



2019-2020 Guidance for the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA)

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to districts as they make promotion and retention decisions for third graders under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA) for the 2019-20 school year. With the waiver for state testing due to COVID-19, districts will need to make these decisions without the Oklahoma State Testing Program (OSTP) scores. This document will outline the steps districts should take for their third-grade students, as well as address common questions that may arise.

The purpose of the RSA is to ensure that third-grade students have sufficient reading ability to be successful in later grades. Under the RSA, third-grade students have four pathways to promotion. See the decision tree below to determine which pathway is appropriate for each student.

Pathway 1 - Meet RSA criteria on the Oklahoma State Testing Program

Without Oklahoma State Testing Program (OSTP) scores, this pathway will not be an option for this year. As a result, schools will need to consider how each third-grade student might meet one of the other pathways.

Pathway 2 - Meet the end-of-year grade level target for third grade on one of the screening assessments approved by the State Board of Education

Examine the screening assessment scores of all third-grade students. If a student meets the grade-level target for **any** of the screening assessments listed below **at any time** during **first, second or third grade**, including benchmark windows or progress monitoring, then the student may be promoted through this pathway. **Document** the date the target score was met and the screener used in the student's permanent record. There are no other requirements for students who meet this pathway.

Screening Assessment	Grade-level Target Score
Acadience	330
aimsweb Plus	410
DIBELS 8	442
FAST	503
Istation	243
MAP Growth	195
Star Reading	392



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Pathway 3 - Meet the requirements of one of the good-cause exemptions

Determine if any of the remaining third-grade students meet the criteria for one of the seven good-cause exemptions listed below. Ensure the required documentation is included in the student's permanent record. Students promoted through this pathway must continue to receive intervention through an IEP, English Language Academic Plan (ELAP) or an Academic Progress Plan (APP) until the student demonstrates grade-level proficiency in reading as measured by an approved screening assessment.

Good-Cause Exemption	Documentation
1 Students who are English learners who have had less than two years of instruction in English and are identified as Limited English Proficient/ English learner on an approved screening tool	Proof of ELAP in place
2 Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) indicates they are to be assessed with the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP)	Proof of IEP that requires assessment with OAAP
3 Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading test approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education	Name of assessment, date taken and score
4 Students who demonstrate through a teacher-developed portfolio that they can read on grade level. Work included in the portfolio must be completed independently by the student	Completed portfolio checklist
5 Students with disabilities who participate in the Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) and who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) reflecting that the student has received intensive remediation in reading and has made adequate progress toward IEP goals	Proof of IEP and agreement of IEP team of adequate progress being made
6 Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained for academic reasons	Grade of previous retention
7 Students facing exceptional emergency circumstances that prevent them from being assessed during the testing window. If schools do not administer the OSTP, this exemption will not be an option.	Copy of approval from assessment office



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Pathway 4 - Unanimous decision by the Student Reading Proficiency Team to promote with probation

Students who do not meet any of the criteria above should be considered by a Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT). The SRPT includes the parent or guardian, the child's current reading teacher, future reading teacher and a certified reading specialist (if one is available). These meetings should take place virtually.

If the team makes a **unanimous** decision to **promote to fourth grade with probation**, then the principal and superintendent must approve the promotion. Any student promoted on a probationary basis will receive intensive reading instruction in fourth grade as outlined through an Academic Progress Plan (APP) until the student demonstrates grade-level proficiency through one of the approved screening assessments.

