



Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document

Pursuant to Title 59 – Chapter 155 – SC Read to Succeed Act
August 2024 (Revised October 2025)

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Introduction and Overview

This guidance document is intended to assist districts and schools in understanding the updated third-grade retention requirements of the Read to Succeed Act.

Significant changes to the legislation were made in 2024, and this document reflects those updates. **Any version prior to July 2024 should not be used.**

Key updates include:

- Increasing the threshold for retention to the "lowest achievement level" on the state summative reading assessment, currently *Does Not Meet Expectations* on SC Ready Reading.
- Removal of the Literacy Assessment Portfolio (LAP folder) as a valid Good Cause Exemption (GCE).
- Adjusting Summer Reading Camp requirements so that students must achieve at least *Approaches Expectations* on an approved norm-referenced alternative assessment to demonstrate proficiency.

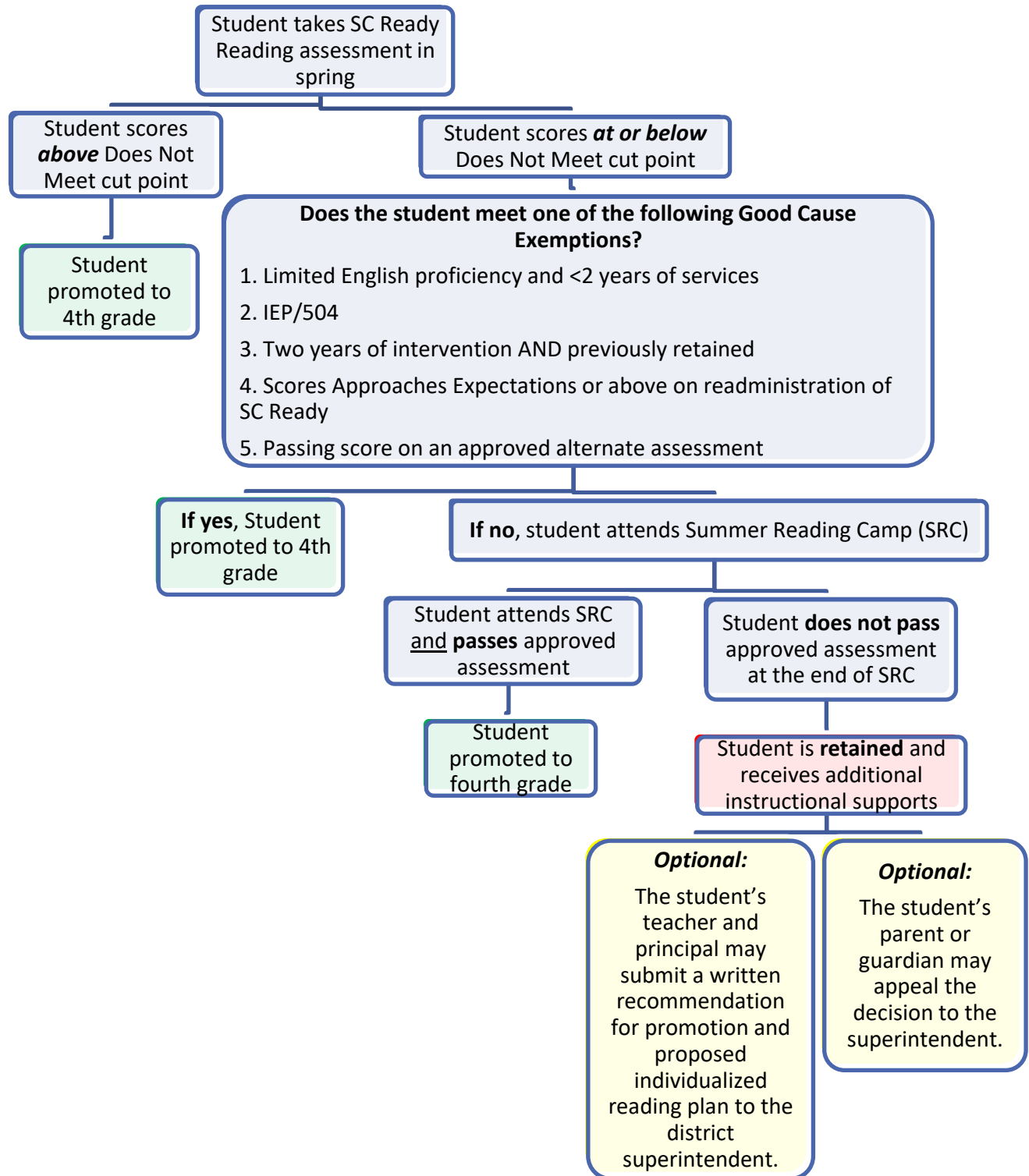
In addition, this document provides:

- Legislative background
- Good Cause Exemption (GCE) information and directions
- Communication with families
- Additional considerations for multilingual learners
- Sample documents for communication and instruction/intervention.

Educators are encouraged to consult the [MTSS Framework and Guidance Document](#) and the [South Carolina Dyslexia Handbook](#) for additional information on serving students with reading difficulties.

Third-Grade Retention Flowchart

Once SC Ready scores are available, schools should use the following flowchart to make decisions regarding the promotion or retention of third graders. Certain actions are required for students scoring at or below the Does Not Meet cut point.



Read to Succeed Act: Retention

Please use this [link](#) to access the law.

Section 59-155-160.

(A) Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment. 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 Individualized Education Program indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program 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 successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of third grade and demonstrate reading proficiency by achieving Approaches Expectations, or at least a level above the lowest level, on the state summative reading assessment;

(4) who demonstrate third grade reading proficiency by scoring the equivalent of Approaches Expectations, or the level above the lowest level, on the statewide summative assessment on a norm-referenced alternative assessment approved by the board for use in summer reading camps; or

(5) who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained.

(B) The superintendent of the local district may 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 retention 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 Individualized Education Program, performance on the statewide summative assessment, or performance on an alternative assessment.

(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 include an individualized reading plan providing additional supports to be offered to the student to ensure reading proficiency is achieved, to the district superintendent for final determination.

(3) The district superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the recommendation, as well as the individualized reading plan provided by the principal, 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 in writing to the parent or legal guardian and the principal.

(C) Prior to the decision for a student to be retained, 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 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; and

(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.

(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 scientifically based services outside the instructional day.

(D) Retained students must be provided intensive instructional services and support, including a minimum of ninety minutes of daily reading instruction, supplemental foundational literacy skill instruction, and other strategies grounded in the science of reading prescribed by the district. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, instruction directly focused on improving the student's individual foundational literacy skills through small group instruction, reduced

teacher-student ratios, more frequent student progress monitoring, high dose low ratio tutoring or mentoring as prescribed by the department, transition classes containing students in multiple grade spans, and extended school day, week, or year reading support. The delivery of additional supports and interventions shall not result in a student losing access to regular instruction in subject areas identified in the defined program for grades K-5 as established by the board. The school must report to the department on the progress of students in the class at the end of the school year and at other times as required by the department based on the reading progression monitoring requirements of these students.

Legislative Requirements

The following sections include more detail on the legislative requirements for schools and districts.

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 students at home and 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 A. Sample letters to families and other resources that districts and schools can customize and use as appropriate are in the appendices.

The following communication with parents and families must occur in a timely manner as required by law (See Appendix A):

- By the end of the second grading period of third grade, the school must:
 - Notify the student's parent/guardian in writing that the student is being considered for retention and that a conference must be held.
 - Hold and document the educator and parent/guardian conference.
- Within two weeks of the conference, the school must provide copies of the conference form to the principal, parent/guardian, teacher(s), and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy.
 - If a parent/guardian does not attend the conference, they must be provided with copies of the conference record.
 - The principal, classroom teacher, and other school personnel must review the recommendation for retention, document any applicable Good Cause Exemptions, and provide a plan for supplemental instruction.

The following sample documents may be found in the appendices. Districts may adapt these documents to fit their specific school/district context.

- Parent letter(s)
- Conference form(s)
- Individualized Reading Plan

Districts are encouraged to send a general notice to all third-grade parents at the beginning of the school year detailing the Read to Succeed requirements for promotion and retention. A sample letter may be found in the appendices.

During the third and fourth nine weeks, districts must invite students identified as eligible for retention without a Good Cause Exemption to Summer Reading Camp.

Retention Determination

A third-grade student is considered eligible for retention if the student scores Does Not Meet Expectations on the SC Ready Reading summative assessment. Eligible students may be promoted if they meet one of the law's Good Cause Exemptions.

This retention mandate applies only to third grade. Districts are encouraged to consider retention during first and second grade if students have received science of reading-based instruction and are still significantly behind grade level in reading.

Good Cause Exemptions

If a third-grade student scores *Does Not Meet* on SC Ready Reading, the school/district should first determine if any of the following Good Cause Exemptions (GCE) apply prior to the end of the school year:

- 1) Is a student with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program;
- 2) Is a student with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program 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) Is a student who has received two years of reading intervention and was previously retained; and/or
- 4) Is a student who demonstrates third grade reading proficiency by scoring the equivalent of Approaches Expectations on an approved norm-referenced alternative assessment.

Currently, the approved alternate assessments include MAP, STAR, DRC Beacon, MVPA and iReady. Students must score the equivalent of Approaches Expectations or above on SC Ready Reading on the alternate assessment. The cut scores are as follows:

- MAP - 186
- STAR - 269
- iReady – 489
- MVPA – 36
- DRC Beacon - 354

If a student meets one of the GCEs above, the school will document the GCE in PowerSchool, and the student may be promoted to fourth grade. All students who are promoted using a GCE must continue to receive intensive instructional support in fourth grade targeted to his/her specific reading deficiencies. A plan should be developed detailing the additional support to be offered to the student. A sample individualized reading plan is included in the appendices.

If a student does not meet one of the prior GCEs, the school/district must invite eligible students to attend Summer Reading Camp.

Summer Reading Camp Good Cause Exemption

Students eligible for retention shall enroll in a Summer Reading Camp (SRC). Summer Reading Camps must be at least the equivalent of ninety-six hours of instruction. The camps must be taught by compensated teachers who have at least a literacy endorsement or who have documented and demonstrated substantial success in helping students achieve proficiency in grade-level reading standards.

