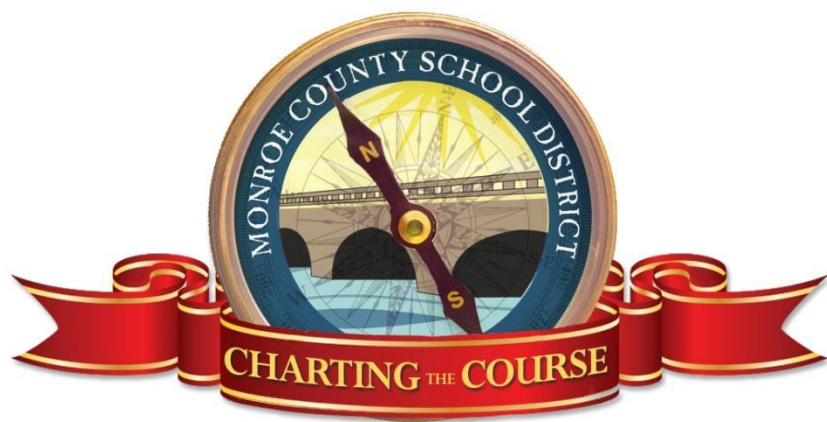


# Monroe County School District Student Progression Plan 2016-2017



Middle Grades  
Grades 6-8

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Student Progression Plan is to inform school personnel, parents, students and other interested citizens regarding the School Board rules and administrative procedures required to implement State and local student progression requirements. It is the responsibility of the School Board and district administration to provide students with effective instructional and remedial programs that monitor progress, promote continuous achievement, and make provisions for individual differences. Monroe County School District is committed to the implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)/Response to Intervention (RtI) framework to integrate/align efforts to improve educational outcomes and meet the academic/behavioral needs of all students. Monroe County School District will provide high quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs and use learning rate and level of performance to inform instructional decisions, including decisions regarding promotion, acceleration, retention, and remediation. Response to Instruction/Intervention is a data-based decision making process applied to education. A problem-solving method and the systematic use of assessment data, school, grade, class, and individual level will guide decisions about the allocation of resources and intensity of instruction/intervention needed to improve learning and/or behavior. The principal of a school is responsible for making and maintaining required records and reports and providing instructional leadership to meet the needs of all students. Teachers are responsible for providing effective instruction and intervention/remediation and documenting instruction of students' mastery of the Florida Standards. They must also document through lesson plans that they are teaching the standards and benchmarks for subjects required at each grade level.

## **ADMISSION, PLACEMENT, AND TRANSFERS**

### **INITIAL PLACEMENT**

Consistent with school board policy and in accordance with Florida statute, the Superintendent has designated the school principal as the final authority in the placement of students in programs or classes. Parents or guardians may discuss a placement decision with school officials and ask for an explanation of the placement, and they may review the evidence the school used to make the placement. Parents or guardians cannot determine a student's placement, unless otherwise provided for by law, as in the case of a placement in a program for exceptional students or a dropout prevention program. [Florida Statute §1003.21 (2), 1012.28 (2)] Families seeking transfers within the school will submit a written request to the principal. The school will approve or deny the request within two weeks of receiving the request. If denied, the school will specify the reason for denial. (Transfers will be subject to Florida Statute 1003.3101)

### **Admission Requirements:**

It is the responsibility of the parents of students entering school in the Monroe County School District for the first time to present the following at the time of registration::

- A valid birth certificate or other documentation of birth\*,
- proof that student resides within the boundary of the school to which he/she is applying by presenting documentation, such as lease, mortgage or utility bill,
- a certificate of immunization [Florida Statute §1003.22] – Students will not be admitted into class without proof of immunization, and
- certification of a physical/health examination to be submitted within 30 school days if not available at the time of registration [Florida Statute §1003.22] (Recommended form: DH 3040 – See Health Requirements.), or
- In the case of military students, the Interstate Compact for Military Students applies.

\* If an original birth certificate verifying date of birth is not available, the next evidence obtainable in the order set forth below shall be acceptable:

- A duly attested transcript of the child's birth record filed according to law with a public officer charged with the duty of recording births;
- A duly attested transcript of a certificate of baptism showing the date of birth and place of baptism of the child, accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;
- An insurance policy on the child's life that has been in force for at least 2 years;
- A bona fide contemporary religious record of the child's birth accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;

- A passport\* or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child;
- A transcript of record of age shown in the child's school record of at least 4 years prior to application, stating date of birth; or
- If none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a public health officer or by a public school physician, or, if neither of these is available in the county, by a licensed practicing physician designated by the district school board, which certificate states that the health officer or physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct.\*\* [Florida Statute §1003.21 (4)]

\*Please note that if a passport is offered for verification of birth, it may not be duplicated for placement in the cumulative folder.

\*\*A homeless child, as defined in s. 1003.01, shall be given temporary exemption from this section for 30 school days.

Students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless. According to the McKinney-Vento Act, (Subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) homeless students must be immediately enrolled in school without residency, school placement, special services or health record requirements.

Homeless students are immediately referred for all available support services in the school including transportation, free breakfast and lunch, child support team, tutoring, Title I, counseling, and assessment services for educational programs. This student should be placed on a priority list for educational or support needs. Parents are to be referred to community resource agencies for family needs such as immunizations and physicals. Parents are given a 30 day period to present all requirements for enrollment.

A Monroe County School District Registration form should be completed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of new and returning students. School personnel are strictly prohibited from requesting/requiring documentation of the immigration status of students and families.

At the beginning of each school year, each student will be provided an address verification form that is to be completed, signed, and returned by the parent(s)/ guardian(s). It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/ guardian(s) to notify the school promptly of any change of a student's address.

## **PLACEMENT AND TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS: GRADES 6 – 8**

### **Placement of Transfer Students (General Requirements)**

A student who transfers to a Monroe County Public School with documentation of completed coursework from a state or regionally accredited public or private school or institution is awarded

equivalent credits and all records from the previous school are accepted, subject to validation if deemed necessary.

### **State Uniform Transfer of Students in Middle Grades**

The purpose of this rule is to establish uniform procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and courses for students entering Florida's public schools composed of middle grades 6, 7, and 8 from out of state or out of country. The procedures shall be as follows:

1. Grades earned and offered for acceptance shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if required by the receiving school's accreditation. If validation of the official transcript is deemed necessary, or if the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, successful completion of courses shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in subsection (2) of this rule.
2. Validation of courses shall be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and should be passing each required course at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have courses validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in subsection (3) of this rule.
3. Alternative Validation Procedure. If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives identified in the district student progression plan shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal, and parent:
  - a. Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee;
  - b. Demonstrated performance in courses taken at other public or private accredited schools;
  - c. Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally-normed standardized subject area assessments;
  - d. Demonstrated proficiencies on the FSA; or
  - e. Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school.
4. A middle grades student who transfers into the state's public school system from an out-of- country, an out-of-state, or a private school or a home education program after the beginning of the second term of eighth grade is not required to meet the Civics education requirement for promotion if the student's transcript documents passage of three courses in social studies or two year-long courses in social studies that include coverage of Civics education. If this is not the case, the student must be immediately enrolled in Civics, participate in the Civics EOC and the results of the EOC must



constitute 30 percent of the course grade.

Students must be provided at least ninety (90) days from date of transfer to prepare for assessments outlined in paragraphs (3)(c) and (d) of this rule if required. [Florida Statute §1003.4156(3), 1003.25(3)]

### **Alternative Placement for Students with Two or More Retentions**

Florida Statute requires districts to provide “an appropriate alternative placement” for students with two or more retentions. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Students who have previously been retained in kindergarten through eighth grade and are being recommended for their third retention (K-8);
- Students who, because of retentions, are facing their third year in the same grade.

