2017-2018 Pupil Progression Plan

Local Education Agency:

Educators for Quality Alternatives

Background and Purpose

Louisiana state law (R.S. 24.4) requires local education agencies (LEAs) to establish a comprehensive Pupil Progression Plan based on student performance on the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program with goals and objectives that are compatible with the Louisiana Competency-Based Education Program and which supplements the minimum standards approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). **The plan shall address student placement and promotion** and shall require the student's mastery of grade-appropriate skills before he or she can be recommended for promotion.

The law states that "particular emphasis shall be placed upon the student's proficiency in grade-appropriate skills which may be considered in promotion and placement; however, each local school board shall establish a policy regarding student promotion and placement." The law goes on to require the state Department of Education to establish, subject to the approval of BESE, the level of achievement on the fourth and eighth grade LEAP test—in mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies—needed for students to advance to grades five and nine. BESE must also determine the nature and application of various intervention options to be used when students fail to meet the minimum academic standards approved by the board.

BESE established minimum standards in *Bulletin 1566 – Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures*. In October 2017, BESE approved, as Notice of Intent, revisions to Bulletin 1566 that relate to placement, promotion, and supports and interventions for students not meeting minimum academic standards. BESE has also approved regulations pursuant to state law that relate to placement and promotion in *Bulletin 741 – Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators*, which includes but is not limited to instructional time, grading policies, and graduation requirements. These bulletins also adhere to federal and state laws and regulations that govern the placement and promotion of students with disabilities, English learners, and transfer students.

The purpose of this document is to assist LEAs in developing their required Pupil Progression Plan in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and to codify LEA policies and procedures related to student placement and promotion. In each section of this document, language that conforms to applicable laws and regulations has been prepopulated. Space is provided for LEAs to add any additional local policies and procedures that fulfill the mandate of the law and support students in acquiring proficiency in grade-appropriate skills. Once completed, submitted to the Louisiana Department of Education, and published locally, teachers shall determine promotion or placement of each student an individual basis. LEAs may review promotion and placement decisions in order to ensure compliance with their established policy, and reviews may be initiated by a school's governing body, the local superintendent, or a student's parent or legal custodian.

Questions about this document should be directed to PPP@La.Gov

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I. Placement of students in kindergarten and grade 1

Kindergarten

Schools can only make recommendations to parents regarding student enrollment in kindergarten, since kindergarten is not mandatory. However, in accordance with state law (R.S. 17:221), once students have enrolled in kindergarten, they are subject to compulsory attendance laws and promotion requirements set forth by the LEA.

Every child, as a prerequisite to enrollment in any first grade of a public school, shall meet one of the following criteria:

- attended a full-day public or private kindergarten for a full academic year; or
- passed an academic readiness screening administered by the LEA at the time of enrollment for first grade

The minimum age for kindergarten shall be one year younger than the age required for that child to enter first grade. Each local educational governing authority, by rule, may provide for a child of younger age to enter kindergarten, provided that such child has been evaluated and identified as gifted in accordance with state regulations for such evaluation.

Grade 1

- Any child admitted to kindergarten pursuant shall be eligible to enter first grade upon successful completion of kindergarten, provided all other applicable entrance requirements have been fulfilled.

- The age at which a child may enter the first grade of any public school at the beginning of the public school session shall be six years on or before September thirtieth of the calendar year in which the school year begins.

- Any child transferring into the first grade of a public school from another state and not meeting the requirements herein for kindergarten attendance shall be required to pass an academic readiness screening administered by the LEA prior to the time of enrollment for the first grade.

In the space below, please describe any additional placement considerations or policies required by the LEA. Include the names of any required assessments and explain how results will be used.

EQA does not serve K-1.

II. Placement of transfer students

- A student who has transferred from a public school, in- or out-of-state, or a nonpublic school, shall be granted credit for work completed in the previous school. A properly certified transcript shall be required with the student's record of attendance, levels of achievement, history of immunization, and units of credit earned.
- Evaluation information for exceptional students transferring from another school system shall be reviewed by pupil appraisal and approved by a supervisor of special education before the student is enrolled in a special education program.
- Students in grades 5 and 9 transferring to a public school from any in-state nonpublic school, any approved home study program, or a Louisiana resident transferring from any out-of-state school, shall be required to pass the English language arts and mathematics portions of the LEAP placement test.

