



## Read to Succeed Overview

This information is for parents of South Carolina’s third-grade students. It is designed to help parents understand what South Carolina’s Read to Succeed legislation says about reading requirements for third grade students and promotion to fourth grade. It also describes what the school will do to help children who are reading below grade level.

### Background

Reading and comprehension are the foundations for all academic learning. Walk into any kindergarten, first, second, or third grade classroom and you will find students learning to read. Students may be talking about the sounds letters make, listening to the teacher read a story, reading aloud together, or talking and writing about what they have read. Reading is the core of the school day for young children because students need strong reading skills to learn in all other school subjects, such as science, social studies, writing, and even math.

### The Law

South Carolina law states, “Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment that equates to Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS).”

This school year’s 2017–18 third grade students will be the first group of students impacted by this portion of the Read to Succeed legislation. The state summative reading assessment this year will be SC Ready. More information about the SC Ready summative assessment can be found on the State Department of Education Website: <http://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/south-carolina-college-and-career-ready-assessments-sc-ready/>

### Good Cause Exemptions

Some students with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and those who have been previously retained can receive a “good cause exemption” and be promoted to the fourth grade even if they are not reading at the required level. Other good cause exemptions exist for students who scored poorly on the state summative assessment, but who have demonstrated grade-level reading proficiency on other tests or through a literacy assessment portfolio (LAP).

### Expectations for Third Graders

The specific skills that students need in reading are described in the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready (SCCCR) Standards. Designed by stakeholders in South Carolina, the SCCCR Standards outline what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level.

By the end of third grade, students are expected to be able to read independently and comprehend a variety of texts. This means they can read and understand words, sentences, and



paragraphs without help. Third grade students should become self-directed, critical thinkers and readers.

## Why Third Grade?

According to the 2013 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), only thirty-five percent of the nation's fourth grade students are reading on grade level. A substantial reading deficiency must be addressed before students can move on to the more difficult schoolwork required in fourth grade and beyond when textbooks become more complex and reading passages are longer. Those who have trouble understanding what they read find it very difficult to keep up. Many students become frustrated when they try to tackle this schoolwork without independent reading skills. For some students, this leads to years of difficulty in school and limited opportunities in college and career.

## PROMOTION, RETENTION AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

Code **IKE-R** Issued **7/14**

### Philosophy

We believe each student will be provided maximum opportunities to achieve at least on grade-level competency in reading, mathematics, science and social studies.

The curriculum will enable all students to make continuous progress at each grade level. When the retention of a student is necessary, the decision will be made on the basis of achievement and grade-level competency as measured by state identified tests, attendance record and judgment of educators.

The philosophy of this policy applies to all students who are in the regular school program. Students functioning in the special education programs are governed by their Individual Education Plans (IEP). This policy will be administered fairly, equitably and consistently in the schools. The policy will establish on grade-level mastery of skills as mandated by the state board of education and as identified in the South Carolina standards.

### Elementary level (grades two to five)

Mastery of reading/language arts and mathematics will be based on teacher-made tests, samples of assigned work and grade-level comprehensive tests. In grades two to five, district and/or state identified grade-level tests will be considered in determining promotion, academic probation or retention. In order to be promoted to the next grade level, a student must meet the following criteria.



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## *Reading*

Completion and mastery of grade-level reading/language arts standards and a yearly passing average of 60% including teacher-made assessments, culminating assessments and grade-level comprehensive tests.

## *Mathematics*

Completion and mastery of grade-level reading/language arts standards and a yearly passing average of 60% including teacher-made assessments, culminating assessments and grade-level comprehensive tests.

## *Additional promotion requirements*

In addition to mastery of reading and mathematics grade-level standards, students must also maintain an overall passing average in grades two through five science and social studies and meet attendance requirements to be considered for promotion.

## **Read to Succeed State-Mandated Retention**

Early in the school year and/or when a third grade student transfers in to a district or school, parents/legal guardians will be given a general notice regarding the requirements for promotion and retention.

## *Retention conference*

During the second grading period of the third grade, parents/legal guardians of students that are not demonstrating third-grade reading proficiency will be notified in writing that their child is being considered for retention. A parent/teacher conference will be scheduled and held, at which time the conference participants will review the student's intensive instruction and intervention plan. Within two weeks following the parent/teacher conference, copies of the plan will be provided to the principal, parent or legal guardian, teacher, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy.

If a parent/legal guardian is unable to attend the conference after two varied attempts at contact, the parent should be mailed a copy of the student's intensive instruction and intervention plan.

An additional parent/teacher conference will be held during the third nine week grading period for students still being considered for retention.

