

Updates

ACT 53 (SB 31) of the 2020 Second Extraordinary Session provides that notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, for the 2020-2021 school year, the results from student assessments shall not be used for making placement decisions for fourth and eighth grade students.

Local Charter Operators (LCO's), Type 1 and Type 3b, have an option to submit their own Pupil Progression Plan (PPP) in accordance with federal law, state law and BESE policy in lieu of using the Local Charter Authorizer's (LCA's) PPP. The LCO PPP does not require approval or adoption from the LCA. Following adoption of the LCO PPP by the LCO school board directors, the LCO shall submit their PPP to the LCA and LDOE prior to the LCA's annual submission to the Department of Education at the beginning of each school year.

Introduction

Bulletin 1566 supports LEA flexibility with regard to student promotion and retention. However, students who struggle must be identified early and receive the necessary support to ensure their growth and ability to stay on track toward graduation.

Struggling students must be identified early and receive intensive support to ensure growth and the ability to stay on track towards graduation while the decision for promotion and retention remains a local decision.

The policy requirements in the 2021-2022 Pupil Progression Plan should reflect promotion, retention, and placement policies for students in grades K-12.

Policy Requirements

Grade 4 Requirements:

- Students who score below "Basic" in at least two core subjects (ELA, math, science, and 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 [intervention options](#) per core subject, including possible participation in summer school as an intervention if chosen by the student and parent
 - 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 shall score at least “Basic” in either ELA or math and “Approaching Basic” in the other subject to be promoted to Grade 9; Bulletin 1566 provides for waivers as well as placement in transitional ninth grade in certain circumstances.
- 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

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.

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 • 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). <i>If student does not meet expectations, per pupil progression policy, determine retention or promotion status.</i>

Promotion and Support Policy FAQs

Where can I find the related policy Bulletin 1566? You can find policies related to IAIPs in [Bulletin 1566, Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures](#). In fact, LEAs can access all policies that BESE has adopted on the [BESE website](#).

- 1. Will the template be required or can we use our own format?** Local school systems may use their own template as long as all components from the State template are addressed, if applicable.
- 2. What documentation do you suggest the LEA keep on file locally?** The following items are required:
 - *a formal submission statement signed by Principal & Board President* See Section XI – LEA Assurances
 - *a local/LEA contact information page*
 - *a listing of the committee of educators appointed by the superintendent*
 - *a listing of the parents appointed by the school board*
 - *documentation of input into the PPP by educators/parents*
 - *copies of the public notice of the PPP prior to approval of PPP (dates and location)*
- 3. 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, unless the student is eligible for a waiver or is placed in transitional 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.
- 4. Do schools have to offer all four choices that are listed as allowable interventions?** No, the policy does not mandate this.
- 5. 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.
- 6. Will there be a template for individual academic improvement?** Yes, a [template](#) and supporting documents are available [in the School Policy library](#).
- 7. 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.
- 8. 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.
- 9. 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.

10. **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.
11. **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.
12. **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.
13. **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](#).
14. **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.
15. **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. The two plans should work in tandem to support student learning and improvement.
16. **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.
17. **How does this policy affect the April Dunn Act?** No change - all state laws continue to be in effect. Refer to Bulletin 1530 for specific regulations regarding promotion decisions for these students.
18. **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.
19. **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. LEAs are encouraged to assemble the most effective group of educators to support students in addressing their academic weaknesses.

20. **How is “summer” defined for purposes of summer remediation?** The Legislature has not defined this term which is used in state law (R.S. 17:24.4). This past year, legislation was passed to allow summer remediation to be optional. LEAs that chose to offer summer remediation may offer it on the timeline that they believe works best for them.
21. **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.
22. **Will LEAP scores come in at the end of May in order to be ready for summer school at the beginning of June?** 2021 results will likely not be available until July, per the LDOE Assessment team and test vendor.
23. **Can a resident or a first year teacher teach summer school or be the classroom teacher the following year for the struggling student?** No. 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.
24. **Are first-time eighth grade students not meeting the eighth grade promotion standard required to complete summer remediation before being placed on a high school campus in transitional ninth grade?** No, revisions to policy approved in January 2018 remove the requirement that a first-time eighth grade student who does not meet the eighth grade promotion standard complete summer remediation before being placed on a high school campus in transitional ninth grade. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, it was determined that transitional ninth grade placement decisions shall be based on both results of the eighth grade LEAP test and all other available evidence of student learning.
25. **Are LEAs allowed to offer summer remediation only to those students who have been identified as academically struggling, based on the results of state assessments?** The revisions approved in January 2018 continue to offer summer remediation to students who have been identified as academically struggling, but enable LEAs to identify such students based not only on the results of state assessments, but also on a preponderance of evidence of student learning available at the end of the school year.
26. **What high-quality science curricula should be used for students who need additional support?** Full reviews of science programs that have been identified as Tier 1 through the Department’s Instructional Materials Review Process, meaning they exemplify quality alignment to standards, can be found on the [Curricular Resources Annotated Reviews](#) page. Additionally, information on high quality pilot programs and Sample Scope and Sequence Documents are included on the [Science Planning Page](#). Students who need additional support may also have extra time on three-dimensional science tasks such as those in [EAGLE and Science Sample Scope and Sequence Documents](#). According to intervention options outlined in the IAIP, no more than 35% of the instructional time can be made up of learning below the student’s registered grade level. At least 65% of instructional time should be targeted to help students access on grade level work.

27. **Is summer remediation (or any other IAIP intervention) required for a subject area for which the IAIP was not originally written?** While not required, the school should strongly consider additional interventions in this subject area as part of the student's updated IAIP. Students who are struggling academically must be identified early and receive appropriate supports to ensure growth and the ability to stay on track towards graduation. If a student was identified as struggling academically in the prior year and is now struggling in a new content area, then supports should address current struggles.