In the space below, please describe any additional considerations or local policies related to placement of transfer students.

EQA reviews all available records to determine a student's placement in accordance to the policy above. EQA reviews the records of all incoming 9th grade students and makes every effort to determine whether they have qualified for promotion to high school in accordance to the requirements above.

III. Promotion for students in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7

Teachers shall, on an individual basis, determine the promotion of each student according to the local Pupil Progression Plan. Particular emphasis shall be placed upon the student's proficiency in grade-appropriate skills.

In the space below, please describe the LEA's policies and procedures that will be used to determine promotion for students in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7.

EQA does not serve students in grades K, 1,2,3,5,6, or 7.

IV. Promotion of students in grade 4

- Each LEA shall identify third and fourth grade students who have not met an acceptable level of performance that would enable them to successfully transition to the next grade level. Fourth grade students who have not met the acceptable level of performance may be retained or promoted, but in either case, shall be provided with an individual academic improvement plan that adheres to the following requirements:
    - The school shall convene an in-person meeting with the student's parent or legal custodian, all teachers of core academic subjects, and specialized support personnel, as needed, to review the student's academic strengths and weaknesses, discuss any other relevant challenges, and formulate an individual academic improvement plan designed to assist the student in achieving proficiency in all core academic subjects. All participants shall sign the documented plan and meet to review progress at least once more before the next administration of the LEAP assessment.
    - The student shall be provided with focused, on-grade level instructional support that is appropriate to the content area(s) in which the student has not yet achieved proficiency. Instruction shall be aligned with state academic content standards.
    - The student shall be identified as requiring an academic improvement plan in the state Student Information System (SIS).
    - The student shall be afforded the opportunity to receive grade-level instruction during the summer.
    - Each LEA shall adopt a written policy pertaining to the development of individual academic improvement plans. This policy shall be included in the Pupil Progression Plan.
    - The Department shall audit a random sampling of students identified as needing an individual academic improvement plan in each local education agency each year.
- The LDOE will provide to each LEA a roster of third and fourth grade students who have scored below the "Basic" achievement level in at least two core academic subjects. Such roster will assist the LEA in making final determinations relative to students' required individual academic plans.
    - The decision to retain a student as a result of his/her failure to achieve the standard on the LEAP shall be made by the LEA in accordance with this pupil progression plan.
    - The individual academic improvement plan shall continue to be in effect until such time as the student achieves a score of "Basic" in each of the core academic subjects that initially led to the development of the student's individual academic plan.

In the space below, please describe any local policies or additional considerations used to determine promotion of students at the end of the fourth grade.

EQA does not serve students in grade 4.

V. Promotion and support of students in grade 8 and high school considerations

a. Promotion of students in grade 8

Regular Grade 8 Promotion

Eighth grade students shall score at least at the "Basic" achievement level in either English language arts or mathematics and "Approaching Basic" in the other subjects in order to be promoted to the ninth grade. Students who do not meet the promotion standard after taking the eighth grade state assessments in the spring, following the completion of summer remediation, may be placed on a high school campus in the transitional ninth grade. For any student who recently completed the eighth grade and is transferring into the LEA from another state or country after the completion of summer remediation, the LEA shall review the student's academic record to determine appropriate placement in ninth grade or transitional ninth grade. Such placement shall occur no later than October 1 of each school year.

Grade 8 Promotion Waivers

- The LEA may waive the state policy for students scoring at the "Unsatisfactory" level in English language arts or mathematics, if the student scores at the "Basic" level in the other, provided that the student has participated in the spring administrations of LEAP and has attended the summer remediation program offered by the LEA.
- An LEA, through its superintendent, may grant a waiver on behalf of individual students who are unable to participate in LEAP testing or unable to attend LEAP summer remediation, including summer remediation required for placement in transitional ninth grade, because of one or more of the following extenuating circumstances as verified through appropriate documentation:
    - *Physical Illness—appropriate documentation must include verification that the student is under the medical care of a licensed physician for illness, injury, or a chronic physical condition that is acute or catastrophic in nature. Documentation must include a statement verifying that the illness, injury, or chronic physical*

condition exists to the extent that the student is unable to participate in remediation.

