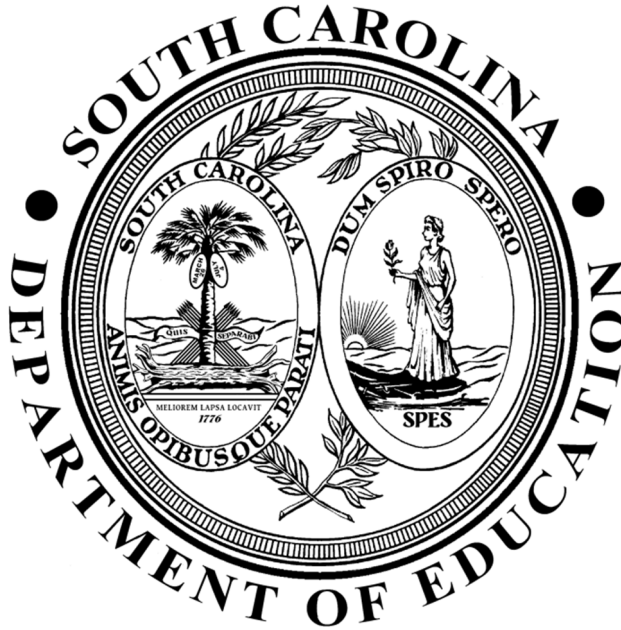


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



**Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention
Guidance Document**

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Introduction and Overview

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) provides this guidance document to assist districts and schools in understanding the requirements of Read to Succeed, specifically Section 59-155-160 that addresses third grade retention (see Appendix A). In addition to this document, the Read to Succeed webpage serves as a collection of resources for administrators, educators, and parents.

S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-160 (2014) 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).

Those students enrolled in second grade during the 2016–17 school year, will be the first class of students affected by these mandatory retention requirements. The Third Grade Retention Flow Chart (see page 5) is a visual representation of the process for determining promotion or retention of third grade students.

The goal of all South Carolina educators should be to ensure each student receives high-quality literacy instruction and has the opportunity to increase their proficiency in reading. The law provides six good cause exemptions to retention; however, “[a] student may be exempt for good cause from the mandatory retention requirements but shall continue to receive instructional support and services and reading intervention appropriate for their age and reading level.” S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-160(A).

In the process of determining whether a student is promoted or retained, schools need to examine closely whether a student is exempt from retention. Districts, schools, teachers, parents, and families have a responsibility to communicate the strengths and needs of students while working as a team to ensure students continue to make progress towards becoming life-long, proficient readers.

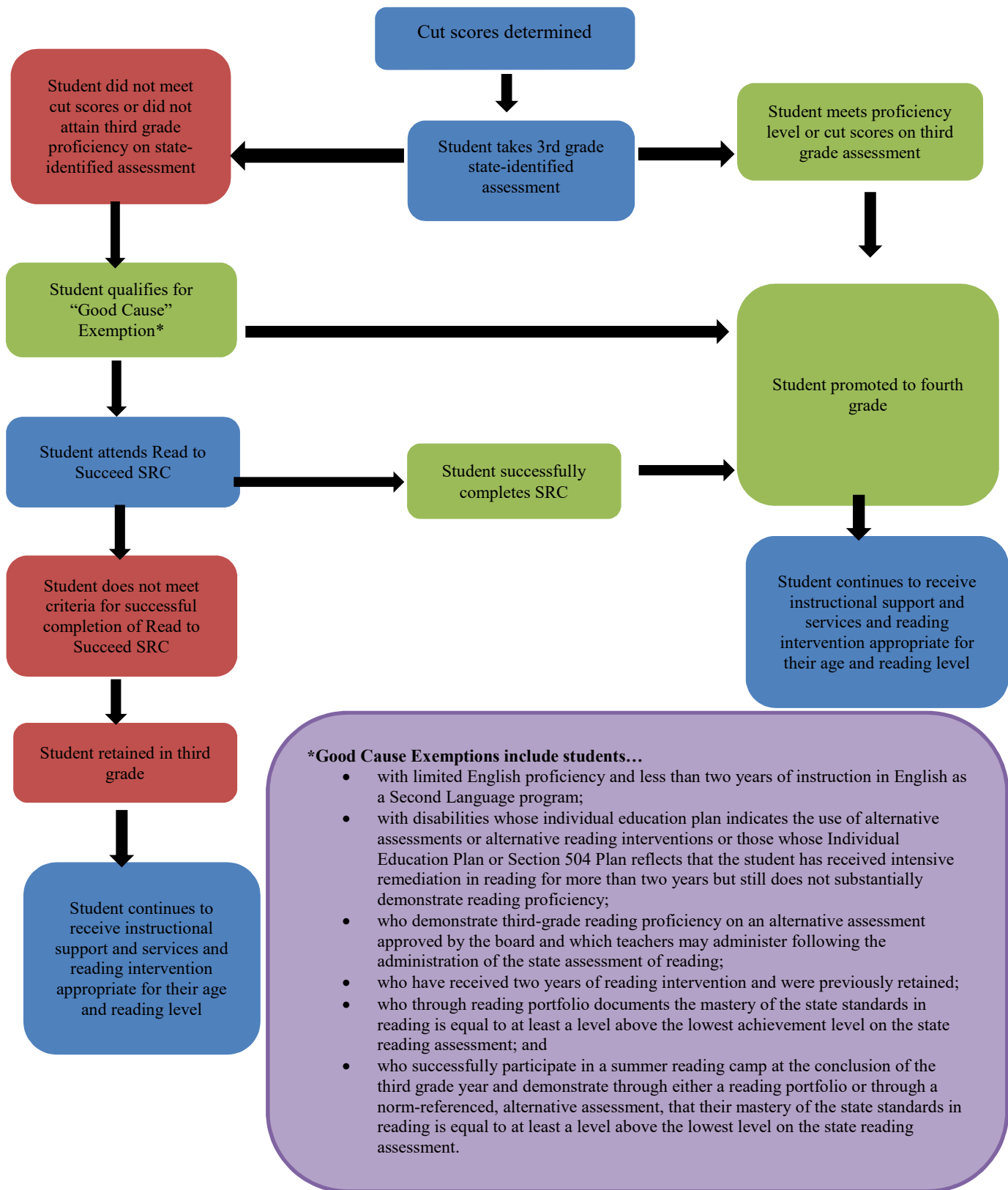
Per Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed, good cause exemptions from mandatory retention include students:

- (1) with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program;
- (2) with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan or Section 504 Plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still does not substantially demonstrate reading proficiency;

- (3) who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the board and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading;
- (4) who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained;
- (5) who through a reading portfolio document, the student's mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment. Such evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the state English/language arts standards that are assessed by the grade three state reading assessment. The Read to Succeed Office shall develop the assessment tool for the student portfolio; however, the student portfolio must meet the following minimum criteria:
 - (a) be selected by the student's English/language arts teacher or summer reading camp instructor;
 - (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 three state reading assessment have been met. Evidence is to include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty percent literary text and forty percent information text, and that are between one hundred and seven hundred words with an average of five hundred words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district or school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the state English/language arts standards or teacher-prepared assessments;
 - (d) be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the English/language arts state standards that are assessed by the grade three state reading assessment. For each benchmark there must be at least three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of seventy percent or above; and
 - (e) be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills; and
- (6) who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a reading portfolio or through a norm-referenced, alternative assessment, selected from a list of norm-referenced, alternative assessments approved by the Read to Succeed Office for use in the summer reading camps, that the student's mastery of the state standards in reading is equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment.

If a student meets one of the exemptions mentioned above, the student may be considered for promotion to fourth grade. The explanations and resources included in this document are intended to provide guidance, support, and examples to support districts and schools as they fully implement this section of Read to Succeed.

Third Grade Promotion/Retention Flowchart



Legislative Requirements

The following sections elaborate on the legislative requirements of Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed.

Communication with Parents and Families

Read to Succeed requires a team approach to assist students not progressing toward grade-level reading proficiency. The classroom teacher, building administrator, and others have a role in involving parents and families as key team members in supporting their student at home as well as at school. The *Read to Succeed Retention Notification Timeline for Third Grade* outlines the requirements for parent and family communication and can be found in Appendix B. Appendix A provides samples of parent letters and other resources that districts and schools can customize and use as appropriate.

Per Section 59-155-160(E) of Read to Succeed, the following communication with parents and families must occur in a timely manner:

- Early in the school year and/or when a third grade student transfers into a district or school, school administrators must send a general notice to all third grade parents regarding the Read to Succeed requirements for promotion or retention (see Appendix B).
- During the second nine week grading period:
 - The data, intensive instruction, and the interventions provided to the student are shared with parents during a parent-teacher conference.
 - Parents of third graders are informed that data indicates their student is not progressing toward reaching grade level proficiency in reading (see Appendix B).
- The *Read to Succeed Plan for Intensive Instruction and Intervention* document found on pages 29-31, or a district or school developed document that meets the requirements of Read to Succeed, can be used as documentation of the conference and the actions taken. Parents are required to sign this document as a record of the conference. After making two varied attempts to contact a parent and the parent is still unable to attend the conference, this same information is to be mailed. An additional parent/teacher conference shall be held during the third nine week grading period for students still being considered for retention.
- During the fourth nine week grading period, SRC pre-assessment results and a reading portfolio for those students still not achieving grade-level proficiency are reviewed. Recommendations for promotion or retention are made. Parents of students are again notified of the student's progress.
- Students identified for possible retention must be invited to attend a Read to Succeed SRC (Appendix B). Parents can accept or decline this invitation, however, this good cause exemption does not apply if the student does not attend and successfully complete the Read to Succeed SRC.

After completion of a Read to Succeed SRC, the student's reading portfolio and SRC post-assessment results are reviewed to determine eligibility for promotion to fourth grade. A recommendation from the SRC teacher and site coordinator is made to the building principal of the school the student will attend in the fall. The principal makes a promotion or retention recommendation to the district superintendent. The district superintendent makes the final decision. Parents have a right to appeal the decision. Local school board policies must comply with the Read to Succeed requirements. S.C. Code Ann. §59-160(B)(1)-(3).

Literacy Assessment Portfolio (LAP)

The purpose of the Literacy Assessment Portfolio (LAP) or a locally developed portfolio (also referred to as a Reading Portfolio) is to provide evidence of a student's progress in the area of literacy. It is a way to collect data that informs teachers, parents, and administrators in determining instructional and intervention decisions. Maintaining a portfolio for every student is good practice; however, Section 59-155-160(A)(5) of Read to Succeed states that all students not demonstrating grade-level proficiency **must** have a portfolio indicating the intensive instruction and interventions provided. A LAP or a locally developed portfolio is kept each school year a student is not reaching grade-level proficiency in reading. Districts and schools may use the LAP as presented, modify it to better meet individual needs, or use a system of documentation already in place. The student's LAP or locally developed portfolio should follow the student from teacher to teacher, school to school, and district to district (page 33). If a student transfers to another school, district, or state the portfolio follows the student. If a student transfers in to a South Carolina district or school without a portfolio, an approved assessment should be administered immediately. The portfolio requirement for Read to Succeed begins at this point in time.

