

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District

Parent Notification of Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI)

November, 2007

Dear Parents or Guardian:

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 8 students must meet the passing standard on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests in reading and mathematics before they can be promoted to grade 9. These grade advancement requirements also apply to the TAKS reading test at grade 3 and to the TAKS reading and mathematics tests at grade 5.

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

- evaluation of student needs at grades that precede SSI grades and academic support for students who need additional instruction;
- ongoing evaluation of student progress during the school year for SSI grades (grades 3, 5, and 8) with assistance provided to all students with identified academic weaknesses;
- 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, that meets when a student has not met the passing standard after two testing opportunities and that 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, is placed 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. In order to help communicate these promotion requirements, I have enclosed the grade 8 SSI parent information brochure. This brochure includes an explanation of the state law, suggestions for how families can help, and available resources for further information. 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 to make an appointment.

Sincerely,

Principal