- *Custody Issues*—certified copies of the court-ordered custody agreements must be submitted to the LEA at least ten school days prior to summer remediation

Transitional 9th Grade

- Any first-time eighth grade student who does not meet the passing standard set forth in BESE Bulletin 1566, §703, and any student not eligible for any waiver pursuant to §707 of the bulletin, after completing summer remediation, may be placed on a high school campus in transitional ninth grade.
- LEAs shall follow the guidelines set forth in §703 to determine, based on evidence of student learning, whether eighth grade students may be promoted to the ninth grade or placed on a high school campus in transitional ninth grade. The percentage of an LEA's eighth graders placed in transitional ninth grade is expected to remain stable over time. In the event that the percentage of an LEA's eighth graders placed in transitional ninth grade exceeds the percentage of eighth graders in that LEA eligible for transitional ninth grade at the conclusion of the prior school year, the local superintendent of that LEA shall provide a written justification to the state superintendent.
- The initial decision to place a student in the transitional ninth grade or to retain a student in the eighth grade shall be made by the school in which the student is enrolled in the eighth grade, in consultation with the student's parents.
- The LEA shall admit transitional ninth grade students, subject to any admissions requirements approved by the school's governing authority or charter authorizer.
- For any student who recently completed the eighth grade from another state or country and is transferring into the LEA after summer remediation has taken place, the LEA shall review the student's academic record to determine appropriate placement in ninth grade or transitional ninth grade. Students placed in the transitional ninth grade shall complete the remediation program offered by the LEA. Such placement shall occur no later than October 1 of each school year.
- After one full year of transitional ninth grade, students shall be included in the ninth grade graduation cohort for high school accountability purposes.
- Students enrolled in transitional ninth grade shall receive appropriate academic supports in any subjects in which they did not score at or above proficient, as determined by BESE. A plan outlining such academic supports shall be included in the student's individual graduation plan (IGP). Progress pursuant to such specified academic supports shall be reviewed at least once throughout the school year in order to determine effectiveness and any needed adjustments.

In the space below, please describe any local policies or additional considerations used to determine promotion of students at the end of the eighth grade.

EQA does not serve 8th graders.

All student entering an EQA school as a Transitional 9th Grader (T9) are required to take Remedial Mathematics and Remedial English courses. Student may also be enrolled in and receive credit for other high school courses while completing their remedial credits.

All EQA students receive individualized counseling and support. In addition to the universal supports of small class sizes, tiered instruction, a comprehensive Individualized Graduation Plan, and tiered supports for behavior and attendance, T9 students complete two additional course: Remedial Math and Remedial English. These courses provide an extra layer of instruction.

T9 students are promoted to 9th grade after their T9 year unless they have earned 6 or more credits in which case they are promoted directly to 10th grade.

b. High school promotion and transition considerations

Instructional Minutes: When awarding credit based on instructional time, LEAs shall provide a minimum of 7,965 instructional minutes for one Carnegie credit, and students shall be in attendance for a minimum of 7,515 minutes. In order to grant one-half Carnegie credit, LEAs shall provide a minimum of 3,983 instructional minutes, and students shall be in attendance for a minimum of 3,758 minutes.

EQA's schools target students who have dropped out of high school, been expelled or who have not been successful academically or behaviorally in a traditional school setting. A majority of students have struggled with or continue to struggle with truancy. Therefore a flexible schedule and multiple opportunities to engage and re-engage are key to student success.

EQA's high school offers a year round program with three semesters. On average, students attend 5 hours per day for 204 days for a total of 61,200 minutes per year. Courses are taught on a semester-long basis with each semester course covering between 7,990 and 8,160 minutes per semester.

Students who have missed 10 or more days in Session 1 or 2, or 5 or more days for Session 3, for non-excused reasons, may not be eligible to earn Carnegie units for the courses missed.

