

Introduction

Historically, promotion, retention, and placement policy had strict requirements of school systems supporting struggling students. In October 2017 and January 2018, BESE approved revisions to Bulletin 1566 that support increased LEA flexibility with regard to student promotion.¹ Struggling students must be identified early and receive intensive supports to ensure growth and the ability to stay on track towards graduation while the decision for promotion and retention remain a local decision.

Policy Requirements

Grade 4 Requirements:

- Students who score below “Basic” in at least two core subjects (ELA, math, science, social studies) at the end of Grade 4 must be placed on an individual academic improvement plan.
- The plan must:
 - Address each core subject in which the student scored below “Basic”
 - Include at least two approved interventions per core subject (see [below](#)), including possible participation in summer school as an intervention if chosen by the student and parent²
 - Be signed by the parent/legal guardian, following discussion of the plan
 - Continue until the student achieves “Basic” in the core subjects that led to the development of the plan

Grades 5-7 Requirements:

- Students placed on an individual academic improvement plan at the end of Grade 4 must continue to receive intervention supports until the student achieves “Basic” in the *same core subjects* that led to the development of their individual academic improvement plan

Grade 8 Requirements:

- Students should score at least “Basic” in either ELA or math and “Approaching Basic” in other subjects to be promoted to Grade 9
- The LEA determines appropriate placement in ninth grade or transitional ninth grade for students who transfer to the LEA from another state or country, no later than October 1 of each school year

Additional Guidance

The following resources are included within this document:

- [Description of new promotion and support policy process](#)
- [Description of allowable intervention options for the Individual academic support plan](#)
- [Promotion and support policy FAQs](#)
- [Appendix A: Summary of changes for Bulletin 1566–Grades 3-7](#)
- [Appendix B: Detailed description of new promotion and support policy process–Grades 3-7](#)
- [Appendix C: Comparison of new and prior policy for fourth and eighth grade promotion, and summer remediation](#)

¹ For the approved revisions to Bulletin 1566, Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures, click [here for October 2017 revisions](#) and [here for January 2018 revisions](#). For specifics on the updates made to the prior policy, please refer to [Appendix C](#).

² All students identified as academically struggling must be *offered* summer remediation. If the student participates in summer remediation, it may count as one of the two required interventions.

New Promotion and Support Policy Process for Grade 4

Bulletin 1566 §701 and §703

All steps in this process are required and should be repeated at the end of each school year.

For more details, [see Appendix B](#).

Action Step 1: Identify students who are academically struggling*			
Who	What	When	Goal
LEA	Receive roster from LDOE of students exiting grades 3 and 4 who identify as below “Basic” in at least two core subjects	End of school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify students exiting grade 3 who may benefit from additional supports (i.e., early warning system) Identify students exiting grade 4 who scored below “Basic” in at least two core subjects and require an individual academic improvement plan

*No action required for students in grades 5 through 7 who were not previously put on a plan in grade 4.

Action Step 2: Engage parent/legal guardian and create a plan (required)			
Who	What	When	Goal
LEA and Parent/Legal Guardian	Attend planning meeting for each student exiting Grade 4 identified as below “Basic” in action step 1	End of school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select interventions from the list of options on page 3 Populate and sign the individual academic improvement plan template and parent/legal guardian agreement form Maintain the plan and agreement form in the student’s file

Action Step 3: Determine retention or promotion status			
Who	What	When	Goal
LEA	Continue academic improvement plan and monitor student progress	Ongoing and as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student met expectations (i.e., Basic or above). <p>If student does not meet expectations, per pupil progression policy, determine retention or promotion status.</p>

Intervention Options

If a student is identified as needing an [individual academic improvement plan](#), the school system is required to choose at least two interventions for each core academic subject from the list below. The parent/legal guardian shall sign an [agreement form](#) indicating the selected interventions.

