

The latest version of this policy.

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

The Board of Education is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled in its schools. Therefore, the District will establish and maintain the highest standards required for each grade and monitor student performance in a continuous and systematic manner. The administration and faculty shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on demonstrated and assessed successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on the statewide mastery assessments and other testing instruments. Any necessary retention should take place as early in a student's educational career as possible.

Students shall be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement. Students who, on the basis of objective measures of academic proficiency, can reasonably be expected to meet the instructional/learning objectives at the next educational level may be promoted.

The Board of Education shall approve the grading and reporting systems as developed by the administration and faculty upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Board desires to minimize/eliminate the practice of promoting students to the next grade level for social reasons even though they are failing academically. The Board expects students to progress through each grade usually within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction should accommodate the varying interests and growth patterns of individual students and include strategies for addressing academic deficiencies when needed. Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade-level standards of expected student achievement. The student's readiness for work at the next grade level shall be required before he/she is promoted. Students who have mastered the appropriate skills will be promoted; those who have not will be retained.

Progress toward high school graduation shall be based on the student's ability to pass the required subjects and electives necessary to earn the required number of credits necessary for graduation, meeting the credit distribution requirement. The student must also satisfactorily demonstrate the district's performance standards, assessed in part by the statewide mastery assessments. Students who have not successfully completed the assessment criteria shall participate in a course of study designed to assist them attain a satisfactory level of competency prior to graduation. When high academic achievement is evident, the Superintendent or his/her designee may approve a student for acceleration into a higher grade level. The student's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

Schools shall identify students in danger of failing and being at risk for retention. This identification shall also include those students who fail to meet the remedial standards of the statewide assessment programs. Prior to deciding on retention for a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district shall provide and may require the student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance. Opportunities, provided for supplemental and remedial instruction to assist the student in overcoming his/her academic deficiencies, may include but are not limited to, after-school tutorial programs, Saturday tutorial programs, summer school, Reading Recovery, instruction during school vacations or during week-end programs, cross-age tutoring or student mentoring.

*Note: Priority school districts are **required** to evaluate the reading level of students in grades one to three, inclusive, and to develop and implement a personal reading plan for students found to be substantially deficient in reading on measures established by the State Board of Education.*

The personal reading plan shall include additional instruction, within available appropriations, such as tutoring, an after-school, school vacation, or weekend program or a summer reading program.

Promotion of students with personal reading plans from first, second or third grade shall be based on documented progress in achieving the goals of the personal reading plan or demonstrated reading proficiency. A decision to promote a student who is substantially deficient in reading from first, second, or third grade must be justified in writing by the school principal to the Superintendent.

Within available appropriation, students in grades one to three, inclusive, who based on an end of the year evaluation, are determined to be substantially deficient in reading, shall be required to attend school the summer following such evaluation. The Superintendent may exempt an individual student from such requirement upon the recommendation of the school principal based on the student's progress with the student's personal reading plan. If a student does not receive such an exemption, has been offered the opportunity to attend summer school, the Board shall not promote the student to the next grade.

Students in grades four, five and six, judged deficient in reading and provided with personal reading plans and additional instruction, who fail to make progress shall attend summer school; within available appropriations, the summer following the school year in which they failed to make such progress. The Superintendent may exempt an individual student from such requirement based upon the school principal's recommendation. If the student does not receive such an exemption, and has been offered the opportunity to attend a summer school program and fails to attend summer school, he/she shall not be promoted to the next grade.

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

In all cases of promotion or retention, the parent/guardian is to be fully involved and informed throughout the promotion/retention decision-making process. Parents will be notified as early as possible that retention is being considered and except in very unusual circumstances, no later than March 15. The Principal shall be responsible for making the final decision as to retention and assignment.

Alternative language to consider:

The administration and professional staff shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on the statewide mastery assessment testing program and on other standardized tests, meeting the statewide reading standards in the primary grades, maturity, academic potential and student aptitude. A student shall not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance. The district shall provide alternatives to promotion such as, but not limited to transitional programs and may require students whose academic performance jeopardizes their promotion or graduation to attend after-school, summer school or other programs the district offers that are designed to help them. The administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted.

