

## STATE PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS



### STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

#### 5<sup>TH</sup> Grade

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

#### 8<sup>TH</sup> Grade

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

### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to perform satisfactorily on a series of end-of-course assessments in English, mathematics, science, and social studies in order to graduate.

For information on course requirements for graduation, please go to TEA's website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation.aspx>.

## STAAR Testing at Grades 5 and 8

Students have three opportunities to pass the STAAR reading test and three opportunities to pass the STAAR mathematics test—two during the spring and one during the summer. The exact test dates are available at [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/calendars](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/calendars).



If you have any questions about the state requirements for grade advancement, contact your school's principal.

If you have questions about the state requirements for accelerated instruction in reading or mathematics, please contact your school's principal or go to TEA's website at [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/SSI](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/SSI).

For information about ordering additional copies of this brochure, call 800-627-0225.



**Texas Education Agency**  
Student Assessment Division  
Curriculum Division



# Prepare for Success

A PARENT GUIDE  
TO THE

## *Student Success Initiative*

AT GRADES 5 AND 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 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) grade 5 reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to sixth grade. Additionally, students are required to pass the STAAR grade 8 reading and mathematics tests to be promoted to ninth grade.

In addition to the SSI grade advancement requirements, state law mandates that high school students must not only meet all their course requirements but also perform satisfactorily on up to 15 end-of-course assessments in English, mathematics, science, and social studies to receive a diploma from a Texas public high school.

## What Happens at Grades 5 and 8?

Fifth and eighth grade students have three opportunities to pass the STAAR reading test and three opportunities to pass the STAAR mathematics test. If a student does not pass one or both tests, the school must give the student additional instruction after each testing opportunity, and the student must participate in that instruction. Parents will be notified if their child does not pass a STAAR test that is required for promotion.

If a student has not passed after the second testing opportunity, a grade placement committee (GPC) is formed. The GPC, which consists of the principal, teacher, and parent or guardian, 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 STAAR 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 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 next grade, but only if everyone on the committee agrees that the student is likely to succeed in the next 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 academic progress with his or her 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

- Establish a daily reading time, when family members can enjoy their favorite book or magazine without the distraction of television. This will help your child realize that you value and enjoy reading.
- Encourage your child to read a variety of materials, including stories, poems, plays, books, and newspaper and magazine articles. Look for opportunities to discuss what your child is reading, and find out what your child learned from the text. Suggest that your child make notes about unfamiliar words and concepts. Interacting with your child about what he or she is reading can improve your child's ability to read "between the lines" and to make connections between reading and personal experience.
- 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.

### Math

- Encourage your child to talk about the steps used when solving a math problem.
- Ask your child 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.