Options	Requirements and Resources
Enrollment in a summer program <i>(Per state law, this option must be offered to parents/legal guardians)</i>	<p>Summer program uses instructional curricula or learning program aligned to Louisiana State Standards.</p> <p>Program taught by a Highly Effective or Effective Proficient teacher.</p> <p>No more than 35% of the instructional time can be made up of learning below the student's registered grade level.</p> <p>At least 65% of instructional time should be targeted to help students access on grade level learning, which includes any additional instructional time.</p>
Additional In-school support	<p>Additional learning minutes should come from free time during the school day or after school support.</p> <p>Student should never be pulled out of on grade level, core academic instruction with peers to receive below level instructional support.</p> <p>No more than 35% of the instructional time can be made up of learning below the student's registered grade level.</p> <p>At least 65% of instructional time should be targeted to help students access on grade level learning, which includes any additional instructional time.</p>
	Additional in-school support resources: Louisiana Believes Teacher Support Toolbox (by grade and subject) K-12 Math Planning Resources: Helping students who struggle (by grade) Diverse Learners Guide and the Supports Flow Chart (ELA Guidebooks 2.0)
Access to high quality, aligned curriculum	Use of a high quality curriculum aligned to Louisiana State Standards that includes built in instructional support.
Placement in classroom of a highly effective teacher	Student is placed in the classroom of a teacher rated highly effective overall or highly effective on value added model or has proven to grow academically struggling students in the past.

Promotion and Support Policy FAQs

1. **Why hasn't the bulletin (Bulletin 1566) been updated online yet?** Bulletins don't get updated until after they run in the Louisiana Register as final rule after the entire Administrative Procedures Act rulemaking process. Right now, the rule is going through that process, following BESE's approval as Notice of Intent. It is unlikely that this rule will not proceed as final rule; therefore, we are encouraging all LEAs to proceed with aligning their local policies and procedures accordingly. LEAs can access the new policies that BESE has adopted as Notice of Intent in the BoardDocs system, Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee, or contact Erin Bendily at erin.bendily@la.gov with specific questions about policy language.
2. **Will the template be required or can we use our own format? We hear in the webinar we can use black text.** Local school systems may use their own template as long as all components from the State template are addressed, if applicable. Black text is acceptable.
3. **In regards to the 2017-2018 Pupil Progression Plan submission, the template previously required the following items. The new template doesn't mention these, are they no longer required?**
 - *a formal submission statement signed by Principal & Board President* See Section XI – LEA Assurances
 - *a local/LEA contact information page* - Keep on file locally.
 - *a listing of the committee of educators appointed by the superintendent* - Keep on file locally.
 - *a listing of the parents appointed by the school board* - Keep on file locally.
 - *documentation of input into the PPP by educators/parents* - Keep on file locally.
 - *copies of the public notice of the PPP prior to approval of PPP (dates and location)* - Keep on file locally.
4. **Eighth grade students shall score at least at the “Basic” achievement level in either English language arts or mathematics and “Approaching Basic” in the other subjects in order to be promoted to the ninth grade. Does that mean that they must have AB in science and social studies too?** The 8th grade policy was not revised by BESE to address science and social studies.
5. **Do schools have to offer all four choices that are listed as allowable interventions?** No, the policy does not mandate this, with the exception of summer remediation. State law mandates that LEAs offer summer remediation, and neither BESE nor LDOE can waive this requirement. This does not mean that struggling students must attend summer remediation, but it must be offered to them.
6. **When will the roster of 3rd and 4th grade students who scored below Basic in at least two subjects be provided?** This information can be extracted from the assessment score report file provided to district test coordinators annually in June.
7. **Will there be a template or suggested policy for individual academic improvement?** Yes, a template and supporting documents are available [here](#).
8. **How will the IGP change in order to incorporate the Individual Academic Improvement Plan?** No change - the individual academic improvement plan will begin after grade 4 and go through the 8th grade. At the end of the 8th grade, the traditional 8th grade promotion/T9/IGP policies commence.