The law requires that students must successfully complete SRC to become eligible for the GCE. Successfully completes is defined as:

- 1) attending a substantial number of days of camp, and
- 2) scoring *Approach Expectations or above* on a re-administration of SC Ready Reading or the equivalent score on one of the norm-referenced interim assessments listed on page 9.

If a student attends the full camp but does not score above the necessary cut score on the district's selected assessment, the student is not eligible for promotion using the SRC exemption.

After Summer Reading Camp concludes, the district must notify the principal and parent/guardian in writing if the student did not meet any Good Cause Exemption and will be retained for the following school year.

If the parent/guardian believes retention is not appropriate, they may:

1. **Submit an appeal in writing** within two weeks of the retention notice.
2. Address the letter to the district superintendent.
3. Clearly state the reasons why the student should not be retained.

The district superintendent will **review the appeal** and provide the parent/guardian and principal with a written decision.

For more information on Summer Reading Camps, see page 12.

Superintendent Promotion

If a student does not meet any GCEs, the district superintendent may optionally determine that the student is exempt from mandatory retention by taking **all** of the following steps:

- 1) The student's teacher must submit documentation to the school principal with evidence that promotion is appropriate. The evidence must be limited to the student's Individualized Education Program, statewide summative assessment performance, or

alternative assessment performance. Student classwork may not be used for promotion documentation.

- 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, including an individualized reading plan providing additional supports to be offered to the student to ensure reading proficiency is achieved, to the district superintendent for final determination.
- 3) The district superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the recommendation, as well as the individualized reading plan provided by the principal, must be in writing, and a copy must be provided to the parent or guardian of the child.

See Appendix N for Superintendent Considerations

Parent or Guardian Appeal

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 in writing to the parent or legal guardian and the principal.

Additional Consideration for Multilingual Learners (MLs)

While maintaining the integrity and intent of the Read to Succeed legislation, schools and districts should consider the following excerpt from the English Language Acquisition Guiding Principles.

There are many adverse effects of retention and retaining multilingual learners (MLs). There are several considerations for MLs who may be at risk of retention. Acquiring a new language takes a minimum of five to seven years, so it is imperative that a multilingual learner not be retained due to acquiring the English language or lack of English language proficiency.

Prior to retention, alternatives must be explored. Consider the following:

- *How much of the academic performance is related to the development of English language proficiency?*
- *Is English language proficiency the dominant concern?*
- *What is the current English language proficiency level of the student?*
- *Are classroom accommodations aligned with the student's Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP)?*
- *Has the implementation of accommodations been documented?*
- *Is the student receiving the appropriate program service delivery model(s), amount of support, and accommodations with fidelity?*

- *Has there been a discussion with the ESOL teacher or coordinator to establish ways to support the student?*

After reflecting on these questions, if evidence does not support a strong instructional program or continued development of English language proficiency, the student should not be retained. The decision to retain MLs should involve multiple data points and is not a decision that should be taken lightly. Every effort should be made to help the student achieve academic content to progress to the next grade level.

See Appendix M for ML Considerations

If you have any further questions regarding Multilingual Learners, please reference the [English Language Acquisition Guiding Principles](#) or contact Susan Murphy at smurphy@ed.sc.gov.

Summer Reading Camps

Districts are required to provide SRCs for third-grade students recommended for retention. Districts may also invite third-grade students who are behind grade level in reading but are not eligible for retention or who have another Good Cause Exemption (GCE). Beginning in 2025-26 districts will include first graders who are not exhibiting grade-level reading proficiency, followed by second graders in the following year, 2026-27. Districts may use nationally normed formative assessment results to determine grade-level proficiency levels for students without statewide summative assessment results. More information will be released prior to those school years.

Districts are encouraged to offer reading camps for students at other grade levels. Districts may charge fees for these students 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 through third grade and does not meet one of the GCE.

SRC Expectations:

- Summer Reading Camps must be the equivalent of 96 instructional hours. Example: 4-6 weeks in duration, 4-5 days/week, 4-8 hours/day.
- Teachers must have the necessary qualifications to teach literacy classes (i.e., R2S Literacy Endorsement or demonstrated success in teaching literacy)
- Student-Teacher Ratio of 15:1 or lower is best practice.
- Pre- and post-assessment of participating students.
- School transportation must be provided.

To align with the state’s “formative” (interim) assessment list, districts may currently use one of the following assessments for pre- and post-testing during SRC:

- MAP
- STAR

- iReady
- DRC Beacon
- MVPA

Beginning in the 2025–2026 school year, districts will also have the option to administer the SC READY Reading assessment at the end of Summer Reading Camps, providing an additional opportunity for students to demonstrate proficiency and meet promotion requirements.

SECTION 7. Section 59-155-160 of the S.C. Code is amended to read: *(A) Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment. 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: (3) who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of third grade and demonstrate reading proficiency by achieving Approaches Expectations, or at least a level above the lowest level, on the state summative reading assessment.***

The South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) program is a statewide assessment in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science and social studies administered to students in grades 3–8 as required by the [Education Accountability Act](#) (EAA). The SC READY test items are aligned to the standards for each subject and grade level. Standards specify what schools are expected to teach and what students are expected to learn. Academic standards also include indicators that are statements of the specific cognitive processes and the content knowledge and skills that students must demonstrate to meet the grade-level standards. SC READY test items are written to assess the content knowledge and skills described in the academic standards and indicators.

The OIS uses a monitoring tool to gauge district implementation of SRC. New SRC coordinators are encouraged to review the tool to understand best practices for camps.

The current monitoring tool and support guide has updates to reflect the state’s implementation of MTSS and research-based literacy instruction and intervention practices. The current monitoring tool and support guide may be found [here](#).

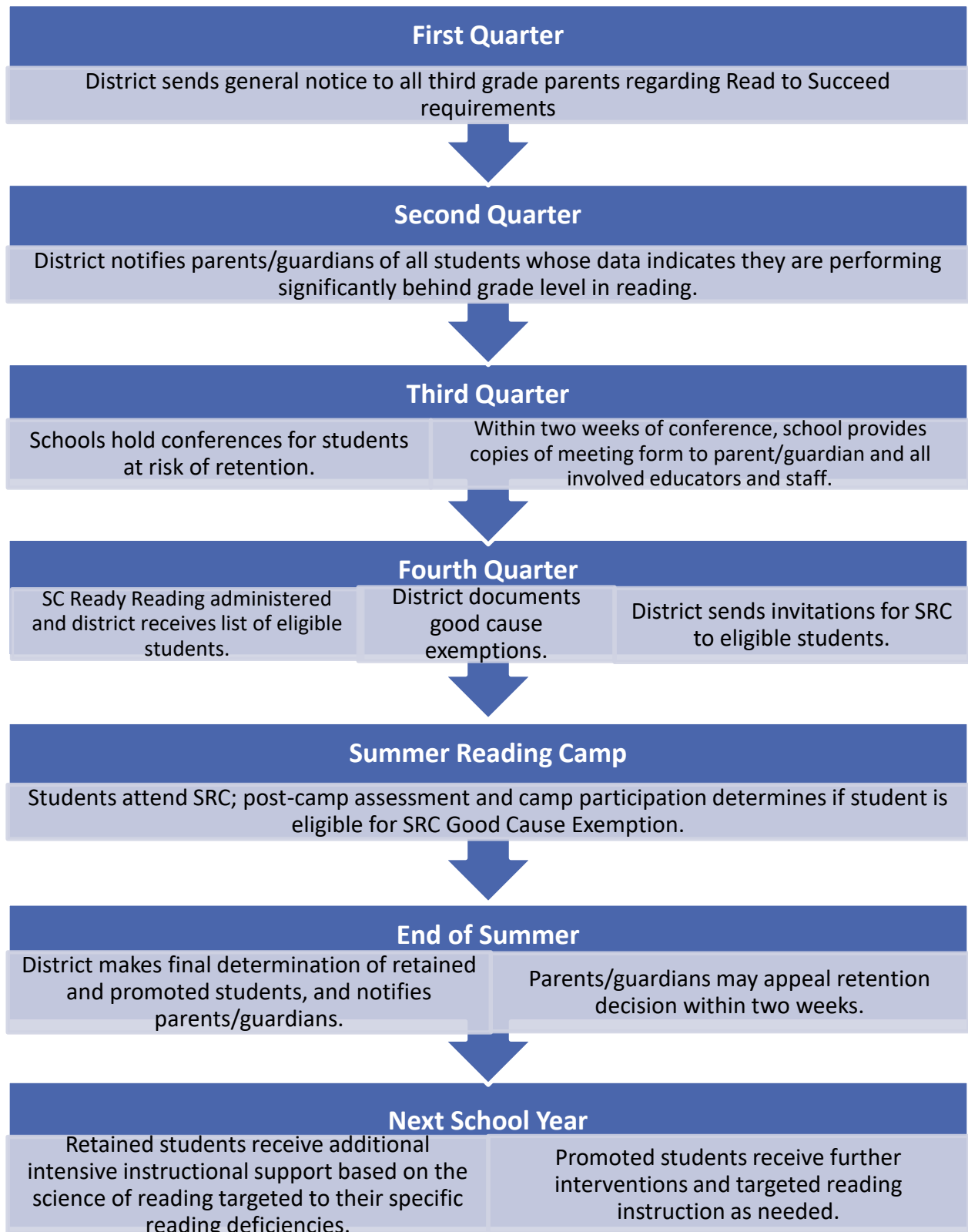
Per pupil allocations are based on the number of students scoring Does Not Meet on the previous year’s administration of SC Ready Reading. District allocations for SRC are usually disbursed in late winter/early spring.

Sample Resources

The following sections of this document include sample resources that districts and schools may use or modify to track student progress, communicate with families, and document retention

requirements. Districts may also use currently established procedures and documentation as long as they are aligned with the expectations of the updated Read to Succeed legislation.

Appendix A: Communication Timeline with Parents and Guardians



Appendix B-1: Sample Beginning of the Year Family Letter (Formal)

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Third-Grade Parent/Guardian;

The following information is for parents and guardians of South Carolina's third-grade students. It is designed to help families understand what South Carolina's Read to Succeed Act (including recent updates) 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

Read to Succeed legislation recommitments efforts in the education system to a third grade reading guarantee for all students. Ensuring that all third-grade students can read and comprehend grade-level text is crucial for their academic success and overall development. As students transition from learning to read to reading to learn, their ability to understand and analyze text directly impacts their capacity to grasp new concepts in math, science, and social studies. Mastery of reading skills in third grade also supports cognitive growth, critical thinking, and a love for learning, setting the stage for future educational achievements.