The school's SBLC meets weekly to review student progress and grades. For students in danger of losing credit due to absence, the SBLC reviews each student's situation, investigate whether the student's absences were legitimate, whether the student has completed appropriate make up work and/or alternative time and/or alternative assignments to show that the student has mastered the appropriate material and concepts. The SBLC uses this investigation to determine whether or not the student is eligible for the Carnegie unit in question.

Individual Graduation Planning: By the end of the eighth grade, every student (with the assistance of his parent or other legal custodian and school guidance personnel, counselor) or IEP team (when applicable) shall begin to develop an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP). An IGP guides the next academic year's coursework, assisting students in exploring educational and career possibilities and in making appropriate secondary and postsecondary education decisions as part of an overall career/postsecondary plan.

Financial Aid Planning: Louisiana requires public school students graduating spring 2018 and beyond to take one of the following steps as part of their Individual Graduation Plan:

1. **Complete the FAFSA**; or
2. **Complete the Louisiana TOPS form**; or
3. Certify a waiver in writing to the LEA (sample: **non-participation LEA form**/**Letter**); or
4. Receive a waiver through the district hardship waiver process.

Early Graduation: Each LEA shall develop an early graduation program allowing students to accelerate their academic progress, complete all state graduation requirements, and receive a high school diploma in less than four years.

- The early graduation program may include distance education (§2326), dual enrollment (§2327), and Carnegie credit and credit flexibility (§2314).
- LEAs shall not have any policies or requirements that would prevent students from graduating in less than four years.

In the space below, please describe any local policies or additional considerations used to determine the promotion of students in Grades 9 and above and to support their attainment of a high school diploma.

The Principal or designee will review a transferring student's transcripts to determine grade placement and Carnegie units. A transcript, final report card, or other official documentation of credits from the former school must be provided. EQA cannot assess units based on incomplete records, student or family memory, or exam scores.

All grade placement decisions beyond T9 & 9th grade are based on Carnegie unit attainment.

- 9th grade = 0-5 credits
- 10th grade = 6-11 credits
- 11th grade = 12-17 credits
- 12th grade = 18+ credits

Students are not promoted based on age, years in high school, or placement exams. Similarly, students do not need to complete a school year to pass to the next grade. Grade level adjustments are made in August, January, June each year.

The one exception is Special Education students who have been identified to be on a LAA1 Diploma track. These students are placed and promoted based on years in high school and attendance, not Carnegie Unit attainment.

A student transferring into EQA from school outside of the United States of America will be allowed credit for the work completed in the former school should the student's records support this decision. A transcript, report card or other appropriate documentation showing a student's record of courses completed is used to justify grade placement and credit for the work completed at the former school. Upon review of documentation, the Principal or designee will determine all courses which align with courses offered at EQA and determine all courses which align with courses offered under the Louisiana Graduation Plan.

VI. Support for students

School year support

- The individual academic plan for each student identified in §701 of BESE Bulletin 1566 will outline the responsibilities of each party for students who have failed to achieve the standards by the end of fourth grade.
- The LEA will design and implement additional instructional strategies to move the students to grade-level proficiency by providing at least two of the following, which will be documented in the individual academic improvement plan:

- The student is placed in the classroom of a teacher who has been rated "Highly Effective" pursuant to his/her most recent evaluation or has achieved a value-added rating of "Highly Effective" pursuant to his/her most recent evaluation, or has documented evidence derived from state summative assessments of improving the academic performance of students having individual academic improvement plans in the past.
- The student completes summer remediation.
- Additional instructional time is provided during or outside of the school day to expose the student to high-quality instruction. This will not result in a student being removed from English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies courses.
- The student is provided access to on grade-level instruction that is aligned to Louisiana State Standards, which may include some below grade-level content and support needed to address the student's identified weaknesses.

- Remediation programs used throughout the school day and school year will not account for more than 35 percent of total instructional minutes.

The LEA will offer, at no cost, extended, on-grade level instruction through summer remediation to students who did not take the spring LEAP tests or who failed to meet the standard set forth in §701 and §703 of BESE Bulletin 1566. The LEA will provide transportation to and from the assigned remediation summer site(s) from, at a minimum, a common pick-up point.

Student with disabilities attending summer remediation will receive special supports as needed.

