

## **WCSD ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS – Grades K-5**

### **Entry into Kindergarten and First Grade**

1. A child is eligible for admission to public kindergarten if he/she has attained the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 of the school year. However, any five (5) year old who has not been in kindergarten previously during the school year and will not attain the age of six (6) by February 1, may not enter kindergarten after December 1. State law requires that a child who will be six (6) years of age by February 1 of any school year must attend school regularly during the entire school term.

An exception to this admission policy is permissible if a student transfers from a public school in another state which has a different age requirement for entrance into kindergarten.

Upon entering kindergarten, or initially entering any other grade in a public school, a student shall provide evidence of a medical examination and immunization against communicable diseases pursuant to 1003.22 F. S.

2. A child who has been enrolled in a public school and is six (6) years old on or before September 1, or a child who is six (6) years old on or before September 1 and who has satisfactorily completed the requirements for kindergarten in a non-public school, may progress to the first grade according to this *Student Progression Plan* and 1003.21 F.S.

3. Acceptance of kindergarten credit from a non-public Florida kindergarten shall be dependent upon the following conditions:

- a. Any student who has attended a non-public school must have met the Florida Statutes age requirements for receipt of kindergarten credits.
- b. The student must have maintained regular attendance during an entire school term of at least 170 actual school days comprising a minimum of 540 net instructional hours.
- c. The non-public school must submit a transcript of kindergarten skills achieved by the student and certify that all above requirements have been met.

### **Specific Promotional Criteria by Grade Level Grades K-2**

Promotion from grades 1 and 2 is based on evidence the student has met the Next Generation Standards in reading and math as indicated by a final grade of —D|| or above, or through evidence of mastery of the standards as determined through class or individual assignments, projects, portfolios, skills checklists, performance tasks, norm-referenced and/or locally determined assessments.

### **Grade 3**

Promotion from third grade is based on evidence the student has met the Next Generation Standards in four or more academic subjects, three of which must be reading, language arts and mathematics.

Science and social studies are considered academic subjects. Mastery is indicated by a final grade of —D|| or above, or through evidence of mastery of the standards as determined through teacher observation, class or individual assignments, projects, portfolios, skills checklists, performance tasks, norm-referenced and/or locally determined assessments,

#### **AND**

evidence the student achieved a score of Level 2 or above on the FCAT Reading Assessment as specified in s. 1008.25, F.S or met the requirements for a Good Cause Waiver. The School Board may only exempt students from mandatory retention for good cause. Refer to the Waiver of Promotion Criteria in Section C of this document.

### **Grades 4-5**

Promotion from grades 4 and 5 is based on evidence the student has met the Next Generation Standards in four or more academic subjects, three of which must be reading, language arts and mathematics.

Science and social studies are considered academic subjects. Mastery is indicated by a final grade of —D|| or above, or through evidence of mastery of the standards as determined through class or individual assignments, projects, portfolios, skills checklists, performance tasks, norm-referenced and/or locally determined assessments.

### **Waiver of Promotion Criteria**

In grades K–3, students who are unsuccessful in meeting the grade level promotion criteria may be considered for a waiver of these criteria based upon the good cause exemptions defined by State Board Rule. Students may be exempted from mandatory retention for good cause (1008.25(5)(b) F.S.). Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

- a. English Language Learner students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other languages program.
- b. Students with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates participation in the state assessment program is not appropriate. State Board Rule 6A-1.0943 specifies that such students must have a demonstrated cognitive ability that prevents them from completing required coursework and meeting the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, even with appropriate and allowable course modifications **and** require extensive direct instruction to accomplish the application and transfer of skills and competencies needed for domestic, community living, leisure and vocational activities.
- c. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on the SAT-10 alternative assessment. State Board Rule sets acceptable levels of performance as a score at or above the 45th percentile on the SAT-10 **or** the 51<sup>st</sup> percentile on a parallel form of the SAT-9. The earliest the alternative assessment may be administered for promotion purposes is after the Grade 3 FCAT reading scores have been received from the state or the last two weeks of school, whichever comes first.
- d. Students who demonstrate, through a student portfolio, that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in reading equal to at least a level 2 performance on the FCAT. The Third Grade Assessment Portfolio created by Beacon Educator in partnership with Just Read, Florida! and following guidelines set forth by the state will be utilized to verify level 2 performance.
- e. Students with disabilities who have an IEP or Section 504 Plan reflecting they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but are still deficient in reading and have been previously retained in Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2 or Grade 3.
- f. Students who have had a progress monitoring plan in reading two (2) or more years and were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3 for a total of two (2) years. If a student is promoted under this exemption, he/she must receive intensive reading instruction that includes an altered instructional day based upon a progress monitoring plan that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies for each student. The district shall assist schools and teachers to implement research-based reading strategies that have shown to be successful in improving reading among low-performing readers.