THE LAW

The South Carolina Read to Succeed Act became law in 2014 and received significant legislative updates in 2024. The intent of Read to Succeed is to ensure all students have the reading skills necessary to become college, career or military ready. One component of the Read to Succeed Act is the requirement that schools retain students who are significantly behind grade level in reading at the end of third grade. The current law, [Act 114](#), states that "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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment."

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 score Does Not Meet Expectations on the state summative assessment, but who have demonstrated grade-level reading proficiency on other approved tests. Students who attend Summer Reading Camp and score Approaches Expectations or higher (or the equivalent score on an approved, alternate assessment) at the end of camp are also eligible for promotion to fourth grade. Please reach out to your school for additional information to see if your child may qualify for a good cause exemption.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIRD GRADERS

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

In third grade, foundational reading skills are focused on fluency; however, reading comprehension becomes the primary focus. In addition to identifying elements of literary and informational texts, students in third grade are beginning to explain how those elements function within a text. As in previous grades, educators should continue to offer appropriate guidance and support to students as needed; however, by the end of the school year, third graders are expected to demonstrate proficiency of the grade-level indicators with independence. Examples of guidance and support might include, but are not limited to, one-on-one instruction, small group instruction, reteaching, prompting, and differentiated instruction.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS SCHOOL YEAR

It is our district's goal that your child become a proficient reader and advance on schedule to fourth grade. Act 114 requires students not reading at grade level be provided with in-class and supplemental reading interventions in addition to the minimum of ninety minutes of daily reading instruction. Interventions must be grounded in the science of reading. Your child's progress will be regularly assessed, and results of these efforts will be provided to you by your child's teacher.

Working in partnership with you, the district remains committed to seeing that your child successfully demonstrates proficiency on the end-of-the-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.

Appendix B-2: Sample Beginning of the Year Family Letter (Less Formal)

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Third-Grade Parent/Guardian,

We're excited to partner with you this year to help your child succeed in third grade! Below, we've outlined important information about the reading expectations for third graders and how we will support your child's reading growth. Together, we can make this a successful year for your child!

Background

Reading is the key to your child's success in school, and third grade is a critical year! At this stage, your child will go from learning how to read to using their reading skills to understand other subjects like math, science, and social studies. Reading and comprehending grade-level text is essential for your child's academic growth, cognitive development, and critical thinking. This year will lay the foundation for future learning and success in school.

The Law: Read to Succeed Act

The **Read to Succeed Act**, which became law in 2014 and was updated in 2024, ensures that all students develop the reading skills necessary to become college, career, or military ready. One important part of this law is the requirement that schools retain third-grade students who are significantly behind in reading at the end of the year.

According to **Act 114**, a student must be retained in the third grade if they do not demonstrate reading proficiency, as indicated by scoring *Does Not Meet Expectations* on the state's summative reading assessment (SC Ready). This requirement is designed to give students who are struggling with reading the extra support they need to succeed.

Good Cause Exemptions

There are some cases in which a student may be promoted to fourth grade, even if they are not reading at the required level. These are called **Good Cause Exemptions** (GCEs). Your child may qualify for an exemption if they:

1. Have limited English proficiency (fewer than two years of English instruction).

2. Have a disability and are receiving specialized services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
3. Have already been retained once in an earlier grade.
4. Attend Summer Reading Camp and demonstrate reading progress by scoring *Approaches Expectations* or higher on the end-of-camp assessment.

Please reach out to your school if you think your child may qualify for a Good Cause Exemption.

Expectations for Third Graders

This year, your child will focus on developing both reading fluency (reading smoothly and accurately) and comprehension (understanding what they read). By the end of third grade, students are expected to be able to explain key details from what they've read, both in literary and informational texts.

Here's how we will support your child's reading development:

- **One-on-One Instruction:** Teachers will work with your child individually as needed.
- **Small Group Instruction:** Your child will receive targeted reading support in small groups.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Lessons will be tailored to meet your child's individual needs.

At home, you can support your child's reading growth by:

- Encouraging them to read aloud to you or a family member.
 - Asking questions about what they've read, such as, "What happened in the story?" or "Why do you think that character made that choice?"
 - Setting aside time each day for reading.
-

What to Expect This School Year

Our goal is to help your child become a confident, independent reader and to ensure they move on to fourth grade on schedule. **Act 114** requires that students who are not reading at grade level receive additional support, including at least 90 minutes of daily reading instruction. These interventions will be based on the **science of reading** and designed to meet your child's specific needs.

Throughout the year, we will regularly assess your child's progress and communicate the results to you. Working together, we can help your child reach grade-level reading proficiency. Please stay in close contact with your child's teacher to monitor their progress and discuss additional ways to support your child at home.

Let's Work Together!

We're committed to helping your child succeed, and we know that by working together, we can make a big difference. If you have any questions about your child's progress or need more resources to support reading at home, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher. We're here to support you and your child every step of the way!

Together, let's make this a wonderful school year full of growth and learning!

Sincerely,
[Insert Name and Contact Information]

Appendix C-1: Sample Parent Letter 1: Third Grade Retention Policy

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

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. Legislative updates to Read to Succeed in March 2024 includes significant changes regarding promotion and retention of third grade students.

Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed states, *“Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment.”*

There are five retention exceptions to this requirement of Read to Succeed. Your child’s principal will be able to discuss these exceptions with you in greater detail. If a student does not qualify for one of the exemptions, the student may attend a summer reading camp. If the student demonstrates the necessary level of reading proficiency by the end of the camp, as demonstrated by a pre-determined assessment score, the student will be promoted to fourth grade. If the student is unable to demonstrate the necessary level of reading proficiency, the student will be retained in third grade.

Please be assured that our district’s goal is for all students to become proficient readers. Schools have put academic supports in place to improve student success that include additional instructional time devoted to literacy, small group and individualized instruction and intervention, and specialized literacy training for classroom teachers from school-based literacy coaches.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact the school.

Sincerely,

[Superintendent or Associate Superintendent or designated other contact information]

[Insert district web page link]

Appendix C-2: Sample Parent Letter 2: Third Grade Retention Policy

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We understand that discussions about retention can be challenging, but please know that our top priority is your child's success. Under the **South Carolina Read to Succeed Act**, which became law in 2014, we are committed to ensuring that every student develops the reading skills necessary to thrive in fourth grade and beyond. Legislative updates to Read to Succeed in March 2024 include important changes regarding the promotion and retention of third-grade students.

The Law and Retention

Starting with the 2024-2025 school year, the updated Read to Succeed Act requires that third-grade students who do not meet the reading proficiency level on the state summative reading assessment (SC Ready) be retained in third grade to receive additional reading support. This requirement helps ensure that students receive the time and resources needed to build a strong foundation in reading before advancing to the next grade level.

Good Cause Exemptions

While the law requires retention for students not meeting the required reading level, there are **Good Cause Exemptions (GCEs)** that allow some students to move on to fourth grade even if they haven't yet reached the required proficiency. Your child's principal can discuss these exemptions with you in more detail, but here are a few key exemptions:

1. Students with **limited English proficiency** (fewer than two years of English instruction).
2. Students with certain **disabilities** documented in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).
3. Students who have **already been retained** in a previous grade and received two years of reading intervention.
4. Students who demonstrate reading proficiency by scoring *Approaches Expectations* or higher on **SC Ready** or an **approved alternate assessment**.
5. Students who **attend Summer Reading Camp** (SRC) and show progress by scoring *Approaches Expectations* or higher on the end-of-camp assessment.

If your child qualifies for one of these exemptions, they may be promoted to fourth grade with additional reading support. Please reach out to your school for more information to determine if your child qualifies for a Good Cause Exemption.

Summer Reading Camp (SRC)

If your child does not meet the reading proficiency level by the end of third grade, they will have the opportunity to attend **Summer Reading Camp (SRC)**. This program is designed to provide intensive, personalized reading support in a small group setting. If your child attends the camp and demonstrates reading progress by the end of the program, they will be promoted to fourth grade.

During SRC, certified teachers with specialized literacy training will work closely with your child to strengthen their reading skills. If your child is invited to SRC, you will receive additional details about the program schedule and expectations. We will work with you and your child every step of the way to support their reading growth.

How We Are Supporting Your Child

Our goal is to help every student become a confident, independent reader. To ensure this, our district has put several academic supports in place:

- **Additional instructional time** focused on literacy.
- **Small group and individualized instruction** tailored to your child's needs.
- **Specialized training for teachers**, provided by school-based literacy coaches, to deliver targeted reading interventions.

These interventions, along with ongoing progress monitoring, are designed to give your child the best chance of success in reading.

How You Can Support Your Child

We encourage you to stay involved in your child's reading development throughout the year. Here are some ways you can support their progress at home:

- **Read together daily:** Encourage your child to read aloud and ask them questions about what they are reading.

- **Stay in communication with your child's teacher:** Regularly check in to monitor progress and discuss any concerns.
 - **Use school resources:** We're here to provide any additional tools or resources you may need to support your child's reading at home.
-

Next Steps

We want to reassure you that your child's success is our priority, and we are here to work alongside you throughout this process. Please stay in close contact with your child's teacher to monitor progress and reach out with any questions or concerns. If your child qualifies for Summer Reading Camp or a Good Cause Exemption, we will provide you with detailed information to guide you through the next steps.

Thank you for your partnership in helping your child become a proficient reader. Together, we can ensure that your child receives the support they need to succeed.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact the school. We're here to help!

Sincerely,

[Superintendent or Associate Superintendent or designated other contact information]

[Insert district web page link]

Appendix D-1: Sample 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 the Read to Succeed law states, “Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment.” Our state summative assessment is SC Ready, an assessment given to all 3rd-8th grade students in South Carolina to measure reading proficiency.

Act 114 states:

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

- 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; and
- 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.

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 and may be retained. This decision is based on a review of your child's assessments to date, as well as independent classwork and teacher observations. Should your child score Does Not Meet in Reading on SC Ready, he/she will be retained, unless a qualifying exemption is in place.