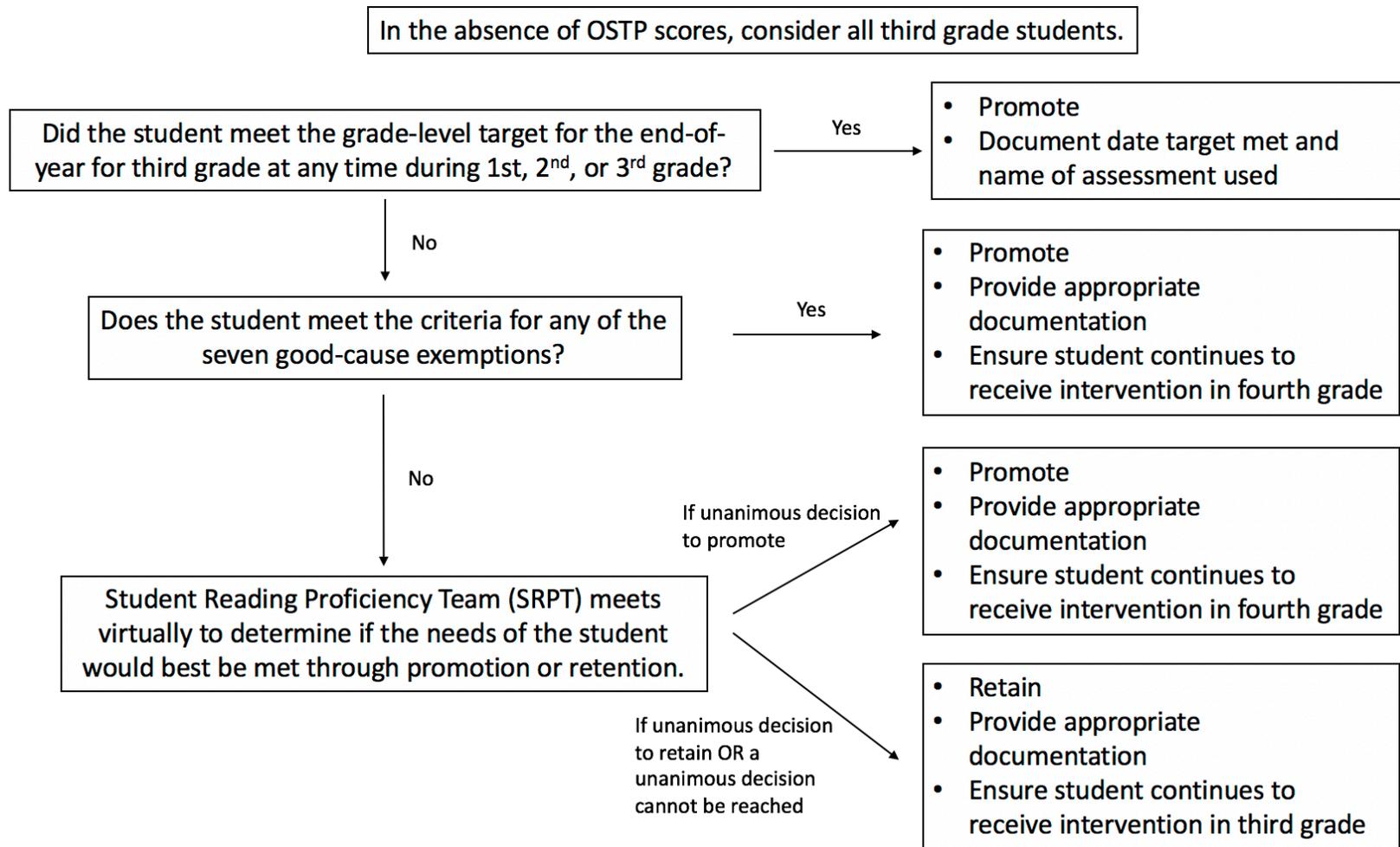
If **any member** of the SRPT disagrees with a promotion decision, or the principal or superintendent do not approve the promotion, then the student is to be **retained** for third grade. Any student who is retained must receive intensive reading instruction as outlined through an APP for the entire year. The parent or guardian must be notified **in writing** that the student will be retained.

As the SRPT is making a decision, it is important to keep in mind the progress of the student prior to the release of school in March. Examining progress monitoring data that has been gathered while the student was on an Academic Progress Plan can help the SRPT determine if the student is able to continue making needed progress if intervention continues, regardless of grade placement.



