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the state standards. The portfolio is an alternative means for students to demonstrate proficiency of third-grade skills. 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;
- **Independently** produced work aligned to the B.E.S.T. Standards that would be assessed on the grade 3 statewide assessment
- Grade level passages that are 50% literary text and 50% informational text between 100-700 words (500 average)
- Evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district/school's core reading curriculum
- Be an organized collection of evidence of mastery of the B.E.S.T. ELA Standards. For each benchmark there must be at least 8 items assessed per benchmark and the student must demonstrate minimum mastery of 70% or above for all items assessed per benchmark.
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

Below is a link to the *Just Read, Florida!* Parent Guide for ELA - Grade 3 brochures:

- English: <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/Parent-Guide-Grade-3-Standards.pdf>
- Spanish: <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/Spanish-PG-Gr3.pdf>

The *Just Read, Florida!* Department has also provided a link titled *Third Grade Guidance* that can direct parents to information on specific reading requirements for 3rd grade students and promotion to fourth grade:

- <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/third-grade-guidance.stml>

We have also provided a link to most recent DOE guidance *Promotion to Grade 4 Technical Assistance Paper* that is distributed to districts for guidance with implementation of the law:

- <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-9518/dps-2022-65.pdf>

Sincerely,

Jessica K. Gray