

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

**SUBJECT:                 STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR FIRST, SECOND, AND  
THIRD GRADE STUDENTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS (M-DCPS)**

**COMMITTEE:            ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC  
BLUEPRINT:            RELEVANT, RIGOROUS AND INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS**

When a student fails to achieve academic success in the early elementary grades, teachers and school principals are faced with a range of choices which may include accessing technology instructional support programs; providing extra tutoring; placing the student in summer school, if available; or, as a last resort, holding the student back for a year. The last option, retention, often proves to be difficult and a contentious issue for the school, the student, and the parents and we as a school district must do everything possible to inspire an achieve success instead of retention.

Pursuant to Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) *Student Progression Plan 2018-2019* and Florida Statute 1008.25, “A Student’s progression from one grade to another is based on a student’s mastery of the state standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social sciences. This state statute also requires M-DCPS to set standards that students must meet for promotion to the next grade. The basis for making the determination to promote a student will reflect teacher judgement based on the following: progress tests, classroom assignments, daily observation, standardized tests, state assessments and other objective data. The primary responsibility for determining each student’s level of performance and ability to function academically, socially, and emotionally at the next proficiency level is that of the classroom teacher subject to review and approval of the principal.”

Each student in Kindergarten through third grade must meet specific levels of performance for advancement from one grade to another. If a student does not master specific levels of performance on District and State assessments and/or if the teacher judges that a student is not proficient, the student must be provided with proper interventions, and student progress must be examined and monitored, per the schoolwide system of progress monitoring.

Student performance standards and performance levels for Kindergarten through third grade are described in the *Student Progression Plan 2018-2019*. The following chart summarizes that information for grades K, 1, 2, and 3:

SUBJECTS	GRADES	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE LEVELS
Reading	Kindergarten	Stanford Achievement Test, 10 <sup>th</sup> Edition (SESAT 2) Sentence Reading percentile score at or above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Reading	1 and 2	Stanford Achievement Test, 10 <sup>th</sup> Edition (SAT 10) Reading Comprehension percentile score at or above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Reading	3	Grade 3 statewide, standardized ELA assessment Achievement level 2 or higher; or  Mastery of benchmarks on the <u>Grade 3 Reading Student Portfolio</u> (mastery consists of 3 acceptable demonstrations on each standard.)  Passing score on a Florida Board of Education approved alternate assessment; ITBS (at or above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile), iReady (at or above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile), or SAT-10 (at or above the 45 <sup>th</sup> percentile).
Mathematics	Kindergarten	Stanford Achievement Test, 10 <sup>th</sup> Edition (SESAT 2) Mathematics percentile score at or above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile (grades 1 and 2),
Mathematics	1-3	Stanford Achievement Test, 10 <sup>th</sup> Edition (SAT 10) Mathematics Problem Solving percentile score at or above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile (grades 1 and 2); or  Statewide standardized assessment Mathematics Achievement Level 3 or higher (grades 3 only)

*The Student Progression Plan 2018-2019* defines all the avenues for student success and advancement to the next level. However, while there is a higher level of accountability in grades 3-5, and the number of schools achieving A, B, or C school performance grades has certainly improved dramatically in M-DCPS, it is important to note that there are students in grades one and two who may be having learning difficulties and may not be achieving academic learning gains. And, while retention is certainly not the best and most recommended answer, it is vital that M-DCPS ensure that we are doing everything conceivable to provide the instructional support, guidance, and educational opportunities to those students in grades one and two, even in “A” schools, who may scoring below the 25% in the Stanford Achievement Test.

A recent memorandum from the Superintendent dated May 24, 2019 details the results for the 2019 Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) English Language Arts (ELA) for grade three indicating outstanding performance by M-DCPS students, outscoring the state and most of the large school districts in Florida. At the same time, approximately 19% of M-DCPS third graders, 4,972 students, scored at level 1. Third grade students do have other opportunities to demonstrate reading mastery as required by state statute and M-DCPS *Student Progression Plan 2018-2019* to be promoted to fourth grade. These opportunities include mastery of benchmarks on the Grade 3 Reading Student Portfolio, or a passing score on the alternative standardized reading assessments administered during the last two weeks of school and at the end of the summer reading camp.

The Office of Academics and Transformation (OAT) provides guidance and support to all M-DCPS schools. Their work is to be commended and the exceptional academic results of our students are more than well documented. OAT, along with region personnel, principals, teachers, and parents, are to be applauded for the outstanding work they have done in providing different opportunities for achieving student academic success in this school district.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to:

- 1) review current academic offerings for underachieving students in grades one and two;
- 2) appraise assessment tools currently being utilized with first and second grade students to determine if they are appropriately assessing student academic success;
- 3) assess current professional development opportunities being offered to instructional staff in grades one and two;
- 4) provide the Board with the number of third grade students who did not meet reading mastery after the different assessment opportunities were offered and implemented during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years; and
- 5) present a comprehensive report, inclusive of recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and others, as applicable, to the Board at the Academics, Innovation, Evaluation & Technology School Board Committee of September 25, 2019.