Per Section 59-155-160(A)(5) of Read to Succeed, the LAP is divided into five sections: (1) state-approved assessments, (2) required documentation, (3) intervention and progress monitoring, (4) SRC, and (5) grade level target scores. Each section is explained in greater detail below.

Section (1) State-Approved Assessments

After completing the identifying information for the student, the teacher records the scores from assessments administered at various points during the current school year. It is recommended that assessments be given three times during the school year - beginning, middle, and the end - especially for those students identified as not demonstrating grade-level proficiency. The student's assessment score is recorded in the box to the right of the grade level target (GLT) column. The GLT for the specified assessment administered is recorded in the column under GLT. This allows the teacher to see where the child is at a particular point in time in relation to what is expected at that same point in time toward reaching grade-level proficiency based on the target for each assessment period. A GLT table can be found on page 16 to aid in recording the appropriate data. The table is also included in section 5 of the LAP.

Section (2) Required Documentation

Section 59-155-160(A)(5)(d) of Read to Succeed requires a minimum of three samples of independently student produced work which best reflects a student's reading and writing development be included in the student's portfolio.

In addition, evidence that the student meets the expectations of the third grade standards should be included. This evidence could be locally developed benchmark assessments or chapter or unit tests from the state adopted English language arts instructional materials. Passages used should contain approximately sixty percent literary text and forty percent informational text and contain between one hundred and seven hundred words with an average of five hundred words.

Prior to a student's transferring to another school, attending SRC, or moving to another classroom, comments should be written indicating strengths as well as opportunities for growth in reading and writing for each student. Space is provided in this section for inserting comments by nine-week period.

Section (3) Intervention and Progress Monitoring

In this section, the teacher records the score from the last progress monitoring assessment given to the student. Current assessment data will inform the more intensive instruction and intervention support the student receives. This data should also be indicated on the *Read to Succeed Plan for Intensive Instruction and Intervention* or on a district-developed form so that this information can be easily accessed and shared when needed. The types and frequency of the interventions provided should also be recorded in this section. If a district developed plan is used, the district must ensure the plan addresses the requirements specified in Read to Succeed.

The SCDE recommends that the raw score the student obtains on each subtest of the assessment chosen for progress monitoring is recorded over the total possible score for each subtest. When running or text passage reading records are used, the score (instructional level) and date of the most recent assessment should be included in the student's LAP or locally-developed portfolio. This is especially important if a student transfers to another school or district, moves to another classroom, and/or attends SRC.

Section (4) SRC Information

SRC teachers are often different from the student's school-year classroom teacher. It is imperative that student portfolios kept by classroom teachers during the school year are provided to the SRC teacher. Data regarding the student's participation and progress as a result of attending SRC is a critical component of the student's portfolio. The SRC teacher will record the required data for the student at the conclusion of the SRC and each student's portfolio will be provided to the next school year's teacher. The district should establish a plan for sharing this information.

Section (5) Grade Level Targets (GLT)

A table to identify suggested grade-level targets for commonly used assessments can be found on page 16. It is designed to assist teachers in looking closely at the instructional "targets" toward a trajectory that supports students in reaching grade level reading proficiency. GLTs for several commonly-used assessments for the beginning, middle, and ending periods for each grade level

are provided. The scores included for each assessment data which should be used to adjust instruction to better ensure appropriate and adequate progress toward reaching grade-level proficiency.

Norm-Referenced, Alternative Assessments

The good cause exemption referenced in Section 59-155-160(A)(3) of Read to Succeed allows for students who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the board and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading to be promoted.

Section 59-155-160(A)(6) of Read to Succeed allows for students who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a reading portfolio or through a norm-referenced, alternative assessment, selected from a list of norm-referenced, alternative assessments approved by the Read to Succeed Office for use in the summer reading camps to be promoted to fourth grade.

The Office of Early Learning and Literacy in collaboration with the Office of Assessment has determined that the alternative assessment will be either STAR or Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).

Intervention and Progress Monitoring

Early intervention for students who may be struggling toward reaching grade-level proficiency is vital to ensure students become proficient, life-long readers. As Dr. Richard Allington states, “The purpose of support programs offering intensive, expert instruction should be to meet the needs of those students who will need more than effective classroom teaching in order to learn to read well.” See Richard L. Allington, *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers: Designing Research-Based Programs* (2001).

Section 59-155-150 (B) of Read to Succeed requires as follows:

Any student enrolled in prekindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade who is substantially not demonstrating proficiency in reading, based upon formal diagnostic assessments or through teacher observations, must be provided intensive in-class and supplemental reading intervention immediately upon determination. The intensive interventions must be provided as individualized and small group assistance based on the analysis of assessment data. All sustained interventions must be aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan. These interventions must be at least thirty minutes in duration and be in addition to ninety minutes of daily reading and writing instruction provided to all students in kindergarten through grade three. The district must continue to provide intensive in-class intervention and at least thirty minutes of supplemental intervention until the student can comprehend and write text at grade-level independently. In addition, the parent or guardian of the student must be notified, in writing, of the child's inability to read grade-level texts, the interventions to be provided, and the child's reading abilities at the end of the

planned interventions. The results of the initial assessments and progress monitoring also must be provided to the Read to Succeed Office.