### **Proficiency Levels – Elementary Grades**

Students will be identified as substantially deficient in reading, mathematics, science and/or writing if their performance on grade level curriculum, assessments, observations, progress monitoring or other relevant data **consistently** indicates non-proficiency or non-mastery of standards. The primary evidence sources will be:

1. Grades given during each reporting period – grades of D or F on grade level curriculum indicate non-proficiency or non-mastery and require intervention.
2. Performance on FCAT Reading, Mathematics and/or Science – Level 1 or 2 scores indicate non-mastery and require intervention.
3. Performance on FCAT Writing and/or District Writing Assessment – A score below 3.5 requires intervention.
4. Other criteria to be considered includes:
  - a. FAIR Progress Monitoring performance – Levels of High Risk or Moderate Risk require intervention.
  - b. Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (Total Reading) – bottom quartile
  - c. Stanford 10 – bottom quartile
  - d. **Discovery Education** Benchmark Assessments-Level 1

Pupil proficiency levels in reading, writing, mathematics, and science will be evaluated at each grade level. Students who are identified as non-proficient according to district criteria will be provided intensive

remediation through a Progress Monitoring Plan created through consultation with the parents. School personnel may waive instruction in all areas except reading, writing, mathematics and science in order to schedule remedial instruction necessitated by the Progress Monitoring Plan.

If after intervention the student has not shown improvement, diagnostic assessments will be used to determine specific areas of deficiency and this data will contribute to the development of a Progress Monitoring Plan.

In cases where evaluations are missing (such as a student transferring from out of the district) or are inconsistent with a student's classroom performance, the teacher's professional judgment may be used to determine student proficiency. In such cases, teachers will consider a variety of evaluation data (e.g., classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, equivalent portions of national norm referenced tests and other information which shows mastery of essential skills).

Any student who is retained may be assigned any time during the first reporting period of the next school year to the next higher grade upon recommendation of the teacher and approval of the Principal and parent, if it has been determined the standards have been met and the student will benefit from instruction at the higher grade level.

An ELL student may be retained only by the decision of an ELL Committee. ELL students who are Identified as being substantially below grade level in reading in English, but who are proficient in their Home Language may not be retained. A formal retention recommendation regarding an ELL student will be

addressed by the ELL Committee after a thorough review of the student's performance on a Native Language

Assessment (Aprenda) if applicable, classroom performance, statewide assessment data, English language

progress and parent and/or student interviews.

#### **E. Elementary Grading**

a. In Grades K-5 a grade of D or above indicates passing of grade-level curriculum for the grading period.

b. In order to determine an integrated language arts grade, yearly grades for writing composition, spelling and English grammar will be averaged. When averaged, the subjects should reflect the following weights: 2/3 English grammar and writing composition and 1/3 spelling.

c. A student shall pass four (4) or more academic subjects, three (3) of which must be reading, language arts and mathematics, to be eligible for promotion from Grades 3, 4, and 5. Reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies are considered academic subjects. A passing grade indicates mastery of the grade level curriculum which includes Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. All grades must reflect the students' independent mastery of standards. Refer to the Grading System explanation in Section V-F of this document.

d. A student's daily average must represent an accurate picture of the student's performance on grade level curriculum. 80% of the graded assignments must represent independently produced work.

#### **F. Third Grade Mandatory Retention**

Grade 3 parents will be notified, in writing, of their child's reading deficiency, current services provided, proposed remediation strategies, the mandatory 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retention requirement and consulted in the development of a Progress monitoring Plan to provide the necessary remediation.

Additionally, parents must be notified that the FCAT is not the sole determiner of promotion and 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 promotion. Parents will be told the district's specific criteria and policies for mid-year promotion to Grade 4 (possible at any time during the year of retention once the student has demonstrated the ability to read at grade level).

The student's reading proficiency will be reassessed by locally-determined assessments and/or teacher recommendations at the beginning of the grade following the intensive reading instruction and the student must continue to be given intensive reading instruction until the deficiency is remedied. The student **must** be retained if the deficiency is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at Level 2

or above on the FCAT reading assessment for grade 3. Parents of those students must be notified in writing and given a list of services and supports that will be provided to the child. At grade 3, students with reading deficiencies can be exempted from mandatory retention for good cause.

Retained third grade students must be provided intensive interventions to ameliorate the student's specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid, reliable diagnostic assessment. These interventions must include effective instructional strategies, participation in the district's summer reading camp and appropriate methodologies necessary to assist students to be able to read at or above grade level and ready for promotion to the next grade. Students who are retained, and students needing remediation or intensive instructional support, will be matched to strategic and intensive interventions based on screening, progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments.