## *Retention determination*

The principal, classroom teacher, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy will review the recommendation for retention and provide suggestions for supplemental instruction. Recommendations and observations of the principal, teacher, parent/legal guardian, and other school personnel who are working with the student on literacy will be considered when determining whether to retain the student.

If it is determined that retention is appropriate, the student may be eligible to enroll in a summer reading camp provided by the district. District summer reading camps will be operated in



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accordance with the guidelines provided by the South Carolina Department of Education. Parents/Legal guardians may elect to opt their child out of participation in summer reading camp, with the understanding that the child will be unable to qualify for a good cause exemption on that ground. Information regarding the summer camp will be provided by the school or requested from the district office.

## *Good cause exemption determinations*

To request an exemption for good cause, the teacher of a student identified as potentially meeting one of the state-approved exemptions will submit documentation to the principal on the proposed exemption and include evidence that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the student's academic record. This evidence will be limited to the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), alternative assessments, or student reading portfolio.

The principal will review the documentation and determine whether the student should be promoted. If the principal determines the student should be promoted, the principal will submit a written recommendation for promotion to the superintendent for final determination.

The superintendent will determine whether a student may be exempted from the mandatory retention policy. The superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the principal's recommendation will be in writing and a copy will be provided to the child's parent/legal guardian.

## *Good cause exemption determinations for students with disabilities*

A third grade student with disabilities will be exempt from the mandatory retention policy if the student is eligible to take a South Carolina alternative assessment and receives instruction aligned to the state's alternative achievement standards, or the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years.

To demonstrate intensive remediation in reading, there must be:

- documentation that the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance have resulted in one or more annual goals and specialized instruction and/or related services in the area of reading for two or more years
- documentation of intensive general education interventions in the area of reading for two or more years
- a combination of special education services and intensive general education intervention in the area of reading for two or more years

Any evidence submitted to document intensive remediation or evidence-based interventions will be in addition to the student's ninety minutes of daily reading and writing instruction as required by law.

## *Appeal of a retention determination*

A parent/legal guardian may appeal the decision to retain a student to the district superintendent if there is a compelling reason why the student should not be retained. To initiate an appeal, the



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parent/legal guardian must notify the superintendent in writing within two weeks after receiving the notification of the retention decision. The letter must be addressed to the superintendent and must include the reasons why the student should not be retained. The superintendent will render a final, written decision and provide copies to the parent/legal guardian and the principal.

### *Appointment of an education advocate*

Parents/Legal guardians are permitted to designate another person as an education advocate to act on their behalf to receive notification of their child's level of reading proficiency and to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the child. Parents/Legal guardians interested in appointing such an advocate should contact principal in writing to make their request.

Please sign below and return to your child's teacher.

Parent/Guardian Name ( <b>PRINTED</b> )	
Parent/Guardian Signature	
Date	



Administrative Office

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8/16/2017

Re: Initial Parent Notification

Dear Third Grade Parent/Guardian:

The South Carolina Read to Succeed Act became law in 2014. The intent of this law is to ensure all students have the reading skills necessary to become college and career ready. This law includes significant changes regarding the promotion and retention of third grade students.

**The students in third grade during the 2017-18 school year will be the first group of students to be impacted by this portion of the Read to Succeed legislation.**

**The law states:**

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment that equates to Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS).

Though there are a number of exceptions to this requirement in the law, please be assured that our school district's goal is that all students will be proficient readers by the end of third grade. Actions to improve student success include additional instructional time devoted to literacy, small group and individualized instruction, and classroom teachers receiving specialized literacy training and support from school-based literacy coaches.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact our school's reading coach, Janet Preston-Mack. You may also find information about the Read to Succeed Act on the South Carolina Department of Education website: <http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/office-of-early-learning-and-literacy1/>

Sincerely,

*Shawn P. Hagerty, Ed.D.*  
*Principal of Crosswell Drive Elementary*



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8/16/2017

Re: Required Notice End of Second Grading Period of Third Grade

Dear Third Grade Parent/Guardian:

Section 59-155-160 of Act 284, Read to Succeed, states "a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment [SC READY] that equates to Not Met 1 on [the prior test, SC PASS]."

It is our district's goal that your child become a proficient reader and advance on schedule to fourth grade. Your child's progress has been regularly assessed and additional supports have been provided based on the results of those assessments. These efforts are reflected in the written progress reports previously provided to you.

At this time, your child is not demonstrating the grade-level reading progress needed to score at the designated proficiency level on this year's SC READY. This is based on a review of your child's reading portfolio, including your child's assessments to date, as well as independent classwork and teacher observations. Should your child not score high enough to demonstrate reading proficiency on SC READY, your child **may not** be promoted to fourth grade.

