

NEWS RELEASE

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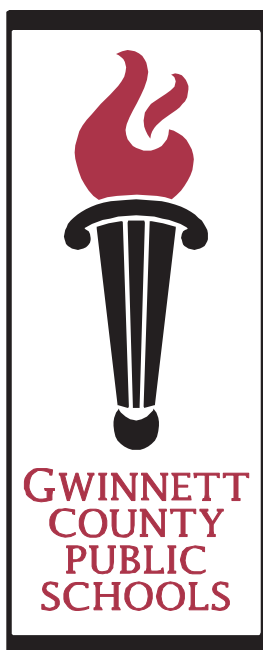
Gwinnett School Board acts on Gateway Review Procedure recommendations

Of the 21,158 Gwinnett 4th and 7th graders required to pass the 2008 Gateway test administered in April, the vast majority earned passing scores on the first try and were promoted to the next grade level. Over 20,000 5th and 8th graders were required to pass the more rigorous Georgia Writing Assessments in addition to grades for promotion to middle and high schools. Of those students required to meet these promotion requirements, only 336 students did not do as well on the Gateways as would be expected, based on their classroom grades. For them, the school system's Assessment Review Procedure was initiated immediately and acted upon by the Gwinnett County Board of Education.

School Level	Number of Students Required to Pass	Students in Board's Review	Gateway Waived: No Summer School Recommended	Gateway Waived: Summer School Recommended	Do Not Waive Gateway: Summer School Highly Recommended
Grade 4	10,732	197	52	103	42
Grade 7	10,426	100	4	94	2
Grade 5	10,415	2	0	2	0
Grade 8	10,542	37	8	29	0
Total	42,115	336	64	228	44

According to the Assessment Review Procedure, any student who earned no grade below a "C" in the subjects assessed on the Gateway on their 2007-08 report cards qualified for an automatic review if he or she failed any part of the Gateway test. Each review was conducted by an impartial committee of teachers, principals, and central office administrators. Three such committees operated simultaneously in order to complete the reviews before the June School Board meeting.

In addition to reviewing each student's Gateway scores, the committee examined each student's classroom performance as documented by the child's teacher(s).



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THE MISSION OF GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Members also studied each student's standardized test data, writing standards, other assessment information, and evidence provided by the parents of extenuating circumstances (illness, death in the family, etc.) that might have caused the student to perform below expectations on the test. The committee then recommended one of the following three actions for each student:

- waive passage of this year's Gateway and promote to the next grade;
- waive passage of this year's Gateway, promote to the next grade, but recommend summer school; or
- do not waive passage of this year's Gateway, recommend summer school, and require Gateway retake and passage for promotion.

According to Dale Robbins, Division of Teaching and Learning, the AKS Assessment Program and the Review Procedure is working as intended. "Our AKS Assessment Program helps us identify students who have not learned the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful at the next grade level. Since GCPS uses assessments required by the Georgia Department of Education, the AKS/Gateway review process assures that promotion standards align with state and GCPS expectations of performance. The Gateway tests better enable us to identify those students who need help, while the Review Procedure allows us to look at individual cases where the Gateway results are different from what we would expect from a particular student.

"The Review Procedure ensures that the Gateway test is not the sole criterion used for determining promotion for students who have earned grades of 'C' or above all year in subjects tested on the Gateway. The review committee takes into account a student's grades and Gateway results, as well as parent and teacher input, to ensure that an uncharacteristic failing score on the Gateway does not have a negative impact on a student."

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Additional Information About the Gateway Assessment Program

The students who are required to retake the Gateway are given the opportunity to receive instructional help, free of charge, in summer classes that focus on their area(s) of academic weakness. Gwinnett's K-8 Academic Intervention Program (summer school) begins June 26 through July 17 with holiday July 4. Gateway retests are scheduled as follows: Science and Social Studies-- July 10; Reading-- July 15; Language Arts-- July 16; Math-- July 17; and Writing-- July 9.

Students who do not pass the Gateway retest will be retained in their current grade and students in grades 4 and 7 will be served in the transition program, where they will receive targeted instruction to help them learn the AKS they have missed while also learning the AKS for the next grade level.

GCPS mailed individual test-takers' results to students' homes this week.

*For further information, contact Dale Robbins,
Division of Teaching and Learning, at 678-301-7030.*