

STATE PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS



STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

5TH Grade

Students must pass the TAKS reading and math tests to be promoted to the sixth grade.

8TH Grade

Students must pass the TAKS reading and math tests to be promoted to the ninth grade.

EXIT LEVEL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

11TH Grade

Students must pass the TAKS exit level English language arts, math, science, and social studies tests in order to graduate.

TAKS Testing at Grade 8

Students have three opportunities to pass the TAKS grade 8 reading test and three opportunities to pass the TAKS grade 8 mathematics test—two during the spring and one during the summer. The exact test dates are available at www.TexasAssessment.com/calendars.



If you have any questions about the state requirements for grade advancement, contact your school's principal or go to TEA's website at www.TexasAssessment.com/SSI.

For information about ordering additional copies of this brochure, call 800-252-9186.



Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division

Prepare for Success

A PARENT GUIDE
TO THE

Student Success Initiative

AT GRADE 8



The Student Success Initiative

State Law Requirements

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) was created by the Texas Legislature to ensure that all students receive the instruction and support they need to be academically successful in reading and mathematics.

Under the SSI grade advancement requirements, students are required to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) grade 5 reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to sixth grade. Additionally, students are required to pass the TAKS grade 8 reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to ninth grade.

In addition to the SSI grade advancement requirements, state law also requires that high school students pass the TAKS exit level tests in English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science, along with meeting all their course requirements, to receive a diploma from a Texas public high school.

What Happens at Grade 8?

Eighth grade students have three opportunities to pass the TAKS grade 8 reading test and three opportunities to pass the TAKS grade 8 mathematics test. If a student does not pass one or both tests, the student will be given additional instruction after each testing opportunity. Parents will be notified if their child does not pass a TAKS test that is required for promotion.

If a student has not passed after the second testing opportunity, a grade placement committee (GPC), which consists of the principal, teacher, and parent or guardian, is formed. The GPC will create an instructional plan based on the individual needs of the student.

Parents' Role in the Process

A student who is unsuccessful on the reading and/or mathematics test after the third testing opportunity will be retained automatically. However, the student's parents may appeal the decision to have their child repeat the eighth grade by submitting a request to the GPC within five working days of receiving the retention notice. The GPC may decide to promote a student to the ninth grade, but only if everyone on the committee agrees that the student is likely to succeed in the ninth grade. Even if the GPC decides to promote the student, the student must participate in the required additional instruction in order to be promoted.

Parents may request a waiver of the third testing opportunity if they do not want their child to test. If the waiver is approved, the student is automatically retained, but the parents may still appeal the retention. A student must participate in all additional instruction required by the GPC, even if the third testing opportunity is waived.

NOTE: For information about how the Student Success Initiative applies to students receiving special education services, check with the special education contact on your campus.

PARENT TIPS to Prepare for Success

General

- Early in the school year, review your child's seventh grade progress and test results with the eighth grade teachers to determine if extra help is needed in reading or math.
- Reinforce what your child is learning in school by asking questions about classroom and homework assignments.
- Attend the school's Open House and parent-teacher conferences. Ask about activities you can do at home to improve your child's skills.
- Keep in contact with your child's teachers throughout the year. If your child seems to be struggling, ask about tutoring programs or other forms of available assistance.

Reading

- Encourage your child to read a variety of materials, including books and newspaper and magazine articles. Look for opportunities to discuss what your child is reading. Find out what your child learned from the text. Suggest that your child make notes about unfamiliar words and concepts.
- Help your child learn to use the reading resources available at home or at the library. Doing this will put your child on the road to becoming a better, more independent reader.
- Establish a daily reading time, when each family member can enjoy their favorite book or magazine without the distraction of television. This will help your child realize that you value and enjoy reading. It will also improve your child's ability to read "between the lines" and to make connections between reading and personal experience.

Math

- Encourage your child to talk about the steps used when solving a math problem.
- Ask questions about what is represented in the tables and graphs found in different sections of magazines and newspapers, such as the weather page.
- Find ways to incorporate math skills into everyday situations like comparing prices when shopping, budgeting money, calculating the amount of tax and tip, measuring ingredients for cooking, doing home repairs, and estimating time and distance when traveling.