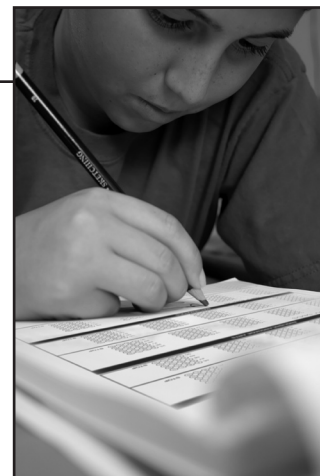


7th Grade Promotion Requirements for 2009–10

Gwinnett schools measure student learning of the school system's curriculum—the Academic Knowledge and Skills or AKS—in a number of ways. Gwinnett measures students' learning in the areas of reading, English/language arts, mathematics, and science using the state's Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT). In Gwinnett, the CRCT is a Gateway test for promotion. To earn promotion to 8th grade, Gwinnett students must meet on-grade-level expectations on these portions of the CRCT, and earn passing grades in social studies. As the parent of a 7th grader, you may have questions about these promotion requirements. Here are answers to some frequently asked questions.



How is promotion determined for GCPS 7th graders?

- **7th grade Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT):** Gwinnett's 7th grade students must score in the "Level 2— Meets Standards" range or higher on the reading, English/language arts, mathematics, and science subtests.
- **Grades in social studies** will determine promotion in that content area. While GCPS 7th graders take the CRCT social studies subtest, a passing score on this subtest is not a promotion requirement for 2009–10.
- Promotion of **special education students** is based on each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- **Students in the English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program** may not be required to pass the CRCT, based on the recommendation of their Test Participation Committee.

Why does Gwinnett use the CRCT for promotion?

Results from the CRCT help teachers to identify each student's academic strengths and weaknesses, and determine readiness for the next grade level. While 7th grade results are used for promotion, they also give 8th grade teachers a snapshot of students' abilities and help teachers plan instruction to best meet each child's specific academic needs.

All 7th graders take the CRCT, a state-required test that measures student achievement compared to state standards. Georgia law requires that all students in grades 1–8 take their grade-level CRCT, or the state's alternative assessment, in the subject areas of reading, English/language arts, and mathematics. Students in grades 3–8 also are assessed in science and social studies. The CRCT

uses multiple-choice questions to measure how well students have learned the skills and knowledge included in the state's curriculum, called the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The new, more rigorous GPS were phased in over time in all subject areas and grade levels. The phase-in is complete for middle school grades. You can learn more about the CRCT from the Georgia Department of Education. Go to http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_testing.aspx and select "CRCT." Check out sample questions in the Online Assessment System at www.georgiaaoas.org, using the generic password and login of Grade7.

How are 7th graders prepared for the CRCT?

Gwinnett's AKS curriculum includes all of the state curriculum, so the teaching and learning that goes on in Gwinnett's 7th grade classrooms every day prepares students for academic success and to pass the CRCT. In addition, classwork, homework, quizzes, and tests throughout the school year also prepare students for the assessment. Of course, regular school attendance and participation in the classroom is critical to a student's academic success as well.

When will students take the CRCT? How much time do they have to take it?

Gwinnett 7th graders will take the state's CRCT April 19–23 and 26. Each of the subtests is given on a different day: reading (April 19), English/language arts (April 20), mathematics (April 21), and science (April 22). The 7th grade CRCT also covers social studies (April 23); however, a passing score on this subtest is not a promotion requirement for 2009–10. Students will have 90–140 minutes to finish each day's subtest, including a short break between sections.

What if a student does not “pass” the CRCT subtests required for promotion to 8th grade?

Most students *will* meet or exceed expectations on the CRCT. (In May, the school will notify parents if their child did not pass the required subtests.) For Gwinnett 7th graders who do not meet grade-level expectations on the CRCT subtests, extra help is available to prepare them for the retest.

- Gwinnett’s free academic summer school is recommended for students who were unsuccessful on any CRCT subtest. Some students already may have been recommended for summer school, based on grades.
- Students are required to take and pass a GCPS retest only in the subject(s) they failed.
- A student who cannot attend summer school still may take GCPS’ content-area retest at the end of summer school. However, a student is more likely to pass if he or she receives extra help through targeted summer school classes.
- A student who has not passed after the retest will not be promoted to 8th grade. Instead, the student will receive extra help the next year through a transition program. This program follows system guidelines, but specifics vary from school to school. That way, teachers can tailor a plan to the academic needs of each student in the program. The goal of the transition program is to help the student catch up academically with his or her classmates.

If Gwinnett 7th graders have to pass these tests to be promoted, are grades still important?

Yes, grades are important! They are a good indicator during the year of how well a student is learning the AKS, and an early warning that a child may need extra help. *(See box to the right to see how grades affect the review procedure.)*

Know that passing scores on the CRCT reinforce that your child has successfully demonstrated the knowledge and skills to be promoted to the 8th grade.

Review Procedure**What happens if a student has earned good grades all year, but unexpectedly fails one or more subtests on the CRCT?*****For CRCT subtests in reading, English/language arts, and math...***

If a 7th grader earns a semester average of “C” or better on progress reports during the year in the subject areas tested (language arts and math), but unexpectedly fails, an automatic “Review Procedure” is launched. (First semester grades are the average of progress report grades for the 1st and 2nd nine weeks. Second semester grades are the average for the 3rd and 4th nine weeks.) An impartial committee reviews the student’s grades and other information provided by teachers and parents. The committee then recommends to the Board of Education one of the following options:

- waive passage of the CRCT for this student;
- waive passage of the test, but recommend summer school; or
- require passing the content-area retest before being promoted to 8th grade.

For the CRCT science subtest...

If a 7th grader earns a semester average of “C” or better during the year in science, but fails the CRCT science subtest, then passage of the CRCT is waived for that subject. However, summer school may be recommended.

If you have other questions about the 7th grade promotion requirements, ask your student’s teacher or principal.

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