Qualifying 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 score Does Not Meet Expectations on SC Ready. An additional exemption would be for students who attend Summer Reading Camp and score Approaches Expectations or higher (or the equivalent score on an approved, alternate assessment) at the end of camp. These

students are also eligible for promotion to fourth grade. Please reach out to your school for additional information to see if your child may qualify for a good cause exemption.

To discuss your child's literacy progress, we invite you to attend a conference with your child's teacher(s).

[Insert information here about conference dates, times, attendees, etc.]

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 do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions.

Sincerely,

[Insert Principal Name and Contact Information]

Appendix D-2: Sample 2 Required Notice End of Second Grading Period of Third Grade

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent/Guardian,

At this point in the school year, we are closely monitoring your child's reading progress. While your child has made efforts, we are concerned about their current level of reading proficiency. According to the **Read to Succeed law**, starting with the 2024-2025 school year, third-grade students who do not meet the required reading proficiency level by the end of the year may be retained to ensure they receive the support needed for future success.

Our goal is to help your child reach the proficiency level required for promotion to fourth grade. While retention is a possibility, we are committed to working together with you to provide the best support for your child's growth.

Next Steps: Parent Conference

To discuss your child's progress and how we can work together to support them, we invite you to attend a conference with their teacher(s). During this meeting, we will review your child's assessments, classwork, and teacher observations. We will also talk about any additional supports or interventions that can help your child improve their reading skills.

Please find the details of the conference below:

[Insert information here about conference dates, times, attendees, etc.]

After the conference, we will continue to monitor your child's progress and provide the necessary support to ensure they are on track to meet the end-of-year goals.

Retention Requirements and Good Cause Exemptions

According to **Act 114**, if your child does not demonstrate reading proficiency by the end of third grade, they may be retained. This is determined by their score on the state summative reading assessment, SC Ready, which is given to all third graders in South Carolina. However, there are **Good Cause Exemptions** that may allow some students to be promoted to fourth grade even if they have not met the reading proficiency level. These include:

1. **Students with limited English proficiency**, who have been in an English language program for fewer than two years.
2. **Students with disabilities** documented in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

3. Students who have **already been retained** in a previous grade and received two years of reading intervention.
4. Students who demonstrate reading proficiency by scoring *Approaches Expectations* or higher on **SC Ready** or an **approved alternate assessment**.
5. Students who **attend Summer Reading Camp (SRC)** and show progress by scoring *Approaches Expectations* or higher on the end-of-camp assessment.

If your child qualifies for any of these exemptions, they may still be promoted to fourth grade with ongoing reading support. We will discuss these exemptions in more detail during the parent conference, and we encourage you to reach out to us if you think your child may qualify.

Summer Reading Camp (SRC)

If your child does not meet the required reading level by the end of the school year, they will be invited to attend **Summer Reading Camp**. This program offers intensive, small group reading instruction designed to help students make significant progress in their reading skills. If your child successfully completes SRC and demonstrates reading proficiency, they may be promoted to fourth grade.

More details about Summer Reading Camp will be shared as we approach the end of the school year, but we will work with you every step of the way to ensure your child receives the support they need.

We Are Here to Support You

We understand that this process can be challenging, but please know that our priority is your child's success. We are committed to working together with you to ensure your child reaches the reading proficiency needed to thrive in fourth grade and beyond. Please do not hesitate to contact me or your child's teacher with any questions or concerns. Together, we can ensure that your child is on the right path to success.

Sincerely,
[Insert Principal Name and Contact Information]

Appendix E-1: Sample Invitation to Attend Summer Reading Camp

(Third Grade Students – No Exemption)

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Section 59-155-160 of the Read to Succeed law states, “Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment.” Our state summative assessment, SC Ready, was administered to your student this month to measure reading proficiency. ***SC Ready test results indicate that your 3rd grade student scored Does Not Meet Expectations.***

Based upon review of your child’s SC Ready assessment results, your child is not demonstrating third grade reading proficiency. Therefore, we invite your child to attend a summer reading camp [SRC]. If your child successfully completes SRC, as demonstrated by regular attendance and participation and a passing score on the end of camp assessment, your child will be re-evaluated for promotion to fourth grade.

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]***.
- 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 and/or other activities that will encourage regular attendance]***.

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. 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.

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.

Please complete the attached enrollment form ***[created by district]*** 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.]

Appendix E-2: Sample Invitation 2 to Attend Summer Reading Camp

(Third Grade Students – No Exemption)

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We understand that this is an important time for your child's education, and our goal is to provide the support needed for their success. Based on your child's SC Ready test results, we recognize that they need extra help to meet the reading proficiency goals for third grade. To help them reach this important milestone, we are inviting your child to attend **Summer Reading Camp (SRC)**, where they will receive personalized reading instruction in a fun and supportive environment.

Why Summer Reading Camp?

Summer Reading Camp is designed to give your child the extra support they need to improve their reading skills and confidently move on to fourth grade. With targeted instruction and a small group setting, we focus on helping your child develop the reading proficiency required for success. By attending regularly, participating fully, and making progress during SRC, your child will have the chance to be re-evaluated for promotion to fourth grade.

If your child successfully completes SRC—demonstrated by consistent attendance, participation, and a passing score on the end-of-camp assessment—they will be reconsidered for promotion.

Details of Summer Reading Camp:

- **Dates:** SRC will be held for [insert number of weeks], from [insert start and end dates].
- **Hours:** Daily from [insert start and end times], [insert days of the week].
- **Location:** SRC will take place at [insert location].
- **Transportation:** Bus transportation will be provided.
- **Meals:** Meals and snacks [will/will not] be provided.
- **Activities:** In addition to reading support, SRC will include fun activities, such as [list activities], which will be offered in partnership with our community organizations.

We believe your child will benefit from both the reading instruction and the engaging activities provided during the camp.

Expectations for Summer Reading Camp

At SRC, we aim to create a positive, supportive environment where every child can learn and grow. To ensure your child makes the most of this opportunity:

- **Regular attendance** is required to help them build their reading skills. If your child is absent or late for any reason, please notify the site coordinator at the camp immediately.
- Students are expected to show respect for others, participate actively, and follow the instructions of camp staff, creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

We are excited to help your child make significant strides in reading through their participation in this program.

Next Steps

To confirm your child's enrollment in Summer Reading Camp, please complete the attached enrollment form and return it to [insert name] by [insert deadline]. We look forward to providing your child the support they need to reach reading proficiency and move on to fourth grade.

We're Here to Support You

We understand that every child learns at their own pace, and we are committed to working closely with you to support your child's reading development. If you have any questions or would like more information, please don't hesitate to contact your child's principal or teacher. We can also provide additional resources and ideas to support your child's reading at home.

Thank you for partnering with us to ensure your child's success!

Sincerely,

[Insert principal's name and contact information]

Appendix F: Sample Invitation to Summer Reading Camp

(For students in grades other than third grade/students not eligible for retention)

[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 goal of SRC 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.

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]***.
- 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 and/or other activities that will encourage regular attendance]***.

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. 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.

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.

Please complete the attached enrollment form ***[created by district]*** and return to ***[insert name]*** 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]

Appendix G: Sample SRC Enrollment & Transportation Form

***[Insert School District]* SUMMER READING CAMP ENROLLMENT FORM**

Please return to *[insert name]* no later than *[insert date]*

<i>Student Information</i>	<i>Enter Information Here</i>
Student Name:	
PowerSchool Number:	
Current Classroom Teacher:	
Current Grade:	
Name of School:	

<i>Parent Information</i>	<i>Enter Information Here</i>
Parent/Guardian:	
Parent/Guardian Phone Number:	
Parent/Guardian Email Address:	

<i>Emergency Contacts</i>	<i>Enter Information Here</i>
Name of Contact:	
Contact Phone Number:	

<i>Individuals Who Can Sign Your Child Out of School</i>	<i>Enter Information Here</i>
Name/Relationship:	
Name/Relationship:	

AM Transportation TO Camp	PM Transportation FROM Camp
Car Rider? Yes No	Car Rider? Yes No
Bus Rider? Yes No	Bus Rider? Yes No
Address student will be picked up from (if bus rider):	Address student will go home to (if bus rider):

Medical Information
Allergies? Daily Medication Required? Medical Conditions? Please list:

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 Information	Enter Here
Parent/Guardian's Name (Printed)	
Parent/Guardian's Signature	
Date	

Appendix H: Sample Conference Form Summer Reading Camp <Progress Monitoring>

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Section 59-155-160 of the Read to Succeed law states, “Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment.”

Your student scored Does Not Meet Expectations in Reading on SC Ready and was invited to attend Summer Reading Camp. It was shared that if your child successfully completes SRC, as demonstrated by regular attendance and participation and a passing score on the end of camp assessment, your child will be re-evaluated for promotion to fourth grade.

Your child’s teacher has been conducting regular progress monitoring checks during summer reading camp to determine progress towards grade level reading proficiency.

Results of these assessments are as follows:

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

I have read and understand all information provided regarding my progress monitoring scores during SRC and agree to continue to support him/her as a learner at home.

Parent Information	Enter Here
Parent/Guardian’s Name (Printed)	
Parent/Guardian’s Signature	
Date	

Sincerely,

[Insert name and contact information]

Appendix I: Sample Conference Form Summer Reading Camp <Retention>

<<Date>>

Parent/Guardian Name

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Section 59-155-160. (A) Beginning with the 2024-2025 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 Does Not Meet Expectations or at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment. 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.

Your student, <<Student>>, scored **Does Not Meet Expectations on SC Ready** and was invited to attend Summer Reading Camp. It was shared that if your child successfully completes SRC, as demonstrated by regular attendance and participation and a passing score on the end of camp assessment, your child will be re-evaluated for promotion to fourth grade. Your child's score on the **end-of-camp assessment** also **did not demonstrate reading proficiency**. Additionally, your child 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. with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program;
2. with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program 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 successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of third grade and demonstrate reading proficiency by achieving Approaches Expectations, or at least a level above the lowest level, on the state summative reading assessment;
4. who demonstrate third grade reading proficiency by scoring the equivalent of Approaches Expectations, or the level above the lowest level, on the statewide summative assessment or a norm-referenced alternative assessment approved by the board for use in summer reading camps; or
5. who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained.

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 in writing to the parent or legal guardian and the principal.

