

Presented for  
School Board Approval  
May 15, 2007

**MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT  
PROGRESSION PLAN  
(GRADES 6-8)**

**2006-07**

**and**

**2007-08**

Required Public Notice (FS. 1008.25(8))

The Sarasota County District School Board will annually publish in the local newspaper, and report in writing to the Florida State Board of Education by September 1, the following information on the prior school year:

- The provision of section 1008.25(8)(b) relating to public school student progression and the district school board's policies and procedures on student retention and promotion.
- By grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3 through 10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the reading portion of the FCAT.
- By grade, the number and percentage of students retained in grades 3 through 10.
- Information of the total number of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as specified in FS 1008.25(6)(b).
- Any revisions to the district board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year.

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## PREFACE

The Student Progression Plan is designed to support the philosophy and goals of the Sarasota County District School Board as defined in Sarasota's vision of NeXt Generation Learning. The plan recognizes that students have unique characteristics, needs and learning styles. It addresses a number of areas including student progression, remediation alternatives, retention, assessment, and placement in special and alternative programs.

All Sarasota County School District Curriculum objectives for Middle School courses are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards. Proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics, and science is measured by the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and district assessments. Each school will offer courses of study and instruction that reflect the Sunshine State Standards in Grades 6-8 language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, health and physical education, the arts, and career-technical education, along with the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma. Instruction will address the skills and competencies that a student must master in order to be promoted from Middle School to High School.

**I. MIDDLE GRADES PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS (FS 1003.4156)**

- A. Beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2006-07 school year, promotion from middle school grades 6, 7, and 8 requires that a student must successfully complete the following academic courses during the grade level specified:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Required Courses</b>			
6	Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies
7	Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies/ Career Education and Planning
8	Language Arts	Math*	Science	Social Studies/ Civics

\*Each middle school will offer at least one high school mathematics course for which students may earn high school credit.

Language Arts classes will emphasize literature, composition, & technical text.

Students who are eligible will also be required to complete Intensive Reading.

- B. The Career and Education Planning course will include online access to career planning options and tools. Successful completion of the course will include a personalized academic and career planner signed by the student's counselor/advisor and parents. The plan will be developed during grade 7 and revised and completed for parent/guardian signature during grade 8.
- C. Each middle school must conduct a parent meeting in the evening or on a weekend to inform parents about the course curriculum and activities. [FS 1003.4156(1)(a)1-5]

**II. REQUIRED REMEDIATION IN READING AND MATHEMATICS**

- A. Intensive Reading [FS 1003.4156(1)(b)]

For each year in which a student scores a Level 1 on FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course the following year. Placement of Level 2 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content area course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be determined by diagnosis of reading needs. All diagnostic, placement, progress monitoring and reading program strategies will be conducted in accordance with the Sarasota K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan as required by FS 1001.62(8).

- B. Intensive/Integrated Mathematics

For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year. This remediation

requirement will be integrated into the student's required mathematics course at the next grade level.

### III. GRADING SYSTEM

- A. The teacher shall be the authority in assigning each student a grade.
- B. The grades reflecting achievement in academic subjects in grades 6-8 with numerical equivalents shall be:
  - A 90-100% 4.0 GPA Outstanding Progress
  - B 80-89% 3.0 GPA Above average progress
  - C 70-79% 2.0 GPA Average progress
  - D 60-69% 1.0 GPA Lowest acceptable progress
  - F 0-59% 0.0 GPA Failure
  - I 0.0 GPA Incomplete
- C. The student's final grade will be determined by quarterly academic grades and other relevant performance criteria (e.g., exams, projects and other demonstrations of mastery of district curriculum objectives).
- D. Evaluation of achievement will indicate progress toward the mastery of district curriculum objectives.
- E. Student Work Habits and Effort will be indicated by the following codes:

- E= Excellent
- G = Good
- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs Improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

These factors will be considered when evaluating student work habits and effort:

- Attends class regularly
- Arrives to class on time

- Comes prepared with required work tools
  - Completes assigned homework
  - Maintains an assigned notebook or other organization system
  - Is dressed appropriately
  - Participates in class work and discussions
  - Is motivated and organized
  - Shows an attitude of cooperation with teacher and fellow students
  - Is respectful of others' class participation and opportunities to learn
- F. Teacher comments on the report card shall be indicated through a coding system, and the report card shall contain a narrative explanation of the grading system.
- G. Report cards shall be issued four times during the school year. In addition, schools are required to issue mid-quarter progress reports to all students.
- H. Parent-teacher conferences shall be scheduled as requested by parents and/or teachers.
- I. Any parent or guardian, after consulting with the teacher, may request that the principal review any grade given a student at the end of a reporting period. However, such grade may not be changed or altered by the principal unless there was an apparent error in the grade calculation. If further appeal is requested, a review panel, as described in the SCTA/School Board of Sarasota County Instructional Bargaining Unit Agreement, will be charged to investigate and render a binding judgment.

