

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**South Carolina Read to Succeed Third Grade
Retention and Guidance Document**

Pursuant to Read to Succeed Act, Updated 2024

Revised September 2024

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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.

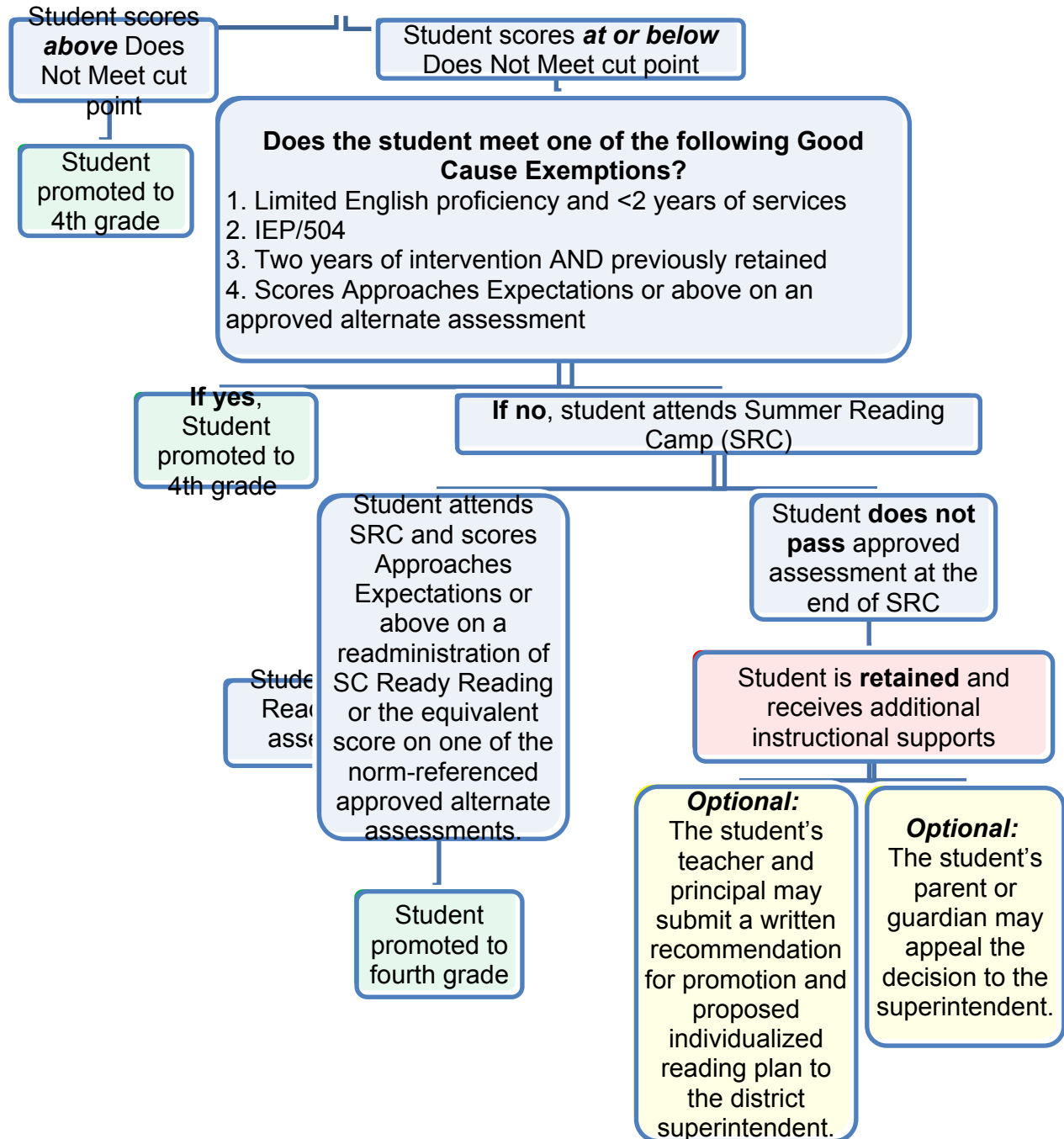
In addition, this document provides:

- 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 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 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.