The following components of Read to Succeed address intervention:

- Parents must be notified, in writing, regarding the need for intervention and what interventions will be provided. It is good practice to establish a partnership between parents and teachers. This may be accomplished through regular parent teacher conferences. Parents are to be informed of their student's literacy progress at the end of planned interventions. S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-150(B).
- A plan must be in place to address a student's need for intensive instruction and intervention. The *Read to Succeed Plan for Intensive Instruction and Intervention* is a document designed to be completed by the classroom teacher for each student who is not demonstrating progress toward reaching grade-level proficiency in reading. This document is intended to be part of the student's LAP and provides valuable data. S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-150.
- High-quality classroom instruction provided by the classroom teacher is the first line of defense in reducing the need for more intensive interventions. S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-170. For more detailed information regarding how Tiers I, II, and III interventions work together to provide the support the student needs to reach grade-level proficiency, see the South Carolina Intervention Guidance Document: Kindergarten through Grade Five accessed at the following link: <http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/office-of-early-learning-and-literacy1/read-to-succeed1/interventions>.

Summer Reading Camp (SRC)

Districts are required to provide SRCs at the end of a student's third grade year for those students recommended for retention. SRCs are another intervention for students who are still unable to comprehend grade-level texts at this point in time. Third grade students who attend and successfully complete SRC may qualify for a good cause exemption from mandatory retention. These students **must** have a portfolio that provides evidence indicating student mastery of state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment (SC READY). S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-160(A)(6). Students in other grade levels, especially those identified as not progressing toward grade-level proficiency, should also be invited to attend SRC. S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-160(C)(2).

Additional Resources

The following sections of this document include sample resources that districts and schools may use or modify to determine progress toward grade level proficiency, communication, and documentation of the Read to Succeed third grade retention requirements. These documents are presented as examples districts and schools may use or modify to best meet individual needs. Districts and schools may use currently established processes for communication or documentation already in place if they are aligned to the expectations included in Read to Succeed.

A number of these resources were contributed by members of the Third Grade Retention Task Force or have been modified from South Carolina districts or other states with similar legislation.

Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention Document

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Appendix A - Grade Level Expectations

A.1 Excerpt from Read to Succeed, Section 59-155-160.

(A) 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). A student may be exempt for good cause from the mandatory retention but shall continue to receive instructional support and services and reading intervention appropriate for their age and reading level. Good cause exemptions include students:

- (1) with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program;
- (2) with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan or Section 504 Plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still does not substantially demonstrate reading proficiency;
- (3) who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the board and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading;
- (4) who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained;
- (5) who through a reading portfolio document, the student's mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment. Such evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the state English/language arts standards that are assessed by the grade three state reading assessment. The Read to Succeed Office shall develop the assessment tool for the student portfolio; however, the student portfolio must meet the following minimum criteria:
 - (a) be selected by the student's English/language arts teacher or summer reading camp instructor;
 - (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 three state reading assessment have been met. Evidence is to include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty percent literary text and forty percent information text, and that are between one hundred and seven hundred words with an average of five hundred words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district or school's

adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the state English/language arts standards or teacher-prepared assessments;

(d) be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the English/language arts state standards that are assessed by the grade three state reading assessment. For each benchmark there must be at least three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of seventy percent or above; and

(e) be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills; and

(6) who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a reading portfolio or through a norm-referenced, alternative assessment, selected from a list of norm-referenced, alternative assessments approved by the Read to Succeed Office for use in the summer reading camps, that the student's mastery of the state standards in reading is equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment.

(B) The superintendent of the local school district must determine whether a student in the district may be exempt from the mandatory retention by taking all of the following steps:

(1) The teacher of a student eligible for exemption must submit to the principal documentation on the proposed exemption and evidence that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the student's academic record. This evidence must be limited to the student's individual education program, alternative assessments, or student reading portfolio. The Read to Succeed Office must provide districts with a standardized form to use in the process.

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

(3) The district superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the recommendation must be in writing and a copy must be provided to the parent or guardian of the child.

(4) A parent or 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. A parent or legal guardian must appeal, in writing, within two weeks after the notification of retention. The letter must be addressed to the district superintendent and specify the reasons why the student should not be retained. The district superintendent shall render a decision and provide copies to the parent or legal guardian and the principal.

(C)(1) Students eligible for retention under the provisions in Section 59-155-160(A) may enroll in a summer reading camp provided by their school district or a summer reading camp consortium to which their district belongs prior to being retained the following school year.

Summer reading camps must be at least six weeks in duration with a minimum of four days of instruction per week and four hours of instruction per day, or the equivalent minimum hours of instruction in the summer. The camps must be taught by compensated teachers who have at least an add-on literacy endorsement or who have documented and demonstrated substantial success in helping students comprehend grade level texts. The Read to Succeed Office shall assist districts that cannot find qualified teachers to work in the summer camps. Districts also may choose to contract for the services of qualified instructors or collaborate with one or more districts to provide a summer reading camp. Schools and school districts are encouraged to partner with county or school libraries, institutions of higher learning, community organizations, faith-based institutions, businesses, pediatric and family practice medical personnel, and other groups to provide volunteers, mentors, tutors, space, or other support to assist with the provision of the summer reading camps. A parent or guardian of a student who does not substantially demonstrate proficiency in comprehending texts appropriate for his grade level must make the final decision regarding the student's participation in the summer reading camp.

(2) A district may include in the summer reading camps students who are not exhibiting reading proficiency at any grade and do not meet the good cause exemption. Districts may charge fees for these students to attend the summer reading camps based on a sliding scale pursuant to Section 59-19-90, except where a child is found to be reading below grade level in the first, second, or third grade and does not meet the good cause exemption.