Students who meet the criteria above may be assigned to the next grade (with the exception of grade 9) only if it has been determined that the student’s academic progress can be achieved as a result of promotion to an alternative program of instruction which may include credit retrieval.

Students who receive an exemption from retention due to multiple retentions are to remain in the alternate program of instruction in which they are placed for the period of at least one school year or until the requirements of the credit retrieval program are satisfied. Withdrawal from the alternate program of instruction will result in forfeiture of the exemption from retention and the student will be placed back into the grade in which he/she was to be retained had an exemption not been granted. [Florida Statute §1008.25(2) (c)]

### **Placement of English Language Learners (ELL)**

Within twenty (20) days of the completion of the Home Language Survey, the Las Links placement test will be administered to English Language Learners. Assessment results, along with ELL committee recommendations, will determine placement.

### **Transfer of English Language Learners (ELL)**

The school-level ELL contact, the guidance counselor, and administrator/designee review the educational background of the transferring student to determine appropriate grade level, subject, and ELL program placement. Parental input regarding educational background should be taken into consideration especially when transcripts, records, or report cards are not readily available. However, the final determination for placement will be decided by the principal or designee. Bilingual school personnel may assist the students and their families when necessary to ensure proper program placement.

The school-level ELL contact, the guidance counselor, and administrator/designee must meet when a student's placement is based on age either because of lack of information about prior schooling (no transcript or report card) or prior schooling does not meet grade level requirements. Parental input regarding educational background should be taken into consideration. However, taking into consideration that the student may reach the maximum age limit for attendance (age 19) before successful completion of high school graduation requirements the final determination for placement will be determined by the principal or designee. ELL students are scheduled into classes that fulfill graduation requirements and the district's Student Progression Plan.

ELL students are placed in classes/courses based on completed academic coursework, regardless of the language in which the coursework was done. School board policy provides flexibility to school staff in making academic placement decisions for students. Parents/guardians may appeal academic placement decisions to the principal.

### **Placement of Students with Disabilities enrolled in Exceptional Student Education (ESE)**

Students entering any Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program must meet two specific indicators of eligibility: a diagnosed disability and documented need for specially designed instruction.. Additional interventions and evaluation will be conducted if deemed necessary by the Student Services Team (SST) or the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Team. See Procedural Safeguards and "*General Transfer Information*" below for information about transferring students with ESE documentation (i.e. a current IEP).

### **Transfer of Students with Disabilities enrolled in Exceptional Student Education (ESE)**

**Within Florida Transfers** - An ESE student who is entering a Monroe County Public School from a school district **within Florida** and who has a current IEP/EP and necessary evaluation data to determine that the student meets Florida and Monroe County's eligibility criteria may be placed in an ESE program. The school district reserves the right to consider any out of county evaluations, assessments, interventions and data associated with the IEP in order to make an appropriate placement determination that meets MCSD criteria for special programming. The receiving school IEP team will review the current IEP/EP and may revise and/or consider any additional re-evaluations as necessary when determining placement.

**Out of State Transfers** - An ESE student who is transferring from an **out-of-state educational setting** who has a current IEP/EP as well as evaluation data necessary to determine that the student meets Florida and Monroe County's eligibility criteria may be placed in an ESE program. An ESE student who is transferring from **out-of-state** and does not meet the district's criteria for entrance or dismissal from an ESE program will also be placed in the appropriate educational

program(s) until a re-evaluation has been completed as agreed upon by the IEP team. In both cases, the receiving school **will** review the current IEP/EP and may revise and/or consider additional evaluations as necessary to make the final placement.

***Within Monroe County School District Transfers*** - Transfers within the county either by parental choice or a change in residence within the county will be considered based on appropriate programs and services required by the student. When parents request an out-of-school zone assignment the student may be subject to the School Choice requirements and transportation is not guaranteed.

### **Placement of Section 504 Students, Parent and Teacher Guidance to Section 504**

A student is “disabled” under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Section 504 regulations if the student meets any one of the three “indicators” of eligibility listed in 34 CFR 104.3(j)(1).

Indicator One: Physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities:

All individuals with an identified disability are protected against discrimination under Section 504. For students eligible under Indicator One, part of the protection from discrimination may also include FAPE in the form of non-instructional and instructional accommodations and services. School districts have certain obligations to ensure that services and accommodations are provided.

Indicator Two: The Record of Impairment

Individuals with a record or history of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the individual’s major life activities are also protected from discrimination under Section 504. A student who no longer meets eligibility criteria for a special program (an IDEA, Individual with Disabilities Education Act, student is an example of documenting a record of impairment).

Indicator Three: Regarded as Impaired

Finally, individuals who are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment when in fact such impairment may or may not actually exist are protected from discrimination under Section 504. A person with a history of a mental or physical impairment because of misclassification also qualifies for protection under Section 504.

Students described in Indicators Two and Three are protected from discrimination under Section 504, even though they are not individuals with a current substantiated disability.

The 504 team is defined as a group of persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options (34 CFR §104.35(c)). *For additional information regarding 504 plans, please refer to the Monroe County “District Implementation Guide for Section 504”.*

### **Transfer of Section 504 Students, Parent and Teacher Guidance to Section 504**

A transferring 504 student is a student who was previously enrolled in any other school or agency with an active *Section 504 Accommodation Plan* and is enrolling in Monroe County School District. Upon notification and documentation that a transferring student currently possesses an active 504 plan, the receiving school will review the existing 504 plan in accordance with Florida Statute. The receiving school reserves the right to review and revise the 504 plan as appropriate.

If a student transfers with a Section 504 plan, the receiving school will review the plan and supporting documentation. If a group of persons at the receiving school determines that the plan is appropriate, the school is required to implement the plan.

If the school determines that the plan is inappropriate, the school will evaluate the student consistent with the Section 504 procedures at 34 CFR §104.35 and determine which educational program is most appropriate for the student.

*For additional information regarding 504 plans, please refer to the Monroe County “District Implementation Guide for Section 504”.*

### **Placement of Children from Military Families**

Students who are children of military families fall under the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Except otherwise provided in Section C, this compact applies to the children of (Section A) [Florida Statute §1000.36]:

- Active-duty members of the uniformed services, including members of the National Guard and Reserve on active-duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. ss. 1209 and 1211;
- Members or veterans of the uniformed services who are severely injured and medically discharged or retired for a period of 1 year after medical discharge or retirement; and
- Members of the uniformed services who die on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty for a period of 1 year after death.

This compact applies to local education agencies (Section B).

This compact does not apply to the children of (Section C):

- Inactive members of the National Guard and military reserves;
- Members of the uniformed services now retired, except as provided in Section A;
- Veterans of the uniformed services, except as provided in Section A; and

- Other United States Department of Defense personnel and other federal agency civilian and contract employees not defined as active-duty members of the uniformed services.
- EDUCATIONAL RECORDS AND ENROLLMENT

A. If a child's official education records cannot be released to the parents for the purpose of transfer, the custodian of the records in the sending state shall prepare and furnish to the parent a complete set of unofficial educational records containing uniform information as determined by the Interstate Commission. Upon receipt of the unofficial education records by a school in the receiving state, that school shall enroll and appropriately place the student based on the information provided in the unofficial records pending validation by the official records, as quickly as possible.