As part of the intensive intervention procedure, the district shall:

1. Conduct a review of students who did not score above Level 1 on the FCAT Reading Assessment and did not meet the criteria for one of the good cause exemptions. For each retained student, a portfolio will be established to monitor and record the intervention services provided throughout the year (not to establish competency to support a good cause promotion).
2. Provide intensive instructional services to remediate identified deficiencies including a minimum of ninety (90) minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically research-based reading instruction and other strategies which may include, but not be limited to: small group instruction, reduced teacher-student ratios, response to intervention strategies, more frequent progress monitoring, tutoring or mentoring, transition classes combining 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, an extended school day, week or year and summer reading camps approved by Just Read Florida. Parents will receive this information during meetings with the administration once their child has been identified for the programs.
3. Provide written notification to the parent that his/her child has not met required proficiency levels and the reason he/she does not qualify for a good cause exemption, including a description of the proposed interventions and support services.
4. Implement a policy for mid-year promotion of retained students who can demonstrate they are successful and independent readers, at or above grade level, and are ready to be promoted to Grade 4. Successful students may be promoted at any time but those promoted after November 1 must demonstrate proficiency above that required to score at Level 2 on the Grade 3 FCAT with a reasonable expectation that their progress is sufficient to master appropriate Grade 4 reading skills.
5. Provide retained students with a high-performing teacher as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals.
6. Provide parents with at least one of the following instructional options: supplemental tutoring in addition to the reading block, a —Read at Home|| plan or a mentor, tutor with specialized reading training or utilization of the response to intervention tiers of increasing assistance.
7. Establish a Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative that shall: be provided to all K-3 students at risk of retention as identified by the statewide assessment system used in Reading First schools, be provided during regular school hours in addition to regular reading instruction and provide a state-identified reading curriculum that:
  - a. Assists students assessed as exhibiting a reading deficiency in developing the ability to read at grade level
  - b. Provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension
  - c. Provides scientifically based and reliable assessment
  - d. Provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress
  - e. Is implemented during regular school hours

f. Provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in maintaining or meeting proficiency levels for the appropriate grade in all academic subjects

8. Establish an Intensive Acceleration Class at each applicable school for retained Grade 3 students who subsequently score at Level 1 on the FCAT Reading Assessment with the intention of increasing their reading proficiency at least two grade levels in one school year. The Intensive Acceleration Class shall:

- a. Be provided to any student in Grade 3 who scores at level 1 on the FCAT Reading Assessment and who was retained in Grade 3 the prior year because of scoring at level 1 on the FCAT Reading Assessment.
- b. Have a reduced teacher-student ratio.
- c. Feature uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of each day and include opportunities to master the Grade 4 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in other core subject areas.
- d. Use a scientifically research-based reading program with proven results in accelerating student achievement within the same school year.
- e. Provide intensive language and vocabulary instruction using a scientifically research-based program and including the use of a speech language therapist.
- f. Include weekly progress monitoring.
- g. Report student progress to the Department of Education at the end of the first semester.

9. Report to the State Board of Education as requested on the specific reading interventions and supports implemented at the district level.

10. Provide a student who has been retained in Grade 3, received intensive services and still is not ready for promotion the option of placement in a transitional program designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet Grade 4 performance standards while continuing to remediate the areas of reading deficiency. This program will have a reduced student/teacher ratio and feature scientifically based core reading and supplemental programs.

### **Accelerated Placement**

1. The following procedures for waiver of promotion criteria must be followed:

- a. The student's teacher shall submit documentation to the school principal indicating that the promotion is appropriate and is based upon the student's academic record. The documentation shall consist only of the existing academic improvement plan (or progress monitoring plan), individual educational plan (if applicable), report card or student portfolio.
- b. The school principal shall review the documentation with the teacher and make a determination as to whether the student should be promoted or retained. If the principal determines the student should be promoted, the principal shall make such recommendation in writing to the district school superintendent. The superintendent shall accept or reject the principal's recommendation in writing.

### **2. Mid-Year Promotion**

Students who have been retained in Grade 3 because of a continuing reading deficiency may be promoted at any time during the year of retention if they can demonstrate that they are successful and independent readers, reading at or above grade level and ready to be promoted to Grade 4. A portfolio must be developed to document student proficiency of Grade 3 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards as well as applicable Grade 4 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. The portfolio will contain, but not be limited to, the following:

Assessment and Progress Monitoring Results demonstrating proficiency

Progress reports demonstrating proficiency within the core curriculum at both grades 3 and 4

The decision for promotion will be made by the principal following an Instructional Support Team meeting with input from the classroom teacher and parent.