#### IV. EXPECTED PERFORMANCE LEVELS

- A. Students in Florida and Sarasota County schools are expected to meet state and local performance standards as follows:

Grade Level	Reading Comprehension	Writing Assessment	Mathematics	Science
6	≥ Level 2 FCAT	≥3.0 Classroom/School Assessment	≥ Level 2 FCAT	
7	≥ Level 2 FCAT	≥3.0 Classroom/School Assessment	≥ Level 2 FCAT	
8	≥ Level 2 FCAT	≥3.0 FCAT Writing	≥ Level 2 FCAT	≥ Level 2 FCAT

B. Determination of Mastery of Student Performance Standards

1. For determination of mastery of student performance standards for middle school, it is the intent of the Sarasota County District Schools to utilize student performance standards which are clear and precise statements of what the learner is expected to do by the end of a prescribed learning period; reflective of the essential knowledge, skills, concepts, or behaviors contained in the district-approved course descriptions; and clearly communicated to all learners at the beginning of a course or unit of instruction.
2. A student will have demonstrated mastery of student performance standards for a district-approved course when through continuous teacher observations, classroom assignments, and examinations, it has been determined that a student has attained a passing score for the course. It is not the intent of the Sarasota County District Schools to measure student performance standards solely through the use of a single method or instrument.

V. RETENTION

A. **GRADE 7 AND 8 (FOR 2006-07) AND GRADE 8 (2007-08)**

1. For school year 2006-07 (for Grade 7) and 2007-08 (for Grade 8) only, the following criteria shall be considered by the school staff before a student in Grade 7 or 8 is retained:
2. Students failing two or more of the required core courses (Language Arts, math, science, and social studies) shall be retained.
3. Personal growth, age, and developmental characteristics such as physical, social and emotional maturity. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.
4. A team of professional staff, in consultation with parents/guardians, must conduct a case review for students being considered for retention. A case review for a Grade 8 students will include a representative designated by the receiving high school principal. The middle school principal, with input from the CARE Team, IEP Committee, LEP Committee and/or other professional staff, may consider waiving promotion requirements for these Good Cause conditions:
  - a. Previous retention in elementary or middle school.
  - b. Alternative program placements for ESE, Dropout Prevention, 504 or ESOL students based on documentation from and IEP, 504 or LEP plan review. The documentation must contain the recommendation and the rationale for the student's exemption from the promotion requirements.
  - c. Student attendance problems of a unique nature as defined in the district's attendance procedures.

- B. Good cause exemptions from retention grade 7 and 8 (for 2006-07) and grade 8 (2007-08) may be made if any of the following criteria are met:
  - 1. A student may be exempt from retention if they meet one of the following criteria:
    - a. Limited English Proficient student who has had less than two years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program.
    - b. Student with disabilities whose individual educational plan indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rules governing Exceptional Student Education programs.
    - c. Student with disabilities who has participated in the FCAT and who has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) of Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for two years or more but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained (ESE);
- C. Any authorization for Good Cause Exemption must be documented and signed by the school principal, recorded in the student’s cumulative record, and copied to the parent.

**VI. RETENTION GRADE 6 (BEGINNING 2006-07)**

- A. Beginning with Grade 6 students who enroll during the 2006-07 school year, students who fail *more than two* of the 4 core academic courses (language arts, mathematics social studies, science) will be retained.
- B. For students who fail *one or two* of the 4 core academic courses, these options are available:

**Option 1: Summer School Academic Course Retrieval**

LA recovery:	Online curriculum modules and offline tasks
Math recovery:	Online curriculum modules
SS recovery:	Online curriculum modules and offline tasks
Science recovery:	Online curriculum modules and offline tasks

Students will be conditionally promoted Grade 7 upon successful completion of summer school course(s).

**Option 2: During School Year Academic Course Retrieval**

Students who fail one or two courses may be conditionally promoted to Gr. 7 and will be enrolled in an elective/exploratory class five days a week until such time mastery of the failed grade level content is completed. Curriculum for this elective option will include:

LA recovery:	Online curriculum modules and offline tasks
Math recovery:	Online curriculum modules
SS recovery:	Online curriculum modules and offline tasks
Science recovery:	Online curriculum modules and offline tasks

- C. Conditionally promoted students who do not complete one of the recovery options for failed grade 6 courses will be retained in grade 7.
- D. No promotion or retention decision may be made for any individual student classified as LEP solely on a score on any single assessment instrument, whether such assessment instrument is part of the statewide assessment program or of a formal district assessment process. A formal retention recommendation regarding a LEP student may be made through action of the school's LEP Committee. [SBER 6A-109421(6)]
- E. Students who attend academic summer school opportunities in other states or districts may be conditionally promoted based on transcripts or other data indicating that they have successfully completed remediation. This promotion will be validated through student performance in the first quarter of grade 7 through district and classroom assessments.

## VII. PARENT NOTIFICATION

- A. Annually, the school district shall provide a written report to parents/guardians of:
  1. The progress of each student toward achieving state and district expectations for proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics, and science; and
  2. The results of each statewide assessment test
  3. The evaluation of each student's progress based upon classroom work, observations, tests, district and state assessments, and other relevant information.
  4. In addition, at any time during a grading period a student is in danger of failing, teachers must contact parents by phone, email, or letter.