B. Simultaneous with the enrollment and conditional placement of the student, the school in the receiving state shall request the student's official education record from the school in the sending state. Upon receipt of the request, the school in the sending state shall process and furnish the official education records to the school in the receiving state within 10 days or within such time as is reasonably determined under the rules adopted by the Interstate Commission.

C. Compact states must give 30 days from the date of enrollment or within such time as is reasonably determined under the rules adopted by the Interstate Commission for students to obtain any immunization required by the receiving state. For a series of immunizations, initial vaccinations must be obtained within 30 days or within such time as is reasonably determined under the rules promulgated by the Interstate Commission.

D. Students shall be allowed to continue their enrollment at grade level in the receiving state commensurate with their grade level, including kindergarten, from a local education agency in the sending state at the time of transition, regardless of age. A student who has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in the local education agency in the sending state is eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade level in the receiving state, regardless of age. A student transferring after the start of the school year in the receiving state shall enter the school in the receiving state on their validated level from an accredited school in the sending state.

#### **Article V: Placement and Attendance**

A. If a student transfers before or during the school year, the receiving state school shall initially honor placement of the student in educational courses based on the student's enrollment in the sending state school or educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state if the courses are offered. A school in the receiving state is not precluded from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in the courses.

B. The receiving state school must initially honor placement of the student in educational programs based on current educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state or participation or placement in like programs in the sending state. Such programs include, but are not limited to:

1. Gifted and talented programs; and
2. English Language Learners (ELL).

Dependent children of active duty military personnel who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria for special academic programs offered through public schools shall be given first preference for admission to such programs even if the program is being offered through a public school other than the school to which the student would generally be assigned. If such a program is offered through a public school other than the school to which the student would generally be assigned, the parent or guardian of the student must assume responsibility for transporting the student to that school. For purposes of this subsection, special academic programs include magnet schools, advanced studies programs, advanced placement, dual enrollment, Advanced International Certificate of Education, and International Baccalaureate. [Florida Statute §1003.05]

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

All new students seeking entrance into a public school in Monroe County are required to present, at the time of entry, valid documentation that they have received within the past year both a health examination and the required immunizations against the communicable diseases as identified by the Monroe County Health Department. [Florida Statute §1003.22 and School Board Policy 5112]

### Immunization:

All new students seeking entrance into a public school in Monroe County are required by Florida Statute 1003.22 to present, at the time of entry, valid documentation that they have received the required immunizations against the communicable diseases as identified by the Monroe County Health Department or to provide a Certificate of Medical Exemption (temporary or permanent) or a Certificate of Religious Exemption.

The Certificate of Religious Exemption is available only through the Monroe County Health Department. It is not available from private physicians.

The Florida Certification of Immunization that includes temporary and permanent medical exemption sections is available from either private physicians or the Monroe County Health Department:

- Documentation of Immunization (DH Form 680)
- Documentation of Temporary Medical Exemption (DH Form 680, Part B)
- Documentation of Permanent Medical Exemption (DH Form 680, Part C)

### IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY INTO GRADES K - 12 2016-2017 School Year

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DTP/DTaP/Tdap <sup>A</sup>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
OPV/IPV series <sup>B</sup>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
MMR series	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
HEP B series	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Varicella 1 dose <sup>C</sup>										√	√	√	√
Varicella 2 dose	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
Tdap Booster								√	√	√	√	√	√

<sup>A</sup>Tdap- tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade

<sup>B</sup>OPV/IPV for K through 5th grade = one dose must be on or after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

<sup>C</sup>Varicella exempt for any student that has had the disease.

### EXPLANATION OF PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

STUDENTS	PHYSICAL EXAMINATION
Monroe County	Required for PreK, Kindergarten
Transfers within Monroe County (including private schools)	Review DH Form 3040 and DH Form 680 for documentation.
Transfers within Florida	Required for Kindergarten  Review and file DH Form 3040 and DH Form 680 in the cumulative folder for all other grades.
Transfers from another state or country	Required for all grades  Physicals presented on forms from another state or country are acceptable if they include all components covered on DH Form 3040.**  <b>Must</b> have been performed within one year of enrollment unless exempt based on a written request for religious reasons

\*\*DH Form 3040 – State of Florida Health Examination Form



## ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Each parent and legal guardian of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's school attendance as required by law [Florida Statute §1003.21]. All students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes in order to benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility.

### STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- be informed by the school of their academic progress;
- have periodic reviews of their instructional achievement by the school staff;
- academic marks in each class that represent fairly and impartially their academic progress in that class;
- have the opportunity to periodically review their marks with their teacher;
- be graded on their progress and class work;
- follow the established procedure.

### STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- regularly attend class;
- perform all tasks required for the successful completion of the course;
- make up all work missed during excused absences but not for work missed during truancies;
- complete all classroom assignments to the best of his or her ability to earn the best possible grade;
- cooperate with the teacher to provide an engaging learning environment in class (Conduct, while not a part of a student's grade, may bear a relationship when a student is absent from a class and unable to make up work due to misbehavior);
- refrain from cheating or plagiarizing on all tests and work assignments.

For information regarding your child's grades or attendance, please visit the school website for a link to the gradebook viewer.

If a student is confined to home or hospital, but is able to participate in and benefit from an instructional program, the student may be eligible for a hospital/homebound program. *See Monroe County Special Programs and Procedures Manual for additional information and eligibility criteria.*

### SCHOOL LAW IN FLORIDA:

- Students will be referred to the Child Study Team after 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days.
- Habitual Truant is defined by law as a student who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days.

- Truancy Petitions can be filed with the Circuit Court pursuant to §1003.26.

#### MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT:

- More than nine absences per semester are considered excessive.
- Students have 48 hours to either bring in an excused note from their parents or a parent must call into the attendance office within the 48 hours.
- After the 48 hours, the absence becomes unexcused if the school has not received notification.

### EXCUSED ABSENCES

An excused absence means that the student is absent:

- due to sickness of, or injury to, the student, attested to orally or in writing by the student's parent or guardian, or, in the event the absence is of three days or more, by a written statement of a licensed practicing physician, chiropractor, dentist, or other appropriate licensed health care or mental health professional;
- due to religious instruction for the student or religious holidays of the student's own faith to be observed by the student, when the absence is requested in writing by a parent or guardian at least three school days in advance of the absence, as delineated in Rule 6A-1.09514, Florida Administrative Code;
- due to a medical, chiropractic, dental, or other appointment with a licensed professional related to the physical or mental health of the student, when the appointment cannot be scheduled outside of school hours and when written documentation is provided by the parent or guardian prior to the scheduled appointment;
- due to attendance at an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting at which the student's educational program is the topic;
- due to attendance in an administrative or judicial proceeding which involves the student as a witness or as the subject of the proceeding;
- due to a death in the immediate family of the student and such absence does not exceed seven school days;
- due to placement in The Florida Keys Children's Shelter and such placement transition period does not exceed three school days. (By the fourth day, Shelter personnel are required to enroll the student in the appropriate public school closest in geographic proximity to the Shelter);
- with written permission of the principal or the principal's designee, for good cause shown, including insurmountable conditions as defined by rules of the state board of education in Rule 6A-1.09513, Florida Administrative Code;
- due to participation in an approved special event. The student must receive advance written permission from the school principal or the principal's designee. (Examples of special events include public functions; conferences; and regional, state and national competitions);
- due to having, or being suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation which can be transmitted to other students or school staff. (Examples include, but are not limited to, fleas, head lice, ringworm, impetigo, and scabies).

