

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION		
PROMOTION AND RETENTION, GRADING, AND ASSESSMENT		4603
ADOPTED: July 28, 2017	REVISED: April 9, 2020	MONITORING: Review: Annually

Each authorized charter school shall adopt a promotion and retention policy in accordance with state laws and policies.

Promotion.¹ For schools serving students in grades kindergarten through eight (K-8):

The school leader or his/her designee shall promote students to the next grade level based on the successful completion of required academic work and on the satisfactory progress in each of the relevant academic areas. However, no student enrolled in the third (3rd) grade shall be promoted unless the student has shown a basic understanding of the curriculum and the ability to perform the skills required in the subject of reading as demonstrated by the student's grades or standardized test results. This requirement shall not apply to students who are participating in a governing board-approved, research-based intervention prior to the beginning of the next school year or to students who have an individualized education program (IEP). Students who have difficulty in achieving the requirements for promotion may be considered for retention. Factors used to identify students who may be considered for retention shall, at minimum, include:

- (1) The student's ability to perform at the current grade level;
- (2) The results of local or state assessments, screening, or monitoring tools, if applicable;
- (3) The overall academic achievement of the student;
- (4) The student's chance for success with more difficult material if promoted to the next grade;
- (5) Attendance; and
- (6) Social and emotional maturity.

Schools shall identify students who demonstrate difficulty in achieving the requirements for promotion to the next grade level and therefore may be considered for retention by February 1. However, a student may be identified for retention after February 1 if the delay is due to:

- (1) Date of enrollment; or
- (2) Additional information acquired after results of local assessment, screening, or monitoring are released.

When a student is considered for retention, the student's parent/guardian shall be notified within fifteen (15) days, and an individualized promotion plan shall be developed to help the student avoid retention. This plan shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian and the school shall offer to hold a parent-teacher conference to discuss the promotion plan. A student who demonstrates sufficient progress with the strategies included in his or her promotion plan during the school year shall be promoted to the next grade level and shall be enrolled in a summer reading or learning program, if available. For school year 2019-20, schools shall consider progress on an individualized

promotion plan made prior to school closures related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Schools should consider the impact of school closure on factors being considered for retention when making all final decisions regarding retention.

The school's policy shall include procedures governing how decisions on retention will be made after the student begins work on his/her individualized promotion plan.

If a student has not demonstrated sufficient progress on his or her promotion plan by the end of the school year to be promoted to the next grade level, the student shall be enrolled in a summer reading or learning program, if available. If a student is enrolled in a summer program, a decision for retention may be made after completion of a summer program but shall be made and communicated to the student's parent or guardian at least ten (10) days prior to the start of the next school year. If a student is not enrolled in a summer program, a decision for retention shall be made and communicated to the student's parent or guardian at least thirty (30) days prior to the start of the next school year. Parents and guardians shall also be notified of their right to appeal a retention decision pursuant to the school's policy.

K – 3 Reading Notification

If it is determined through a student's overall performance or a state or local assessment that a student in grades kindergarten through three (K-3) is not meeting grade-level standards in reading, the student's parent(s)/guardians(s) shall be notified within fifteen (15) calendar days of such determination.

Retention.² For schools serving students in grades kindergarten through eight (K-8):

A student may be retained when, in the judgment of the student's teacher and/or the student's IEP team, such retention is in the best interest of the student. However, a student shall not be retained more than once in any grade and retention shall not be used without an academic remediation plan with strategies and enhancements different from the previous year or used as a punitive or disciplinary measure or based solely on a student's social and emotional maturity. Additionally, retention of English Learner (EL) students shall not be based solely on English language proficiency and shall be in compliance with Policy 4207 – English Learners.³ In school year 2019-20, a student shall not be retained if the factors for retentions are directly related to school closure related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Retention decisions shall be based upon a student's progress on the individualized promotion plan prior to school closures due to COVID-19. Any positive progress made by a student via distance learning opportunities during school closures related to COVID-19 may be considered in the retention decision.

If a student is retained, the school leader or his/her designee shall develop an individualized academic remediation plan prior to the start of the next school year. A copy of the plan shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian within ten (10) days of its development. This plan shall include at least one (1) of the following strategies:

- (1) Adjustment to the current instructional strategies or materials;
- (2) Additional instructional time;
- (3) Individual tutoring outside of school hours;

- (4) Modification to the student's classroom assignment to ensure the student receives instruction from a highly effective teacher; or
- (5) Attendance or truancy interventions.

The school's policy shall include procedures to ensure appropriate record keeping and proper monitoring of students who are retained, including reporting progress to parents at least three (3) times during the school year of retention.

Grading. Each school shall adopt a grading policy in accordance with state laws and policies. For the purposes of application for postsecondary financial assistance administered by the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, schools shall report the grades for students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) using the uniform grading system contained in State Board Policy 3.301. Schools electing to offer honors courses and early postsecondary opportunities shall provide for additional weighting for these courses, as outlined in the uniform grading system. These policies shall be communicated annually to students and parents.⁴

Schools shall not remove additional weighting for students who were unable to participate in the culminating exam in the spring semester of 2020 due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Weighting State Assessment Scores.⁵ TNReady and EOC scores shall be included in students' final grades as follows:

- (1) 2018-2019 School Year and Thereafter: The school shall determine the percentage of a student's final grade that is comprised of the student's scores on TNReady or EOC assessments as follows:
 - a. Grades three through eight (3-8): A student's score on TNReady or EOC assessments shall comprise no less than ten percent (10%) and no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the student's final grade in mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies. Each year, the school shall notify the State Board of the percentage for which the state assessment shall count toward a student's final grade.
 - b. Grades nine through twelve (9-12): A student's score on TNReady or EOC assessments shall comprise no less than fifteen percent (15%) and no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the student's final grade. Each year, the school shall notify the State Board of the percentage for which the state assessment shall count toward a student's final grade.

If state assessment results are not received by the State Board at least five (5) instructional days before the end of the course, the school may choose not to include the state assessment score in the student's final grade calculation.

Each school shall adopt a policy that outlines the methodology for including EOC/TNReady scores in a student's final grade calculation and submit that policy to the State Board annually.

In school year 2019-20 TNReady and EOC assessments are optional due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Therefore, student scores on TNReady or EOC assessments are not a requirement for student's final grade for the 2019-20 school year.

Testing Information and Parental Consent.⁶ No later than July 31st of each year, the State Board and each school shall publish on their website information related to state and district mandated tests that will be administered during the school year. Each school shall report this information to the State Board no later than May 1st of each year. The information shall include:

- (1) The name of the test;
- (2) The purpose and use of the test;
- (3) The grade or class in which the test will be administered;
- (4) The tentative date or dates that the test will be administered;
- (5) The time and manner in which parents and students will be notified of the results of the test;
- (6) How parents can access the questions and answers on their student's state-required tests; and
- (7) If a board mandated test, how the test complements and enhances student instruction and learning and how it serves a purpose distinct from state-required tests.

Testing information shall also be placed in student handbooks or other school publications that are provided to parents on an annual basis.

Legal References:

¹ State Board Policy 3.300

² State Board Policy 3.300

³ [TDOE Retention Guidelines for English Learner Students](#)

⁴ TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.05(3)(b);

TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.05(3)(c);

State Board Policy 3.301

⁵ T.C.A. § 49-1-617; Public Acts of 2017, Chapter No. 192; TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.06(1)(c)(2)

⁶ T.C.A. § 49-6-6007; State Board Policy 2.103

Cross References:

Attendance 6200

Credit Recovery 4210