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

Sincerely yours,

[Insert principal's name and contact information]

Appendix J: Sample Read to Succeed Exemption from Mandatory Retention

[District Name], [School Name]

Student's Information

<i>Student Information</i>	<i>Enter Here</i>
Student's Full Name (First, M, and Last)	
Summer School Teacher	
Grade Level	
MLL: Years of Service (<i>as applicable</i>)	
Year Previously Retained (<i>as applicable</i>)	

Teacher Documentation

The teacher of a student eligible for retention 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 Individualized Education Program, performance on the statewide summative assessment, documented reading intervention for two years and a prior retention, or performance on an approved, alternative assessment.

<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Check if Included</i>
IEP with Reading Goals	☐
Alternative Assessment	☐
SC Ready Score	☐
Two Years Reading Intervention & Prior Retention	☐
Less Than Two Years of Instruction in English	☐

X

Classroom Teacher

Principal Documentation

- ☐ Based on the evidence provided, this student is recommended for promotion to fourth grade.
- ☐ An individualized reading plan detailing the additional supports to be offered to the student is attached.

☐ Based on the evidence provided, this student is **NOT** recommended for promotion to fourth grade.

X

Principal

Superintendent Documentation

☐ Based on the evidence provided, the superintendent **accepts** the recommendation for promotion to fourth grade.

☐ Based on the evidence provided, the superintendent **rejects** the recommendation for promotion to fourth grade

☐ Written recommendation of promotion or recommendation of retention submitted to parent/guardian.

Date of letter: <<date>>

X

Superintendent

Parent/Legal Guardian Appeal of Retention Decision

☐ Parent/guardian appealed the retention decision.

☐ Parent/guardian did **not** appeal the retention decision.

If appealed...

☐ Parent/guardian submitted written appeal within two weeks of retention notification.

☐ Parent/guardian **did not** submit written appeal within two weeks of retention notification.

Superintendent Post-Appeal Review

After reviewing the parent appeal,

☐ The superintendent **accepts** the appeal and the student will be promoted to fourth grade.

☐ The superintendent **rejects** the appeal and the student will be retained in third grade.

Appendix K: Sample Individualized Reading Plan (Grades K, 1, 2, 4, and 5)

*From Act 114: Section 59-155-155. (D) In order to determine student progression in reading, a district shall administer a universal reading screener three times per school year with the first administration occurring within the first forty-five days of school, the second administration occurring at the midpoint of the school year, and the third administration occurring by the end of the school year. Within fifteen days of each administration, the district shall notify the parent or guardian regarding the performance of their student and whether the student may be considered for retention. **For each student demonstrating literacy deficiencies and not meeting grade-level proficiencies based on the data received from the administration of the universal reading screeners, the district shall create an individualized reading plan and include a copy in the notification to the parent or guardian.***

Individualized Reading Plan (Grades K, 1, 2, 4, and 5)

This template meets the requirements of Act 114, Section 59-155-155

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Purpose: The Individualized Reading Plan (IRP) provides a targeted strategy to support students in Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th grade who are not demonstrating grade-level reading proficiency, as required by Section 59-155-155 (D) of Act 114 of 2024:

For each student demonstrating literacy deficiencies and not meeting grade-level proficiencies based on the data received from the administration of the universal reading screeners, the district shall create an individualized reading plan and include a copy in the notification to the parent or guardian.

***Note:** Third grade teachers who have students who do not read proficiently are directed to use the IRP-3 document to satisfy the requirements set forth by Act 114 of 2024.

Goal: The goal of the IRP is to develop a focused, evidence-based reading instruction plan tailored to each student’s specific needs—such as word recognition, fluency, or language comprehension.

Developed through assessment data and educator input, the IRP defines clear goals, intervention strategies, and progress monitoring methods to accelerate reading development. It ensures instructional continuity across grade levels and actively involves families in the support process. The IRP is designed to close literacy gaps and guide students toward reading proficiency, setting the foundation for long-term academic success.

Individualized Reading Plan Directions:

Section 1: Student Information

- By the end of the current school year, complete Section 1 of this document for all students who are not exhibiting grade level reading proficiency.
 - Invite these students to attend Summer Reading Camp. At the end of camp, proceed to Sections 2 and 3.
 - If the parent/guardian declines Summer Reading Camp, proceed to Section 3.

Section 2: Summer Reading Camp (as applicable)

- Complete Section 2 at the conclusion of SRC for all students who attended.

Section 3: IRP Interventions and Progress Monitoring Plan

- Complete Section 3 for all students who are being promoted to the next grade level who are not exhibiting grade level reading proficiency. Section 3 outlines the specific reading interventions and planned progress monitoring for the upcoming school year.

Section 1: Student Information and Data Collection

School Name:	Current Grade Level:
Student's Legal Name:	Student DOB:
Referring Teacher:	Interventionist (if applicable):
Conference was held: In-person ☐ Phone ☐ Virtual ☐	Date(s) of conference:
MTSS Tier Status of Student: Reading Tier 2 ☐ Reading Tier 3 ☐	Tested previously by Special Services? ☐ Testing Outcome:

Report Card Grades | Grade _____

Subject	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final Grade
English					
Math					
Science					
Social Studies					

Historical Interim Assessment Data – Reading

Grade Level	Assessment Tool	B-O-Y Score	M-O-Y Score	E-O-Y Score	Performance Level
Kindergarten					
1 st Grade					
2 nd Grade					
3 rd Grade					

4 th Grade					
5 th Grade					

Historical Literacy Screener Data - K-1 (*and 2nd grade as applicable*)

Grade Level	Screener Tool	B-O-Y Score	M-O-Y Score	E-O-Y Score	At-Risk Y/N
Kindergarten					
1st Grade					
2nd Grade (<i>as applicable</i>)					

Attendance Record: Days Absent: _____ Number of Tardies: _____

If the student has high absenteeism, please provide additional information:

Discipline Record: Days Suspended: _____

If the student has multiple suspensions, please provide additional information:

Team Recommendation (select Option 1 or 2 as applicable)

Option 1 _____ The team recommends that the student attend *Summer Reading Camp* to receive additional support in reading instruction. At the end of camp, the school team will develop an *Individualized Reading Plan* (located in Section 3 of this document). This plan will outline targeted instruction and interventions to accelerate the student's progress toward reading proficiency during the upcoming school year.

Option 2 _____ The team recommends that the student receive an *Individualized Reading Plan* to provide additional support in literacy instruction and intervention. This plan, developed by the school team and located in Section 3 of this document, will outline targeted instruction and interventions to accelerate the student's progress toward grade-level reading proficiency during the upcoming school year.

Parent Acknowledgment:

I acknowledge that my child, _____, is currently reading below grade level as defined by the requirements of Act 114, South Carolina's Read to Succeed legislation. I understand that my child has been invited to attend a Summer Reading Camp, where he/she will receive intensive reading intervention designed to support progress toward grade-level proficiency.

_____ Yes, my child will attend Summer Reading Camp.

_____ No, my child will not attend Summer Reading Camp.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section 2: Post Summer Reading Camp Decisions

This section outlines post-SRC decisions with parents/guardians

Confirmation of Parent/Guardian Consultation and Parent/Guardian Response.

_____ I acknowledge that my child participated in Summer Reading Camp where they received targeted instruction in key literacy areas including word recognition and/or language comprehension. I have reviewed the progress shared by the teacher and recognize the ongoing efforts to strengthen my child's literacy development.

_____ I acknowledge that as outlined in Act 114, South Carolina's Read to Succeed legislation, the school has designed an **Individualized Reading Plan** for my child that outlines targeted instruction and interventions to accelerate my student's progress toward grade-level reading proficiency during the upcoming school year. I have reviewed this plan (Section 3 of this document).

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section 3: Individualized Reading Plan

This section outlines the intervention plan for students not demonstrating grade level reading proficiency.

(Please list the adopted ELA HQIM and any Supplemental ELA curriculum)

Tier 2 or tier 3 | Intervention(s)

Targeted Need(s) Based on Data

- ☐ Phonemic Awareness
- ☐ Phonics and Spelling
- ☐ Fluency
- ☐ Vocabulary
- ☐ Comprehension
- ☐ Written Expression

Data used to Determine Targeted Need:

Intervention Specifics:

- Name of Intervention Program/Kit/Resource:
- Provide a thorough description of the intervention, including the structure, duration, frequency, and activities involved:
- Explain the student's specific reading needs and how the intervention addresses word recognition and/or language comprehension:
- Discuss the differences between this year's intervention and any previous interventions:
- Describe how this intervention will accelerate reading growth for this student:
- Confirm that the intervention is evidence-aligned and/or research-based.

Progress Monitoring Tool and Considerations:

- List the frequency and duration of the intervention each week:
- Specify how often the student's progress will be monitored:
- Outline the specific benchmarks or goals that the student must meet (success criteria) to demonstrate success:
- Describe the specific tool(s) you will use to measure the student's progress toward meeting the success criteria:
- Define what would signal the need to adjust the intervention if progress is delayed:
- Define what would signal that the current intervention has been successful (exit criteria) and that the student is ready for a new reading intervention goal:

Progress Monitoring Graph



Appendix L: Sample Individualized Reading Plan (IRP-3)

From Act 114: 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 include an individualized reading plan providing additional supports to be offered to the student to ensure reading proficiency is achieved, to the district superintendent for final determination.

Third Grade Individualized Reading Plan | IRP-3 for Retained 3rd Grade Students

This template meets the requirements of Act 114, Section 59-155-160

[Customize for your school and district as indicated.]

Purpose: The *Third Grade Individualized Reading Plan* (IRP-3) offers a focused strategy to support **third-grade** students **retained** under South Carolina’s Act 114. This document helps determine whether retention is appropriate and, in cases where retention is determined necessary, the plan outlines targeted, evidence-based reading instruction aligned to the student’s specific needs—such as word recognition, fluency, or language comprehension.

Developed using assessment data and educator input, the IRP-3 outlines goals, intervention strategies, and progress monitoring to help accelerate reading growth. It ensures instructional continuity across grade levels and engages families in the support process. The IRP-3 is designed to close foundational literacy gaps and help the student achieve reading proficiency for long-term academic success.

Directions: Use the steps below to determine retention and good cause exemptions from retention for third grade students.