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Decision Tree for Promotion Under the RSA (specific to SY2020)





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Frequently Asked Questions for the Reading Sufficiency Act: Promotion Decisions for SY2020

Funding

- ▶ **I have been told there is increased flexibility for RSA money this year. What are the guidelines for RSA funds?**

The purpose of RSA funding is to address reading instruction for kindergarten through third-grade students. Those guidelines, along with related Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS) codes, can be found [here](#). However, for the 2019-20 school year, the guidelines for RSA funds have been expanded to include assistance with costs related to distance learning. Pre-approval for technology expenditures is not required for the 2019-20 school year.

- ▶ **Is there additional funding for RSA?**

The full amount of funds budgeted for RSA has already been allocated to districts for the 2019-20 school year. There are not additional funds to disperse.

- ▶ **Can RSA funds be used to purchase technology or web-based subscriptions?**

Yes. For the 2019-20 school year, the guidelines for RSA funds have been expanded to include assistance with costs related to distance learning. Pre-approval for technology expenditures is not required for the 2019-20 school year.

- ▶ **Can RSA funds be used to pay teachers for committee meetings if they have to meet after school hours?**

It is not a unique expectation this year that teachers meet with parents, sometimes outside of school hours. Stipends for these meetings is not an appropriate use of RSA funds.

- ▶ **What if we are unable to spend all of our RSA funds this year? We had budgeted for events that are no longer able to happen.**

Any RSA funds not expended this year may be carried over to use next year.

- ▶ ***NEW:* Do we need to adjust this year's Annual District Reading Plan if we need to make changes to our funding plans?**

No, changes do not need to be made to the Annual District Reading Plan for this year.



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Academic Progress Plans (APP) and Interventions

➤ How should we continue Academic Progress Plans (APPs) for the remainder of this year?

Intervention plans for students often require facilitation beyond what parents would be expected to do. It is not expected that schools will continue to provide interventions for the remainder of this school year. If it is appropriate to provide opportunities for practice on skills that students have been working on through their APP, please do so. Interventions will continue once school resumes.

➤ Do we finalize the APP with the latest assessment score?

Yes, record the most recent score with the date the last assessment was taken. Schools should use data gathered prior to March 13, 2020 to finalize Academic Progress Plans for the 2019-20 school year. If the data is not available digitally, do not enter the school building for written records. Wait until it is safe to enter the building to finalize the APP.

➤ Do parents need to sign the final APP?

Parents are not required to sign the final APP.

End-of-Year Testing and Reporting

➤ Will Oklahoma schools be required to give an end of year universal screening assessment?

Schools will not be expected to, nor should they, administer end-of-year universal screening assessments for the Spring of 2020.

➤ How will schools complete the End of Year RSA Survey on Single Sign On?

Since schools will not be able to complete end-of-year assessments, this report is not required for the 2019-20 school year.

Promotion through Pathway 2: Meet Grade-Level Target on Screening Assessment

➤ Our district uses DIBELS Next, but I don't see it on the list. What is the grade-level target?

DIBELS Next is now known as Acadience. If your school is using materials labeled "DIBELS Next," then use the technical guidance for Acadience.



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- ▶ **If a student meets the grade-level target for third grade in an earlier grade, does the score still count toward promotion?**

Yes. Students may meet the end-of-year third-grade target at any time during first, second or third grade. For example, if a second-grade student is taking the STAR Reading test and meets the end-of-year third-grade target by scoring a 392 that student is eligible for promotion to fourth grade under Pathway 2.

- ▶ **NEW: Can we use the mid-year grade-level target since we didn't give the screening assessment at the end of the year?**

No. The RSA statute (70 O.S. §1210.508C.1.1) clearly states that “end of year proficiency in reading at the third-grade level” must be met to promote through Pathway 2.