(cf. 5124 - Reporting to Parents)

(cf. 6146 - Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6146.1 - Grading System)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 P.A. 99-288 An Act Concerning Education Accountability
 10-221(b) Boards of education to prescribe rules.
 10-265g Summer reading programs required for priority school
 districts. Evaluation of student reading level. Personal reading
 plans. (as amended by PA 01-173 and PA 06-135)
 10-265l Requirements for additional instruction for poor
 performing students in priority school districts; exemption.
 Summer school required; exemption (as amended by PA 99-288,
 PA 01-173, PA 03-174 and PA 06-135)

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rev. 7/01

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Another version of this policy

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

The schools are committed to ensuring that every graduate is a lifelong learner, productive worker, responsible citizen and thoughtful participant in our diverse communities. It is the goal of this school system that every graduate:

- is a proficient reader, communicator, problem solver and critical thinker;
- demonstrates the habits of mind and work required for success in school and the world of work;
- knows how to acquire knowledge, connect it to familiar concepts and prior knowledge, and apply it, using sophisticated technologies;
- has mastered key skills and understands important concepts from English/language arts, mathematics, science, technology, social science, the arts, health, physical education and foreign language;
- has applied these concepts in real life contexts; and
- has made a valued contribution to the school and community.

These expectations shall frame the teaching, learning and assessment processes of the District. Such expectations are viewed as crucial to lifelong learning and essential to gaining student's commitment to the learning process.

The Board of Education believes that student promotion and graduation shall be based on demonstrated and/or assessed proficiency with the district's academic content and skills standards. (*especially in the core subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, science and social science.*) Students should earn the right to move from grade to grade through demonstration of the mastery of the knowledge and skills required of them.

Therefore, the Board of Education shall adopt and maintain rigorous grade-by-grade standards and a curriculum and assessment system to support such standards as soon as reasonably possible within budgetary constraints. A high priority must be placed on ensuring a student's ability to read on grade level. The standards, organized by grade levels (*or grade clusters or age bands*) shall outline the essential knowledge and skills that all students should learn in each subject area or in each middle school and high school course, resulting in a strong common core of learning. The development of such standards shall be aligned with Connecticut's statewide mastery assessment system, Common Core of State Standards, Common Core of Learning and Curriculum Frameworks. The Board adopted standards shall be translated into local curriculum frameworks to guide instruction based upon high expectations for student achievement.

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Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

The Board believes that strong grade-level academic standards provides the foundation to improve student achievement and win/retain/gain public confidence in the school system. However, it is recognized that the development of these standards involves a lengthy process of revision and refinement. To guide the development of these standards, the Board believes that such standards must:

- focus on academics;
- be grounded in the core disciplines;
- be specific enough to assure development of a common core curriculum, outlining the essential knowledge and skills that all students should learn in each subject area;
- be manageable given the constraints of time;
- be rigorous and world class, establishing expectations that are at least as demanding as those set for students in other high achieving countries;
- include performance standards which describe what students should know, be able to do and how well they must know and do it;
- define multiple levels of proficiency for students to strive for (*partially proficient, proficient, advanced*);
- combine knowledge and skills;
- not dictate how the material shall be taught; and
- be written clearly for all stakeholders to understand.

Criteria # 1: The promotion policy shall include objective data for the promotion and graduation of students.

Retention, nor social promotion, is considered an adequate response to student underachievement. Neither requires change in pedagogy, content or curriculum. Appropriate steps must be taken to ensure that students learn what they need to know to be successful in the next grade and ultimately in life. Ignoring the problem of student failure, use of social promotion or simple retention to do again that which failed to work initially for the student are not considered appropriate. The District must consistently address the underlying reasons for student failure to achieve and what changes in school organization, curriculum, instruction and educational programs are necessary for students to succeed.

In order to foster student achievement and reduce social promotions, this District is committed to the following initiatives:

1. Adoption of rigorous standards and development of a curriculum to support them, as described in this policy statement;
2. Staffing of all schools with a full complement of well-trained staff;

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

3. Interventions to prevent early school failure and assistance to students who show evidence of being at risk of failure;
4. Maintenance of a safe and orderly environment;
5. Small class sizes within budgetary constraints;
6. Utilization of instructional strategies designed to maximize time on task; and
7. Monitoring individual student progress frequently.
8. Specification of the basic skills required of students to graduate.
9. Establishment of a process to assess a student's level of competency in the basic skills needed for graduation. Such process to include but not be limited to performance on the statewide mastery assessments.
10. Identification of a course of study for those students who have not successfully completed the assessment criteria to assist such students to reach a satisfactory level of competency prior to graduation.