There are several "good cause exemptions" to the law's retention requirement. If a student does not qualify for one of the exemptions, the student can attend a summer reading camp. If the student demonstrates the necessary level of reading proficiency at the end of the camp, your child can be considered for promotion to fourth grade.

Working in partnership with you, the district remains committed to seeing that your child successfully demonstrates proficiency on the end-of-year state reading assessment and advances to fourth grade. Please stay in communication with your child's teacher to monitor progress and identify additional ways that you can support your child's reading development at home.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions.

Sincerely,

***[Insert Principal Name and Contact Information]***





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8/16/2017

RE: Invitation to Attend Summer Reading Camp

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is supporting school districts in providing summer reading camps (SRC) as required by Act 284, Read to Succeed, for those students identified as not successfully reaching grade-level proficiency in reading based on reading assessment results and teacher observation. Section 59-155-160 of Act 284 states:

Beginning with the 2017-2018 School Year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade. A student may be exempt from mandatory retention if he qualifies for a “good cause exemption,” one of which is successful participation in a summer reading camp.

Based upon review of your child’s formal and informal reading assessment results and student portfolio, **[CHILD’S NAME]** is not demonstrating grade-level reading proficiency, and as a result, will be retained if a “good cause” exemption does not exist. If your child successfully completes SRC, as demonstrated by assessment results indicating increased progress toward grade level expectations, including regular attendance and participation, your child will be re-evaluated for promotion to fourth grade.

The goal of SRC is to provide additional reading instruction in support of moving each student closer to grade level proficiency. Research shows reading on grade level by the end of third grade is a critical factor in determining a child’s future success. The objectives of SRC include:

- teaching students strategies to assist them in reading comprehension;
- making the reading experience pleasurable for students building upon their interests; and
- promoting the belief in students that they can be successful readers.

The details for this summer’s SRC are:

- SRC will be held for **[indicate the number of weeks, dates, daily hours, and days of the week]**.
- SRC will begin at **[provide starting and ending dates and times]**.
- Classes will have a student to teacher ratio of no more than 15 to 1.
- SRC will be held at **[insert location]**.
- Bus transportation will be provided.
- Breakfast and lunch will be provided.
- Community partnership activities will be included as part of SRC.

Please complete the attached enrollment form and return to **[insert name]** as indicated no later than **[insert date]**. We look forward to providing additional support to your child through SRC. Please do not hesitate to contact your school’s reading coach, **[INSERT NAME]**, should you have questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

**[Insert principal’s name and contact information]**





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## SUMMER READING CAMP ENROLLMENT FORM

Please return to your child's teacher no later than **[insert date]**.

<input type="checkbox"/>	MY CHILD WILL ATTEND 2018 SUMMER READING CAMP.
<input type="checkbox"/>	MY CHILD WILL <b>NOT</b> ATTEND 2018 SUMMER READING CAMP.

### STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name			
Classroom Teacher			
School Name			Grade Level
Student Summer Address ( <b>This is the address the buss office uses for transportation purposes.</b> )			City
			Zip Code

### PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian Name ( <b>Print</b> )	Email		
Telephone Number	Alternate Telephone Number		
Emergency Contact Name	Telephone Number		

### TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Transportation <b>to</b> Camp (Circle One)		Transportation <b>from</b> Camp	
CAR RIDER	BUS RIDER	CAR RIDER	BUS RIDER

List the names and relationships of those permitted to pick up and drop off your child at SRC.

Name	Phone Number
Relationship	
Name	Phone Number
Relationship	
Name	Phone Number
Relationship	



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OTHER INFORMATION	
Allergies? (Please list.)	Medical Conditions? (Please list.)
I give permission for my child, _____, to be photographed or videotaped during camp.	
YES	NO

The behavioral and attendance expectations and objectives of SRC summer reading camps are the same as those during the regular school year. A safe and positive environment for learning is paramount.

For summer reading camps to have the maximum impact on student achievement, regular attendance is required. If a child is absent or late for any reason, it is the expectation that the parent/guardian notify the site coordinator at the camp location immediately.

A child's behavior should demonstrate the use of appropriate language; cooperation with staff including following directions; respect for others, equipment, and self; and a positive attitude.

I have read and understand all information provided regarding my child's participation in summer reading camp and agree to support him/her as a learner at camp and at home.

Parent/Guardian Name ( <b>PRINTED</b> )	
Parent/Guardian Signature	
Date	