- ▶ **If a student met the grade-level target in second grade, are they eligible for Pathway 2?**

To be eligible for promotion under Pathway 2, students must meet the end-of-year third-grade target. Those target scores have been defined by the vendor on the technical guidance pages for each screening assessment. These can be found on the [RSA Coordinator and Teacher](#) webpage, as well as on the first page of this guidance document.

- ▶ **I have a student that met the end-of-year third-grade target last year in second grade. However, we used an assessment that was approved last year but is not approved this year. Does that still count?**

Yes. If the student met the grade-level target for the end of the third-grade year with an assessment on the state approved list of assessments for that same year, then that score is still valid.

- ▶ **How are we to notify parents of the Pathway 2 students?**

Once students have met the end-of-year third-grade target, parents must be notified in writing that the student is eligible for promotion to fourth grade. If a school has not yet notified a parent that this target has been met, notifications can be sent to the parent through email or regular mail.

- ▶ **If a student had scored over the grade-level target in the first quarter, but has struggled in reading and scores had gone down throughout the year, should we still use the higher score?**

Yes. State statute states that students can reach this target at any time during first, second or third grade. It does not state that students must still be at or above this target score at the end of the third-grade year.



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➤ **Should we use the scores obtained prior to March 13, 2020 for Pathway 2?**

Yes. Since schools are not to conduct the RSA assessments after March 13, 2020, schools should use data collected prior to this data for promotion and retention decisions.

➤ **The student met the end-of-year grade-level target for third grade at the beginning of the third-grade year. However, at the mid-year assessment the student was below the target. Does the student still meet Pathway 2?**

Yes. The student is eligible for automatic promotion to fourth grade if they meet the end-of-year grade-level target for third grade at any time during first, second or third grade on any of the screening assessments approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education.

➤ **A school identified one screener on the District Reading Plan and uses that for benchmark, or universal screening, testing. However, the reading interventionist uses a different screener to monitor progress. The student met the grade-level target on the screener used by the interventionist, but not on the one for benchmark. Does that count for Pathway 2?**

Yes. The student is eligible for automatic promotion to fourth grade if they meet the end-of-year grade-level target for third grade at any time during first, second or third grade on any of the screening assessments approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education.

➤ **NEW: If a student moved into our school during third grade and had documentation from a screener that is different than the one used by our school, does the student still qualify for Pathway 2?**

Yes, as long as the student meets the grade-level target for the end of third grade on any of the screening assessments approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education, the requirements for promotion through this pathway have been met.

Promotion through Pathway 3: Good-Cause Exemptions

➤ **What are the alternative assessments used for good-cause exemption 3? Is this the same thing as the screening assessment?**

[Alternative assessments](#) are different assessments than the screening assessments used for Pathway 2. Alternative assessments that are approved for use are the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-10) and Terra Nova. The minimum score required to meet this exemption is the 45th percentile. Since assessments are administered through paper-pencil methods and cannot be safely administered with validity at this time, this exemption is not an option. Once students can safely return to school, this exemption may be used as an option for mid-year promotion.



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- ▶ **The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that states they should take the OAAP rather than the OSTP. However, the OAAP was not administered because of the school closure. Does the student still meet the criteria for good-cause exemption 2?**

Yes. If the student has an IEP that specifies that they should participate in the OAAP, then the student qualifies for this exemption, even if the school was unable to administer the assessment.

- ▶ **UPDATED: Can the school administer alternative assessments for good-cause exemption 3?**

Yes, [alternative assessments](#) may be administered. Since these are paper-pencil assessments, they may only be administered at the school building.

Updated [guidance from OSDE](#) states that students and staff may access the school building beginning and consistent with Phase 2 of the OURS Plan and its requirements for health and safety. See the [School Access](#) section of this document for further explanation.

School districts must continue to comply with CDC guidelines to control the spread of COVID-19. Districts must also continue to abide by health and safety policies developed under the State Board's order limiting the opportunity for students, staff and families to be in physical buildings and exposed to potential pathogens that could lead to illness.

