



# Middle School Student Progression

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## Middle School Student Progression

This session will review elements of middle school progression and discuss strategies for working with overage students. Participants will obtain helpful resources and learn how districts are supporting this group of students.





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## Middle grades promotion requirements

Pursuant to the statutory requirements found in section (s.) [1003.4156](#), Florida Statutes (F.S.), in order for students to be promoted to high school from the middle grades, they must successfully complete the following courses:

- Three middle grades or higher\* courses in English language arts.
- Three middle grades or higher\* courses in mathematics.
- Three middle grades or higher\* courses in science.
- Three middle grades or higher\* courses in social studies.
  - One of these courses must be at least a one-semester civics education course in compliance with s. [1003.4156\(1\)\(c\)](#), F.S. Each student's performance on the statewide, standardized end-of-course (EOC) assessment in civics education required under s. [1008.22](#), F.S., constitutes 30 percent of the student's final course grade.
- One course in career and education planning to be completed in grades 6, 7 or 8.

Note: The statutory requirements for physical education (one semester each year) are found in s. [1003.455](#), F.S.

\*May include high school courses for high school credit

## Middle school career and education planning course requirements

- The course must be Internet-based, customizable to each student, and include research-based assessments to assist students in determining educational and career options and goals. In addition, the course must result in a completed personalized academic and career plan for the student that may be revised as the student progresses through middle school and high school; must emphasize the importance of entrepreneurship and employability skills; and must include information from the Department of Economic Opportunity's economic security report under s. [445.07](#), F.S.

Per Memorandum [DPS: 2020-94](#), effective September 1, 2020, school districts will be responsible for their own career planning and advisement platform. Districts will determine locally the appropriate platforms students use to satisfy the requirements for middle grades promotion, as per s. [1003.4156](#), F.S. If interested, you may explore options to contract with Kuder® directly or explore alternative methods to support your career planning and advisement initiatives.

## Overage Students in Middle School

- Research<sup>1, 2</sup> shows some of the most common factors that may lead to students being retained and becoming overage in middle school include:
  - Student mobility
  - Family crises
  - Attention or behavior concerns
  - Low attendance
  - Undiagnosed disabilities
- The researchers<sup>3</sup> found that students who were older than the typical age for their grade at the beginning of high school (16 or older at the beginning of ninth grade) had 336 percent higher odds of dropping out in any given year of high school. In addition, students who experienced a disciplinary incident in the eighth grade had 124 percent greater odds of dropping out during high school.

<sup>1</sup> Ledyard, O. (2017). Implications of small group instruction for overage secondary students' academic performance. *Walden University ScholarWorks*, 1-154.

<sup>2</sup> Reed, D. & Kirkpatrick, C. (1998). A Study of the impact of overage middle school students on middle schools. *Virginia Commonwealth University Scholars Compass*, 1-89.

<sup>3</sup> Torres, D.D., Bancroft A., & Stroub, K. (2015). Evaluating high school indicators and assessing their strength. *Rice Kinder Institute for Urban Research*, 3(5), 1-11.

## Overage Students in Middle School 2020-21, Final Survey 2

### 6<sup>th</sup> grade

District Name	Age	# of Students	Total Students	% of Students	# of SWD	# of SWD in Grade	% of SWD
FLORIDA	13	5,392	216,672	2.5%	2,665	34,601	7.7%
FLORIDA	14	381	216,672	0.2%	179	34,601	0.5%
FLORIDA	15	46	216,672	0.0%	15	34,601	0.0%
FLORIDA	16	11	216,672	0.0%	4	34,601	0.0%
FLORIDA	17	7	216,672	0.0%	0	34,601	0.0%

### 7<sup>th</sup> grade

FLORIDA	14	5,812	223,277	2.6%	2,821	33,765	8.4%
FLORIDA	15	508	223,277	0.2%	219	33,765	0.6%
FLORIDA	16	98	223,277	0.0%	47	33,765	0.1%
FLORIDA	17	16	223,277	0.0%	5	33,765	0.0%
FLORIDA	18	6	223,277	0.0%	2	33,765	0.0%

### 8<sup>th</sup> grade

FLORIDA	15	5,492	220,569	2.5%	2,576	30,340	8.5%
FLORIDA	16	649	220,569	0.3%	302	30,340	1.0%
FLORIDA	17	116	220,569	0.1%	37	30,340	0.1%
FLORIDA	18	23	220,569	0.0%	12	30,340	0.0%
FLORIDA	19	8	220,569	0.0%	3	30,340	0.0%

