

LEAP

High Stakes Testing Policy

Revised

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State Superintendent of Education

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LEAP High Stakes Testing Policy (Grades 4 and 8)

A student may not be promoted to the 5th or 9th grade until he or she has scored at or above the *Basic* achievement level on either the English Language Arts or Mathematics component on the 4th or 8th grade LEAP and at the *Approaching Basic* achievement level on the other (hereafter referred to as the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination). For promotional purposes; however, a student shall score at or above the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination on the English Language Arts and Mathematics components of LEAP only one time.

A parent/student/school compact that outlines the responsibilities of each party will be required for students in grades 3, 4, 7, and 8 who have been determined to be at risk of failing to achieve the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination on the English Language Arts and Mathematics components of the 4th or 8th grade LEAP, as well as for students who were retained in grades 4 or 8.

LEAs shall offer a minimum of 50 hours per subject of summer remediation and retest opportunities in English language arts and mathematics at no cost to students who did not take the spring LEAP tests or who scored *Approaching Basic* and/or *Unsatisfactory* on the English Language Arts and/or Mathematics component (s) on the spring tests. The LEA shall provide transportation to and from the assigned LEAP remediation summer site(s) from, at a minimum, a common pick-up point.

- A student who failed to achieve the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination is *not* required to attend the LEA-offered LEAP summer remediation program in order to be eligible for the summer retest.
- All students with disabilities who participate in LEAP should receive services along with regular education students in summer remediation programs, with special supports provided as needed.
- Students with disabilities who participate in LEAP Alternate Assessment, Level 1 (LAA 1), are not eligible to attend LEAP summer remediation programs.
- Students with disabilities who participate in LEAP Alternate Assessment, Level 2 (LAA 2), are eligible to attend LEAP summer remediation programs.

In order to move students toward grade level performance, LEAs shall design and implement additional instructional strategies for students in grades 3, 4, 7, and 8 who have been determined to be at risk of failing to achieve the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination on LEAP, and for 4th and 8th grade students being retained. The purpose of the additional instructional strategies is to move the students to grade-level proficiency by providing the following:

- focused intervention in the subject area(s) on which a student scored at the *Approaching Basic* and/or *Unsatisfactory* level on the iLEAP;
- focused remediation for those 4th and 8th grade students repeating the grade as a result of failing ELA and/or math on the LEAP;
- ongoing instruction in the core subject areas using curricula based on State-level content standards and the Grade-Level Expectations.

Promotion/Retention Policies

Grade 4

A student may not be promoted to the 5th grade until he or she has scored at or above the *Basic* achievement level on either the English Language Arts or Mathematics component on the 4th grade LEAP and at the *Approaching Basic* achievement level on the other.

The decision to retain a student in the 4th grade more than once as a result of his/her failure to achieve the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination on the English Language Arts and Mathematics components of LEAP shall be made by the LEA in accordance with the local Pupil Progression Plan which shall include the following:

- A student who **has repeated** the 4th grade may be promoted to only the 5th grade. A district may apply for a waiver from this part of the policy if their specific plan is presented to the Department of Education, and the State Superintendent of Education approves it.
- However, a student who **has repeated** the 4th grade and who is 12 years old on or before September 30th may be promoted according to the local Pupil Progression Plan.

After the summer retest, a school system, through its superintendent, may consider granting an appeal on behalf of individual students, provided that all of the following criteria have been met:

- The student's highest score in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics on either the spring or summer LEAP must fall within twenty (20) scaled score points of the cutoff score for *Basic*.
- The student shall have a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the subject(s) for which the appeal is being considered.
- The student must have attended the LEAP summer remediation program.
- The student must have taken the LEAP retest given after the LEAP summer remediation program has been concluded.
- The student must have met State-mandated attendance regulations during the regular school year and any locally mandated regulations during the summer remediation program.
- The principal and the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) must review student work samples and attest that the student exhibits the ability to perform at or above the *Basic* achievement level in the subject for which the appeal is being considered.

LEAP Testing

- Students retained in the 4th grade shall retake all four components of LEAP.

Promotion/Retention Policies (cont'd.)

Grade 8

A student may not be promoted to the 9th grade until he or she has scored at or above the *Basic* achievement level on either the English Language Arts or Mathematics component on the 8th grade LEAP and at the *Approaching Basic* achievement level on the other.

After the summer retest, a school system, through its superintendent, may consider a waiver for an 8th grade student who has scored at the *Approaching Basic* level on both the English Language Arts and Mathematics components of LEAP. The LEA may grant the waiver in accordance with the local Pupil Progression Plan provided the following criteria are met:

- The student may be promoted to the 9th grade, provided that he or she has scored at the *Approaching Basic* level on **both** the English Language Arts and Mathematics components of LEAP, has attended the LEAP summer remediation program offered by the District, and has taken the summer retest administered at the conclusion of the summer program.
- The student must retake the component(s) (English Language Arts and/or Mathematics) of the retest on which a score of *Approaching Basic* or below was attained on the spring test.

The student who has repeated the 8th grade may be either

- 1) Retained again in the 8th grade.
- 2) Promoted to the 9th grade, provided that the student has scored at the *Approaching Basic* level on **either** the English Language Arts or Mathematics component of LEAP, has attended the current year LEAP summer remediation program offered by the District in, at a minimum, the *Unsatisfactory* subject, and has taken the summer retest administered at the conclusion of the summer program. **If promoted with an *Unsatisfactory* on the English Language Arts or Mathematics component of LEAP, the student must enroll in and pass a high school remedial course in the *unsatisfactory* subject (English language arts or mathematics) before enrolling in or earning Carnegie credit for English or mathematics.**
or
- 3) Placed in the Pre-GED/Skills Options Program that shall be available to students who meet criteria as outlined in *Bulletin 741: Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators*, §2907.