Summer remediation

Pursuant to state law (R.S. 17:24.4), LEAs shall continue to offer summer remediation to any student not meeting promotion standards as determined by BESE. Summer remediation programs will meet all of the following requirements:

- Uses curriculum determined by the Louisiana Department of Education to fully align to Louisiana State Standards (Bulletin 141 – *Louisiana Standards for English Language Arts*, Bulletin 142 – *Louisiana Standards for Mathematics*, Bulletin 1962 – *Louisiana Science Content Standards*, and Bulletin 1964 – *Louisiana Social Studies Content Standards*).
- Utilizes teachers rated "Highly Effective" pursuant to the teacher's most recent evaluation or have achieved a value-added rating of "Highly Effective" on the most recent evaluation.
- Limits remedial (below grade-level) instruction to only necessary and focused skills as identified from top-quality assessments and does not account for more than 35 percent of the total summer remediation instructional time.

VII. Promotion and placement of certain student populations

Students with disabilities

- Students with disabilities attending summer remediation shall receive special supports as needed.
- IEP teams shall determine promotion to the next grade level for a student with a disability who fails to meet state or local established performance standards for the purposes of promotion. Such determination shall be made only if, in the school year immediately prior to each grade level in which the student would otherwise be required to demonstrate certain proficiency levels in order to advance to the next grade level, the student has not otherwise met the local requirements for promotion or has not scored at or above the basic achievement level on the English language arts or mathematics components of the required state assessment and at or above the approaching basic achievement level on the other (Bulletin 1530 §403).

English learners

- The requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are as follows:
  - Establish procedures to identify language minority students.
  - Establish procedures to determine if language minority students are Limited English Proficient.
  - Establish procedures for age-appropriate placement and determine the specialized language services or program the district will use to address the linguistic and cultural needs of the Limited English Proficient student.
- Limited English Proficient (LEP) students shall participate in the statewide assessments pursuant to Bulletin 118. Increasing the expectations for the academic content that students must master in grades K-12 requires a parallel increase in expectations for English language acquisition.
  - Establish procedures to monitor former Limited English Proficient students for two years.
  - Ensure that no LEP student shall be retained solely because of limited English proficiency.

In the space below, please describe any local policies or additional considerations related to the promotion and placement of students with disabilities, English learners, or other student populations.

The RtI Coordinator/Academic Dean/Principal work with the classroom teacher and the ELL teacher(s) and Special Education teachers to design the program of instruction that meets the students' needs and incorporates the standards from Louisiana's English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP) and IEPs as appropriate. The ELL teacher(s) and Special Education teachers monitor students' progress and report that progress to the classroom teacher, RtI Coordinator, and Principal. Additionally, the team reviews students' progress on their weekly assessments in their core subjects. The support team meets at the end of each Cycle, approximately every 6-7 weeks, to review progress and adjust curriculum and interventions as needed.

VIII. Alternative education placements

Alternative schools/programs serve students who are not succeeding in the traditional educational setting and offer a venue that aids in preventing these students from dropping out of school. Alternative schools/programs provide educational and other services to students who have a variety of behavioral and other needs that cannot be adequately met in a traditional school setting. (Refer to Bulletin 741, §2903 and Bulletin 131)

In the space below, please describe the LEA's policies for placement of students in an alternative program or school, including any promotion policies that may differ from what was provided above.

All EQA schools are alternative education placements for students who have struggled in a traditional environment.

IX. Due process related to student placement and promotion

In the space below, please describe the LEA's due process procedures related to student placement for regular education students, students with disabilities having an Individualized Education Program plan, and students having an Individual Accommodation/Section 504 plan.

Requests for changes or reconsiderations of decisions relative to a student's placement can be made by a parent or legal guardian. The principal will consider the request or refer the request to the SBLC when appropriate. The decision shall be communicated to the parent(s) within three school weeks of the request. The parents may appeal that decision to the Board of Directors as per Educators for Quality Alternative's complaint process.

Placement requests must be submitted in writing and contain evidence to be considered.

In the case of students with disabilities, the due process must be consistent with those described in Bulletin 1508. Due process procedures for qualified students must be consistent with those defined in Bulletin 1706.