(D) Retained students must be provided intensive instructional services and support, including a minimum of ninety minutes of daily reading and writing instruction, supplemental text-based instruction, and other strategies prescribed by the school district. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, instruction directly focused on improving the student's individual reading proficiency skills through small group instruction, reduced teacher-student ratios, more frequent student progress monitoring, tutoring or mentoring, transition classes containing students in multiple grade spans, and extended school day, week, or year reading support. The school must report to the Read to Succeed Office on the progress of students in the class at the end of the school year and at other times as required by the office based on the reading progression monitoring requirements of these students.

(E) If the student is not demonstrating third-grade reading proficiency by the end of the second grading period of the third grade:

(1)(a) his parent or guardian timely must be notified, in writing, that the student is being considered for retention and a conference with the parent or guardian must be held prior to a determination regarding retention is made, and conferences must be documented;

(b) within two weeks following the parent/teacher conference, copies of the conference form must be provided to the principal, parent or guardian, teacher and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy, and summary statements must be sent to parents or legal guardians who do not attend the conference;

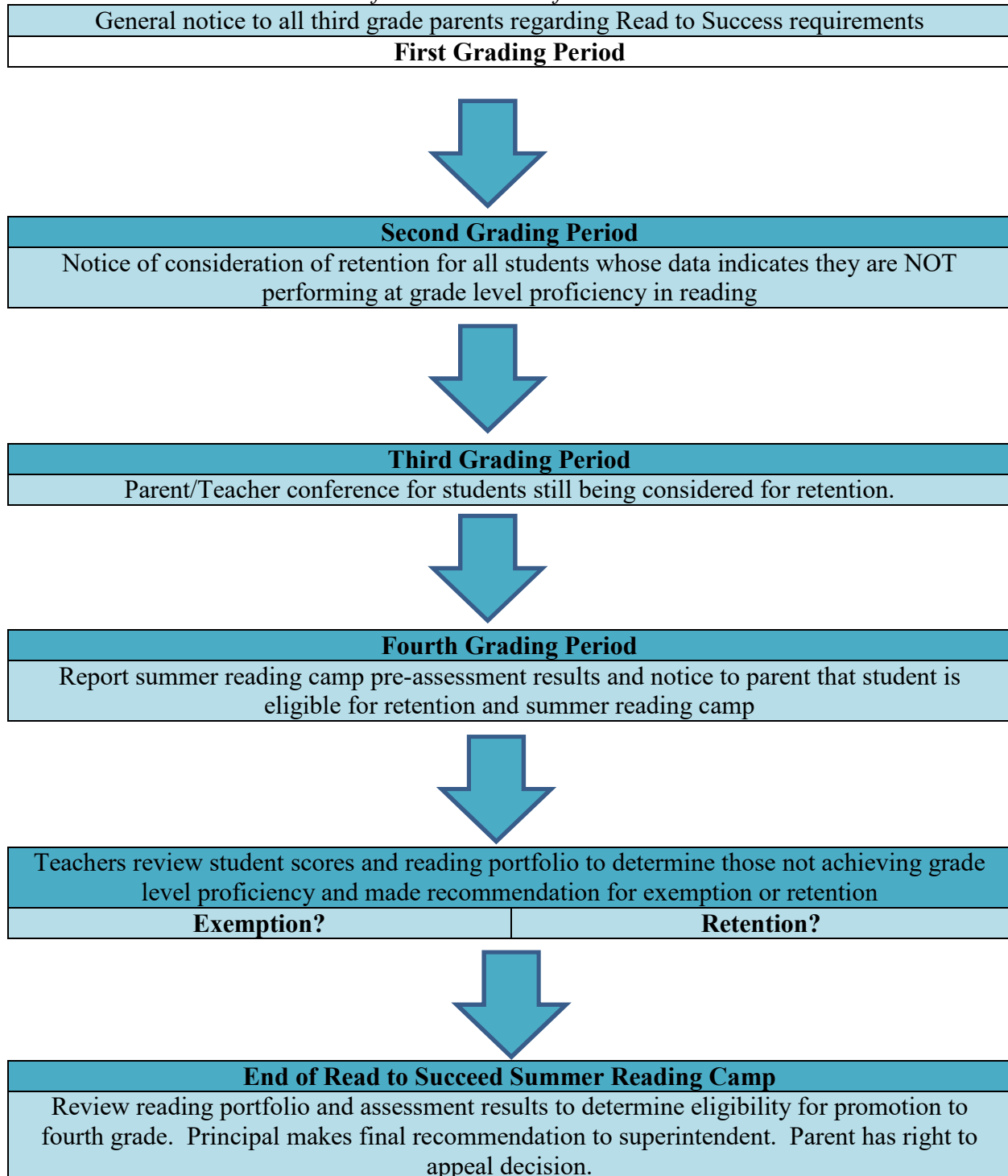
(c) following the parent/teacher retention conference, the principal, classroom teacher, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy must review the recommendation for retention and provide suggestions for supplemental instruction; and

(d) recommendations and observations of the principal, teacher, parent or legal guardian, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy must be considered when determining whether to retain the student.

(2) The parent or guardian may designate another person as an education advocate also to act on their behalf to receive notification and to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the child. The parent or guardian of a retained student must be offered supplemental tutoring for the retained student in evidenced-based services outside the instructional day.

(F) For students in grades four and above who are substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency, interventions shall be provided by reading interventionists in the classroom and supplementally by teachers with a literacy teacher add-on endorsement or reading/literacy coaches. This supplemental support will be provided during the school day and, as appropriate, before or after school as documented in the district reading plan, and may include book clubs or summer reading camps.

A.2 Read to Succeed Retention Notification Timeline for Third Grade



Appendix B – Communication Samples

The following documents are intended to be examples that districts and schools may use or modify to best meet individual needs.

