

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

October 10, 2023

SUBJECT:

Revision of the following policy:

Administrative Rule IKE-R Promotion and Retention of Students

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The proposed changes to Administrative Rule IKE-R Promotion and Retention of Students reflect alignment with the new accountability model for high schools and matches the state criteria for students being considered on track for graduation.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The proposed revision of Administrative Rule IKE-R Promotion and Retention of Students ensures alignment with the South Carolina Department of Education Accountability Model for High Schools criteria for graduation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the following policy:

Administrative Rule IKE-R Promotion and Retention of Students

ATTACHMENTS:

Administrative Rule IKE-R Promotion and Retention of Students

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PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Code **IKE-R** Issued **3/22/23**

Promotion Criteria for Kindergarten

Completion of the kindergarten program generally leads to placement in first grade. Retention in kindergarten will be based on an evaluation of the child as indicated by formal and informal instruments, with input from teachers, parents/legal guardians, the principal, and other appropriate school personnel.

Promotion Criteria for Grades One through Five

The following criteria will govern student promotion from one grade to another. Reading and math proficiency will be determined by state assessments, mastery tests, teacher-made tests, and samples of assigned work. In addition, other objective measures may be utilized.

Grade One Successful completion of grade one reading and math skills and appropriate growth in reading and math based on objective measures.

Grades Two A yearly passing average in reading and math or appropriate growth in through Five reading and math of at least one grade level based on objective measures.

In addition to meeting the mastery criteria for reading and mathematics in grades three through five, a student must pass at least two of the three academic courses (language arts, science, and social studies).

Third Grade Retention – Act 284

In accordance with Act 284 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the Read to Succeed Act:

- A. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment. A student may be exempt for good cause from the mandatory retention but shall continue to receive instructional support and services and reading intervention appropriate for their age and reading level. Good cause exemptions include students:
- 1) with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in English as a Second Language program;
 - 2) with disabilities whose individual education plan indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions and students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plan or Section 504 plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still does not substantially demonstrate reading proficiency;
 - 3) who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the board and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading;
 - 4) who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained;

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- 5) who through a reading portfolio document, the student's mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment. Such evidence must be an organized collection of the student's mastery of the state English/language arts standards that are assessed by the Grade three state reading assessment. The Read to Succeed Office shall develop the assessment tool for the student portfolio; however, the student portfolio must meet the following minimum criteria:
 - (a) be selected by the student's English/language arts teacher or summer reading camp instructor;
 - (b) be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
 - (c) include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the Grade three state reading assessment have been met. Evidence is to include multiple choice items and passages that are approximately sixty percent literary text and forty percent information text, and that are between one hundred and seven hundred words with an average of five hundred word. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district or school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the state English/language arts standard or teacher-prepared assessments;
 - (d) be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the English/language arts state standards that are assessed by grade three state reading assessment. For each benchmark there must be at least three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of seventy percent or above; and
 - (e) be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills; and
 - 6) who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a reading portfolio or through a norm referenced, alternative assessment, selected from a list of norm-referenced, alternative assessments approved by the Read to Succeed Office for use in the summer reading camps, that the student's mastery of the state standards in reading is equal to at least a level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment.
- B. The superintendent of the local school district must determine whether a student in the district may be exempt from the mandatory retention by taking all of the following steps:
- 1) The teacher of the student eligible for exemption must submit to the principal documentation on the proposed exemption and evidence that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the student's academic record. This evidence must be limited to the student's individual education program, alternative assessments, or student reading portfolio. The Read to Succeed office must provide districts with a standardized form to use in the process.
 - 2) The principal must review the documentation and determine whether the student should be promoted. If the principal determines the student should be promoted, the principal must submit a written recommendation for promotion to the ~~district~~ level assistant superintendent for final determination.
 - 3) The ~~district~~ level assistant superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the recommendation must be in writing and a copy must be provided to the parent or guardian of the child.

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- 4) A parent or legal guardian may appeal the decision to retain a student to the ~~district superintendent~~ Chief Officer of Instruction if there is a compelling reason why the student should not be retained. A parent or legal guardian must appeal in writing, within two weeks after the notification of retention. The letter must be addressed to the ~~district superintendent~~ Chief Officer of Instruction and specify the reasons why the student should not be retained. The ~~district superintendent~~ Chief Officer of Instruction shall render a decision and provide copies to the parent or legal guardian and the principal.

C.

