

Durham Intermediate School

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Please note: The Student Success Initiative (SSI) only impacts our fifth grade students. In order to keep all DIS parents informed, we are sending the same information to parents of both fifth and sixth graders.

Dear Parents:

This letter is to inform you of the grade advancement requirements of the Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI), which was passed by the 76th Texas legislature in 1999. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that every student makes the academic progress necessary to show a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills taught and tested at each grade level.

The SSI requires that **Grade 5** students must meet the passing standard on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in reading and mathematics before they can be promoted to Grade 6. These grade advancement requirements have applied to the TAKS reading test in Grade 3 since 2003 and, beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, these requirements will apply to the TAKS reading and mathematics tests at Grade 8.

Please note that these testing requirements are part of an overall system of support for student academic achievement. This system includes the following elements:

- evaluation of student needs at grades that precede SSI grades and academic support for student who additional instruction;
- ongoing evaluation of student progress during the school year for SSI grades (currently Grade 3 and 5) with assistance provided to all students with identified academic weakness;
- three testing opportunities;
- additional instruction after each test administration for students who do not meet the passing standard on a subject-area test;
- a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal, teacher, and parent or guardian, which meets when a student has not met the passing standard after two testing opportunities and decides the most effective way to support the child's academic success; and
- an instructional plan for every student who has not met the passing standard after three opportunities, regardless of whether the student is retained or, upon parent appeal, it promoted by the grade placement committee.

The SSI recognizes and supports the important role parents play in the education of their children. Your child's teacher and I depend upon and look forward to working with you to help your child succeed. **If your child is a fifth grader**, I strongly encourage you to discuss this matter with your child's teacher. I would also be glad to meet with you about the SSI, if you like. Please contact the school office to make and appointment at 817-949-5300.

Summary

This year, all regular education students enrolled in the **fifth grade** will be required to pass the TAKS reading and math tests in order to be promoted to the sixth grade.

All of the TAKS testing dates are listed below. **Although the Student Success Initiative does not involve the TAKS fifth grade science test or any of the sixth grade tests**, all tests that the student will take have been included in this chart for your convenience.

| | 1st Administration | 2nd Administration | 3rd Administration |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 5th Grade Reading | 3-05-08 | 4-30-08 | 7-02-08 |
| 5th Grade Math | 4-08-08 | 5-19-08 | 7-01-08 |
| 5th Grade Science | 5-01-08 | n/a | n/a |
| 6th Grade Reading | 4-30-08 | n/a | n/a |
| 6th Grade Math | 4-29-08 | n/a | n/a |

Our goal will continue to be that all DIS students pass each TAKS test the first time that it is administered.

Additional information about the SSI is available at the following website:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/ssi/index.html>

Sincerely,

Gary L. Brake