9. **What about attendance by teachers and parents in-person? Many of our parents cannot attend in person as we serve families from all over the state. When parents do not have transportation or otherwise cannot attend IEP meetings in person, we conduct the meeting over the phone/video phone. Can we do the same for these review meetings?** LEAs should work with parents to determine how best to have these conversations and obtain written affirmations of their participation. We suggest documenting the meeting date and time and obtaining an electronic signature on the parent agreement form to keep on file, if an in-person meeting is not possible.
10. **What if the school makes every attempt to contact the parent to get them at the meeting, but they don't attend?** Keep documentation showing multiple attempts to contact the parent, including but not limited to phone call, written note home, email, etc.
11. **If a parent refuses to allow a student to take the 8th grade LEAP, how will the promotion/placement decision be made?** Principals and superintendents should personally discuss the implications of non-participation with parents who make these requests or express concerns about testing. While federal law does call for the participation of “all students” in state testing, local school leaders should also work to accommodate and respect parent wishes for their children. Local pupil progression policies may address this as well, and where test scores are not available to guide promotion/placement decisions, the school should review the preponderance of evidence of student learning from that school year to make that decision.
12. **If a parent instructs a student to not test (opt out students), therefore they receive unsatisfactory, do they get an individual academic improvement plan?** The school shall work with the parent to consider all other available evidence of student learning to determine if an academic improvement plan is needed.
13. **What is the difference between academic supports and remediation? Can you provide examples?** Remediation is a form of academic support, although typically focused on content that is below grade level. In keeping with other language in this proposed regulation, we are requiring that academic supports contain content that exposes students and allows them to learn content that is on grade level. Remedial (below grade level) content should not comprise more than 35 percent of the instructional time.
14. **For math, there are Eureka Remediation tools aligned to the Modules and Topics in Eureka. What should be used for ELA?** There are two primary resources for supporting struggling students in ELA :[ELA Guidebooks Diverse Learners Guide](#) and [ELA Guidebooks Supports Flow Chart](#). These resources are also linked in the [School System Promotion Guidance 2017-2018](#).
15. **What are the implications for those districts which may not be able to provide “highly effective” teachers for every class?** BESE, at its December 2017 board meeting, approved a policy revision which provides that summer school teachers be rated Highly Effective or Effective: Proficient pursuant to their most recent evaluation. This is one of four options that LEAs have to meet the needs of academically struggling students. LEAs need only provide two of the four required.
16. **For students with disabilities, can the IEP serve as the individual academic improvement plan if they add the needed components or should a separate plan be written?** The IEP is based on federally required components related to special education services. An [Individual Academic Improvement Plan](#) is required in addition to the IEP for students with disabilities.

- 17. Do students with 504 plans or IEPs that do not meet the standard for promotion still need an Individual Academic Improvement Plan?** Yes, an [Individual Academic Improvement Plan](#) is required in addition to the 504 plan and IEP.
- 18. How does this policy affect Act 833?** No change - all state laws continue to be in effect.
- 19. The proposed policy says shows that the summer test is going away, yet it still shows up in other sections and is mentioned in one section of the new PPP template. Is the summer retest definitely ending?** Yes, the PPP template has been corrected and we will disseminate an amended copy to LEAs in the newsletter following the January BESE meeting.
- 20. Will all four subjects need to be offered during summer remediation?** Yes, the policy provides for remediation to be offered in each of the four core subjects where students may have weaknesses. The objective is to help students in the core academic subjects in which they've scored below Basic.
- 21. Using only highly effective teachers narrows the summer school teacher pool down considerably. What if there are not enough HE teachers in the district to teach summer school?** BESE, at the December 2017 board meeting, approved a policy revision which provides that summer school teachers be rated Highly Effective or Effective: Proficient pursuant to his/her most recent evaluation.
- 22. How is "summer" defined for purposes of summer remediation?** Neither BESE nor the LDOE have defined this term which is used in state law (R.S. 17:24.4). LEAs have the ability to comply with the law by offering summer remediation on the timeline that they believe works best for them.
- 23. Page 7 of the template refers to 8th grade summer retest – will there be a retest?** The summer retest will no longer exist. The PPP template has been corrected and we will disseminate an amended copy to LEAs in the newsletter.
- 24. With the repeal of the 50-hour cap for each subject taught during summer remediation, won't this increase local costs?** The 50-hour requirement in the previous policy was a minimum, not a cap, that BESE has since voted to repeal. LEAs can now determine the appropriate length of summer remediation programs needed to address students' needs.
- 25. Will LEAP scores come in at the end of May in order to be ready for summer school at the beginning of June?** 2018 results will likely not be available until June, per the LDOE Assessment team and test vendor.
- 26. After reviewing the 4th and 8th Grade Promotion Policy Guidance document, it is still unclear as whether or not Summer Remediation is still required by LEAs. If it is still a requirement, can LEAs offer the “summer Remediation” during the school day/school year prior to summer break? OR Are LEAs required to offer “Summer Remediation” only during the summer months? Please clarify.** Yes, school systems must continue to offer summer remediation to struggling students. The 50-hour requirement in the previous policy has been repealed. LEAs can now determine the appropriate length of summer remediation programs needed to address students' needs.
Remediation programs used throughout the school day and school year will not account for more than 35 percent of total instructional minutes. Please also refer to question 22 for information about the definition of summer relative to summer remediation.