It is important that students do not feel they are being forced to come to the school if the parent/guardian does not feel it is safe for the student. Students who do not meet the requirements for promotion under Pathway 2: Screener or Pathway 3: Good-Cause Exemption are still eligible for promotion with probation under Pathway 4: Student Reading Proficiency Team.

- ▶ **The student needs to complete some tasks for the teacher-created portfolio to meet good-cause exemption 4. Can they do these tasks at home?**

Schools should use the data collected prior to March 13, 2020. Incomplete portfolios cannot be used to meet good-cause exemption 4. However, the data collected should be considered by the Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT) for Pathway 4. Once school reconvenes, the portfolio may be completed at school to meet the requirements for mid-year promotion.

- ▶ **NEW: Are portfolios required for students in kindergarten through second grade?**

A portfolio to meet the requirements of good-cause exemption 4 only considers third-grade work. While a district may decide to use a portfolio to gather work samples for students below third grade, it is not a requirement of the RSA.



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➤ **NEW: What is required for the portfolio to meet good-cause exemption 4?**

Students must have four (4) work samples for each objective under Standard 2: Reading and Writing Process and Standard 4: Vocabulary. Each work sample must demonstrate that the student can independently complete the objective with third-grade materials. As there are eight (8) objectives under these two standards, the student must have thirty-two (32) work samples. The [Portfolio Checklist](#) provides additional details for completing the portfolio.

➤ **The student just started an IEP before spring break. How will adequate progress be determined for good-cause exemption 5?**

The IEP team should look at progress the student has made with interventions provided during the evaluation process. Using that information, the IEP team should make the decision they feel best fits the needs of the student.

➤ **Can we use good-cause exemption 5 since students did not take the OSTP state test this year?**

Yes. Good-cause exemption 5 requires that a student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that states the student would participate in the OSTP (as opposed to the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program, or OAAP). The exemption applies even if the OSTP was not administered.

➤ **NEW: Is a 504 Plan the same as an IEP for good-cause exemptions?**

No. An IEP is for students who qualify for special education services. To qualify, the student must have a documented learning disability or developmental delay. An IEP outlines specific, measurable goals for the student, which are monitored to ensure appropriate gains. A 504 Plan does not include special education services or explicit goals. Instead, a 504 Plan involves classroom accommodations, such as behavioral modification and environmental supports.

➤ **NEW: We have a student who was retained in homeschool. Does that count toward good-cause exemption 6?**

It is within a school district's authority to determine whether a student's retention in a homeschool setting or a non-accredited private school would appropriately apply to this exemption.



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► I heard there were some changes to exemptions this year. What are they? And are they only for this year?

Senate Bill 601, signed into law last spring, defined changes to two exemptions. Good-cause exemption 5 now states that students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for reading or language and participate in the Oklahoma State Testing Program (OSTP) may be promoted if the student is making acceptable progress toward IEP goals. The IEP team would define acceptable progress for a student.

Good-cause exemption 6 now states that students who have been previously retained one year are eligible for promotion to fourth grade. Previous retention could have occurred in prekindergarten for academic reasons, kindergarten, first grade, second grade or third grade. If a student is enrolled in a transitional grade, (e.g., over the course of three years, the student is in kindergarten, transitional first, then first grade), the transitional grade is considered a retention year for purposes of this exemption.

These changes apply for students in the 2019-20 school year and are a permanent change to the RSA law.

Promotion through Pathway 4: Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT)

► How can SRPT meetings be held with parents? Do they need to be physically present to sign documents?

The health of school personnel and families is of the utmost importance. SRPT meetings must be held virtually, either through a teleconference platform or a conference call. Approval may be provided through email, text message, or chat box of a virtual call. In lieu of physical signatures, use digital signature options or document the date of the call along with the decision of each participant and note the decision is being given verbally during the meeting. Refer to the Social Media and Cyber Security section of the [Coronavirus/COVID-19: FAQs for Oklahoma Public Schools](#).