(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 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, 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
- iReady – 489
- STAR Unified - 941

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 *Approaches 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.

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.

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

For the pre-assessment, either districts may assess students during the beginning of SRC, or they may use the spring administration of one of the assessments as the pre-assessment score. Districts must use the same assessment for both the pre- and post-test (i.e. cannot pre-test in MAP and post-test using iReady).

The OELL uses a monitoring tool to gauge district implementation of SRC. New SRC coordinators are encouraged to review the tool in order 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](#).

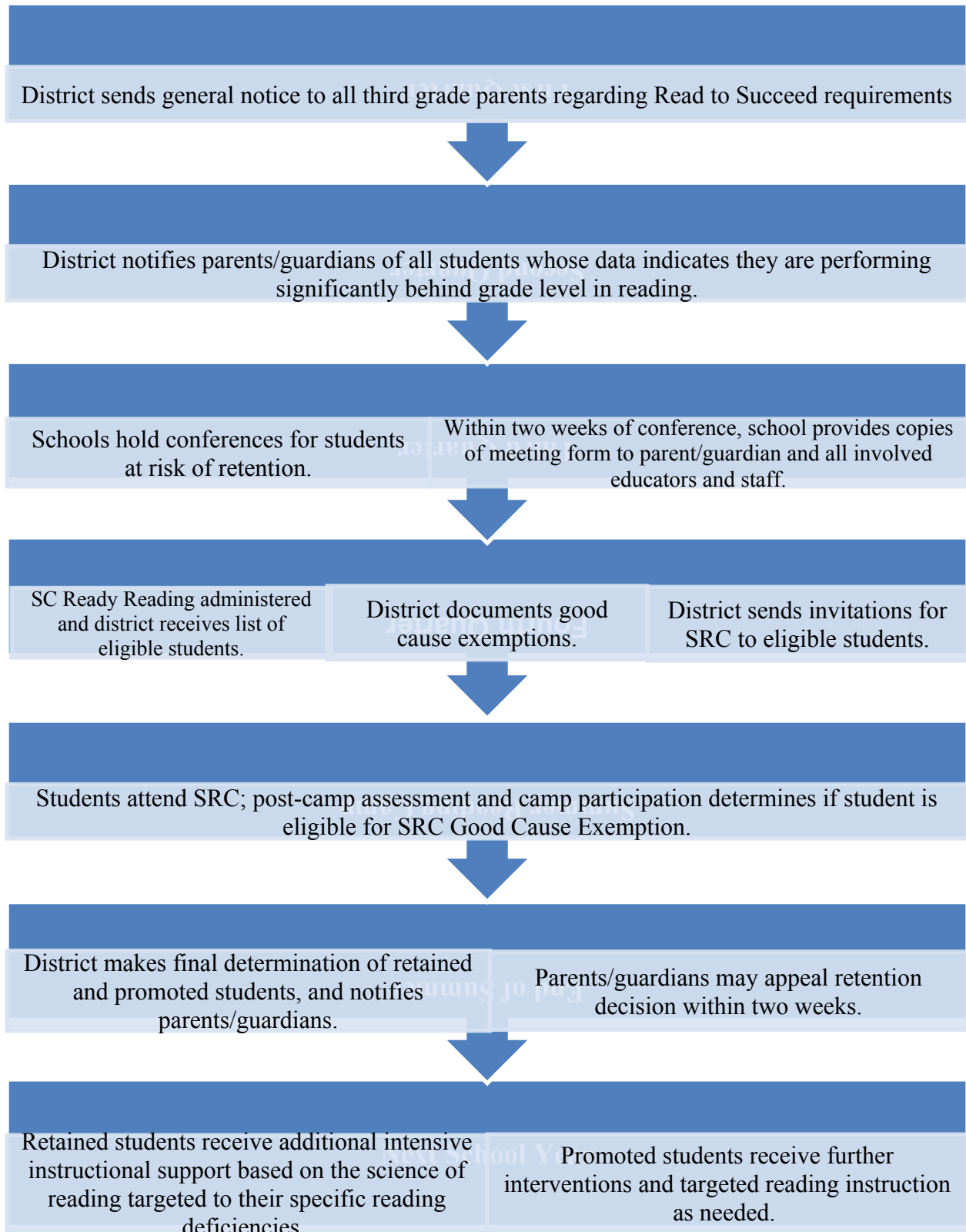
Per pupil allocations are based on the number of students scoring Does Not Meet on the previous year's administration of SC Ready Reading. District allocations for SRC are usually disbursed in late winter/early spring.

