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| TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION | |
| PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY | 3.300 |

Policy Sections

- 1. Promotion**
- 2. Retention**

This policy outlines the promotion and retention guidelines for students in grades kindergarten through eight (K-8). Each Local Education Agency (LEA) shall adopt a local promotion and retention policy in compliance with this policy.

1. Promotion

- a. The academic program implemented in each school shall be designed to help students attain and demonstrate learning proficiency and help students meet the requirements for promotion to the next grade.
- b. Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on the successful completion of required academic work and/or a demonstration of satisfactory progress in each of the relevant academic areas.
- c. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3106, a local board of education may submit to the State Board for approval a policy for determining the competency of students who have completed kindergarten to advance directly to grade two (2).
- d. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3115, a student in the third (3rd) grade shall not be promoted to the next grade level 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. However, such student may be promoted if the student participates in an LEA-approved, research-based intervention prior to the beginning of the next school year.
- e. 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.
- f. Factors used to identify students who may be considered for retention shall, at a minimum, include:
 - i. The student's ability to perform at the current grade level;
 - ii. The results of local or state assessments, if applicable;
 - iii. The overall academic achievement of the student;
 - iv. The student's chance for success with more difficult material if promoted to the next grade;

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- v. Attendance; and
 - vi. Social and emotional maturity.
- g. If a student is considered for retention, the school shall notify the student's parent or guardian within fifteen (15) days of identification and develop an individualized promotion plan to help the student avoid retention. All promotion plans shall include evidence-based promotion strategies and shall be tailored to the student's learning needs. Each promotion plan shall also include expectations and measurements that can be used to verify that a student has made sufficient progress to be promoted to the next grade level. Evidence-based promotion strategies may include:
- i. Special education services for students who qualify based on state and federal guidelines;
 - ii. Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) to address deficits in student learning;
 - iii. Modification and personalization of curriculum and instruction;
 - iv. Extended learning time beyond the regular school day or school week;
 - v. Individual or small group tutoring; or
 - vi. Other personalized programming to augment the individual student's classroom learning and instructional experiences.
- h. A copy of a student's promotion plan shall be provided to his or her parent or legal guardian and the school shall offer to hold a parent-teacher conference to discuss the promotion plan.
- i. 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.
- j. If a student is not making progress on his or her promotion plan, the promotion strategies shall be modified to support the student in the goal of promotion to the next grade level.
- k. 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. LEAs shall make every effort to ensure summer reading or learning programs are accessible to all students. 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

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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 local board policy.

2. Retention

- a. Retention shall be considered only when it is in the best interest of the student. Retention decisions affecting a student receiving special education services shall be made by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and in accordance with the provisions of the IEP.
- b. If a retention decision has been made, the school shall develop an individualized academic remediation plan for the retained student prior to the start of the next school year. The academic remediation plan shall be designed to help the retained student attain and demonstrate learning proficiency and shall include at least one (1) of the following strategies:
 - i. Adjustment to the current instructional strategies or materials;
 - ii. Additional instructional time;
 - iii. Individual tutoring outside of school hours;
 - iv. Modification to the student's classroom assignment to ensure the student receives instruction from a highly effective teacher; or
 - v. Attendance or truancy interventions.
- c. A copy of the academic remediation plan shall be provided to the student's parent or guardian within ten (10) days of development of such plan.
- d. A student shall not be retained more than once in any grade.
- e. Retention shall **not**:
 - i. Be used without an academic remediation plan that includes strategies and enhancements that are different from the previous year;
 - ii. Be used as a punitive or disciplinary measure;
 - iii. Be based solely on English language proficiency; or
 - iv. Be based solely on a student's social and emotional maturity.
- f. The progress of a retained student shall be closely monitored during the school year of retention.
- g. The Director of Schools shall keep an annual record of each student who is retained.