Students will be afforded an opportunity to make up class work upon return to school from an absence. After three consecutive absences, the teacher will determine due dates. If notice has been given of a test or due date for a paper, project or assignment prior to an absence, the student is still responsible for the work on the date it is due. Absence will not extend the deadline. In the case of a test, the student will be expected to take the test as soon as he or she returns to school. The exception to this policy is the student assigned an out of school suspension.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

An unexcused absence is any absence that does not fall into one of the above excused absence categories. Examples of unexcused absences include vacations, personal services (trip to salon, shopping, dance lessons), non-school events / programs / sporting activities, older students providing day care services for siblings.

***Any unexcused absence will result in a grade penalty for work missed.***

Students receiving out-of-school suspension **must** be assigned schoolwork that will cover content and skills taught during the duration of suspension. Students on out of school suspension will be permitted to make up quarter and semester examinations, if applicable. Projects, term papers, etc., which represent work for a period of time greater than the suspension period will be submitted for the purpose of determining a student's grade in accordance with each school's grading practices. Should questions arise regarding this rule; principals will grant the parent(s)/guardian(s) a conference. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the principal's decision to the District if a conflict arises.

Parents will not be held responsible for their child's nonattendance at school under the following conditions:

- with permission – absence was with permission of the principal or designee;
- without knowledge – without parent knowledge, consent or connivance;
- financial inability – parent unable to provide necessary clothes, reported in writing to the superintendent, any claim for exemption shall be determined by the school superintendent subject to appeal to the district school board;
- sickness, injury or other insurmountable condition (extreme weather, communicable disease). [Florida Statute §1003.24]

The school shall respond in a timely manner to each unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown. Upon each unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown, the school shall contact the student's parent or guardian to determine the reason. [Florida Statute §1003.26 (1) (a)]

The school must evaluate each parent justification based upon the district's definition of excused and unexcused absences. If it is determined, that the justification is not accepted, the parent must be notified, and the absence marked as UNEXCUSED.

### **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING TARDIES**

Students who are tardy to school must be signed-in at the Main Office. An excused tardy exists when reasons acceptable to the principal or his or her designee are given. Any student arriving to school after the session has begun must report to Main Office. An admit pass shall be issued indicating an excused or unexcused tardy. Excessive tardies may result in revocation of choice hardship or other consequence as determined by the principal or designee.

#### **AN EXCUSED SIGN-IN INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:**

- illness;
- medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required);
- automobile accident;
- death or funeral;
- emergency situations acceptable to the principal or designee;
- required court appearance (subpoena required);
- established religion observance;
- severe weather;
- breakdown of school bus.

#### **AN UNEXCUSED SIGN-IN INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:**

- car problems (ex: flat tire, no gas, car won't start, student getting a parking decal);
- heavy traffic;
- overslept;
- returned for forgotten items or student obtaining an absentee admit;
- non-educational appointments.

### **ADDITIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE INFORMATION**

Middle school students are expected to enroll in and attend a full day of classes. To earn a passing grade in a quarter for a course, a student must be in attendance for a minimum of ninety percent (90%) of the class time. A student who is not in attendance for the minimum ninety percent of class time may earn a passing grade by demonstrating mastery. However, such student shall be reported to the school principal for exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. If the principal deems the absence unexcused, he or she will report the child to the school's Student Services Team for further action.

### **Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles**

Schools are required to report to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles the names, dates of birth, sex, and social security number of minors (14-18) who accumulate 15

unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days, which is a “rolling” number, thus making the student ineligible for driving privileges. The legislation further provides that those minors who fail to satisfy attendance requirements shall be ineligible for driving privileges. If the minor does not have a license, he or she shall not be issued one upon application. Persons ages fourteen until their eighteenth birthday cannot get or keep their driver’s privilege or license unless they are in school, have successfully completed school, earned their GED certificate, or have a hardship waiver. A student who has had their license suspended due to unexcused absences can apply for reinstatement once they have attended school for 30 consecutive days without an unexcused absence and have completed the necessary paperwork. Reinstatement is delayed a day for each excused absence during that 30 day period.

### ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In the case of an ESE student with excessive absences, an IEP team meeting **should** meet to determine whether or not the absences are related to the student's disability. If the IEP team determines that the excessive absences **are** related to the student's disability, the IEP team will determine a reasonable course of action or placement that will support the student’s academic achievement.

If the IEP team determines that the student's excessive absences **are not** related to the student's disability, the student is treated in the same manner as that for a general education student, with regard for the state and federal statutes regarding ESE students.

### ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS WITH A 504 PLAN

In the case of a student with excessive absences the Student Services Team (SST) should be convened to determine if the absences are caused in relation to the active *Section 504 Accommodation Plan*. If the SST determines that the absences are related to the 504 plan, the team should consider interventions and or changes to better accommodate and or facilitate the students learning. The revised 504 plan should address any additional strategies and/or interventions needed to support the student’s academic achievement.

If the SST determines that the absences **are not** related to the 504 plan, the student is treated in the same manner as that for a general education student with regard for the state and federal statutes regarding students with an ADA /504 plan.

### ABSENCES DUE TO RELIGIOUS REASONS

Students will be afforded an opportunity to make up missed work without adverse school effects when absent because of a religious holiday. Within five school days prior to an expected absence for religious reasons, parent(s)/guardian(s) **must** notify the principal in writing and request that the student be excused from attendance. A written excuse will not be required upon return to

school and no adverse or prejudicial effects will result for any student availing her/himself of this provision. Students will be permitted to make up missed work according to school-center procedures.

Should questions arise regarding this rule, the principal will grant the parent(s)/guardian(s) a conference. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee should a conflict arise.

## **MAKING UP WORK**

Middle school students are expected to attend school regularly and be on time for classes. Each school's student handbook outlines the attendance procedures for that school. All school procedures must conform to the following district procedures:

1. Notes or telephone calls from parent(s)/guardian(s) are required either before or after an absence.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to request make-up work missed because of absences.
3. Students are given one day for each day of absence to complete makeup work unless unusual circumstances indicate an extension. The principal or designee **must** approve any extension.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are to be notified by telephone or by mail when lack of attendance endangers the student's grades.

Students receiving out-of-school suspension (OSS) must be assigned schoolwork to keep up with content and skills covered during the duration of the suspension. Should questions arise regarding this OSS rule, principals will grant the parent(s)/guardian(s) a conference.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

### **EARLY WITHDRAWALS**

Students who are required to leave school prior to the last day of the school year must show evidence that the withdrawal is mandatory and must successfully complete assigned class work in order to satisfy promotion requirements. Principals are authorized to make arrangements for the administration of any tests or examinations, as appropriate.

Principals may waive the requirements for early withdrawal when unusual/extenuating circumstances require it. Approval is mandatory prior to the student's leaving school.