## VIII. OPTIONS FOR ASSISTANCE FOR RETAINED STUDENTS

For students who have not met promotion criteria, the following options for assistance may be available:

- Retention in the current grade level
- Referral to the district/school's CARE (Children At-Risk in Education) team
- Remedial groups within existing classes
- Extended School Year programs for students who qualify
- Course recovery programs for students who qualify

- Remedial programs during the day

#### IX. PROGRESSION FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY STUDENTS

- A. As required by Florida Statute 1003.56, Sarasota District schools will provide LEP students with comprehensive instruction that is equal in amount, sequence, and scope as that provided to non-LEP students. The district will enroll LEP students who are reading below grade level in English and who score Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Reading in courses appropriate to their level of English proficiency and reading ability.
- B. Diagnostic, placement, progress monitoring and evaluation of LEP student performance in reading will be conducted as specified in the district's K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan.

#### X. HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

- A. Middle school students may be enrolled in Algebra I (or Honors), Geometry Honors or Spanish I for high school credit. Credit will be awarded upon successful completion of these courses as follows:
  - 1. Algebra I (or Algebra I Honors): Grade 7 or 8
  - 2. Geometry Honors: Grade 8 only
  - 3. Spanish (or other foreign language) I: Grade 8 only
- B. Middle school students participating in high school level courses are subject to these rules:
  - 1. During 2006-07, middle students may replace any high school grade earned in middle school by successfully completing the same course at the high school.
  - 2. Beginning with school year 2007-08, middle school students who take high school courses in middle school may only replace high school course grades of "D" or "F".

#### XI. TRANSFERS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

- A. Foreign students who are unable to obtain records from previous schools will be placed according to chronological age or last grade completed. The principal may review and make changes in placement based on the academic performance of the student. The principal is responsible for the final placement decision.
- B. Students who transfer from other districts with failing semester or quarter grades will have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of performance standards before the final course grade is calculated and awarded.

C. Home Education [1002.41]

1. A “home education program” is the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent in order to satisfy the attendance requirement of F.S. 1002.41, 1003.41, 1003.01(4), 1003.21(1), and 1002.01.
2. Parents must register home education students with the Sarasota County School District within 30 days of the establishment of the home education program.
3. Parents must provide written notice of termination to the Sarasota County School District within 30 days of the termination of a home education program.
4. Parents must maintain a portfolio of records, educational activities and materials. Portfolios are to be preserved for 2 years after re-entry into Sarasota County Schools and shall be made available for the district school superintendent, or the district school superintendent’s designee, upon 15 days’ written notice.
5. Parents shall provide for annual educational evaluations documenting that the student’s educational progress is at a level commensurate with his or her ability.
6. A home education program shall be excluded from meeting the requirements of a school day.
7. Extra-Curricular Activities

Home education students may participate in Sarasota County School District interscholastic extra-curricular student activities at their zoned school. Home education students participating in an extra-curricular activity may attend the specific course required for participation in the activity.

D. Florida Virtual School

1. Students, including Home School students, may earn credits offered through the Florida Virtual School each year.
2. Florida Virtual School courses shall be available to students after the normal school day or during summer school enrollment. Some exceptions to this policy may be granted based on specific needs identified by the school principal.
3. Students requesting to take a course offered by Florida Virtual School must have parent approval. Students and their families are strongly urged to consult with the school counselor and classroom teachers prior to applying to or enrolling in Florida Virtual School.
4. Schools must accept all academic grades and credits successfully earned at Florida Virtual School.

## XII. STUDENT RIGHTS FOR INSTRUCTION

- A. All Sarasota School District classes shall be available to all students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation. This is not intended to eliminate the provision of programs designed to meet the needs of students with limited proficiency in English or exceptional education students (F.S. 1000.05).
- B. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services are designed to meet the communicative, academic, and social needs of English Language Learners (ELL) as defined in F.S. 1003.56. Services will be provided as outlined the District LEP Plan. No ELL student will be retained solely due to a lack of English language proficiency.
- C. No student will be denied appropriate use of his/her primary language [F.S. 1003.56].
- D. Any student who believes that he/she has been denied participation in or access to an educational program or activity, or has otherwise been discriminated against due to age, sex, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, handicapping condition, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, political beliefs, social and family background, or for any other reason not related to his/her individual capabilities, may file a grievance according to the procedure established in School Board policy and published in the brochure entitled Policy Against Discrimination for Students, which may be accessed at: <http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/humres/forms/EquityBook-Student.pdf>
- E. In cases of alleged discrimination and/or harassment, nothing in this policy shall prohibit a student, applicant for admission to an educational program or service, or parent from pursuing a grievance through the complaint and/or grievance procedures as may be established by federal and/or state statutes or regulations. No student, applicant for admission to an educational program or service, parent, or employee shall be subject to adverse action in retaliation for having filed a grievance or for having testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted under the authority of this policy.