[Summer Reading Camp Self-Study Guide](#)

Additional 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.
4. 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** who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that specifies alternative learning goals or assessments.
3. **Students who have previously been retained** in an earlier grade.

4. **Students who attend Summer Reading Camp (SRC)** and demonstrate 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]

Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document
Revised September 2024

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]*

Student Information	Enter Information Here
Student Name:	
PowerSchool Number:	
Current Classroom Teacher:	
Current Grade:	
Name of School:	

Parent Information	Enter Information Here
Parent/Guardian:	
Parent/Guardian Phone Number:	
Parent/Guardian Email Address:	

Emergency Contacts	Enter Information Here
Name of Contact:	
Contact Phone Number:	

Individuals Who Can Sign Your Child Out of School	Enter Information Here
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>

Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document
Revised September 2024

[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 59155160. (A) Beginning with the 20242025 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 normreferenced 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
SC Ready Score	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two Years Reading Intervention & Prior Retention	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less Than Two Years of Instruction in English	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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.

Individualized Reading Plan

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

South Carolina Read to Succeed Act [ACT 114](#), Section 59-155-160.

B (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.

Student Name	
--------------	--

3rd Grade Curriculum (include core and supplemental)

3rd Grade Interventions (if applicable)
<i>Include intervention(s) name, number of weeks implemented and frequency, progress monitoring tool used, and level of success</i>

Section 1 (Tier I Universal Core Literacy Instruction)

Recommended 4th Grade Curriculum (include core and supplemental)

Section 2 (Tier II Targeted Literacy Intervention)

Data used to determine targeted need:

Targeted Need(s) Based on Data	Phonemic Awareness Phonics and Spelling Fluency Vocabulary and Comprehension Written Expression
---	---

Recommended Intervention (Name and Description)	Recommended Duration, Frequency, and Group Size	Recommended Progress Monitoring Tool
	<i>Include recommended number of weeks, sessions per week, minutes per session, and group size</i>	

Section 3 Tier III Intensive Intervention *(may be adjusted based on performance in Tier II)*

Third Grade Retention and Guidance Document

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Recommended Intervention (Name and Description)	Recommended Progress Monitoring Tool

Recommended Intervention Logistics

Week of Intervention	Days of Intervention	Minutes Per Session	Average Group Size
__ Weeks <i>*Recommended number of weeks</i>	M T W Th F <i>*Recommended number of sessions per week</i>	__ min per session <i>*Recommended minutes per session</i>	__ per group <i>*Recommended group size</i> ____

Progress Monitoring Graph (sample graph to be used after interventions using PM to plot progress)



Section 4 – Recommendation for Promotion

Student Performance Goal:

Does the student's current performance indicate that he/she could meet the goal by the end of an additional intervention cycle?	Yes	No	Not Enough Information
Is there evidence that the skills taught in 3 rd grade instruction/intervention lessons are transferring to other settings?	Yes	No	Not Enough Information
Did the students receiving the same intervention make adequate progress?	Yes	No	Not Enough Information

Based on the documentation presented, we recommend that _____ be promoted to 4th grade. We feel the student will make adequate progress if the recommended instruction and interventions are implemented in the upcoming school year.

Teacher's Signature/Date	
Principal's Signature/Date	