Pre-Work:

- Review the [Third Grade Retention Flowchart](#).
- If a student has an existing Good Cause Exemption from retention, you may complete *Appendix J: Sample Read to Succeed Exemption from Mandatory Retention* in the Third Grade Retention Guidance Document in lieu of this form.
- Reminder: Students who are promoted to fourth grade using a GCE must also have a fourth grade Individualized Reading Plan.
- If a student does **not** have an existing Good Cause Exemption prior to enrolling in Summer Reading Camp, **go to Section 1 of this document**.

Section 1: Student Information

- Complete Section 1 of this document **prior to Summer Reading Camp (SRC)** for all **third-grade students at risk of retention without a GCE**.

Section 2: Post-Summer Reading Camp Decisions

- Complete Section 2 at the conclusion of SRC for all students who did not meet the cut score.
- If the student met the necessary score for promotion, complete both *Appendix J: Sample Read to Succeed Exemption from Mandatory Retention* and *Appendix K: Individualized Reading Plan* (for fourth grade) in the Third Grade Retention Guidance Document.
- If the student did NOT meet the necessary cut score for promotion, complete the *Appendix J: Sample Read to Succeed Exemption from Mandatory Retention* in the Third

Grade Retention Guidance Document and note that the student is not eligible for any GCEs.

Section 3: Retained Student Individualized Reading Plan (IRP-3)

- Complete Section 3 for all third-grade students who are retained.

Section 1: Student Information

This section outlines the criteria for retention and eligibility for Summer Reading Camp.

Districts are encouraged to use the [Third Grade Retention Flowchart](#) to guide the retention decision.

School Name:		Current Grade Level:	
Student's Legal Name:		Student DOB:	
Referring Teacher:		Interventionist (if applicable):	
☐ Conference was held: In-person	☐ Phone	☐ Zoom	Date(s) of conference:
MTSS Tier Status of Student: ☐ Reading Tier 2		☐ Reading Tier 3	
☐ Tested previously by Special Services?		Testing Outcome:	

Report Card Grades – Grade 3

Subject	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final Grade
English					
Math					
Science					
Social Studies					

Historical Interim Assessment Data – Reading

Grade Level	Assessment Tool	B-O-Y Score	M-O-Y Score	E-O-Y Score	Performance Level
1 st Grade					
2 nd Grade					
3 rd Grade					

Historical Interim Assessment Data -Math

Grade Level	Assessment Tool	B-O-Y Score	M-O-Y Score	E-O-Y Score	Performance Level
1 st Grade					
2 nd Grade					
3 rd Grade					

Historical Literacy Screener Data - K-1 (and 2nd grade as applicable)

Grade Level	Screener Tool	B-O-Y Score	M-O-Y Score	E-O-Y Score	At-Risk Y/N
Kindergarten					

1st Grade					
2nd Grade <i>(as applicable)</i>					

Attendance Record:

Days Absent: _____

Number of Tardies: _____

If the student has high absenteeism, please provide additional information:

Discipline Record:

Days Suspended: _____

If the student has multiple suspensions, please provide additional information:

Team Recommendation:

_____ The team recommends that the student attend Summer Reading Camp to provide an additional opportunity to qualify for a Good Cause Exemption (GCE). If the student does not meet the GCE criteria by the end of camp, they will be retained in third grade and receive a *Third Grade Individualized Reading Plan* (IRP-3). This plan, developed by the school team and located in Section 3 of this document, will outline targeted instruction and interventions to accelerate the student's progress toward reading proficiency.

Parent Acknowledgment:

I acknowledge that my child, _____, is currently reading below grade level as defined by the requirements of Act 114, South Carolina's Read to Succeed legislation. I understand that my child has been invited to attend a Summer Reading Camp, where he/she will receive intensive reading intervention designed to support progress toward grade-level proficiency. I also understand that to be promoted to fourth grade, my child must demonstrate adequate reading proficiency by achieving a qualifying score on an approved assessment administered at the end of Summer Reading Camp. If this score is not met, I acknowledge that my child will be retained in third grade for an additional year of reading instruction and support.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section 2: Post Summer Reading Camp Decisions

This section outlines post-SRC decisions with parents / guardians.

Confirmation of Parent/Guardian Consultation and Parent/Guardian Response

_____ I have met with my child's teacher to discuss the requirements outlined in Act 114, South Carolina's Read to Succeed legislation, regarding a retention year focused on accelerated academic growth. **I agree** that my child should remain in third grade for the upcoming school year to receive continued support in developing reading proficiency.

_____ I have met with my child's teacher to discuss the requirements of Act 114, South Carolina's Read to Succeed legislation, regarding a retention year in third grade focused on accelerated academic growth. **I do not agree** with my child being retained in third grade and intend to appeal the retention decision with the district superintendent.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section 3: Third Grade Individualized Reading Plan | IRP-3

This section outlines the intervention plan for the retained 3rd grade student.

Tier I Core Literacy Instruction 3rd Grade Curriculum

(Please list the adopted ELA HQIM and any Supplemental ELA curriculum)

Tier 2 or tier 3 | Intervention(s)

Targeted Need(s) Based on Data

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics and Spelling
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Written Expression

Data used to Determine Targeted Need:

Intervention Specifics:

- Name of Intervention Program/Kit/Resource:
- Provide a thorough description of the intervention, including the structure, duration, frequency, and activities involved:
- Explain the student's specific reading needs and how the intervention addresses word recognition and/or language comprehension:
- Discuss the differences between this year's intervention and any previous interventions:
- Describe how this intervention will accelerate reading growth for this student:

- Confirm that the intervention is evidence-aligned and/or research-based.

Progress Monitoring Tool and Considerations:

- List the frequency and duration of the intervention each week:
- Specify how often the student's progress will be monitored:
- Outline the specific benchmarks or goals that the student must meet (success criteria) to demonstrate success:
- Describe the specific tool(s) you will use to measure the student's progress toward meeting the success criteria:
- Define what would signal the need to adjust the intervention if progress is delayed:
- Define what would signal that the current intervention has been successful (exit criteria) and that the student is ready for a new reading intervention goal:

Progress Monitoring Graph



Appendix M: ML Guidance Document

Navigating State and Federal Compliance Promotion and Retention of Multilingual Learners

Language acquisition is a complex, non-linear process. Retention decisions must not be based solely—or even primarily—on English language proficiency. There are many adverse effects of retention and retaining multilingual learners (MLs). There are several considerations for MLs who may be at risk of retention. While maintaining the integrity and intent of the Read to Succeed legislation, schools and districts must also reference and utilize the promotion and retention information provided in the [Multilingual Learner Program Guiding Principles](#).

Decision-Making Framework

Stemming from the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), an ML student must not be retained solely due to limited English proficiency. As a result of that ruling, the question of retention requires comprehensive analysis. Before retention is considered, all other instructional, programmatic, and support-based interventions must be thoroughly explored and documented. The decision to retain an ML must be multidisciplinary, data-informed, and child-centered.

A team of stakeholders (e.g., parents, administrator, guidance counselor, Multilingual Learner Program Specialist (MLPS)/teacher, content teacher(s), etc.) that know and work with the student regularly should come together to review student progress and evaluate at a minimum, the outlined questions below.

Districts and schools should carefully evaluate the following:

1. Language Proficiency Assessment
 - Has the student’s level of English language proficiency been assessed?
2. Language Development Impact
 - To what extent is the student’s academic performance related to English language development?
 - What is the student’s current English Language Proficiency (ELP) level?
 - Has the student been enrolled in the U.S. school system for at least one full academic year?
3. Communication and Family Engagement

- Have the student's parents/guardians been informed and engaged from the early stages of academic concern?
- Have families been included in meaningful conversations about the student's progress, using appropriate language access services?

4. Instructional Supports and Program Fidelity

- Are the students' accommodations aligned with their Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP)?
- Has the implementation of ILAP accommodations been documented consistently?
- Is the student receiving appropriate language development instruction from a qualified MLPS/Teacher?
- Is the student receiving an appropriate Multilingual Learner Program (MLP) service delivery model (PSDM) with consistency and fidelity?
- Are grading procedures reflecting the use of modified or accommodated assignments, per the ILAP?

5. Collaboration and Data Use

- Has the MLPS, teacher, or coordinator participated in a collaborative review of the student's progress?
- Have quantitative data been used to evaluate the student's overall development? Examples of documentation will vary based on each student. However, some examples include English language proficiency scores and performance (e.g., WIDA Screener, WIDA ACCESS, WIDA MODEL), newcomer/SLIFE status, historical background of the student (personally and academically), parent input, etc.

Retention should not be the default for MLs struggling academically. Decisions must be based on multiple data points and thorough documentation. Teams should prioritize targeted instruction, language support, and strong home-school partnerships to close learning gaps. The goal is to help MLs access grade-level content and succeed long-term without being penalized for learning a second language. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) always advises putting the students' best interest first.

Retention Flowchart

1. Does the student qualify for a Good Cause Exemption?
 - a. **YES** - If the student qualifies for a GCE, you may promote them to the next grade.

- b. **NO** - Retention may be considered in consultation with the MLPS if the steps have been addressed and the student still is not successful (see Decision-Making Framework).
- 2. If the student attended Summer Reading Camp (SRC), did they meet the reading cut score?
 - a. **YES** - If the student attends SRC and scores Approaches Expectations or above on the re-administration of the SC Ready Reading or the equivalent score on one of the norm-referenced approved alternate assessments, you may promote them to the next grade.
 - b. **NO** - Retention may be considered in consultation with the MLPS if the steps have been addressed and the student still is not successful (see Decision-Making Framework).
- 3. If the student does not qualify for a GCE and has not met the reading cut score, has the Decision-Making Framework (outlined above) been collaboratively reviewed and documented?
 - a. **YES** - Ensure the documentation is complete and filed with the student record.
 - b. **NO** - The collaborative team must convene to review and document the Decision-Making Framework prior to any decision regarding student retention or promotion.
- 4. Has the student been recommended for retention and to receive additional instructional support?
 - a. The student's parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the superintendent.
 - b. The student's teacher and principal may submit a written recommendation for promotion and a proposed individualized reading plan to the district superintendent.

Ensure all state-required documentation and additional local documentation, as applicable, have been completed and kept within the student records for potential Title III/MLP monitoring purposes.

As per the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), all translation and interpretation services must be provided to families in the language that they prefer. LEAs are responsible for effectively communicating with families who may require translation or interpretation services. To assist LEAs in determining communication languages for families, the Enrollment Survey (ES) has a section that will be completed annually by families to determine their preferred oral and written language(s).