## STUDENT WITHDRAWALS FOR ENROLLMENT IN HOME EDUCATION PROGRAM

To withdraw a student for enrollment in a home education program, the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) must initiate the withdrawal process at the school and notify the Superintendent of Schools/designee, **in writing**, of the intent to establish a home education program for the student and complete the appropriate documentation. The custodial parent/guardian shall submit the letter of intent to the Home Education Office within 30 days of the establishment of the home education program. Home education correspondence should be mailed to:

Monroe County School District  
Home Education Office  
Attn: Executive Director of Teaching & Learning  
241 Trumbo Road  
Key West, FL 33040

Following the acceptance into the home education program the parent or guardian is accepting the full responsibility for the following:

1. **Parent must notify the district** in writing of the intent to home school.
2. **Parent must maintain a portfolio** of records that consist of the following:
  - a. Log of educational activities;
  - b. Writing samples, work sheets, workbooks, and or other creative materials;
  - c. The portfolio must be maintained by the parent and may be reviewed by the school district with appropriate notice.
3. **Evaluation**, the parent must ensure annual evaluation by a certified instructor, state evaluation, or national evaluation instrument and report the results to the district coordinator.
4. **Annual Review**, the district will review the evaluation results, if there are any concerns regarding the child's academic achievement. The district may place the parent on one year probation if the student fails to show adequate progress. Under probation, the parent must then remediate the child within the year or the district may require the student to enroll in an appropriate program [Florida Statute § 1002.41]

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### **GENERAL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Monroe County School Board Curriculum incorporates the strands, performance standards, and benchmarks that delineate student performance standards as defined by the Florida Department of Education *Florida Standards and/or Next Generation Sunshine State Standards*. ([Florida Statute §1003.4156] and State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09401)

Promotion from middle school requires that a student successfully complete the following 12 courses:

1. Three courses in mathematics (middle school or higher);
2. Three courses in English (middle school or higher);
3. Three courses in science (middle school or higher);
4. Three courses in social studies (middle school or higher), including a civics course that includes the study of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of the Confederation, the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution;
5. One course in Career and Education Planning (students will develop a personalized academic and career plan);
6. One class period per day for one semester of physical education for each year he/she is enrolled in a middle school.
  - a. Medical Exemption: Principals may exempt a student from physical education only after meeting with the student's parents and/or guardians, consulting with the physical education staff and receiving written verification that the exemption is necessary for validated medical reasons.
  - b. Academic Exemption: A principal may exempt a student from the physical education requirement for the following reasons:
    - If academic courses required in Florida Statute and/or the requirements of the student's IEP do not leave a class period available during a middle school year for enrollment in physical education.
    - The student is enrolled in a remedial course.
    - The student's parent indicates in writing to the school each year that:
      1. The parent requests that the student enroll in another course from among those courses offered as options by the school; or
      2. The student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement.



### Middle School Mathematics Acceleration Progression

Students enrolled in grades 6-8 are provided the opportunity to participate in mathematics courses outside their listed grade level. The district recommendations for acceleration in M/J Mathematics 1 through Pre-Algebra are listed in the [mathematics progression document 6-12](#).

Students who wish to participate in Algebra 1 as a middle school student should meet the requirements listed below. Students who wish to participate in these courses and do not meet the requirements as listed will need to sign a course recommendation waiver.

Assessment Name	Required Score
Orleans Hanna Prognosis Test or STAR Math	Orleans Hanna $\geq 85$  STAR Incoming 6 <sup>th</sup> Grader $\geq 857$ Incoming 7 <sup>th</sup> Grader $\geq 889$ Incoming 8 <sup>th</sup> Grader $\geq 843$
State Assessment Score	$\geq 4$
Previous Course Progression EOC	$\geq 80$
Previous Course Year Grade	$\geq 85$
Other Core Course GPA	$\geq 3.0$

### High School Credit in Middle School

The Monroe County School District offers students in grades 6-8 the opportunity to earn high school credit. Courses will adhere to high school grading and attendance policies which may be found in the high school program section of the Student Progression Plan. [Florida Statutes §1003.4156, §1008.22 (3)(c)2.a.]

Middle school students earning high school credit shall simultaneously be credited with meeting the requirements for the appropriate corresponding middle school course requirements. High school courses taken in middle school are included in student's high school cumulative GPA, will be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements, and may be used to satisfy Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements.

### Middle Grades Grade Forgiveness

The forgiveness rule applies to middle school students who have earned a grade C or lower in a high school course taken for credit.

- A student in the middle grades who takes any high school course for high school credit and earns a grade of "C," "D," or "F" or the equivalent of a grade of "C," "D," or "F" is eligible for grade forgiveness. In such case, the district forgiveness policy allows for the replacement of the grade with a grade of "C" or higher, or the equivalent of a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only one grade shall be used in the calculation of the student's grade point average. [Florida Statute 1003.428 (4) (d)]
- Students are advised that many universities calculate GPAs based on all courses attempted and that all courses attempted for credit must appear on the student transcript.

## END OF COURSE EXAMS (EOC)

The Civics EOC statewide standardized assessment will be required of all middle school students. The assessment results will constitute 30 percent of the final course grade.

Students taking high school courses with an associated statewide standardized EOC (Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, Geometry Honors, or Biology I Honors, or an equivalent high school course) in middle school must take the associated assessment. The assessment will constitute 30% of the final course grade. Passing the Algebra I EOC assessment is a high school graduation requirement. Students with disabilities may qualify for EOC waivers.

Middle grades students enrolled in Algebra I must take the Algebra I EOC assessment and pass the course to earn high school Algebra I credit. A middle grades student is not required to earn a passing score on the Algebra I EOC assessment in order to earn high school credit or be promoted to high school. A middle grades student's performance on the Algebra I EOC assessment constitutes 30 percent of the student's final course grade.

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### English Language Learners (ELL)

English Language Learners will be identified as students whose English language proficiency is limited in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. All ELL students **must** be given **equal access** to the general curriculum as defined by the Monroe County School District Curriculum Guidelines. The general education standards and benchmarks should be the basis of their curriculum. The individual student's ELL schedule documents the instructional model that is utilized to ensure the student an equal opportunity to master the general education curriculum.

Note: See Monroe County School District *English Language Learners (ELL) Plan* for full explanation of services and models.

### **Gifted Education**

Students identified as gifted have an Educational Plan (EP) that provides direction for the instructional program. The differentiated instructional program may include a variety of educational opportunities that address the student's advanced abilities. Courses and programs offered at each school vary as prescribed by the site based leadership team.

Note: For additional ESE information regarding evaluations, data and placement of students into Gifted programs please refer to the Monroe County Special Programs and Procedures Manual for additional information

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students are given access to the general curriculum as appropriate and outlined in the child's IEP. The general education Florida Standards are appropriate for the majority of ESE students. However, for some students, modified standards and/or Access Points in one or more content area may be more appropriate as indicated in the IEP.

The IEP addresses annual goals and short-term objectives to meet the unique needs of the student as well as appropriate classroom accommodations and modifications.

### **504 Students**

Once a student is determined to be eligible under Section 504 and in need of services and accommodations, the 504 team develops a Section 504 accommodations plan. Students are given access to the general curriculum as appropriate with the specific accommodations listed in the 504 plan.

### **Alternative Education/Dropout Prevention (DOP) Programs**

The academic program for an Alternative Education/DOP student may differ from traditional education programs and schools in scheduling, administrative structure, philosophy, curriculum and/or setting. The programs employ alternative teaching methodologies, curricula, learning activities or diagnostic and assessment procedures in order to meet the needs, interests and talents of eligible students.

### **Alternative to Out-of-School-Suspension (AOSS) Grades 6-12**

The design of this program provides a viable option to ensure that students who are given an out-of-school suspension shall continue to receive academic support while they are away from their schools. Upon return to school, they shall be able to make up any work missed to help maintain their academic standing. Students who attend and meet the requirements for AOSS shall not be considered absent and shall not receive any grade penalty.

### **Virtual Instruction**

As stipulated by the Florida K-20 Education Code [Florida Statute §1002.45(2)(b)] parents or guardians have the right to choose educational options such as MyDistrict Virtual School (MDVS) or Florida Virtual School (FLVS) for their children. A student's full-time school may not deny access to courses offered by MDVS or FLVS assuming that the desired online course(s) is an appropriate course placement based on the student's academic history, grade level, and age. Access to students shall be available during and after the normal school day. Additional information regarding the district virtual instruction program is available in Appendix B.