- B.1. Read to Succeed Overview Sample
- B.2 Read to Succeed Sample Parent Letter A: Third Grade Retention Policy
- B.3. Read to Succeed Sample Parent Letter B: Third Grade Retention Policy
- B.4. Sample Letter C- Required Notice End of Second Grading Period of Third Grade
- B.5. Sample Letter D- Invitation to Attend Summer Reading Camp (Third Grade Students)
- B.6. Sample SRC Enrollment Form
- B.7. Sample Letter E Invitation to Summer Reading Camp
- B.8. Sample Letter F Retention Letter after Summer Reading Camp
- B.9. Read to Succeed Exemption from Mandatory Retention



Read to Succeed

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

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 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 in 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

Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed states, "[b]eginning 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)."

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 reading portfolio.

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.

[Insert district-specific or school-specific materials and contact information.]

B.2. Read to Succeed Sample Parent Letter A: Third Grade Retention Policy

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

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

Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed 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 Read to Succeed, 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 your school’s principal or the below-listed contact in our district office. You may also find information about the Read to Succeed Act on the South Carolina Department of Education website at <http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/office-of-early-learning-and-literacy1/>

Thank you.

[NAME]

[TITLE]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]

Sample

B.3. Read to Succeed Sample Parent Letter B: Third Grade Retention Policy

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As you may be aware, the South Carolina Read to Succeed Act, which became law in 2014, aims to improve literacy and reading proficiency for all children in our state. Read to Succeed includes some significant changes regarding promotion and retention of third grade students.

Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed states, “[b]eginning 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 third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state’s summative reading assessment that equates to Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS).” There are six exceptions number to this requirement provided for in Section 59-155-160(A) of Read to Succeed. Your child’s principal will be able to discuss these exceptions with you in greater detail.

Please be assured that our district’s goal is for all students to be proficient readers in third grade and for no student to be retained for failing to demonstrate reading proficiency. The district is putting supports in place to improve student success. These supports may include additional instructional time, small group and individualized instruction, and targeted interventions.

Classroom teachers and school administrators are receiving specialized literacy training and support from school-based reading coaches and interventionists.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact your school’s principal or your child’s teacher. You can also find information about Read to Succeed on the school district’s web page (link below) and on the South Carolina Department of Education web page <http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/office-of-early-learning-and-literacy1/>

Sincerely,

[Superintendent or Associate Superintendent or designated other contact information]

[Insert district web page link]

Sample

B.4. Sample Letter C- Required Notice End of Second Grading Period of Third Grade

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Section 59-155-160 of 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 Read to Succeeds retention requirement. *See* S.C. Code Ann. §59-155-160(A). 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]

Sample

B.5. Sample Letter D- Invitation to Attend Summer Reading Camp (Third Grade Students)

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is supporting school districts in providing summer reading camps (SRC) as required by 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 Read to Succeed 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/she 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, your child 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.
- Meals and snacks ***[will or will not]*** be provided.
- Community partnership activities will include ***[List some activities that will be provided if the district receives a Community Partnership Grant or other activities that will encourage regular attendance]***.

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 child's principal or teacher should you have questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

[Insert principal's name and contact information]

Sample

B.6. Sample SRC Enrollment Form

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

***[Insert School District]* SUMMER READING CAMP ENROLLMENT FORM**
Please return to *[insert name]* no later than *[insert date]*

	MY CHILD WILL ATTEND 2017 SUMMER READING CAMP.
	MY CHILD WILL NOT ATTEND 2017 SUMMER READING CAMP.

STUDENT INFORMATION							
STUDENT NAME							
CLASSROOM TEACHER NAME DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR							
SCHOOL NAME				GRADE LEVEL			
STUDENT ADDRESS				CITY			
				ZIP CODE			
PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION							
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME				EMAIL			
TELEPHONE NUMBER				ALTERNATE TELEPHONE NUMBER			
EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME				TELEPHONE NUMBER			
TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION							
TRANSPORTATION TO CAMP				TRANSPORTATION FROM CAMP			
CAR RIDER?		BUS RIDER?		CAR RIDER?		BUS RIDER?	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
LIST THE NAMES AND RELATIONSHIPS OF THOSE PERMITTED TO PICK UP AND DROP OFF YOUR CHILD AT SUMMER READING CAMP.							
NAME				RELATIONSHIP			
NAME				RELATIONSHIP			
NAME				RELATIONSHIP			
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 (PRINTED)	
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	
DATE	

B.7. Sample Letter D Invitation to Summer Reading Camp

(For students in grades other than third grade)

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian

Your child has been recommended to attend the district's Read to Succeed Summer Reading Camp (SRC). Based on a review of your child's current academic progress based on formal and informal assessment data, teacher observation, and consultation with others, your child would greatly benefit from this opportunity.

The SRC is designed for students needing extra support in becoming grade level proficient readers. The camps aim is to help students increase their reading skills as well as introducing content required for success at the next grade level. During the camp, students will receive intensive reading instruction from a certified teacher. They will be exposed to an abundance of fiction and non-fiction texts and will benefit from whole group, small group, and individual instruction.

If you wish for your child to participate in his opportunity, you must make a commitment for your child to attend every day for the entire length of camp. By signing the attached form, you agree to these terms. The details for the summer reading camp follow:

- 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.
- Meals and snacks ***[will or will not]*** be provided.
- Community partnership activities will include ***[List some activities that will be provided if the district receives a Community Partnership grant or other activities that will encourage regular attendance]***.

Please complete the attached enrollment forms and return as indicated no later than ***[insert date]***.