► The teachers on the SRPT recommend retention. However, the parent does not agree. Does the parent override the teachers on the team?

No. Just as in past years, an SRPT decision must be unanimous for the student to be promoted. If the team does not agree, the student must be retained. Retention does not require a unanimous decision.



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- ▶ **If the teachers recommend promoting a student but the parent disagrees, does the student have to be retained?**

Yes. Just as in past years, an SRPT decision must be unanimous for the student to be promoted. If the team does not agree then the student must be retained. Retention does not require a unanimous decision.

- ▶ **What platform should we use to hold virtual meetings?**

Check with your school leadership about the virtual platform they would like your district to utilize.

- ▶ **If parents don't have the technology to do a virtual meeting, what should we do?**

Virtual meetings could be a phone call with families and the teachers involved. Parents/guardians and school personnel should not meet in-person at this time for SRPT meetings.

- ▶ **Is the full Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT) required to be in the virtual meeting?**

Yes. The third-grade teacher, a fourth-grade teacher, and parent or guardian of the student must be present at the SRPT. If a reading specialist is available, they should also be a part of this team and present at this meeting. The purpose of the SRPT is for the team to look at data together to make decisions about promotion or retention. To do this, all members must be present.

- ▶ **Does an administrator need to be in the Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT) meeting?**

No, administrators are not required to attend the SRPT meeting. However, both the principal and superintendent must accept or reject the decision of the SRPT.

- ▶ **What if both parents are at the Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT) meeting and do not agree--one parent wants to retain and the other parent wants to promote the student?**

The statute is clear that for the student to be promoted, there must be a unanimous decision from all team members. If one of the parents does not agree that promotion is in the best interest of the student, then the student must be retained.

In the event that the parents are divorced and share joint custody, the parent who has been given authority over educational decisions as spelled out in the divorce decree would be the one to make the decision for the SRPT.



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➤ Do schools need to meet with the parents or guardians of every third grade student?

No, schools do not need to meet with all families.

If students are promoted through Pathway 2 by meeting the end-of-year third-grade target, then parents or guardians must receive written notification of their students being promoted.

If students are promoted through Pathway 3 by meeting the requirements of one of the good-cause exemptions, parents or guardians must also be notified. It is recommended that this notification also be in writing, but could be through a phone call. How this phone call is documented is determined at the local level.

There must be a Student Reading Proficiency Team meeting for all students who do not meet Pathways 2 or 3 to determine if retention or promotion through Pathway 4 is appropriate for that student. Refer to the Social Media and Cyber Security section of the [Coronavirus/COVID-19: FAQs for Oklahoma Public Schools](#).

➤ **NEW:** Our district has attempted to reach a parent multiple times for a Student Reading Proficiency Team meeting to either retain or promote a student. If we cannot get a response, what should we do? If we are recommending promotion but the parent will not respond, can we still promote?

The school should attempt every method at its disposal to contact a parent, including a certified letter. If the school makes every effort to contact a parent or guardian, but a parent cannot be reached to participate in an SRPT meeting, the team may either promote or retain according to the decisions by the remaining team members.

➤ What do we do if the third-grade teacher moves before the beginning of the next school year?

The SRPT meeting should be held prior to the teacher's last day with the district. If the teacher has already left the district, a teacher who has worked with the student in the area of reading, such as a reading specialist or interventionist, may step into the third-grade teacher's role on the SRPT.

➤ **NEW:** Will our district be flagged or in trouble if we promote more students through Pathway 4: Student Reading Proficiency Team this year?

No. Given the unusual circumstances this year, it is expected that there will be differences in the number of students promoted under the different pathways this year. Schools should make the best decision for each individual student.



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Documentation of Decisions

▶ Do all third graders need documentation of promotion or retention?