- 1) Students eligible for retention under the provisions in Section 59-155-160(A) may enroll in a summer reading camp provided by their school district or a summer reading camp consortium to which their district belongs prior to being retained the following school year. Summer reading camps must be at least six weeks in duration with a minimum of four days of instruction per week and four hours of instruction per day, or the equivalent minimum hours of instruction in the summer. The camps must be taught by compensated teachers who have at least an add-on literacy endorsement or who have documented and demonstrated substantial success in helping students comprehend grade level texts. The Read to Succeed Office shall assist districts that cannot find qualified teacher to work in the summer camps. Districts also may choose to contract for the services of qualified instructors or collaborate with one or more districts to provide a summer reading camp. Schools and school districts are encouraged to partner with county or school libraries, institutions of higher learning, community organizations, faith-based institutions, businesses, pediatric and family practice medical personnel, and other groups to provide volunteers, mentors, tutors, space, or other support to assist with the provision of the summer reading camps. A parent or guardian of a student who does not substantially demonstrate proficiency in comprehending texts appropriate for his grade level must make the final decision regarding the student's participation in the summer reading camp.
- 2) A district may include in the summer reading camps students who are not exhibiting reading proficiency at any grade and do not meet the good cause exemption. Districts may charge fees for these students to attend the summer reading camps based on a sliding scale pursuant to Section 59-19-90, except where a child is found to be reading below grade level in the first, second, or third grade and does not meet the good cause exemption.

- ### D.
- Retained students must be provided intensive and instructional services and support, including a minimum of ninety minutes of daily reading and writing instruction, supplemental text based instruction, and other strategies prescribed by the school district. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, instruction directly focused on improving the student's individual reading proficiency skills through small group instruction, reduced teacher-student ratios, more frequent student progress monitoring, tutoring or mentoring, transition classes containing students in multiple grade spans, and extended school day, week, or year reading support. The school must report to the Read to Succeed Office on the progress of students in the class at the end of the school year and at other times as required by the office based on the school year and at other times as required by the office based on the reading progression monitoring requirements of these students.

- ### E.
- If the student is not demonstrating third-grade reading proficiency by the end of the second grading period of the third grade:

- 1) his parent or guardian timely must be notified, in writing, that the students is being considered for retention and a conference with the parent or guardian must be held prior to a determination regarding retention is made, and conferences must be documented.

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- a) within two weeks following the parent teacher conference, copies of the conference form must be provided to the principal, parent or guardian, teacher and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy, and summary statements must be sent to parents or legal guardians who do not attend the conference;
 - b) following the parent/teacher retention conference, the principal, classroom teacher, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy must review the recommendation for retention and provide suggestions for supplemental instruction; and
 - c) recommendations and observations of the principal, teacher, parent or legal guardian, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy must be considered when determining whether to retain the student.
- 2) The parent or guardian may designate another person as an education advocate also to act on their behalf to receive notification and to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the child. The parent or guardian of a retained student must be offered supplemental tutoring for the retained student in evidence-based services outside the instructional day.
- F. For students in grades four and above who are substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency, interventions shall be provided by reading interventionists in the classroom and supplementally by teachers with a literacy teacher add-on endorsement or reading/literacy coaches. This supplemental support will be provided during the school day and as appropriate, before or after school as documented in the district reading plan and may include book clubs or summer reading.

Considerations for Promotion/Placement for K through Grades Five

Certain factors may be considered with regard to the child's ability to succeed at the next higher grade. These factors may include health, social/emotional and/or mental maturity, chronological age, and/or physical development. These factors may lead to a decision to administratively assign a student to the next grade.

When a student is administratively assigned by the administration or at the request of the parent/legal guardian and has not met mastery standards appropriate for his/her grade level, a document that includes reasons why the decision was made to override academic standards should be signed by the parent/legal guardian and the principal and made a part of the student's cumulative record. If the parent/legal guardian does not agree with the decision to administratively assign the student, a conference with the principal and parent/legal guardian will be held to review the data and to determine placement in the best interest of the student.

The procedure for administratively assigning a student who has not met mastery standards appropriate for his/her grade level will also be followed for parents/legal guardians who request that a student who has met grade level requirements be retained.

During the school year, when a student is identified as performing below the level required for promotion, data will be analyzed and interventions should begin immediately. Measures for students who are not promoted will be addressed in an intervention plan. The school principal and other appropriate school personnel will jointly make the recommendation for retention.

Promotion Criteria for Grades Six through Eight

Students in grades six through eight must pass core academic areas (English/language arts, math, science, social studies) in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

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Students who are in danger of failing one or more subjects must be identified by the end of the first semester of school and their parents/legal guardians notified through written correspondence and/or parent conference. A program for intervention will be established at this point by the administration and teacher leaders. The plan will be monitored and refined, if needed, every four weeks.

End-of-year status for grades six through eight

If at the end of the year, the student has met all promotion criteria, the student will be promoted.

If the student has failed core academic courses, a student may take, in a district approved **summer** program, core academic courses through content recovery that he/she failed during the regular school year. A student mastering four core academic courses through a combination of the regular school year and ~~summer~~-content recovery will be promoted at the conclusion of the **summer program school year**.

If the student has failed to meet promotion criteria, the student will be retained. ~~The student will be provided an academic assistance plan to accelerate student learning but will not be promoted to the next grade.~~

Other considerations for promotion/placement for grades six through eight

Considerations for promotion/placement

Certain factors may be considered with regard to the child's ability to succeed at the next higher grade. These factors may include health, social/emotional and/or mental maturity, chronological age, and/or physical development. These factors may lead to a decision to administratively assign a student to the next grade.

When a student is administratively assigned by the administration or at the request of the parent/legal guardian and has not met mastery standards appropriate for his/her grade level, a document that includes reasons why the decision was made to override academic standards should be signed by the parent/legal guardian and the principal and made a part of the student's cumulative record. If parent/legal guardian does not agree with the decision to administratively assign the student, a conference with the principal and parent/legal guardian will be held to review the data and to determine placement in the best interest of the student.

The procedure for administratively assigning a student who has not met mastery standards appropriate for his/her grade level will also be followed for parents/legal guardians who request that a student who has met grade level requirements be retained.

During the school year, when a student is identified as performing below the level required for promotion, data will be analyzed and interventions should begin immediately. Measures for students who are not promoted will be addressed in an intervention plan. The school principal and other appropriate school personnel will jointly make the recommendation for retention.

Promotion Criteria for Grades Nine through Twelve

Classification of students

The South Carolina Board of Education (SBE) Regulation 43-234 lists course requirements for public high school students to graduate with a South Carolina High School Diploma. A student must earn a total of 24 units of credit to graduate.

9th grade*

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All students entering high school for the first time will be classified in the 9th grade.

10th grader*

A student will be classified as a 10th grader promoted from 9th to 10th grade provided he/she the student has earned at least five six units toward graduation, including one unit each in English and mathematics at least one of which is an English credit and at least one of which is a Mathematics credit.

11th grader*

A student will be classified as an 11th grader promoted from 10th to 11th grade provided he/she the student has earned at least 11 12 units credits toward graduation, including two where at least 2 are in English credits, at least 2 two are in Mathematics credits, and one 1 in is a Science credit.

12th grader*

A student will be classified as a 12th grader promoted from 11th to 12th grade provided he/she the student has earned at least 17 18 units credits toward graduation, including three in where at least 3 are English credits, three in 3 are Mathematics credits, and two in 2 are Science credits.

Retained Sstudents earning Carnegie units credits adequate for advancement to the next grade level during the school year should will be promoted immediately at the end of the semester in which the credits were earned.

*To be implemented with 9GR-24 cohort in 2023-24 for promotion into the 24/25 school year

Promotion Criteria for Students with Special Needs

Promotion or retention of students with disabilities will be determined in the same manner as for all other students.

Based on a review of federal regulations, federal guidance documents, and state policies, the guidance is as follows:

- Though the IEP does not determine if a student should be retained or promoted, it is best practice for administrators to consult with special education teachers to provide information related to progress on IEP goals. This information is readily available via interim and quarterly progress reports. IEP team members can also provide information on the impact of promotion or retention on the student with a disability.
- If a student is not mastering IEP goals and this becomes a factor in the decision to retain a student, the IEP team must convene a meeting to consider why the student is not making progress on goals in the IEP. The team may need to review instructional strategies, the appropriateness of the IEP goal, or other components of the IEP that impact the progress on goals.
- All students with disabilities will be subject to the promotion criteria appropriate to the student's age and grade placement unless the student's IEP, as developed by a legally constituted IEP team, addresses and defines a modified curriculum and alternative learning goals. Students who have modifications to the general curriculum cannot not be held to the same promotion/retention standards as students who are accessing the general curriculum with accommodations and special education services.

Promotion Criteria for English Learners

The School District of Aiken County

(see next page)

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Students identified as English learners (ELs) should be promoted in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations. An English learner should be advanced along with his/her age-level peers. Non-advancement must be documented with evidence that indicates the determining factors are other than English language proficiency. English learner students are eligible to participate in all age-appropriate school programs and receive available services.

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