We look forward to providing additional support to your child through this summer's reading camp. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's principal or teacher should you have questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

[Insert name and contact information]

B.8. Sample Letter E. Retention Letter After Summer Reading Camp

<<Date>>

Parent/Guardian Name

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Beginning with the 2017–18 school year, the Read to Succeed Act calls for mandatory retention of third grade students who have not demonstrated reading proficiency following summer reading camp. The law allows promotion to fourth grade for students who, at the end of camp, score at a level that equates to being above the lowest level on the state reading assessment (SC READY).

Your student’s score on the end-of-camp assessment did not meet that requirement. Your student also does not meet one of the good cause exemptions listed below; therefore, <<Student>> will be retained in third grade.

Good cause exemptions include a student who

1. Is limited English proficient and has had less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program;
2. Has a disability and whose individual education plan indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions, and a student with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan or Section 504 plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still does not substantially demonstrate reading proficiency;
3. Demonstrated third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading;
4. Received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained;
5. Has a mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment as documented through a reading portfolio; or
6. Participates in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrates through either a reading portfolio or through a norm-referenced, alternative assessment, that the student’s mastery of the state standards in reading is equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment.

You may appeal the retention decision if there is a compelling reason why the student should not be retained. The appeal must –

- be in writing,
- be within two weeks after this notification,
- be addressed to the district superintendent, and
- specify the reasons why the student should not be retained.

Please send your written appeal to the superintendent's office by <<date>> to appeal this decision.

Sincerely yours,

Superintendent

B.9. Read to Succeed Exemption from Mandatory Retention

District Name:		School Name:	
Student's Legal Name:	(L)	(F)	(M)
SUNS Number:		Ethnicity:	Gender:
Reading Teacher:		Grade Level:	
ELL: Years of Service		Year Previously Retained	
Parent/Guardian Name:	(L)	(F)	(M)
Teacher Documentation		Evidence Documented	
The teacher of a student eligible for exemption must submit to the principal documentation on the proposed exemption and evidence that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the student's academic record. This evidence must be limited to the student's individual education program, alternative assessments, or student reading portfolio.		☐ IEP _____ ☐ Alternative Assessments ☐ MAP Score _____ ☐ STAR Score _____ ☐ Literacy Assessment Portfolio (LAP)	
Teacher Signature _____			
Principal's Review and Recommendation		Written Recommendation for Promotion	
☐ Based on the evidence presented, this student is recommended for promotion to fourth grade.		☐ Written recommendation for promotion submitted to district superintendent for final determination.	
Principal Signature _____			
District Superintendent's Recommendation		Written Recommendation for Parent/Guardian	
☐ Acceptance ☐ Rejection		☐ Written recommendation of acceptance submitted to parent/guardian. ☐ Written recommendation of rejection submitted to parent/guardian.	
Superintendent Signature _____			
Parent/Legal Guardian Appeal of Retention Decision		Written Appeal Submitted (within two weeks of notification of retention)	
☐ Yes, we appeal this decision. ☐ No		☐ Yes ☐ No	
Parent/Guardian Signature _____			

District Name:	School Name:
Superintendent Signature (<i>if appealed</i>)	

Appendix C – Additional Resources

The following documents are intended to be examples that districts and schools can use or modify to best meet individual needs.

- C.1. Read to Succeed Plan for Intensive Reading Instruction and Intervention
- C.2. Read to Succeed Literacy Assessment Portfolio

C.1. Read to Succeed Plan for Intensive Reading Instruction and Intervention



**SAMPLE READ TO SUCCEED
PLAN FOR INTENSIVE READING INSTRUCTION AND
INTERVENTION**

A Plan for Intensive Reading Instruction and Intervention is in place for this student with the goal of improving his/her reading skills. This plan is individualized, based on data, and shall continue until the student is determined to be reading on grade level based on a state approved assessment. The student will not be promoted to the fourth grade if the reading deficiency is not “corrected” by the end of third grade unless the student qualifies for a good cause exemption.

DISTRICT		SCHOOL	
STUDENT NAME		GRADE LEVEL	
PRINCIPAL NAME		TEACHER NAME	
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME		SCHOOL YEAR	

Based on the most current results from one of the following assessments, this student is not demonstrating grade-level proficiency in reading. A space for entering the date and the score for beginning (B), middle (M), and/or end of year (E) administration is provided. Assessments are not required to be administered three times a year, but this is strongly encouraged. The frequency of administration is a local district decision. Please circle the assessment given.

Assessment	Date (B)	Score/Level	Date (M)	Score/Level	Date (E)	Score/Level
PreK Assessments MyIGDIS, PALS - PreK Teaching Strategies GOLD						
Reading Assessments Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, Dominie, DRA2+, Next Steps to Guided Reading						
Computerized Assessments DIBELS, MAP, STAR						
Marie Clay's Observation Survey						

Assessment	Date (B)	Score/Level	Date (M)	Score/Level	Date (E)	Score/Level
Other (Please indicate name)						

Please indicate the current interventions and/or supplemental services or supports provided to this student.

Intervention Services and Supports	1st Nine Weeks	2nd Nine Weeks	3rd Nine Weeks	4th Nine Weeks	SRC
Tier I Instruction through a daily literacy block using high quality, evidence-based instruction (Please describe)					
Tier II Instruction (Please describe)					
Tier III Instruction (Please describe)					
After school					
Before school					
Summer Reading Camp					
Tutoring					
Extended School Year					

Additional Supports

The following instructional plans may be in place for this student. Please check those that apply. Use the space below to provide any additional comments.

☐ IEP

☐ English Language Learner Instructional support

☐ 504 Plan

Comments:

Parent/Family Support

The following are suggestions for parents to support their students at home toward reaching grade-level reading proficiency.