### **Interscholastic Athletics Eligibility (Grades 6 – 8)**

Eligibility for each student shall be limited to three (3) consecutive years from the time the student first enters grade 6.

1. To be eligible to compete in interscholastic athletic competition for the first grading period, a sixth-grade student must be a bona fide student in the school which the student represents (unless being home schooled); must have been regularly promoted from the fifth grade; and must be carrying a normal class load and doing satisfactory classroom work with a satisfactory conduct record.
2. Failure in more than one (1) subject during a given quarter grading period shall cause a student to be ineligible for practice and competition during the following quarter grading period. In addition, a student must maintain a specified grade point average of 2.0, as well as acceptable conduct determined by the principal.
3. Age rule: A middle school student loses eligibility when the student reaches the age of 15 years prior to September 1 of the current school year.

4. To participate in the first semester of grade 9, a student must be regularly promoted from grade 8 during the immediately preceding year.

### Extra-curricular Programs

The Monroe County School District recognizes the value that extra-curricular activities play in creating a healthy school climate. Schools are encouraged to develop diverse offerings for students beyond the classroom that include opportunities for ***all*** students to become involved in activities that include but are not limited to athletics, academic clubs, the arts, and community service organizations.

### Extracurricular Activities for Home Education Students

Registered home education students are eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities at the public middle school to which they would have been assigned by the school district. Interscholastic extracurricular activities are school-authorized athletic or education-related activities for students that occur during or outside of the regular instructional school day. Such activities include athletics, marching band, chorus, and academic clubs. In order to participate, the home education student must meet the same eligibility requirements of the special activity as established for all regularly attending students. [Florida Statute §1006.15]

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

### STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS and MATH

All students must participate in the statewide standardized assessment program. Students who do not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the district school board in English Language Arts, , and mathematics for each grade level, or who do not meet specific levels of performance as determined by the commissioner on statewide assessments at selected grade levels, must be provided with additional assessments to determine the nature of the student's difficulty and areas of academic need. [Florida Statute §1008.25 (4)(a), §1008.22]

Monroe County School District will use the FLDOE technical assistance guidelines to identify those students who need remediation as follows:

GRADES	SUBJECTS	REMEDATION CRITERIA
Grades 6, 7, 8	ELA (FSA)	Achievement Levels 1 & 2

<b>Grades 6, 7, 8</b>	<b>Mathematics (FSA)</b>	<b>Achievement Levels 1 &amp; 2</b>
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## **PROMOTION**

No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion or administrative placement. [Florida Statute §1008.25 (6)(a)]

### **No Social Promotion/Administrative Placement**

Florida statute prohibits the assignment of a student to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion or administrative placement at the next grade level without regard for student mastery of the appropriate Florida Standards. A student fails to meet the state portion of levels of performance for student progression when the student fails to achieve Level 3 on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) in reading, mathematics and/or science. As the FSA is not the sole determiner of promotion or retention, the school administration shall base a promotion or retention decision on the preponderance of evidence reviewed. [Florida Statute §1008.25 (6) (a)]

### **Promotion under Unique Circumstances**

In limited, unique circumstances, a student may be promoted without meeting the specific assessment performance levels prescribed by the district and the state. Promotion may be recommended by a principal if the student is able to demonstrate mastery of the Florida Standards through alternate assessments with the preponderance of evidence indicating that the student's achievement is equivalent to the designated levels of performance for student progression.

### **Promotion of Late-in-the-Year Transfer Students**

The promotion of students transferring into the Monroe County School District during the last grading period shall be determined primarily by the grades and records received from the sending school.

### **Mid-Year Promotion of Retained Students from 6th to 7th or 7th to 8th**

In middle school, mid-year promotion is defined as promotion of a retained student at any time during the year of retention once the student has successfully completed the four (4) core grade academic requirements (English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) of the preceding grade level. Student grade level classification at the end of the first semester will determine which grade level Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) is administered.

## **RETENTION**

Retention may occur when the school's instructional staff and administration determines that the student demonstrates the need for additional time to attain appropriate academic knowledge and skills in order to meet required district and/or state performance standards.

A student who is retained must be provided with instructional experiences different from those in the previous year's program, taking into consideration the student's individual learning needs and learning style. Only in exceptional cases will a student be assigned to any one grade more than two consecutive years. The district shall provide an appropriate alternative placement for a student who has been retained two or more years. [Florida Statute §1008.25(2)(b)(c)]

### **Options for Students Not Meeting Promotion Standards**

If a student does not meet district or state promotion standards, the student must participate in course retrieval or attend summer school in order to receive remediation before the beginning of the next school year.

### **Considerations for Special Program Students**

**English Language Learners (ELL):** Students identified as Limited English Proficient (ELL) **must** meet the district levels of performance. However, ELL students who are identified as being substantially below grade level in reading in English may be retained only if approved by the ELL committee.

**Students with Disabilities:** Specific determinations for retention of students with disabilities shall be determined on an individual basis considering the following factors: disability, diploma option, grades, state assessments, portfolios etc. *See Monroe County Special Programs and Procedures Manual for additional information.*

**504 Students:** Students with 504 plans **must** meet the district levels of performance. The Team **must** determine if the reason(s) for retention is/are caused by the disability of record on the active *Section 504 Accommodation Plan*

## **REMEDIATION AND RETENTION**

Remedial and supplemental (academic) instruction resources **must** be allocated to students who fail to meet achievement performance levels required for promotion. [Florida Statute §1008.25(3)(a)(b)]

Remediation **must** be based on the results of diagnostic assessment(s), and it **must** be systematically embedded in the total educational program for the student. The daily instruction for the student will be modified based on the Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) progress monitoring plan or other educational plan(s) (e.g., IEP, ELL, 504 Plan). Remediation **must** include an instructional program that is not identical to that provided during the previous school year.

## Summer School

**Extended School Year for ELL Students:** The purpose of Extended School Year (ESY) (if offered) for ELL students is to provide beginning and some intermediate English speakers with the opportunity to accelerate their English language acquisition. This is done through content-related instruction in a nurturing environment that promotes use of listening / speaking / reading / writing English. The ELL teacher will identify the ELL students eligible for an Extended School Year (if offered).

**Students with Disabilities: Extended School Year (ESY):** Special education and related services provided to students with disabilities beyond the regular 180-day school year are called **extended school year (ESY) services**. School districts are not required to provide ESY services to all students with disabilities. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ESY is provided only when there is documented evidence that a **severe regression will occur** in critical life skills during time off from the school year.

## REPORTING OF STUDENT PROGRESS

All middle schools in the Monroe County School District report grades/progress to parents/guardians on a quarter schedule. The report card will clearly depict and grade the student's academic performance in each class or course in grades 1 through 12 based on examination as well as written papers, class participation, and other academic performance criteria. The student's conduct and behavior, as well as attendance including absences and tardiness will be depicted on the report card.

The final report card for a school year shall contain a statement indicating end-of-the-year status or performance or nonperformance at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, and promotion or non-promotion.

Schools shall not exempt students from academic performance requirements, such as final exams, based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance. A student's attendance record may not be used in whole or in part to provide an exemption from any academic performance requirement. [Florida Statute 1003.33]

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with disabilities enrolled in ESE must also be informed of their child's progress toward his or her annual IEP goals at least as often as each quarter period. Every child including ESE will receive a progress report in the same manner as all students



## PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) - WRITTEN NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Parent(s)/guardian(s) **must** be notified in writing of the district's promotion requirements. Parent(s)/guardians(s) of ELL students **may be** notified using the appropriate translated version of the district's promotion requirements upon request.