Yes. It is required that documentation of evidence for promotion and retention decision are included in student files. In previous years, nearly 80% of students were promoted under Pathway 1 through OSTP results included in student files. As districts will be using other pathways to promotion for all students in 2019-20 school year, documentation in student files will be required for all other pathways used for promotion or retention. The OSDE form for [Documentation of Promotion or Retention Under the Reading Sufficiency Act](#) provides districts with an option for documentation and provides guidance to districts for the types of documentation that could be utilized.

▶ The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) has created a form for documenting decisions. Do districts have to use this form?

No. Statute defines what documentation and written approval is required for promotion and retention decisions. Districts may use the form created by the OSDE to ensure they are meeting requirements, or create their own method of documentation that meets statutory requirements.

▶ How will we get signatures on forms during virtual meetings?

Digital signatures may be used for promotion and retention decisions. If the meeting is being held on a platform such as Zoom or Google Meet, participants may express written agreement in the chat box as a record to be attached. If parents do not have access to technology, the teacher may document the verbal decision given by the parent or guardian, noting the time of the call and names of participants. Approval may also be provided through email or text messages. Refer to the Social Media and Cyber Security section of the [Coronavirus/COVID-19: FAQs for Oklahoma Public Schools](#).

▶ **NEW:** Is the completed Academic Progress Plan (APP) sufficient documentation for third-grade promotion or retention decisions?

No, the APP does not identify how a student will be promoted or retained. The purpose of the Academic Progress Plan (APP) is to define the plan by which the student's reading difficulties will be addressed. Districts may use the [Documentation of Promotion or Retention Under the Reading Sufficiency Act](#) created by OSDE or use a district-created document that meets statutory requirements for the RSA.



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Student Transfer

- **NEW:** A third grade student moved into a district either just before or during distance learning from a private school or an out-of-state school. There are no records that would inform a promotion or retention decision. What needs to be done?

Students who are not enrolled in an Oklahoma public school for the third-grade are not required to meet the requirements of the RSA. For this year, students who enroll during distance learning under these scenarios should be automatically promoted to fourth grade.

- **NEW:** A third-grade student moved into our district either just before or during distance learning from another Oklahoma district. How should we address this situation?

First check the records sent by the school where the student was prior to moving. Records may indicate that the student qualifies for Pathway 2: Screener or Pathway 3: Good-Cause Exemption. The school might have also communicated information that the Student Reading Proficiency Team (SRPT) may wish to consider to make a recommendation for promotion or retention. It is the responsibility of the school in which the student is currently enrolled to make the final determination for promotion or retention.

If the records for the student are missing or incomplete and the district is not responding to requests for records, the district may contact their Regional Accreditation Officer for assistance in communicating with the school in which the student was previously enrolled.

If the student's records cannot be obtained before a promotion or retention decision must be made, it would be appropriate to form an SRPT and promote the student with probation. A student should not be retained by default. Students promoted with probation must continue to receive intervention to address reading difficulties. If the student demonstrates on-grade-level reading ability in the fall, then the student is removed from probation and any further RSA requirements.



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School Access

- **There are documents at the school that need to be checked to determine if a student is eligible for one of the promotion pathways. Should I go to the school for these documents?**

No. The health and safety of school personnel and students is of the utmost concern. If records cannot be accessed digitally, do not enter school buildings for written records. If there is agreement that the student has met one of the pathways, the team should move forward. If there is a need for written documents in order to make a decision, explain to families you cannot safely access the required documents and will need to wait until it is safe to enter the building before proceeding. While many schools like to make promotion or retention decisions as early as possible, schools have until the start of the 2020-21 school year to make these decisions.

- **NEW: Can we bring staff into the building to work in small groups (for special education meetings, related services, etc.)?**

Yes, beginning and consistent with Phase 2 of the OURS Plan and its requirements for health and safety. Virtual meetings and planning, however, are still strongly encouraged when possible. School districts must continue to comply with CDC guidelines to control the spread of COVID-19. Districts must also continue to abide by health and safety policies developed under the State Board's order limiting the opportunity for students, staff and families to be in physical buildings and exposed to potential pathogens that could lead to illness.

