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Dear Parent/Guardian,

According to section 1008.25(5), Florida Statutes (F.S.), to be promoted to fourth grade, a third-grade student must score a Level 2 or above on the statewide Florida Assessment of Student Thinking – English Language Arts (FAST-ELA). The intent of the third-grade progression statute is to ensure that students have the necessary reading skills to be successful in grade 4 and beyond. The following plan describes ways for students who do not meet this standard initially to be promoted to fourth grade.

If a student does not score Level 2 or above on the statewide FAST-ELA, they may attend the district provided Summer Reading Program for additional reading instruction. Some third graders who score Level 1 on the statewide FAST-ELA can be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted to fourth grade. This is called a "good cause exemption":

1. Limited English proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program.
2. Students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with requirements of State Board of Education Rule.
3. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternate standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
4. A student who demonstrates through a student portfolio that he or she is performing at least at level 2 level on the FAST in reading.
5. Students with disabilities who participate in the FAST in reading and who have an IEP or 504 Plan that reflects the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in prekindergarten, kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3*.
6. Students who have received intensive reading intervention for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3 for a total of two years. A student may not be retained more than once in grade 3**.

#3 Alternate Standardized Reading Assessment: Under section 1008.25(6), F. S., students who score a Level 1 on the grade 3 statewide FAST-ELA may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through an alternative standardized reading assessment that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the state standards (Star Reading or other state approved assessment utilized in SJCSD).

These assessments have been approved by the State Board of Education as alternative standardized reading assessments which may be used for good cause exemption.

#4 Student Portfolio - Under section 1008.25(6), F. S., students who score a Level 1 on the grade 3 statewide FAST-ELA may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through a student portfolio, they are reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the state standards. The portfolio is an alternative means for students to demonstrate proficiency in third-grade skills.

1008.25(7), F.S. states that a parent of a student in grade 3 who is identified anytime during the year as being at risk of retention may request that the school immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio.

The student portfolio must meet the following requirements:

- be selected by the student's teacher,
- be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been *independently* produced in the classroom,
- include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 reading FAST-ELA have been met. This includes multiple-choice items and passages that are approximately 50% literary text and 50% information text, and that are between 100-700 words with an average of 500 words, and
- be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the B.E.S.T. standards for Language Arts that are assessed by the grade 3 reading FAST-ELA.
- For each standard, there must be at least *three* demonstrations of mastery at 70% or above.

SJCSD utilizes district portfolio assessments to fulfill the portfolio requirements.

If you have questions about third grade promotion, please do not hesitate to contact administration or your child's teacher.

Sincerely,

Ruth E. Cortes

Assistant Principal

Attachment: Mandatory Retention for Level 1 FAST ELA in Grade 3 and Good Cause Exemption (GCE) 26-27 State Document