Superintendent Determination and Compelling Argument

The superintendent of the local district may determine whether a student in the district may be exempt from the mandatory retention by following all steps outlined in the [South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document](#). However, 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.

For questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Marie Gibbons, MGibbons@ed.sc.gov, in the Office of Instructional Supports (OIS) or the Title III/MLP team, TitleIIIMLP@ed.sc.gov, in the Office of Federal and State Accountability (OFSA).

Decision-Making Framework Documentation Form

Checklist and Documentation Notes

School districts may utilize this example form for properly documenting the promotion and retention decision-making process for multilingual learners (MLs).

☐ **Collaborative Team of Stakeholders** (e.g., parents, administrator, guidance counselor, Multilingual Learner Program Specialist (MLPS)/teacher, content teacher, etc.)

Attendance:

Meeting Date(s) and Time(s):

Districts and schools should carefully evaluate the following:

Does the student qualify for a Good Cause Exemption (GCE)?

☐ **YES** - If the student qualifies for a GCE, you may promote the student to the next grade.

☐ **NO** - Retention may be considered in consultation with the MLPS if the steps have been addressed and the student still is not successful (see Decision-Making Framework).

Notes:

Language Proficiency Assessment

☐ Has the student's level of English language proficiency been assessed?

Notes:

Language Development Impact

☐ To what extent is the student's academic performance related to English language development?

☐ What is the student's current English Language Proficiency (ELP) level?

☐ Has the student been enrolled in the U.S. school system for at least one full academic year?

Notes:

Communication and Family Engagement

- ☐ Have the student's parents/guardians been informed and engaged from the early stages of academic concern?
- ☐ Have families been included in meaningful conversations about the student's progress, using appropriate language access services?

Notes:

Instructional Supports and Program Fidelity

- ☐ Are the students' accommodations aligned with their Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP)?
- ☐ Has the implementation of ILAP accommodations been documented consistently?
- ☐ Is the student receiving appropriate language development instruction from a qualified MLPS/Teacher?
- ☐ Is the student receiving an appropriate Multilingual Learner Program (MLP) delivery service model(s) (PSDM) with consistency and fidelity?
- ☐ Are grading procedures reflecting the use of modified or accommodated assignments, per the ILAP?

Notes:

Collaboration and Data Use

- ☐ Has the MLPS, teacher, or coordinator participated in a collaborative review of the student's progress?
- ☐ Have quantitative data been used to evaluate the student's overall development? Examples of documentation will vary based on each student. However, some examples include English language proficiency scores and performance (e.g., WIDA Screener, WIDA ACCESS, WIDA MODEL), newcomer/SLIFE status, historical background of the student (personally and academically), parent input, etc.

Notes:

If the student attended Summer Reading Camp (SRC), did they meet the reading cut score?

- ☐ **YES** - If the student attends SRC and scores Approaches Expectations or above on the re-administration of the SC Ready Reading or the equivalent score on one of the norm-referenced approved alternate assessments, you may promote the student to the next grade.

- ☐ **NO** - Retention may be considered in consultation with the MLPS if the steps have been addressed and the student still is not successful (see Decision-Making Framework).

Notes:

Has the student been recommended for retention and to receive additional instructional support?

- ☐ The student's parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the superintendent.
- ☐ As per the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), all translation and interpretation services must be provided to families in the language that they prefer. LEAs are responsible for effectively communicating with families who may require translation or interpretation services. To assist LEAs in determining communication languages for families, the Enrollment Survey (ES) has a section that will be completed annually by families to determine their preferred oral and written language(s).
- ☐ The student's teacher and principal may submit a written recommendation for promotion and a proposed individualized reading plan to the district superintendent.

Notes:

Signatures:

Multilingual Learner Program Guiding Principles

Multilingual Learner Promotion and Retention

Retention is a significant decision with potentially long-lasting impacts on students, particularly for multilingual learners (MLs). Research consistently shows that retention can have adverse academic, social, and emotional effects, and such outcomes may be compounded when language acquisition is not adequately considered in the decision-making process.

Language acquisition is a complex, non-linear process, and for MLs, mastering academic English typically takes five to seven years. This timeline can vary significantly based on factors such as a student's age, prior educational experiences, literacy in their first language, access to quality instruction, and the level of support received both at school and at home. For these reasons, retention decisions must not be based solely—or even primarily—on English language proficiency.

To support districts in making informed retention decisions, it is essential to implement a well-defined decision-making framework rooted in objective criteria, evidence-based guiding questions, and relevant historical data. Such a framework promotes consistency, transparency, and alignment with research-based best practices in ML education, ensuring that each decision reflects the student's full academic and linguistic profile.

While maintaining the integrity and intent of the Read to Succeed legislation, schools and districts must also reference and utilize the retention and promotion information provided in the [South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document](#).

Third Grade Retention - Read to Succeed (R2S)

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Instructional Supports (OIS) provides the [South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document](#), which includes provisions for MLs. According to Act 114, third-grade retention is mandated under certain conditions, but MLs with fewer than two years of English instruction may qualify for a Good Cause Exemption (GCE). Furthermore, federal law explicitly prohibits retention based solely on English language proficiency. The SCDE strongly suggests analyzing the student's needs with the decision-making framework below for rather than just a strict timeline for MLs who may be beyond the two years of English instruction.

Decision-Making Framework

When considering retention for a multilingual learner, the collaborative team must thoroughly discuss the impact on language development to ensure that any academic difficulty the student is experiencing is not rooted in their development of English language proficiency. It is essential that Multilingual Learner Program (MLP) instructional support and services, such as instructional and assessment accommodations and modifications, aligned with their Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP) have been implemented with fidelity before considering any high-stakes decisions. Families must be actively engaged and informed throughout the process, with consistent communication regarding student concerns. The decision to either promote or retain the student must be made collaboratively, grounded in comprehensive data and with input from all relevant stakeholders. Refer to the Decision-Making Framework outlined in the [South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document](#).

Ensure all state-required documentation and additional local documentation, as applicable, have been completed and kept within the student records for potential Title III, Part A/Multilingual Learner Program monitoring purposes.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the appropriate number or percentage of MLs each district should retain annually?

There is no number or percentage of MLs for which this would be appropriate, as it is based on each individual student and at the district's discretion. The SCDE would not recommend proficiency levels or cut scores within this guidance, as it is based on each individual student's needs.

Can MLs be invited to Summer Reading Camp?

MLs may be invited to Summer Reading Camp (SRC) if they score "Does Not Meet" or have met the GCE. However, we suggest using the term "strongly recommended" rather than "required." When using "required," the district must then have a policy regarding when students do not attend. Meeting with families is strongly encouraged to increase participation in SRC.

What can a district do if an ML is being retained but the team or family disagrees with the decision?

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. The superintendent of the local district may determine whether a student in the district may be exempt from the mandatory retention by following all steps outlined in the [South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document](#).

Please refer to the [South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document](#) for applicable GCEs and additional information regarding superintendent determinations and parent or guardian appeals.

Appendix N: Guidance Document for Superintendents

Guiding Questions for Superintendents: Third Grade Good Cause Exemptions

Purpose

As outlined in South Carolina’s updated Read to Succeed legislation ([Act 114](#)), third-grade students who score *Does Not Meet Expectations* on the SC READY Reading assessment are subject to mandatory retention, unless they qualify for a Good Cause Exemption (GCE). The role of the superintendent is critical in ensuring that retention and promotion decisions are made thoughtfully, equitably, and in the best interest of the student—while remaining in full compliance with Act 114.

This guide is intended to support the decision-making process when reviewing Good Cause Exemption (GCE) appeals and collaborating with school teams. It emphasizes the importance of using multiple data sources and considering the whole child—including academic performance, intervention history, behavior, and attendance—while ensuring alignment with the requirements of Act 114.

Exemption: Students with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program

- *Has the student been enrolled in an ESL program for two years or less?*
- *Is there documentation of the student’s entry date into ESL services?*
- *Is the student's limited English proficiency the primary factor affecting reading assessment performance? Note: Federal guidelines prohibit the retention of an ML student based solely on English proficiency.*
- *Has the student received appropriate, research-based reading instruction tailored for English Language Learners?*

Exemption: Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program 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

- *Does the student's IEP or 504 Plan specifically indicate the use of alternative assessments or reading interventions?*
- *Has the student received intensive reading remediation for more than two years? Were the two years of reading interventions documented? Note: The reading interventions could have occurred prior to and/or during the time the student has had the IEP with reading goals.*

- *Would retention align with or hinder the supports outlined in the student's IEP or 504 Plan?*
- *Has the student shown progress aligned with their IEP reading goals?*

Exemption: Students who demonstrate third grade reading proficiency by scoring the equivalent of Approaches Expectations, or the level above the lowest level, on the statewide summative assessment on a norm-referenced alternative assessment approved by the board for use in summer reading camp

- *Did the student score the equivalent of Approaches Expectations on the approved alternate assessment during the spring interim assessment window?*
- *Did the student attend and fully participate in the summer reading camp?*
- *Did the student score the equivalent of Approaches Expectations on the approved alternate assessment at the end of summer reading camp?*

Exemption: Students who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained

- *Has the student already been retained once in an earlier grade?*
- *Has the student received two years of documented reading intervention?*
- *Despite not yet meeting grade-level expectations, has the student made consistent growth?*
- *Would retention likely benefit the student more than continued targeted support in 4th grade?*

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

The teacher of a student eligible for retention 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 Individualized Education Program, performance on the statewide summative assessment, or performance on an alternative assessment.

- *The superintendent must review the student's academic record and ensure that all supporting evidence aligns with one or more of the following criteria:*
 - *The student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)*
 - *Performance on the statewide summative reading assessment*
 - *Performance on an approved alternative assessment*

- *Teachers must submit documentation to the principal showing that promotion is appropriate. An exemption may be granted only if the evidence clearly supports the decision and meets the criteria.*

Additional Guiding Questions for School Teams to Consider

Has the student consistently performed below grade level in reading throughout the school year?

What trends are evident in classroom performance, grades, and report cards?

How does the student perform on district-level benchmark or formative assessments?

Despite being below grade level, has the student shown measurable academic growth?

Has the student experienced chronic absenteeism that may have impacted academic progress?