3. In grades 4-8, waiver of promotion criteria shall be granted in a manner consistent with the good cause exemptions outlined in State Board Rule.

4. The assignment of a student to a higher grade which results in the student's skipping a grade or part of a grade should be made on the basis of exceptionally high achievement by the student and evidence that the student will benefit more from the instructional program at the advanced grade level. The probable long-range academic, social and emotional effect of the decision should be considered. A committee consisting of the guidance counselor and teacher(s) of the student has the responsibility for making recommendations for accelerated placement to the Principal.

The following procedures for accelerated placement must be followed:

- a. A parent or guardian must be given written notification from the Principal that his/her child is being considered for accelerated grade placement.
- b. A parent or guardian must provide written consent for the placement.
- c. A copy of the consent must be placed in the cumulative record.
- d. The student's cumulative record must indicate —accelerated placement.||

### **Intensive Reading Instruction**

1. Each elementary school shall regularly assess the reading ability of each K-3 student. Students who exhibit substantial deficiency in reading skills, as determined by the district and identified through locally determined assessments (e.g., Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR), Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (GMRT), Stanford 10, Fox in a Box, Early Reading Screening Instrument (ERSI), DAR, ERDA) conducted before the end of kindergarten, grades one, two, or three or through teacher recommendation (based upon a combination of individual assignments, projects, portfolios, skills checklists, performance tasks and tests), must be given intensive, research-based reading instruction following identification of the deficiency. Parents will be immediately notified, in writing, of the exact nature of the reading deficiency, current services provided, proposed remediation strategies and the mandatory 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retention requirement. The student's reading proficiency will be reassessed by locally determined assessments and/or teacher recommendations at the beginning of the grade following the intensive reading instruction, and the student must continue to be given intensive reading instruction until the reading deficiency is remedied.

2. The student **must** be retained if the deficiency is not remedied by the end of grade 3, as demonstrated by scoring at level 2 or higher on FCAT Reading for grade 3. Parents of these students must be notified in writing and given a list of services and supports that will be provided to the child. Parents will be notified in writing that if a child's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause. Students who received intensive reading remediation for two or more years and who were previously retained in grades K-3 for a total of two years and are promoted based on good cause will be provided an altered instructional day. These students will receive intensive reading instruction for a minimum of 120 minutes per day. Families Building Better Readers will be used to provide strategies to assist parents in helping their child succeed in reading. The District School Board shall assist schools and teachers in implementing reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in working with low-performing readers.

3. Students who are retained in grade 3 will receive instruction within an intensive program that utilizes prescriptive instructional methods and supplementary materials different from those used during the year of retention and based on a review of all assessments, progress monitoring and outcomes from the prior year. The student's learning style will be considered in planning this instruction. These retained students will be placed with high performing teachers as determined by student performance data and above-satisfactory performance appraisals. Additionally, a —Read at Home|| plan outlined in a parental contract, including participation in Families Building Better Readers workshops, will be developed and parents will be encouraged to participate in the plan.

4. A student who has been retained two or more years (at any combination of grade levels) must be provided an alternative placement. The alternative placement should include an environment that is based upon the needs of the student and is not merely retention in or promotion to a regular classroom without supplemental services that meet the student's particular needs.

### **Instructional Requirements – Elementary Grades**

1. Instruction in language arts, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, music, and fine arts will be regularly scheduled for all students in grades K-5. In grades K-5, a 90 minute, uninterrupted block of time shall be set aside for reading instruction. At least 150 minutes of physical education must be provided each week in sessions that last no less than 30 minutes.

Students in grades K-5 are eligible to waive the physical education requirement if the student is enrolled or required to enroll in a remedial course or the student's parent indicates in writing to the school that: 1) the parent requests that a student enroll in another course from among those offered as options by the school district; or 2) the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement.

2. Instruction in environmental education, nutrition, health education, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, conservation of natural resources, kindness to animals, flag education, agricultural principles, consumer education, and Florida history will be provided in appropriate classes. Instruction in the sacrifices that veterans have made in serving our country and protecting democratic values worldwide will be provided. Such instruction must occur on or before Veteran's Day and Memorial Day. Members of the instructional staff are encouraged to use the assistance of local veterans when feasible. A character development program is also required for all elementary schools.

3. Pupil proficiency levels in reading, writing, mathematics, and science will be evaluated at each grade level. Students who are identified as non-proficient according to district criteria will be provided intensive remediation through a Progress Monitoring Plan. School personnel may waive instruction in all areas except reading, writing, mathematics and science in order to schedule remedial instruction necessitated by a Progress Monitoring Plan created through consultation with the parents.

4. District assessments at the elementary level shall consist of the District Writing Assessment, **Discovery Education Benchmark Assessments**, and the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) progress monitoring throughout the school year in grades K-5.