Dear Parent/Guardian,

The intent of the third-grade progression statute is to ensure that students have the necessary reading skills to be successful in grade 4 and beyond, where the rigors of reading in the content areas increase. According to section 1008.25(5), Florida Statutes (F.S.), to be promoted to fourth grade, a third-grade student must score a Level 2 or above on the statewide Florida Assessment of Student Thinking – English Language Arts (FAST-ELA). The following plan describes several ways for students who do not meet this standard initially to be promoted to fourth grade.

If a student does not demonstrate proficiency on the statewide FAST-ELA, they may attend the district provided Summer Reading Program to ensure they receive additional instruction. There is also statutory language that prohibits the statewide FAST-ELA from being the sole determiner of promotion and states that additional evaluations, portfolio reviews and assessments are available to the child to assist parents and the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for grade promotion. Some third graders who score Level 1 on the statewide FAST-ELA can be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted to fourth grade. This is called a “good cause exemption.” Good cause exemptions are only given to the following students:

1. Limited English proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages program.
2. Students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with requirements of State Board of Education Rule.
3. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternate standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
4. A student who demonstrates through a student portfolio that he or she is performing at least at level 2 level on the FSA in reading.
5. Students with disabilities who participate in the FSA in reading and who have an IEP or 504 Plan that reflects the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2 or grade 3\*.
6. Students who have received intensive reading intervention for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3 for a total of two years. A student may not be retained more than once in grade 3\*\*.

**Alternative Standardized Reading Assessment**: An alternative standardized reading assessment is another opportunity given to students to demonstrate mastery of the state standards. Under section 1008.25(6), F. S. (Eliminating Social Promotion), students who score a Level 1 on the grade 3 statewide FAST-ELA may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through an alternative standardized reading assessment that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the state standards (SAT10 or other state approved assessment utilized in SJCSD). These assessments have been approved by the State Board of Education as alternative standardized reading assessments which may be used for good cause exemption.

**Student Portfolio -** Under section 1008.25(6), F. S. (Eliminating Social Promotion), students who score a Level 1 on the grade 3 statewide FAST-ELA may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through a student portfolio that he or she is reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the state standards. The portfolio is an alternative means for students to demonstrate proficiency of third-grade skills.

1008.25(7), F.S. states that a parent of a student in grade 3 who is identified anytime during the year as being at risk of retention may request that the school immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio.

To be accepted as meeting the portfolio option for demonstrating mastery of the required reading skills, the student portfolio must meet the following requirements:

* be selected by the student's teacher,
* be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been *independently* produced in the classroom,
* include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the grade 3 reading FAST-ELA have been met. This includes multiple-choice items and passages that are approximately 50% literary text and 50% information text, and that are between 100-700 words with an average of 500 words, and
* be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the B.E.S.T. standards for Language Arts that are assessed by the grade 3 reading FAST-ELA.
* For each standard, there must be at least *three*demonstrations of mastery at 70% or above.

The SJCSD utilizes district portfolio assessments to fulfill the portfolio requirements.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or your child’s teacher.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Murphy, Principal