Make reading part of every day, even for just a few minutes.
Read to your child each day. When the book contains a new or interesting word, pause and talk about the word with your child.
Discuss the meaning of unknown words, both those he reads and those he hears.
Set aside a time each day for your child to read independently.
Choose books that are at an appropriate reading level for your child.
Let your child see you reading.
Ask your child questions about the story as you read together.
Visit your local library.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Grading Period	Date	Comments
1st Nine Weeks		

Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention Document

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Grading Period	Date	Comments
2nd Nine Weeks		
3rd Nine Weeks		
4th Nine Weeks		

As the parent/guardian I have been notified of the following:

	1. My student has been identified as not demonstrating grade-level proficiency in reading.
	2. A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports provided to my student toward reaching grade level proficiency.
	3. My student will not be promoted to the fourth grade if he/she is reading significantly below grade level unless he/she qualifies for a “good cause” exemption.
	4. Suggestions for parents/guardians to help their student reach grade level proficiency have been provided.
	5. The grade-level performance scores of the student have been made available.
	6. The results of the third grade state-wide reading assessment (SC READY) is not the only basis for promotion; “Good Cause” exemptions are considered and have been explained.

Student Name

Parent/ Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

A parent/guardian was unable to attend parent-teacher conference; a written reading progress update was mailed after making two attempts to contact parent or guardian to schedule conference.

Teacher Name/Signature

Date Mailed

C.2. Read to Succeed Literacy Assessment Portfolio

District - _____

LITERACY ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO (LAP)

School Year _____

STUDENT'S LEGAL NAME	(L)	(F)	(M)
STUDENT ID NUMBER			
SCHOOL		GRADE LEVEL	
CLASSTOOM TEACHER			
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME			
ETHNICITY		GENDER	

ADDITIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT (Indicate all that apply)							
IEP	Yes/No	ELL	Yes/No	Summer Reading Camp	Yes/No	4k Program Public Provider	Yes/No
504 Plan	Yes/No	Speech	Yes/No	Extended School Year	Yes/No	4K Program Private Provider	Yes/No
Resource Classroom	Yes/No	Previously Retained?	Yes/No	If retained, what grade?		Other (please explain)	

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES				
Grading Period	Date	Report Card Grade	Attendance %	Comments
1st Nine Weeks				
2nd Nine Weeks				
3rd Nine Weeks				
4th Nine Week				

(Section 1) ASSESSMENT DATA and (Section 5) Grade Level Target											
Please enter any applicable data (B=Beginning of Year; M=Middle of Year (end of second nine weeks); E=End of Year)											
<i>SCDE Approved Assessment Options (select the assessment used)</i>		Year __ Grade __		Year __ Grade __		Year __ Grade __		Year __ Grade __		Year __ Grade __	
			Score		Score	GLT*	Score	GLT*	Score	GLT*	Score
4K- MyIGDIs _____ PALS _____ GOLD _____	B										
	M										
	E										
5K – KRA _____	B										
<i>Reading Assessments (select the assessment(s) used)</i>											
Dominie _____ DRA2 _____ Fountas & Pinnell _____ Other _____	B										
	M										
	E										
<i>Computer Based Assessments</i>											
MAP _____ STAR _____ Other _____	B										
	M										
	E										
SC READY	E										

GLT = Grade Level Target (if applicable)

**Add Grade Level Targets specific to your district's assessment.*

Score = Actual Student Score

(Section 2) STUDENT WORK SAMPLES	
<i>Evidence of independently produced student work which might include the following: (Three samples for each area should be included)</i>	
<u>READING</u>	<u>WRITING</u>
• Re-telling of text read aloud or independently • Transcribed conversations • Summary, discussion, or written responses to questions after silent reading • Cold reads • Benchmark assessment(s) • DRA continuum	• Responses to narrative or informational text read aloud or read independently • Authentic writing – one sample of each of the following: ○ Narrative ○ Informational ○ Opinion • Responses to test dependent prompts

(Section 3) INTERVENTION AND PROGRESS MONITORING				
	1st Nine Weeks	2nd Nine Weeks	3rd Nine Weeks	4th Nine Weeks
Tier I – High Quality Classroom Instruction • Small guided reading groups • Shared reading and writing in small groups • One-to-one conferencing during reading and writing workshop				
Tier II – Intervention • Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) • Additional small group instruction • Push-in/Pull-out • Other				
Tier III – Intervention • One-to-one instruction • Intensive small group instruction • Other				

(Section 3 continued) ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT OR PROGRESS MONITORING DATA												
Nine Weeks	Date	Assessment	Score	Date	Assessment	Score	Date	Assessment	Score	Date	Assessment	Score
1st												
2nd												
3rd												
4th												

Grading Period	Teacher/Coach/Administrator Notes and Comments
1st Nine Weeks	
Strengths	
Opportunities for Growth	
2nd Nine Weeks	
Strengths	
Opportunities for Growth	

(Section 4) SUMMER READING CAMP <i>(only complete if the student has attended Summer Reading Camp)</i>			
Camp Location		Teacher Name	
DRA Pre-Test Level		DRA Post-Test Level	
Progress <i>(see scale below)</i>		Successful Completion?	Yes/No

[1 = Regression from pre-to post assessment 2 = Maintained pre-assessment level 3 = Growth from pre-to post assessment]

Promotion Recommendation		
Based on the evidence presented in this LAP, this student is recommended / not recommended for promotion to fourth grade		
	Recommended	Not Recommended
Teacher Signature		
Principal Signature		
Superintendent Signature		

Additional Comments: