

IHE-R Promotion and Retention

6/14/17

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

The Cobb County School District (District) will, at a minimum, comply with all applicable authority and state requirements regarding the academic promotion, placement, and retention of students. The regulations of this policy apply to students in grades k-12 to help assure that basic promotion, placement, and retention criteria will be consistently addressed.

RULE:**A. DEFINITIONS:****1. Accelerated Instruction:**

Challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading and/or mathematics. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, to meet grade-level standards in the shortest time possible.

2. Additional Instruction:

Academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before or after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer/inter-session instruction.

3. Differentiated Instruction:

Instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

4. Early Intervention Program (EIP):

A program designed to support students in need of additional support in both reading and mathematics.

5. Grade Level:

Standard of performance, as defined by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, on the appropriate state-adopted assessments.

6. Placement:

The assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

7. Placement Committee:

The committee established by the principal or designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not achieve proficiency on the appropriate state-adopted assessments.

8. Promotion:

The assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

9. Response to Intervention (RtI):

A practice of academic and/or behavioral interventions designed to provide early, effective assistance to underperforming students. Researched-based interventions are implemented, and frequent progress monitoring is conducted to assess student response and progress. The student's response is used as feedback to more accurately target interventions. When students do not make progress, increasingly more individualized interventions are introduced.

10. Retention:

The re-assignment of a student to his/her current grade level during the next school year.

B. PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR KINDERGARTEN:

1. State rules and regulations, as well as District requirements, will be followed regarding assessment procedures and criteria used to determine the readiness of a kindergarten student for first grade. Multiple, state approved, sources of data will be used to identify each student's strengths and needs, determine the appropriate placement for each student, and to assist with the design of appropriate instructional programs and teaching methods.
2. Georgia Board of Education and District regulations will be followed when assessing the readiness of students who are not enrolled in the District's kindergarten programs but who wish to enroll in one of the District's first grade programs. Good cause exemptions may be considered, however, social-emotional or physical development should not be used as the sole criteria for retention or placement.
3. All or part of the following indicators shall be considered for kindergarten promotion:
 - a. Readiness level as established by the results of the state assessment;
 - b. Readiness level as indicated on the student report card; and
 - c. Teacher recommendation for promotion.
4. Placement decisions will be made on an individual basis. If a student is retained in kindergarten, written documentation of evidence supporting the decision will be filed in the student's permanent record.
5. Every effort should be made to consult with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) about the placement; however, the principal will have the final authority for placement decisions. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the final placement decision.
6. Students who spend a second year in kindergarten will be provided accelerated, differentiated and/or additional instruction. No student will be retained in kindergarten more than once.
7. In general, no student should be retained without being a part of an intervention process, which may include: identification, assessment, analysis of results, intervention strategies, parental notification and progress monitoring.

C. DISTRICT PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 1 through 8:

1. Promotion:

All or part of the following indicators shall be considered:

a. Grades 1, 2, and 4:

- (1) Readiness level as established by the results of the appropriate state-adopted assessment in the areas of reading and/or mathematics.
- (2) Readiness level as indicated on the student report card.
- (3) Teacher recommendation for promotion.

b. Grades 3 and 5:

- (1) Readiness level as established by the results of the appropriate state-adopted assessment in the areas of reading and/or mathematics.
- (2) Readiness level as indicated on the student report card.
- (3) Teacher recommendation for promotion.
- (4) Clear demonstration of grade level competency in mathematics and reading. (see Section E below)

c. Grades 6 through 8:

In order to earn promotion to the next grade level, the student must meet all of the following criteria:

- (1) Pass math, English/language arts and one additional core subject for the year or demonstrate minimum proficiency on the appropriate state-adopted assessment in math, English/language arts and one additional core subject.
- (2) Earn a combined overall passing average for all scheduled courses for the year; and
- (3) Demonstrate an appropriate level of reading comprehension as measured by Lexile score.

2. **Placement/Retention:**

- a. The principal or designee shall implement a process to:
 - (1) Determine whether each student shall be retained or placed based on a review of the overall academic achievement and any reasons for suggesting a good cause exemption. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Standardized test scores
 - (b) Learning ability of student;
 - (c) Previous interventions (including RtI);
 - (d) Previous retentions;
 - (e) Age and maturity of student;
 - (f) Attendance;
 - (g) Teacher recommendation.
 - (2) Develop/revise an accelerated, differentiated, and/or additional instructional plan for each student who does not earn promotion;
- b. Retention of students should be made at the lowest level.
- c. The principal or designee shall annually notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) that promotion, placement, or retention of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the student's academic achievement.
- d. Placement decisions will be made on an individual basis. If a student is retained, written documentation of evidence supporting the decision will be filed in the student's permanent record.
- e. If placement or retention is recommended, the principal or designee will consult with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). The principal will have the final authority regarding placement and retention decisions. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the final decision.
- f. In general, no student should be retained without being a part of an intervention process, which may include: identification, assessment, analysis of results, intervention strategies, parental notification and progress monitoring.

3. **Retention Limitations:**

- No student will be retained more than once in each of the following grade categories:
- Grades 1 or 2
 - Grade 4
 - Grades 6 or 7

D. RETENTION OF A STUDENT WHO HAS EARNED PROMOTION IN GRADES 6-8:

In order for a student who has earned promotion in grades 6-8 to be retained, written documentation shall be maintained in the student's permanent record and shall include the following information:

- 1. A parent/guardian written statement outlining the reasons for requesting the retention and/or a school-initiated written request with accompanying written approval of the request by the parent/guardian;
- 2. Statement from two professional sources from outside the student's school justifying the retention for educational reasons; and
- 3. Written approval of the retention request and justification of the retention for educational reasons by the principal, the Superintendent and two teachers, other than an athletic coach, who have taught the student.

E. STUDENT SUPPORT, TESTING AND NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 3, 5, AND 7:

1. **Identification:**

Any third, fifth or seventh grade student that scores below grade level in mathematics and/or reading, as measured multiple assessments (e.g. nationally normed standardized assessments, DRA, classroom assessments, etc.) administered each fall, will be identified as needing specific interventions to improve the student's performance.

2. **Interventions:**

An intervention process will be put in place for support of students identified below grade level in mathematics and/or reading. This process includes identification, assessment, analysis of results, intervention strategies, parental notifications, and progress monitoring.

If the student's math and/or reading level shows improvement, the strategies may stay the same, continue or discontinue. If the student is not responding more intensive strategies for improvement may be applied.

Interventions may include, at the discretion of the local school:

- a. Additional instruction;
- b. Differentiated instruction; and/or
- c. Early Intervention Program (EIP).

3. **Notification to Parents:**

- a. Reasonable efforts should be made to keep parents informed and active in their child's education. When the student is identified as performing below grade level, parents/guardians should be notified.
- b. Parents/guardians should also be notified that if these interventions do not yield performance that clearly demonstrates that the student has made enough progress to be considered on grade level by the end of the school year, the student may be retained.

F. HIGH SCHOOL PROMOTION INDICATORS:

Students shall be on track to advance with the graduating class they enter as a ninth grader (or under which they are placed upon transfer) with the following indicators:

1. Maintain the following minimum units of credit required for promotion.
 - a. 10th grade: 5 units
 - b. 11th grade: 10 units
 - c. 12th grade: 16 units
2. For students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time in the 2008-2009 school year and for subsequent years, the following requirements must also be met in order to advance with the entering graduating class:
 - a. 10th grade: 5 units, including one full credit each of state required or core coursework in mathematics, science, and English/language arts.
 - b. 11th grade: 10 units, including two full units each of state required or core coursework in mathematics, science, and English/language arts.

Students placed in ninth grade who do not meet expectations on the math and/or reading portions of the eighth grade end-of-grade Georgia Milestone assessment (state rule 160-4-2-.11) shall be placed in skills-building math and/or reading classes in the ninth grade.

Adopted: 8/11/82

Revised: 4/28/83; 7/11/84; 8/8/84; 7/11/85; 4/28/88; 6/8/88; 1/10/90; 6/25/92; 7/28/94; 8/24/00; 2/1/02; 5/22/03; 7/22/04

Reclassified an Administrative Rule: 9/1/04

Revised: 2/21/06; 7/27/06; 1/10/07; 8/13/08; 4/13/11

Revised and re-coded: 9/27/12 (Previously coded as Administrative Rule IKE)

Revised: 2/13/13; 7/4/14

Waiver: 9/10/14 (Section D waived for the 2014-2015 school year)

Revised: 11/12/14 (to incorporate Policy JQM)

Waiver: 5/6/16 (Section D waived for the 2015-2016 school year)

Revised: 5/5/17; 6/14/17

Legal Reference

O.C.G.A. 20-2-282

Georgia Academic Placement and Promotion Policy

O.C.G.A. 20-2-283

Georgia Academic Placement and Promotion Policy-Criteria; specific requirements for students in grades three, five and eight; implementation

O.C.G.A. 20-2-284

Criteria for local boards of education; model placement and promotion policy

O.C.G.A. 20-2-2162

Military children; placement based on current educational assessments; subsequent evaluations

O.C.G.A. 20-2-281

Assessment of effectiveness of educational programs

O.C.G.A. 20-2-285

Placement and Promotion policy - implementation timetable

Rule 160-3-1-.07

Testing Programs- Student Assessment

Rule 160-4-2-.11

Promotion, Placement, and Retention

Rule 160-5-1-.18

Competitive Interscholastic Activities in Grades 6-12