- 27. Can a first year teacher teach summer school or be the classroom teacher the following year for the struggling student? For example, could the teacher's evaluations as a resident be used to determine if they are Highly Effective or Effective Proficient? What if they are somehow paired with a Highly Effective or Effective Proficient teacher?** The regulations require that the summer school teacher must have been rated Highly Effective or Effective: Proficient pursuant to his/her most recent evaluation. Thus, a teacher must have been formally evaluated in order to have such a rating.
- 28. Can a resident teach summer school or be the classroom teacher for the struggling student?** No, please refer to question 27.
- 29. When will state placement tests be available for students transferring in from out of state or from non-public/home study?** As school systems are currently determining placement for transfer and nonpublic students for 2018-2019, current practices may be used for placement until the 5th and 9th grade placement tests are released.
- 30. Will an EOC summer retest be administered?** Yes, the EOC summer retest will be administered the week of June 18 – 22, 2018.
- 31. I read that BESE will consider further, final adjustments to this policy – changes to how students are identified for summer remediation and placed in transitional 9th grade – at the January 2018 meeting. What changes will be made?** In response to stakeholder feedback, the LDOE will propose that BESE make two final adjustments to the pupil progression/promotion regulations, as follows:
 - a. Going forward, LEAs should offer summer remediation to academically struggling students based on all evidence of student learning that exists by the end of the school year, including classroom teacher exams/grades, interim/benchmark test results, etc. If state test results indicate that additional students who were not previously identified are in need of academic supports, the LEA can work with those students' families to determine how best to support their needs later in the summer and/or at the start of the following school year.
 - b. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, placement of students in the transitional 9th grade need not be based solely on the results of the 8th grade LEAP test. LEAs should consider all available evidence of student learning to determine which students could benefit from the transitional 9th grade placement.

Appendix A: Summary of Changes for Bulletin 1566 – [Grade 3-7](#)

LEAs shall make promotion and retention decisions based on a preponderance of evidence of student learning, including LEAP results.

If a student scores below “Basic” in at least two core academic subjects upon completion of grade 4, the student shall be provided with an individual academic improvement plan regardless of promotion or retention status. The plan shall be reviewed with and signed by the student’s parent or legal guardian. The plan must outline at least two allowable interventions to be provided during the school year and/or during the summer (see [page three](#) for detailed description of interventions).

LEAs shall offer, at no cost to students, extended on grade-level instruction to students who did not take the LEAP tests or who failed to meet the promotional standard set forth in §701 and §703 of Bulletin 1566. The LEA shall provide transportation to and from the assigned LEAP instructional support summer site(s) from, at a minimum, a common pick-up point.

Summer instructional support programs must be offered as an intervention option for struggling students. Summer instructional support programs shall use curriculum determined by the LDOE to fully align to Louisiana State Standards. Teachers rated “Effective: Proficient” or “Highly Effective” shall serve as summer instructional support instructors. Remedial (below grade-level) instruction shall be limited to only necessary and focused skills as identified from top quality assessments and cannot account for more than 35 percent of the total summer instructional support instructional time. Students with disabilities attending summer instructional support shall receive special supports as needed. No summer retest will be provided or required.

Appendix B: Promotion or Retention Determination Process Grades 3-7

Per Bulletin 1566, promotion remains a local decision and there is no forced promotion at any grade. At the end of each school year, the following processes take place with regard to student placement decisions and academic supports for struggling students:

Action Step 1: Identify students who are academically struggling

The LDOE will provide a roster to LEAs of third and fourth grade students who scored below “Basic” in at least two core subjects, including ELA, math, science, and social studies.

- For students completing third grade, this roster shall be used as an early warning system where additional supports or interventions may be appropriate for these students as they progress through fourth grade.
- For students completing fourth grade, this roster identifies students who must receive an [individual academic improvement plan](#).

Action Step 2: Engage parent/legal guardian and create a plan

If a student is identified as below “Basic” in at least two subject areas by the end of fourth grade, then the school must hold an individual parent meeting with the student’s parent/legal guardian to build an [individual academic improvement plan](#) in partnership with the teacher. The school and the parent/legal guardian must sign an [agreement](#) stating each party’s commitment to executing the plan.

This agreement must be kept on file and the department will monitor districts each year. Any district with less than 90% of documents on file will require further monitoring.

Action Step 3: Determine status

The individual academic improvement plan shall continue until student meets expectations and when applicable, the school system shall determine final retention or promotion status. The school system will make that determination based on available data.