X. Additional LEA policies related to student placement and promotion

In the space below, please describe any additional LEA policies related to student placement and promotion that have not been addressed in other sections of this document.

As described below, EQA utilizes a variety of research-based methods to ensure student mastery and credit acquisition is accelerated as appropriate for the school's demographic need and mission.

Attendance Interventions & Supports EQA targets students who have dropped out and are chronically truant. Therefore EQA provides intensive attendance interventions and supports including, but not limited to, Individualized Attendance Plans, Advisory programming, homevisits, Homebound programming, online courses, and wireless lap top lending program.

Students who have missed 10 or more days in Session 1 or 2, or 5 or more days for Session 3, for non-excused reasons, may not be eligible to earn Carnegie units for the courses missed. However, through the supports described above, they often have the opportunity to get back on track, cover the appropriate material, and demonstrate mastery of the learning targets. In these cases the SBLC may elect to award the Carnegie unit.

Personalized Learning Lab Students have the opportunity to earn credits through Edgenuity, Aleks, Compass, and other nationally recognized online learning programs. Students may make up credits that they previously failed in a classroom instruction setting or may take elective or core courses that they are missing. Students work at their own pace and are awarded the credit upon passage of course modules and exams, regardless of the number of minutes it takes them to do so. Since online learning is highly effective for some students and not for others, students are hand scheduled into such courses and are carefully monitored to ensure they are making adequate progress on the program.

Multi-Disciplinary Seminar Courses the NET offers interdisciplinary courses through which students can earn multiple credits while participating in mainly project based learning. Every student participates in a seminar course (called "Advisory") through which they gain their elective and core credits. Through a combination of direct instruction, inquiry based learning and individualized project development and execution, students explore the content and develop and practice the skills associated with each course. Students' progress in each subject is closely tracked to ensure that they master the standards necessary to earn the associated Carnegie Units. In these cases, students earn two credits within a single time block. Course examples include:

- Students gained Carnegie units for Civics and English through an interdisciplinary study on the US Constitution. Students covered content standards from both subject areas and then developed presentations on a component of the Constitution that has personal significance to them. Presentations ranged in type, but all connected the historical movement or moment to current issues in American government and politics.
- Students in an Environmental Science and Speech course completed an intensive summer semester seminar in which they studied the Louisiana wetlands through classroom-based and field-based instruction. Students spend two to three days a week in the field visiting various environments, fishing, and meeting with individuals and groups involved in wetland restoration, protection and commerce. They demonstrated mastery by completing an oral exam and writing and presenting a Field Guide to Louisiana wetlands.

Mastery is assessed through written and oral exams, for EOC/LEAP2025 courses through the EOC/LEAP2025 test and through the school's rigorous Exhibitions. Exhibitions are held each Cycle and require students to complete:

- A product—usually a research paper or analytical essay
- A two part reflection on the course's Essential Question and on their progress toward their academic, behavioral, graduation, and post-graduation goals
- A formal presentation

Blended Learning/Interventions Students use research based RtI and skill building programs such as Achieve 3000 and Aleks to complete credits in Remedial English, Reading, Remedial Math and Math Essentials. Courses are online which allow for students to master the content at their own pace.

Internship Program Students at the NET participate in internships in the career field of their choice. Internships are set up and monitored by the Internship Coordinator and each student has a professional mentor at the job site. Coordinator works with each student and his/her mentor to connect the student's work at the internship site with his or her mastery of academic standards from the courses in which the students is currently enrolled. Other internship credits are awarded through providers through the LDOE's Supplemental Course program.

Dual Enrollment Students have the opportunity to earn both high school and college credits through Delgado Community College and Bard Early College program. Credits are awarded in accordance to the program specifics.

XI. LEA assurances and submission information

Assurance is hereby made to the Louisiana Department of Education that this **Educators for Quality Alternatives** 2017-2018 Pupil Progression Plan has been developed in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. If any local policy outlined in this plan conflicts with federal or state laws or regulations, I understand that federal and state laws and regulations shall supersede the local policy.

Date approved by local school board or governing authority: 1/23/2018

Superintendent

Board President