

Why T9 is Important for Students:

Prior to the 2014-15 school year, nearly 40% of Louisiana students retained in the 8th grade never entered high school. In response, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) developed Transitional 9th Grade (T9) to allow students who would have been retained in 8th grade to move to a high school campus and receive targeted academic remediation. By identifying and serving T9 students, middle and high schools can drastically decrease drop-out rates and dramatically improve life outcomes for Louisiana's most vulnerable students.

A Student's Experience Between 8th and 9th Grade

To understand the benefits of Transitional 9th grade, schools and families must first understand these basic facts about T9:

- 1) Only students who fail the ELA and/or math portion of the LEAP are eligible for placement into Transitional 9th grade. In order to be placed in T9, these students must then complete post-LEAP remediation in the non-proficient subject area(s).
- 2) The sending middle school is responsible for promoting students to Transitional 9th grade. All requirements for promotion must be outlined in the middle school's Pupil Progression Plan.
- 3) Students promoted to T9 take high school courses and have the same diploma options as all other high school students. T9 students are placed on a five-year timeline for graduation from high school, but can still graduate in four years.
- 4) High schools provide each T9 student with targeted academic remediation in the subject area(s) that the student did not pass on the LEAP, as well as additional counseling supports.
- 5) After completing their Transitional 9th grade year, students will automatically be promoted to 9th grade. However, students who earn enough high school credits can be promoted directly to 10th grade.

Responsibilities of High Schools:

Bulletin 1566 requires high schools to provide all T9 students with remediation in any subjects in which they did not score at or above proficient on the LEAP. Schools are also required to provide T9 students with dropout prevention and mentoring services based on proven strategies to retain and graduate at-risk students. For specific action items that must be completed by high schools, see the table on the following page.

High School Action Items	School Personnel	Timeline
Design flexible curricula that can be adapted to meet the needs of individual T9 students and train relevant teachers on the curricula	Academic leaders, teachers, counselors	June – August of preceding summer
Communicate in writing with families of incoming T9 students about how T9 is different from traditional 9 th grade, including the five-year timeline for graduation, what the academic program will be, and what supports students can expect to receive to ensure successful promotion to 9 th grade	School leaders, counselors	August – September of initial semester
Create an ongoing, individualized, and custom counseling structure and support team to assist each individual T9 student	Counselors, teachers, support team members	August – September, follow up quarterly
Using the high school planning guide and T9 guidance document , work with T9 students and families to develop Individual Graduation Plans	Counselors, support team members	Review progress at the end of each quarter

How T9 Affects School Accountability:

Transitional 9th Grade can have a positive impact on School Performance Scores for both middle and high schools.

- Credit accumulation for School Performance Scores only applies to a student's T9 year, not their traditional 9th grade year. Credits earned by T9 students will be included in the sending middle school's dropout/credit accumulation index (DCAI).
- T9 students are not included in a school's graduation cohort until their second year of high school, meaning high schools can receive full credit in their SPS for graduating a T9 student in five years.
- Only proficient EOC scores from T9 students count toward a high school's SPS. If a T9 student does not earn a "Good" or "Excellent" on an EOC exam, that score does not impact a school's SPS.