1. School personnel will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of Student Progression requirements within the first two months of school. The requirements may be included in the parent/student handbook or sent home in some other written form.
2. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who is not making adequate progress in the standard curriculum in reading, writing, science and math will be notified in writing each quarter on the report card.

An annual written report **must** be provided to the parent of each student on the student's progress toward achieving proficiency in reading, writing, science, and mathematics, including results on each statewide assessment test. The evaluation of each student's progress **must** be based upon the student's classroom work, observations, tests, district assessments, and other relevant information. Progress reporting **must** be provided to the parent in writing in a format adopted by the district school board. [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(a)].

## MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORTS

Within each grading period, teachers will provide every student who is failing or performing below expectations with a status report listing, at a minimum, current grade average and attendance. This report is issued during the middle week of each grading period. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with disabilities enrolled in ESE must be informed at least as often as the general education students.

## GENERAL RULES OF GRADING

Grades are based on the quality of student performance relative to expected levels of achievement of the Florida Standards and the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

- Quality of work will be assessed by multiple measures that include, but are not limited to:
  - assessments (essay, multiple-choice and completion tests, oral tests and skill tests requiring demonstrations);
  - classroom assignments (paper and pencil assignments, reports, term or research papers, models, projects, exhibits, posters, computer programs, and homework);
  - alternative methods (portfolios and performance assessment);
  - teacher observations (oral presentations or reports, speeches, recitations, impromptu speaking and demonstrations);
  - student participation in class and completion of work assigned.

- A sufficient number of grades shall be recorded to justify the quarter grade. Grades shall be recorded on a regular basis. A recorded grade (with the exception of I and N) may not be changed after report cards are printed except by one of the following procedures:
  - The change is initiated by the teacher and approved by the principal. Signatures of both the teacher and the principal are required; OR
  - The change is initiated by the principal and approved by the superintendent. Signatures of both the principal and the superintendent are required. The teacher will be consulted prior to the initiation of a grade change by the principal if the teacher is on duty. If the grade change is initiated when the teacher is not on duty, the teacher will be notified in writing upon his/her return.

Note: In either case, any grade change requires two signatures on the form indicating the change and the reason for the change.
- An Incomplete (I) in any quarter, unless changed, will remain on the report card and the final average will compute to an F.
- A student enrolled for fifteen (15) days or more shall receive grades for the quarter. Students enrolled less than this amount of time may receive grades at the discretion of the individual teacher.

Effort and behavior are important to a student's academic progress. They are evaluated independently and are reported to parents in the appropriate sections of the report card.

- ESE and ELL students should have the opportunity to earn grades/marks that are equivalent to the grades/marks earned by general education students. No student should be denied the opportunity to earn above-average grades/marks because of placement in an ESE or ELL program or due to accommodations as deemed appropriate for use within his or her instructional setting. ESE students must be graded on the basis of performance within the curriculum designated on their IEP or ELL plan.
- Alternate assessments, including performance assessments, may be used to document progress for the ESE and/or ELL student. Additionally, for ESE student, the criteria and evaluation procedures will be identified and discussed with the student and the parent/guardian during IEP meetings.
- Academic performance and behavior will be evaluated independently

#### *Recommendations for Teachers*

1. Make conscious decisions about all elements of your grading approach. A "Below Grade Level" report card comment is not acceptable to justify higher grades.
2. Grades should compare student performance to learning criteria. In Florida, the learning criteria should be based on the Florida Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards benchmarks and the district's curriculum guidelines.
3. Grades should be separate for academic achievement and behavior, effort, and participation.

4. Learning expectations and grading procedures should be clearly presented to students and parents. Using explicit language both at the beginning of the grading period and when report card grades are given about which assessments and products are included in the report card grade and how the grade is calculated.

## DESCRIPTION AND DEFINITION OF REPORT CARD MARKS

Grade of <b>A</b> :	Superior Progress	(90-100%)
Grade of <b>B</b> :	Commendable Progress	(80-89%)
Grade of <b>C</b> :	Average Progress	(70-79%)
Grade of <b>D</b> :	Lowest Acceptable Progress	(60-69%)
Grade of <b>F</b> :	Failure	(below 60%)
Grade of <b>I</b> :	Incomplete*	(0 %)

A grade of I (Incomplete\*) Indicates a problem that causes the student's work to be incomplete. For example:

- Student has not been enrolled in a class long enough to determine a grade;
- Transfer student's grades from previous school have not been received;
- A grade of I indicates that a student has entered into an agreement for credit retrieval.

A grade of I, unless changed, will revert to the original assigned grade.

## Calculation of Final Grades

The final course grade is calculated using the numeric average from each quarter. Failing grades for the quarter that are below a numeric score of 50 are defaulted to a score of 50. This final average is then converted to a letter grade as described above.

## Calculation of High School Course Grades

High school course grades may be reported on student transcripts as semester grades unless an EOC tested course. For non-EOC courses, each quarter grade counts 40% of the semester grade. Semester examinations for high school courses count 20% of the final semester grade. All students taking high school courses must take the semester examination for each course. For high school courses that include a statewide standardized end-of-course assessment, the assessment constitutes 30% of the overall course grade.

## Mid-term and Final Examinations

All students will be required to take mid-term and final exams for each course in which they are enrolled with the exception of state EOC courses. Students enrolled in courses with a state or nationally developed standardized assessment (e.g., State EOC course and Advanced Placement Courses) will be offered alternative assignments during the final exam window at the discretion of the building principal and teacher. In EOC courses the statewide, standardized EOC will serve as the final exam and will comprise 30 percent of the overall course grade. No other final exam may be given. District developed common semester and final exams may be administered as these assessments are developed and field tested throughout the year.

### **Awards and Recognition**

Students who perform above average (As and Bs) as evidenced by their report card grades will be recognized as Honor Roll students. Students who earn all A's for the entire year will be recognized with the Superintendent's Award. Students may also earn awards for Attendance, Specials, Citizenship, and other achievements.

### **REPORTING STUDENT CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR**

At the secondary level, teachers record their best judgment of how each student's behavior affects learning in the classroom. The following are the general descriptions used in secondary schools. Student conduct indicators are separate from the academic grade earned for the grading period. These conduct indicators reflect the student's overall conduct in all class activities and cannot be cause for lowering an academic grade. Indicators on the report card that reflect students' behavior are "behavior satisfactory," "behavior needs improvement" and "behavior unsatisfactory."

## MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT PROGRESS MONITORING PLAN PROCESS

As required by Florida Statute §1008.25(4)(b), schools **must** develop, in consultation with the student's parent, a progress monitoring plan. A progress monitoring plan is intended to provide the school district and the school flexibility in meeting the academic needs of the student and to reduce paperwork.

A student who is not meeting the school district or state requirements for proficiency in reading and math shall be covered by one of the following plans to target instruction and identify ways to improve his or her academic achievement:

- A federally required student plan such as an individual education plan;
- A school wide system of progress monitoring for all students; or
- An individualized Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) progress monitoring plan.

The plan chosen must be designed to assist the student or the school in meeting state and district expectations for proficiency. The K-12 comprehensive reading plan shall include instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance.

Middle school students who score at or below level 2 on the ELA FSA may be placed in either an intensive reading course and/or a content area course (dependent on the student's level of comprehension) in which reading strategies are delivered. These courses will be taught by highly qualified teachers of reading who are either Reading Endorsed or Next Generation Content Area Literacy Professional Development (NG CAL PD) Certified.