If retention is deemed the appropriate action for the struggling student, the following requirements must be met:

- Criteria for determination should be listed in school system PPP and adhered to in all retention decisions
- District should consider recommendations from LDOE on what leads to retention, including but not limited to:
 - Parent recommendation/agreement
 - Student maturity
 - Combination of at least 2+ test scores
 - Student work results throughout the school year
 - Teacher recommendation
- Summer school must be offered to student before retention takes effect
- Parent meeting must be held to ensure parents understand rights relative to retention and sign permission to retain document provided by LDOE.
- **If promotion** through instructional support is deemed the appropriate action for a struggling student in any given year, then instructional support plan must be developed or updated using the individual academic improvement plan template.

Appendix C: Comparison of New and Prior Policy for Fourth and Eighth Grade Promotion, and Summer Remediation

Fourth Grade		
Prior Policy	New Policy	LEA Implications
Students must score at or above "Basic" in ELA or math and "Approaching Basic" on the other assessments to be promoted to fifth grade.	Students are expected to score "Basic" in at least two core academic subjects, including ELA, math, science, and social studies; however, the LEA shall make promotion and retention decisions based on a preponderance of evidence of student learning, including LEAP results. See Bulletin 1566, section 701.	By the end of the school year, LEAs should identify academically struggling students and begin an individual academic improvement plan.
Struggling students must be offered summer remediation.	<p>Struggling students (those who do not score "Basic" in at least two core academic subjects) shall be provided with an individual academic improvement plan, reviewed with and signed by the student's parent or legal custodian.</p> <p>The plan must outline at least two allowable interventions/supports to be provided during the school year and/or during the summer. Allowable interventions and supports include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement in the classroom of a teacher rated "Highly Effective" • completion of summer remediation program that includes curriculum fully aligned to Louisiana State Standards and limits below grade-level content to no more than 35 percent of total instructional minutes • additional instructional time during or outside of the school day • grade-level instruction that is aligned to Louisiana State Standards, which may include limited below-grade level content and support needed to address the student's identified weaknesses Academic improvement plans shall continue until such time as the student meets academic expectations. See Bulletin 1566, section 705 for specific interventions and supports. 	LEAs should decide what specific interventions and supports will be provided to each academically struggling student.
Promotion waiver is based on Twenty Point Appeal.	The Twenty Point Appeal has been repealed; LEAs now have discretion over whether to promote or retain students.	N/A

Eighth Grade	
Note: With the exception of the addition below, all eighth grade promotion policies remain unchanged.	
New Policy	LEA Implications
Placement decisions for transitional 9 th grade shall be made based on all available evidence of student learning and not based solely on results of the 8 th grade LEAP.	LEAs should determine at the end of the school year, at least preliminarily, which students would benefit from placement in the transitional 9 th grade. The results of the 8 th grade LEAP may be taken into consideration when received.
For any eighth grade completer who transfers to the LEA from another state or country after completion of summer remediation, the LEA shall determine appropriate placement in ninth grade or transitional ninth grade no later than October 1 of each school year.	LEAs should exercise the ability to determine placement for such students per this new regulation.

Summer Remediation		
Prior Policy	New Policy	LEA Implications
Students attending summer remediation must take a summer retest.	No summer retest will be provided or required.	LEAs will no longer administer a summer retest or consider retest results in making promotion decisions.
Students with disabilities who participate in LEAP Alternate Assessment, Level 1 (LAA1), are not eligible to attend the LEAP summer remediation programs.	Students with disabilities attending summer remediation shall receive special supports as needed.	LEAs should incorporate any needed supports into summer remediation programs for students who need them.
Summer remediation shall consist of a minimum of 50 hours of instruction per subject and shall meet other detailed requirements as specified in Bulletin 1566, chapter 9.	<p>Most of the detailed requirements pertaining to summer remediation, including the required minimum of 50 hours of instruction per subject, have been repealed.</p> <p>LEAs shall offer, at no cost to students, extended on grade-level instruction to students who did not take the LEAP tests or who failed to meet the promotional standard set forth in §701 and §703 of Bulletin 1566.</p> <p>The LEA shall provide transportation to and from the assigned LEAP remediation summer site(s) from, at a minimum, a common pick-up point.</p> <p>Summer remediation programs shall use curriculum determined by the LDOE to fully align to Louisiana State Standards. Teachers shall be rated "Highly Effective" or "Effective: Proficient" pursuant to the teacher's most</p>	Summer remediation shall be offered pursuant to new regulations.

	<p>recent evaluation or have achieved a value-added rating of “Highly Effective” or “Effective: Proficient” on the most recent evaluation. Below grade-level instruction shall be limited to only necessary and focused skills as identified from top quality assessments and cannot account for more than 35 percent of the total summer remediation instructional time.</p>	
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