Has the student participated in tiered interventions through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)?

Were the reading intervention strategies evidence-based and monitored and documented for effectiveness? Were goals adjusted and updated based on consistent progress monitoring data?

Has the parent or guardian been kept informed consistently about the student's reading challenges and progress?

Has the parent submitted a written appeal? If so, does it provide compelling reasons or additional documentation for superintendent consideration?

Considerations for Grade Placement

If retained in third grade:

Will the student be placed with a highly qualified teacher who can meet their specific instructional needs?

Has the school developed a *Third Grade Individualized Reading Plan (IRP-3)* that outlines targeted, prescriptive intervention support based on identified reading needs?

If promoted to fourth grade with a GCE:

Will the student be placed with a highly qualified teacher who can meet their specific instructional needs?

Has the school developed an *Individualized Reading Plan (IRP)* that outlines targeted, prescriptive intervention support based on identified reading needs?

Appendix O: Summer Reading Camp Considerations for Grades 1 and 2

Beginning in the 2025–26 school year, **first grade students** not exhibiting grade-level reading proficiency **must be invited** to attend Summer Reading Camp (SRC). Beginning in 2026–2027, this requirement will also apply to **second grade students**.

Scores from MAP, STAR, i-Ready, MVPA or DRC Beacon are used to make this determination. First and second grade remediation and conservative cut scores are in the Appendixes of this document.

Section 59-155-160 of Act 114 of 2024:

*A district shall include in the summer reading camps first and second grade students who are not exhibiting grade-level reading proficiency. This shall be implemented beginning with the **2025-2026 School Year** by including **first grade students not exhibiting grade-level reading proficiency** and beginning with the 2026-2027 School Year by including second grade students not demonstrating grade-level reading proficiency.*

Students scoring at the Remediation Cut Score (24.7%) and below must be invited to summer reading camp.

- Remediation Cut Score: 24.7th percentile
 - This cut score aims to identify students who need intensive reading intervention and must be invited to attend summer school.
 - Fall and winter scores should be used to identify students in need of intensive reading interventions.
 - **The spring score determines which students must be invited to attend summer reading camp.**
 - While spring scores will determine SRC eligibility, winter scores may be used for early planning to support timely district planning and staffing needs for SRC.

Students scoring at the Conservative Cut Score (46.5%) and below are recommended to be invited to summer reading camp.

- Conservative Approach Cut Score: 46.5th percentile
 - This cut score aims to identify students who could benefit from additional reading support and are recommended to attend summer school.
 - Fall and winter scores can be used to identify students in need of reading intervention.

- The spring score determines which students may benefit from being invited to attend summer reading camp.
- *Note: Districts are not required but are encouraged to invite students scoring at the Conservative cut score and below to summer reading camp.*

Summer Reading Camp District Considerations

Q: Does the 96-instructional hour requirement pertain to first and second grade students attending summer reading camp?

A: No. Act 114 does not stipulate a minimum hour of attendance at SRC for first and second grade students invited to SRC. This decision can be made by each district.

Q: Are districts required to take attendance in PowerSchool during SRC for first and second grade students?

A: Yes

Q: Are districts required to complete the R2S PowerSchool information page for first and second grade students attending SRC?

A: Yes

Q: Are districts required to enter pre and post test scores (MAP, STAR, i-Ready, MVPA, DRC Beacon) on the R2S PowerSchool Information page for first and second grade students?

A: Yes

Q: If a 1st or 2nd grade student falls below the threshold for Remediation and is invited to summer reading camp, are they required to attend?

A: No

Q: If a 1st or 2nd grade student who falls below the threshold for Remediation is invited to summer reading camp – and they do not attend – are they automatically retained?

A: No. There is no retention stipulation in Act 114 for 1st and 2nd grade students, only the requirement to invite. Retention for 1st and 2nd grade students is a local school district decision.

Remediation and Conservative Approach Cut Scores

****Note:** There are no 1st grade scores available for CASE/MVPA. Only 2nd grade remediation and conservative cut scores are available for this assessment due to available data when the study was released. SCDE will work with districts who use MVPA. The SCDE will work with districts who use MVPA as their assessment.

The SCDE will also work with districts who use DRC Beacon and would like access to conservative scores for grades 1 and 2.

Appendix P: Summer Reading Camp Cut Scores for Grades 1 and 2

1st and 2nd Grade REMEDIATION Cut Scores (24.7%)

Students scoring at the **Remediation Cut Score (24.7%)** and below must be invited to summer reading camp.

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
nwea_map	reading	01	fall	24.7	146
nwea_map	reading	01	winter	24.7	154
nwea_map	reading	01	spring	24.7	160
nwea_map	reading	02	fall	24.7	156
nwea_map	reading	02	winter	24.7	163
nwea_map	reading	02	spring	24.7	171

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
iready	reading	01	fall	24.7	370
iready	reading	01	winter	24.7	397
iready	reading	01	spring	24.7	414
iready	reading	02	fall	24.7	411
iready	reading	02	winter	24.7	431
iready	reading	02	spring	24.7	462

Assessment Name*	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
MVPA/case	reading	02	fall	24.7	28
MVPA/case	reading	02	winter	24.7	30
MVPA/case	reading	02	spring	24.7	32.5

*Note: There are no 1st grade scores available for CASE/MVPA. Only 2nd grade remediation and conservative cut scores are available for this assessment due to available data when the study was released. SCDE will work with districts who use MVPA. The SCDE will work with districts who use MVPA as their assessment

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Enterprise Cutoff Scale Score	Unified Cutoff Scale Score
star_reading	reading	01	fall	24.7	62	721
star_reading	reading	01	winter	24.7	72	757
star_reading	reading	01	spring	24.7	84	794

star_reading	reading	02	fall	24.7	77	774
star_reading	reading	02	winter	24.7	91	812
star_reading	reading	02	spring	24.7	142	847

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Enterprise Cutoff Scale Score	Unified Cutoff Scale Score
star_early_literacy	reading	01	fall	24.7	562	725
star_early_literacy	reading	01	winter	24.7	626	759
star_early_literacy	reading	01	spring	24.7	691	795
star_early_literacy	reading	02	fall	24.7	659	777
star_early_literacy	reading	02	winter	24.7	720	813
star_early_literacy	reading	02	spring	24.7	769	847

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
DRC Beacon	reading	01	fall	24.7	414
DRC Beacon	reading	01	winter	24.7	432
DRC Beacon	reading	01	spring	24.7	450
DRC Beacon	reading	02	fall	24.7	440
DRC Beacon	reading	02	winter	24.7	458
DRC Beacon	reading	02	spring	24.7	475

1st and 2nd Grade CONSERVATIVE Cut Scores (46.5%)

Students scoring at the **Conservative Cut Score (46.5%)** and below are recommended to be invited to summer reading camp.

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
nwea_map	reading	01	fall	46.5	153
nwea_map	reading	01	winter	46.5	162
nwea_map	reading	01	spring	46.5	168
nwea_map	reading	02	fall	46.5	165
nwea_map	reading	02	winter	46.5	176
nwea_map	reading	02	spring	46.5	183

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
iready	reading	01	fall	46.5	395
iready	reading	01	winter	46.5	417
iready	reading	01	spring	46.5	445
iready	reading	02	fall	46.5	441
iready	reading	02	winter	46.5	475
iready	reading	02	spring	46.5	493

Assessment Name*	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
MVPA/case	reading	02	fall	46.5	48
MVPA/case	reading	02	winter	46.5	50
MVPA/case	reading	02	spring	46.5	47.5

**Note: There are no 1st grade scores available for CASE/MVPA. Only 2nd grade remediation and conservative cut scores are available for this assessment due to available data when the study was released. SCDE will work with districts who use MVPA. The SCDE will work with districts who use MVPA as their assessment.*

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Enterprise Cutoff Scale Score	STAR Unified Cutoff Scale Score
star_reading	reading	01	fall	46.5	72	757
star_reading	reading	01	winter	46.5	87	802
star_reading	reading	01	spring	46.5	158	855
star_reading	reading	02	fall	46.5	125	839
star_reading	reading	02	winter	46.5	206	880

star_reading	reading	02	spring	46.5	276	916
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Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Enterprise Cutoff Scale Score	STAR Unified Cutoff Scale Score
star_early_literacy	reading	01	fall	46.5	626	759
star_early_literacy	reading	01	winter	46.5	706	804
star_early_literacy	reading	01	spring	46.5	779	855
star_early_literacy	reading	02	fall	46.5	759	839
star_early_literacy	reading	02	winter	46.5	806	879
star_early_literacy	reading	02	spring	46.5	837	916

Assessment Name	Subject	Grade Level	Test Term	Cutoff Percentile	Cutoff Scale Score
DRC Beacon	reading	01	fall	46.5	*
DRC Beacon	reading	01	winter	46.5	*
DRC Beacon	reading	01	spring	46.5	*
DRC Beacon	reading	02	fall	46.5	*
DRC Beacon	reading	02	winter	46.5	*
DRC Beacon	reading	02	spring	46.5	*

*Note: We do not currently have DRC Beacon cut scores at the Conservative Cutoff percentile (46.5%). The SCDE will work with districts who use DRC Beacon and would like access to conservative scores for grades 1 and 2.

Appendix Q: Sample Parent Letter: Required to Invite First and Second Grade Students

[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 assessment data and teacher input, your child is not currently exhibiting grade-level reading proficiency and would benefit from additional support.

In accordance with Read to Succeed legislation, Act 114 of 2024, Section 59-155-160, beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, districts are required to invite first grade students who are not reading at grade level in summer reading camps. The legislative invitation extends to second grade students beginning in the 2026–2027 school year.

To support your child’s growth, we are pleased to invite them to participate in our Summer Reading Camp, a free, intensive literacy program designed to strengthen foundational reading skills. The camp will include small-group instruction, engaging literacy activities, and individualized reading support.

Camp Details:

- **Dates:** [Insert District Start and End Dates]
- **Time:** [Insert District Daily Schedule]
- **Location:** [Insert School Name and Address]
- **Cost:** Free of charge

We strongly encourage your child’s participation to help ensure they are prepared for the upcoming school year. Please complete the attached registration form [Insert District Registration Form] and return it by [Insert District Deadline].

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your child’s progress further, please don’t hesitate to contact us at [Insert District/School Contact Info].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[District/School Name]

[Contact Information]