Middle school students who score at or below level 2 on the Mathematics FSA will be recommended to be placed in one of the following:

- Remediation program either before or after school;
  - Mathematics lab as part of an extension, intervention or enrichment period
  - Online programming and virtual support
1. The MTSS progress monitoring plan for a student who has been identified as deficient in reading **must** identify:
    - the student's deficiencies in one (or more) of the following:
      - basic reading: phonemic awareness, phonics,
      - fluency
      - vocabulary
      - comprehension
      - listening comprehension

- oral expression
- written expression
- the desired levels of performance in these areas;
- the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance.

Schools shall also provide for weekly monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance.

2. The MTSS progress monitoring plan for a student who has been identified as deficient in math **must** identify:

- the student's deficiencies in one (or more) of the following:
  - calculation
  - problem solving
- the desired levels of performance in these areas;
- the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance.

Schools shall also provide for weekly monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance.

3. It is the responsibility of the teacher, the grade chair and the principal to ensure that the MTSS progress monitoring plan is substantive and that the outlined instructional and support services are provided. The school district will assist schools and teachers in the implementation of research-based reading activities [Florida Statute §1008.25(4)(b)]. The MTSS progress monitoring plan must clearly identify:

- the specific diagnosed academic needs to be remedied;
- the success-based intervention strategies to be used;
- how, when, how often by whom, and how long intensive remedial instruction is to be provided; and
- the monitoring and reevaluation activities to be employed.

### ELL Students

When an ELL student is determined to be performing below grade level in mathematics, science, reading and/or writing, an ELL committee, including parents or guardians, must convene to implement a progress monitoring plan.

### Students with Disabilities

Students under IDEA that are working toward a standard diploma and performing below grade level should also receive progress monitoring. The IEP is reviewed annually or as needed to

determine if programmatic changes are required. Promotion and grading of students with disabilities must take into account the impact of the student's disability. Each student with an IEP is entitled to specific accommodations and/or modifications as prescribed in the IEP.

**Accommodations:** If the student with a disability participates in the general curriculum with accommodations to instruction and assessment, the teacher implements the accommodations and then assesses the student according to the established learning criteria.

**Modifications:** When students with disabilities are unable to meet the expectations of the general curriculum, the expectations are customized. Modifications to the curriculum are used in coordination with an assessment that is compatible with the modified expectations. Grading systems that should be used for students using curriculum modifications reflect the student's expected level of performance based on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards Access Points.

### 504 Students

A progress monitoring plan shall be implemented for a 504 student who is performing below grade level. If a 504 student's below-grade-level performance **is** caused by his or her disability, the student's program accommodations are to be addressed in the 504 plan.

### Gifted Students

For a student eligible and participating in gifted programming who is performing below grade level, it is appropriate to implement a progress monitoring plan.

## DISTRICT/STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Each student **must** participate in district and statewide assessments as required by Florida Statute §1008.22 in grades and subjects where such assessments are administered. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students participate in FSA English Language Arts and Math; seventh grade students participate in Civics EOC Assessment; eighth grade students participate in the Statewide Science Assessment. Students will also participate in end of course exams as defined in the EOC subsection in program description. [Florida Statute §1008.22]

## ACCOMMODATIONS OF DISTRICT/STATE ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIAL PROGRAM STUDENTS

### ELL Students

ELL students are required to take all required state and district achievement and norm referenced tests. However, all active (LY) ELL students are eligible to receive accommodations during testing.

Permissible accommodations include: flexible setting, flexible scheduling, flexible timing, and assistance in the heritage language. ELL students **must** have access to an English-to-heritage language translation dictionary and/or heritage language-to-English translation dictionary, such as those made available to ELL students in an instructional setting. When a student is in both the ELL and ESE programs, all allowable accommodations listed on their IEP will be implemented. Parents/guardians are notified in writing of all accommodations offered to their child.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Test accommodations during district/state testing will be implemented as specified in the student's IEP. Test accommodations may include: flexible setting, flexible scheduling, flexible timing, flexible responding, flexible presentation and/or flexible format.

Note: Specific information regarding modifications for each assessment instrument can be found in the *Test Coordinator's Handbook individual assessments*.

### **504 Students**

Students with 504 plans may receive accommodations on both district and state assessments. The SST should refer to the student's past performance on standardized tests and the classroom accommodations section of the 504 plan to determine if the impairment substantially interferes with his/her performance. If so, the SST will determine the necessary accommodations for district and state assessments. Test accommodations may include: flexible setting, flexible scheduling, flexible timing, flexible responding, flexible presentation and/or flexible format.

Note: Refer to *The Monroe County School District Section 504 Manual* and the *Test Coordinator's Handbook*.

## **EXEMPTIONS FROM DISTRICT/STATE ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIAL PROGRAM STUDENTS**

### **ELL Students**

ELL students may be considered for an exemption from FSA ELA when approved by the ELL Committee based on Florida Department of Education guidance on exempting ELL students from statewide assessments. Students are eligible for an exemption if their date of entry into a United States school is less than one year from the proposed assessment in Reading/Writing. Exempt students will still be assessed in reading, writing, speaking, and listening using an alternative assessment for English Language Learners.



## Students with Disabilities

The IEP committee determines whether a student with a disability participates in state and district assessments. The decision to exclude any student with a disability must be documented on the IEP and must meet the following criteria:

- Does the student have a significant cognitive disability?
- Is the student unable to master the grade-level, general state content standards even with appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, assistive technology, or accessible instructional materials?
- Is the student participating in a curriculum based on Next Generation Sunshine State Standards Access Points for all academic areas?
- Does the student require extensive direct instruction in academics based on Access Points in order to acquire, generalize, and transfer skills across settings?

Students who are exempt from state and district assessment will be assessed through the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment test (FSAA).

## 504 Students

Students with 504 plans **must participate in** state assessments. Refer to *The Monroe County School District Section 504 Manual* and the *Test Coordinator's Handbook*.

## Progress Monitoring

Students in grades 6-8 who are identified as being marginally below the proficiency thresholds, Level 1 or Level 2 in English Language Arts and mathematics, may receive targeted remediation and **may** be promoted with a progress monitoring plan.

Use of progress monitoring plan

Students Identified as	Progress Monitoring Tool	Remediation Frequency
Tier 1	STAR/Renaissance Learning	3 times per year
Tier 2	STAR/Renaissance Learning	Monthly (September-May)
Tier 3	STAR/Renaissance Learning	Weekly

\*See the MTSS manual for further description of Tier placement.

## ANNUAL REPORT

The district school board must annually publish in the local newspaper, and report in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year, the following information on the prior school year [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(b)]:

- The provisions of this section relating to public school student progression and the district school board's policies and procedures on student retention and promotion [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(b)1].
- By grade, the number and percentage of all students in grades 3 through 10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(b)2].
- By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in grades 3 through 10 [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(b)3].
- Information on the total number of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as specified in paragraph (6)(b) [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(b)4].
- Any revisions to the district school board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior year [Florida Statute §1008.25(8)(b)5].

EQUITY POLICY

**MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

1. No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political beliefs, national or ethnic origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law.
2. The School Board shall comply with all state and federal laws, which prohibit discrimination and are designed to protect the civil rights of applicants, employees, and/or students, or other persons protected by applicable law.
3. The School Board shall admit students to District Schools, programs, and classes without regard to race, color, religion, age, nation or ethnic origin, marital status, disability or handicap.

**District Equity Contact for Student & Educational/Activities:**

Director of Student Service/Equity Contact

241 Trumbo Road

Key West, FL 33040

Telephone: (305) 293-1400 ext. 53378

FAX: (305) 293-1408