

## **Frequently Asked Questions About Promotion, Placement, and Retention**

### General Questions

**1) Does a system need to retest 3rd grade students who did not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment if they have not passed the local system promotion and placement guidelines and will be retained anyway?**

Yes. Both state law and State Board of Education (SBOE) Rule require that each student “shall” be retested (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE 160-4-2-.11).

**2) If a student fails his/ her 3rd grade coursework and does not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments, does the system have to offer the student an opportunity to retest?**

Yes. Both state law and SBOE Rule require that each student “shall” be retested (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE 160-4-2-.11).

**3) When will my child attend summer school if he/she did not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment in 3rd grade?**

Local systems determine specific summer remediation activities, schedules, and school sites.

**4) What happens if my child receives a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment or attains an achievement level of “Developing Learner”, “Proficient Learner” or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments the second time he/she takes it?**

The student has met the State’s legal requirement regarding promotion and placement (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

However, the child would still be subject to the local school system’s promotion policy. Consequently, the child could still be retained by the local school district if the child does not meet the criteria in the local policy. For more information, please contact your local school district office regarding its specific policy.

**5) What happens if my child does not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment or does not attain an achievement level of “Developing Learner”, “Proficient Learner” or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment on the second attempt?**

The child is automatically retained. The parent, guardian, or teacher can initiate an appeal to that decision, however. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

Both State law and SBOE rule provide that a parent, guardian, or teacher may appeal the decision to retain. In the case of parental appeal, the principal will convene a meeting (i.e. physical meeting or conference call) of the “placement committee,” that is composed of the parent/guardian, principal (or designee) and the child’s teacher (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

A decision to promote the student to the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 9<sup>th</sup> grade must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee and must be accompanied by a plan to ensure the student’s success in the next school year (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

- For students with disabilities the IEP team serves as the placement committee (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

**6) We are moving to another Georgia school district early this summer. Since my 3rd grade child did not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment, what steps should I take to ensure that my child takes the required English Language Arts section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment retest?**

Parents should contact their new school system for information related to that system’s Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment retest dates. Local school systems select one or two five day retest windows. Students would need to be present in the systems where they are enrolled or plan to enroll in order to participate in the retest.

**7) My child always spends the summer break out-of-state with his grandparents. Can my child go to summer school in another state (or a private school in state) and still have the opportunity to take the appropriate section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment a second time?**

Yes. Summer school is not a requirement under the Georgia law or SBOE rule, simply an opportunity school systems must make available to children who does not achieve grade level on the spring administration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

However, children would need to be present in the school system where they are enrolled or plan to enroll in order to take the required Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade retest. Consequently, parents should contact their school system for information related to that system’s Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade retest dates.

## Out of State Students

### **8) Are new student(s) who enroll in 3rd or 4th grade from out-of-state subject to Georgia's promotion and placement requirements?**

No. Out-of-state students are not subject to Georgia's promotion and placement criteria for previous school years. In other words, a 3rd grader from Alabama who is planning to attend 4th grade would not be subject to Georgia's promotion and placement requirements for 3rd grade. At the same time, he/she would be subject to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade requirements if he/she attended 5<sup>th</sup> grade in Georgia.

All transfer students must also satisfy any local promotion and placement criteria.

### **9) Would a Georgia private school student who is transferring to a Georgia public school have to meet the state's promotion and placement requirements?**

Students from private schools within Georgia are required to meet Georgia's promotion/retention criteria for those grades in which they attend the public schools but not previous grades at a private school.

All students transferring from private schools must also satisfy any local promotion and placement criteria.

## Children of Foreign Military Personnel

### **10) Foreign army personnel arrive in Georgia with their families, attend the School of the Americas for a brief time, and then go back to their home countries. Does the school system need to retest children of these military families, if these children did not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment?**

Yes. If these students are enrolled in the system, the retest should be offered and the decisions about promotion and retention will be based on local promotion policy and Georgia's promotion/retention criteria.

## Special Education

### **11) When does the appeals process for special education students take place?**

There are special education students whose IEP committees determined that they will follow modified content standards and then be assessed with the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA). These students are not subject to state law and SBOE rule regarding promotion and placement.

However, for most special education students, the IEP expects students to follow the regular state curriculum and be assessed with the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment (grades 3-

8), with appropriate accommodations. For these students, state law and SBOE rule regarding promotion and placement do apply.

This means that if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment or does not attain an achievement level of “Developing Learner”, “Proficient Learner” or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment, accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction should be offered and the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment retest required. If the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment or does not attain an achievement level of “Developing Learner”, “Proficient Learner” or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment on the retest, then the student is considered retained. Only then can parent, guardian, or teacher appeal the retention, at which time the IEP committee serving as the placement committee would determine the student’s placement for the coming school year.

**12) An IEP committee recommended the retention of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student with disabilities for the next school year. The student has not received a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment. Since the IEP committee determined retention in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, does the system still have to offer supplemental instruction followed by a retake of the English Language Arts Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment?**

Yes. If a student did not receive a grade level reading determination of “On/Above Grade Level” on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment, state law and SBOE rule both require that the system offer the opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction. Parents have the right to opt out of this opportunity (O.C.G.A. 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

Both state law and SBOE Rule also require that each student “shall” be retested. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-283 and SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.11).

If the student fails the retest, then the student is retained. Parents, guardians, or teachers can then appeal the retention, whereupon the IEP committee would determine placement for the coming school year.

**13) When the IEP committee is considering an appeal, what criteria should be used in determining promotion, placement or retention?**

When the parent of a student with a disability requests an appeal, the IEP committee is convened to consider all current information and data. They should consider the most appropriate instructional placement, including but not limited to the following:

- The most recent grades and classroom performance
- The amount of instruction provided in the deficient subject
- The intensity of instruction on the subject
- The attendance of the student

- The accommodations and/or supports provided to the student
- The comparison of classroom assessments, individualized assessments, and Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade results
- The learning style of the student and whether or not the learning style was addressed
- Any previous retentions
- The additional supports provided, such as parental assistance at home or private tutoring
- What can and will be done differently to support the student if retained