LEAP Testing

- Students repeating the 8th grade will retake all four components of LEAP.
- Students in the Pre-GED/Skills Options Program will take the 9th grade iLEAP.

Exceptions to the High Stakes testing policy

1. Policy Override – 4th and 8th grades

The local school system (LEA) may override the State policy for students scoring at the *Unsatisfactory* level in English language arts or mathematics, if the student scores at the *Mastery* or *Advanced* level in the other, provided that

- the decision is made in accordance with the local Pupil Progression Plan, which may include a referral to the School Building Level Committee (SBLC);
- the student has participated in **both** the spring and summer administrations of LEAP and has attended the summer remediation program offered by the LEA (the student shall participate in the summer retest only on the subject that he/she scored at the *Unsatisfactory* achievement level during the spring test administration); and
- parental consent is granted.

Policy Override – 8th grade only

The local school system (LEA) may override the State policy for 8th grade students scoring at the *Unsatisfactory* level in English language arts or mathematics, if the student scores at the *Basic* level in the other, provided that the following criteria are met:

- the student scored **Approaching Basic** or above on the Science and Social Studies components of LEAP;
- the student had an overall 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale;
- the student had a minimum 92% attendance during the school year;
- the decision is made in accordance with the local Pupil Progression Plan, which may include a referral to the School Building Level Committee (SBLC);
- the student has participated in **both** the spring and summer administrations of LEAP and has attended the summer remediation program offered by the LEA (the student shall participate in the summer retest only on the subject that he/she scored at the *Unsatisfactory* achievement level during the spring test administration); and
- parental consent is granted.

If a student meets the criteria for this override, and is promoted with an *Unsatisfactory*, the student must enroll in and pass a high school remedial course in the *unsatisfactory* subject before enrolling in or earning Carnegie credit for English or mathematics.

2. Students with Disabilities Eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) participating in LEAP Alternate Assessments

- Students with disabilities who participate in the LEAP Alternate Assessment, Level 1 (LAA 1), shall have promotion decisions determined by the SBLC.
- Students with disabilities who participate in the LEAP Alternate Assessment, Level 2 (LAA 2), shall have promotion decisions determined by the SBLC.

3. Waiver for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

- LEP students shall participate in statewide assessment. The SBLC shall be granted the authority to waive the State's grade promotion policy for a LEP student. A LEP student who was granted a waiver at the 4th grade level is ineligible for a waiver at the 8th grade level.

4. Waiver for Extenuating Circumstances

A school system, through its superintendent, may grant a waiver on behalf of individual students who are unable to participate in LEAP testing or unable to attend LEAP summer remediation because of one or more of the following extenuating circumstances as verified through appropriate documentation:

- a physical illness or injury that is acute or catastrophic in nature.
- a chronic physical condition that is in an acute phase.
- court-ordered custody issues.

Documentation:

- *Physical Illness:* Appropriate documentation must include verification that the student is under the medical care of a licensed physician for illness, injury, or a chronic physical condition that is acute or catastrophic in nature. Documentation must include a statement verifying that the illness, injury, or chronic physical condition exists to the extent that the student is unable to participate in testing and/or remediation.
- *Custody Issues:* Certified copies of the **court-ordered** custody agreements must be submitted to the LEA at least ten (10) school days prior to summer remediation or retesting.

Student Eligibility/Retest Requirements:

- Students who meet the criteria for extenuating circumstances under the *physical illness, chronic physical condition, or court-ordered custody category* related to LEAP and
- who are unable to participate in **both** the spring and the summer administration of LEAP, **or**
- who failed to achieve the *Basic/Approaching Basic* combination on the spring administration of LEAP English Language Arts and Mathematics tests and are unable to participate in LEAP summer retest
 - shall take The Iowa Tests for grade placement within ten (10) school days of returning to school, which may include hospital/homebound instruction, in order to ensure the appropriate level of instruction;
 - must score at or above the cutoff score on the selected form of The Iowa Tests for grade placement to be promoted to the 5th or 9th grade; and
 - are not eligible for a retest. These students may be eligible for the policy override, the 4th grade appeal, or the 8th grade waiver in accordance with the local Pupil Progression Plan.

Students who meet the criteria for extenuating circumstances under the *physical illness, chronic physical condition, or court-ordered custody category* related to LEAP and

- who are unable to participate in the spring testing **and/or** summer remediation, including the provision of remediation through hospital/home bound instruction, are required to take the LEAP summer retest. These students may be eligible for the policy override, the 4th grade appeal, or the 8th grade waiver in accordance with the local Pupil Progression Plan.

5. State-Granted Exceptions:

- A local school superintendent, a parent or guardian, or the State Department of Education may initiate a request for a State-granted waiver from the State Superintendent of Education on behalf of individual students who are not eligible for promotion because of LEA error or other unique situations not covered under extenuating circumstances.
- The Department of Education will provide a report to the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education detailing State-granted waivers.

Documentation:

- *LEA Error:* The LEA superintendent or parent must provide the State Superintendent of Education with school- and student-level documentation detailing the error, how the error occurred, and how the error will be corrected so that it will not occur again in the future.
- *Other Unique Situations:* Documentation must be provided to the State Superintendent of Education detailing the unique situation and justifying why a waiver should be granted.

Testing/Promotion Decisions:

The Department of Education will communicate to the LEAs the means for establishing promotional decisions for those students who have received a State-granted waiver.

The promotion policies outlined above will be reviewed in 2008.