OSDE understands that as districts close out the 2019-20 school year and begin student services over the summer, access to buildings will be necessary. Until further notice, districts must continue to implement the following guidelines:

- Insist that staff feeling sick stay home;
- Maintain at least 6 feet of distance between individuals at all times;
- Limit any gathering to no more than 10 individuals if social distancing is not possible;
- Adhere to sneeze and cough etiquette; and
- Wash hands vigorously and routinely for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, particularly before and after entering buildings, when handling items or in public areas, etc.



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➤ **NEW:** Can students be asked to come to the school to take a screening assessment, alternative assessment, or complete portfolio work?

Yes, beginning and consistent with Phase 2 of the OURS Plan and its requirements for health and safety. The State Board of Education Order of March 25, 2020, which closed school buildings to general student and personnel attendance and required distance learning to be provided for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, expired on May 8, 2020, or the last day a district is conducting distance learning for the current school year.

School districts must continue to comply with CDC guidelines to control the spread of COVID-19. Districts must also continue to abide by health and safety policies developed under the State Board's order limiting the opportunity for students, staff and families to be in physical buildings and exposed to potential pathogens that could lead to illness.

It is important that students do not feel they are being forced to come to the school if the parent/guardian does not feel it is safe for the student. Students who do not meet the requirements for promotion under Pathway 2: Screener or Pathway 3: Good-Cause Exemption are still eligible for promotion with probation under Pathway 4: Student Reading Proficiency Team.

Summer Reading Academy

➤ **NEW:** Do districts have the option of conducting summer reading academies either in person or virtually?

Yes. Summer Academy Reading Programs, in this case, are summer programs that allow for a student to demonstrate successful completion of the required competencies for reading necessary for promotion to fourth grade under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA). While these academies are not required, districts can use RSA funds for these programs. Administrative rules require that as a part of offering summer reading programs for students, districts must provide for "at least four weeks of tutoring a half day each day for four days." See OAC 210:15-27-1(h).

To the extent possible, OSDE encourages districts to provide these services virtually until schools can reopen for general student attendance and distancing requirements are lifted. However, schools may, in compliance with the requirements and guidance provided above, host such programs in school buildings beginning in Phase 2 of the OURS Plan. To assist districts in providing virtual summer reading academies, the OSDE will propose allowing flexibility on the time requirements to the State Board of Education at its May 28 meeting.



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➤ Are we required to hold a Summer Reading Academy this year?

In previous years, a Summer Reading Academy is recommended but not required. If RSA funds are used for a Summer Reading Academy, the district must follow the [administrative rules](#) for Summer Reading Academy. Given the situation for the summer of 2020, it is unlikely that schools will be able to safely hold a Summer Reading Academy.

➤ **NEW:** Can districts hold summer school inside school buildings?

Yes, beginning with Phase 2 of the OURS Plan, but OSDE encourages making contingency plans for summer school to be provided via virtual/distance learning. The State Board of Education Order of March 25, 2020, which closed school buildings to general student and personnel attendance and required distance learning to be provided for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, expired on May 8, 2020, or the last day a district is conducting distance learning for the current school year.

While there is not currently such an order in effect, schools are encouraged to conduct summer school by virtual means wherever possible or adopt social distancing guidelines, limiting classes to no more than 10 students at a time OR maintaining 6 feet of space between each student. Again, OSDE encourages school districts to be aware of the provisions of the OURS Plan as it impacts the reopening and provision of services by schools.

OSDE will work closely with stakeholders to develop further guidance as additional information becomes available. For now, the agency encourages virtual/distance learning for summer school activities and active planning in the event that the plan or other guidance authorizes summer school activities to be held inside school buildings.