The District shall utilize multiple measures of academic performance indicators as determinants in promotion/retention decisions. Student assessment of performance shall be based upon and aligned with the adopted standards. Student evaluation shall be fair, consistent and appropriate to program goals. The assessment program shall include, but not be limited to, the use of standardized and teacher made tests, projects, portfolios, teacher observation, student performance on the statewide mastery assessments as integrative parts of a comprehensive evaluation system. In addition middle school/junior high school and high school staff shall plan to administer term and/or final examinations in each course.

Progress toward high school graduation shall be based on the student's ability to pass the required subjects and electives necessary to earn the required number of credits established by Board policy and state statutes for graduation, meeting the credit distribution requirement. The student must also satisfactorily demonstrate the district's performance standards, assessed in part by the statewide mastery assessments. Students who have not successfully completed the assessment criteria shall participate a course of study designed to assist them attain a satisfactory level of competency prior to graduation.

Academic achievement, attitude, effort, work habits, behavior, attendance, and other significant learning related factors shall be regularly evaluated and communicated to students and their parents/guardians.

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

Criteria # 2: the promotion policy shall provide for the measuring of the progress of students against objective criteria and report such information to parents and students.

Schools shall identify students in danger of failing and being at risk for retention. This identification shall also include those students who fail to meet the remedial standards of the statewide mastery assessment programs. Prior to deciding on retention for a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district shall provide and may require the student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance. Opportunities, provided for supplemental and remedial instruction to assist the student in overcoming his/her academic deficiencies, may include but are not limited to, after-school tutorial programs, Saturday tutorial programs, summer school, Reading Recovery, instruction during school vacations or during week-end programs, cross-age tutoring or student mentoring. The District shall also provide alternatives to promotion for students not successfully completing academic criteria for promotion. Such programs shall include, but not be limited to, transitional programs and alternative schools/programs within the District or in cooperation with other school systems. Parents/guardians shall also be included in the planning of intervention strategies and the ongoing monitoring of the student's progress.

Criteria # 3: The promotion policy shall include alternatives to promotion such as transition programs.

Criteria # 4: The promotion policy shall provide for supplemental services and such policies may require students who have substantial academic deficiencies that jeopardize their eligibility for promotion or graduation to attend after school programs, summer school or other programs offered by the school district.

When high academic achievement is evident, the Superintendent or his/her designee may approve a student for acceleration into a higher grade level. The student's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

*Note: Priority school districts are **required** to make their students in fourth grade who do not meet the statewide assessment remedial standards on the reading portion on the 4th grade test attend summer school in the following summer and students who do not meet any portion of the 6th grade test attend summer school, within available appropriations, in the following summer. Fourth and sixth grade students required to attend summer school may be exempted by the Superintendent upon the recommendation of the principal indicating that the student has made sufficient progress with the additional instruction provided. A student not receiving an exemption and who fails to go to summer school cannot be promoted to the next grade.*

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

In priority school districts a student in grades one through three determined to be substantially deficient in reading based on measures established by the State Board of Education shall have a personal reading plan for such student which shall include measures to improve the student's reading level such as tutoring, a transitional class or a summer reading program. Promotion of such student shall be based on documented progress in achieving the goals of the personal reading plan or demonstrated reading proficiency. The promotion of a student who is substantially deficient in reading from third to fourth grade must be justified in writing to the Superintendent by the school principal. A personal reading plan shall be maintained for such a student until the student achieves a satisfactory level of proficiency.

In all cases of promotion or retention, the parent/guardian is to be fully involved and informed throughout the promotion/retention decision-making process. Parents will be notified as early as possible that retention is being considered and except in very unusual circumstances, no later than March 15. The Principal shall be responsible for making the final decision as to retention and assignment.

(cf. 5124 - Reporting to Parents)

(cf. 6146 - Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6146.1 - Grading System)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221(b) Boards of education to prescribe rules.

10-265g Summer reading programs required for priority school districts. Evaluation of student reading level. Personal reading plans. (As amended by PA 01-173).

10-265l Requirements for additional instruction for poor performing students in priority school districts; exemption. Summer school required; exemption (as amended by PA 99-288, PA 01-173, and PA 03-174)

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