

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS THROUGH 8TH GRADE

This policy addresses end-of-year, grade-to-grade promotion and retention decisions that are made at any point prior to a student's attendance in any high school program in the District (i.e., prior to the start of 9th grade or any program-specific equivalent to 9th grade). This policy does not address grade-level acceleration decisions or any decision to adjust the initial grade-level placement of a newly-enrolled student during the student's first school year of attendance in a District school or program.

The administration is expected to implement this policy and, in conjunction with other instructional staff members, make the promotion and retention decisions for individual students. If a student's parent/guardian disagrees with a District decision regarding promotion or retention, the parent/guardian may submit a written request for reconsideration to the District Administrator or his/her designee. Except as otherwise required by law, the decision of the District Administrator or his/her designee following such a request shall be final.

For students in grade 1 through 8, the School Board directs the administration to develop and implement a process for annual promotion and retention decisions that initially identifies students who are at risk of possible retention.

When a student is having very significant academic difficulty in one or more areas and is at risk of possible retention, it is the Board's judgment that no single measure or description of the student's academic progress, knowledge, and skills is sufficient to determine whether the student should be retained or promoted. Accordingly, before making a final decision to promote or retain a student who the District has identified as being at risk of retention, the administration and instructional staff will use a team-based approach to review and consider, at a minimum, the following information about the student's academic progress in relation to established promotion and retention criteria:

1. State assessment results (or results from an alternate assessment, if applicable) that are available for the student,
2. The results of District assessments
3. The student's grades and teachers' evaluations of the student's academic skills (generally as reflected on report cards and formal progress reports);
4. Evidence indicating the extent to which the student has made progress with respect to individual goals that the District established for the student.

Additional information about the student's academic progress may also be considered if the team

considers it helpful in making the promotion/retention decision. For example, the team could consider information from a relevant out-of-district source, the results from specific classroom assignments, projects or tests, specific samples of the student's work, and/or other teacher recommendations relating to the student's skills and progress that add greater overall context to the team's decision-making process.

For each student identified as being at risk of retention, the team shall recommend, with final decision-making authority resting with an agreed upon decision by the Director of Student Services and the Director of Learning Services, either that:

1. the student should be promoted in combination with the identification of individualized goals and the use of available intervention strategies that are intended to enhance the student's overall development, alleviate an identified barrier that may be inhibiting the student's learning, improve the student's level of engagement with school, and/or provide the student with opportunities to reduce observed gaps in the student's learning relative to grade-level standards;
or
2. the student should be retained in combination with the identification of individualized goals and the use of appropriate intervention strategies.

The District's specific grade-level promotion criteria and other procedures related to promotion and retention decisions will be defined by rule. The rule and criteria shall strongly disfavor any use of retention in kindergarten, as well as other grade levels.

Nothing in this policy or in the related criteria and procedures shall be interpreted in a manner that would interfere with or detract from a student's or parent's rights under any applicable state or federal law. For example, in regard to any student who has been referred for a special education evaluation or who is receiving special education and/or related services under an individualized education program (IEP), nothing in this policy or in its implementation shall detract from the authority of the student's IEP team.

Legal References

Wisconsin Statute

- 118.30 Pupil Assessment

Policy References.:

- IKEA-Adm: Procedures for Promotion and Retention of Students through 8th Grade
- AD: Educational Philosophy
- AE: District Goals and Lifelong Learning Standards
- IKA: Student Grading Systems

Policy Adopted: August 25, 1982

Policy Revised: September 9, 1986; January 17, 1990; July 10, 2002 (Note: IKE divided into IKEA and IKEB); October 22, 2014 (Note: IKEA and IKEB were eliminated and new IKE written)