## Retention Criteria

- **State law provides the authority for placement of students with the school district. Placement is based on professional educators' evaluations of how well the student is meeting the levels of performance for student progression. Such evaluations take into account whether or not the student has the knowledge and skills to move on successfully to the more difficult work of the next grade or course (s. [1008.25](#), F.S.).**
  - A student scoring below grade level must receive instructional support or be retained in an intensive program that is different from the previous year's program and addresses the student's learning needs.
  - Retention may occur when the school's instructional staff, through its Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team, or its equivalent, 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 (s. [1008.25\(2\)\(b\)](#), F.S.).
- **Department of Education (FDOE) [Executive Order No. 2021-EO-02](#)**
  - Whereas, local school districts, in consultation with parents, are in the best position to evaluate the academic progress of each student and then make individualized decisions related to such student progression and graduation in keeping with the best interest of the child.
  - Retention
    - Decisions about whether it is in the best interest of a child to repeat a grade solely for academic reasons must be determined at the local level by the school principal, after careful review of the student's academic record, with input from the parents, student, teacher and school leaders.
  - Extra support for struggling students
    - For students who are at risk of being retained, the school district and charter schools must provide extra supports in concert with those interventions required under FDOE [Executive Order No. 2020-EO-07](#).





## **Middle School Progression: Students With Disabilities Considerations**

Bureau of Exceptional Student Education

## Let's Revisit the Emphasis of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

“Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities”

20 U.S.C. § 1400

# IDEA

- [34 CFR 300.1](#) ensures that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that [emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living](#);
- And in the least restrictive environment.

## Secondary Transition

- [34 CFR 300.43](#) provides for a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:
  - is designed within an outcome-oriented process, **that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation.**
- Section [1003.5716](#), F.S., ensures quality planning for a successful transition of a student with a disability to postsecondary education and career opportunities. **An individual educational plan (IEP) team shall begin the process of, and develop an IEP for identifying the need for transition services before the student with a disability attains the age of 14 years in order for his or her postsecondary goals and career goals to be identified and in place when he or she attains the age of 16.**

## Specially Designed Instruction

- “(3) Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology or delivery of instruction —
  - (i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and
  - (ii) To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.”

[34 CFR 300.39](#)

## FAPE and Progression

- Under Part B of IDEA, the parent may request a due process hearing on matters relating to the identification, evaluation or educational placement of their child with a disability, or the provision of FAPE to their child.
- IDEA permits but does not require IEP teams to make promotion/retention decisions.
- Promotion/retention decisions are not considered placement decisions.
- IDEA requires that the IEP specify any alternative promotion standards or requirements.
- For students not meeting grade level promotion requirements, the IEP team must meet to address any lack of expected progress – whatever the retention or promotion decision may be ([34 CFR 300.324](#)).
- For students approaching transition age – there are additional implications.

## Systemic Approach

- **MTSS** – How are your schools utilizing the problem-solving process to identify students needs? How is your district utilizing the resources available (Florida PBIS, PS/RTI, FDLRS, Student Support Services Project, Project 10)?
- Section [1001.42](#), F.S., **Early warning system** – A school that serves any students in kindergarten through grade 8 shall implement an early warning system to identify students in such grades who need additional support to improve academic performance and stay engaged in school. The early warning system must include the following early warning indicators:
  - Attendance below 90 percent, regardless of whether absence is excused or a result of out-of-school suspension.
  - One or more suspensions, whether in school or out of school.
  - Course failure in English Language Arts (ELA) or mathematics during any grading period.
  - A Level 1 score on the statewide, standardized assessments in ELA or mathematics or, for students in kindergarten through grade 3, a substantial reading deficiency under s. [1008.25\(5\)\(a\)](#).



## Example District Approaches

- Osceola County share-out
- Districts have reported utilizing the following to support students:
  - Alternative schools/programs
  - Virtual credit/course recovery systems used to accelerate students. This is a virtual curriculum that allows students to work at their own pace.
  - Mid-year promotions
  - After-school programs
  - Extended school year/summer learning programs



# Group Share



## Resource: Middle School Education Resources

### Instructional Supports

- [6 Great Ideas for Summer Learning](#)
- [Just Take 20 for Families](#)
- [Mathematics, Science & STEM \(Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics\) Programs](#)
- [Reading Tips for Parents](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Standards and Instructional Support](#)
- [Secondary Student Progression FAQ](#)

### College and Career Planning

- [Career Exploration Resources](#)
- [Career Cruiser Planning Guide](#)

### Support Services

#### FDOE Resources:

- [Healthy Schools Office](#)
- [Military Family Resources](#)
- [Exceptional Student Education Parent Information](#)
- [K-12 School Choice Office](#)
- [Parent and Family Engagement in Title I Programs](#)

#### U.S. Department of Education Resources:

- Resource Guide: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf>
- English Learner Tool Kit:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/eltoolkit.pdf>
- January 7, 2015, Dear Colleague Letter:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>



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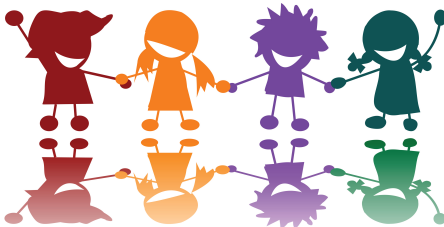
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