

XIII-A-4



<p>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY April 2004 Board Meeting Administrative Procedure – IHE – Promotion and Retention</p>
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SUMMARY : In response to a Board request in March, this procedure has been placed on the agenda for information.

ACTION REQUESTED: This procedure is presented for information only.

MOTION STATEMENT: N/A

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Section:	I	Policy/Procedure:	Procedure
Classification:	Instructional Program	Descriptor Term:	Promotion and Retention
Rescinds Code:		Descriptor Code:	IHE
Effective Date:	11/13/03		

I. Promotion/Retention/Placement Procedures for K, Grades 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7; Grade 5 (until 2004-2005); and Grade 8 (until 2005-2006)

Continuous achievement is a method of organizing instruction which allows each student to progress through school at his/her own individual rate. Instruction is presented in steps of sequential skills called levels. Students progress from one level to another when they have acquired the skills of that level. Students in the instructional program shall be expected to move through the continuous achievement continuum at a rate commensurate with their total capabilities for scholastic progress.

Parents shall be notified yearly, through the Elementary and Middle School Curriculum Handbooks that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class or program will be based on the academic achievement of the student on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (administered in grades 1-8) and criteria established by the Fulton County Board of Education (See I. A).

In order to help assure appropriate achievement as students progress through their school experience, the Fulton County Board of Education establishes the following basic promotion and retention procedures for elementary and middle schools:

A. Criteria

A student shall be promoted when, in the professional judgment of the teacher, the principal and other school staff, he/she has successfully met instructional-level standards for the grade level in which he/she is currently placed based on the following criteria:

1. Quality Core Curriculum Content for Georgia's Public Schools (K-8)
2. Fulton County School System Curriculum Guides
3. State mandated and other standardized test data, as appropriate

Middle school students in grade 6 must have a passing grade in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, reading and one of the following: a combination of grades in the connections segment or the physical education/health/connections segment.

Middle school students in grades 7 and 8 must have a passing grade in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, reading/foreign language and one of the following: a combination of grades in the connections segment or the physical education/health connections segment. A passing semester grade in the connections or physical education/health segment is accomplished by earning an average of 70 or above when averaging the combination of three nine-week grades during the semester. Any student who receives an average for both semesters of 69 and below shall fail the subject for the year. Students who are not promoted are either placed in the next grade or retained in the same grade.

A failing grade in a subject can be made up by the student earning a passing grade in an appropriate subject during a summer school session or other pre-approved remediation opportunity.

The following should also be considered by the professional school staff in determining promotion or retention of a student:

4. Student's cumulative work folder
5. Overall classroom performance and participation
6. Previous interventions, including retentions
7. Age and level of social and emotional maturity
8. Regular school attendance

B. Number of Times Retained in Grades K-8

A student shall not be retained more than twice in grades K through 8, except with the approval of the school's Area Superintendent. In most cases, students who will be 16 years old on or before September 1 shall not be retained in the middle grades.

C. Promotion/ Retention/Placement Decision Process

1. The teacher(s) should modify and document instructional strategies for students experiencing difficulty and confer with other appropriate personnel for additional suggestions.
2. After Informal Collaboration, the teacher(s) should request assistance for students who continue to experience difficulty which could result in retention to the Student Support Team (SST). Every effort will be made to ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) attend the SST meetings at which their child's instructional program is being discussed. The SST or other principal designated like committee should recommend strategies or interventions which parent(s)/guardian(s) should use to assist the school in working with

the child. Documentation and review of the problem solving process is completed through data collection.

3. The teacher(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will implement interventions recommended by the SST.
4. The SST or other like committee will evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and either add/modify strategies, monitor, or request assistance from the comprehensive building team (CBT).
5. A conference should be scheduled and held with parents, by the end of the first semester, to inform them of the possibility of retention or placement for the next school year. Intervention strategies to be used shall be discussed at this time. Notification of the possibility of retention or placement must be presented in writing and signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and teacher. A signature by the parent(s)/guardian(s) indicates knowledge, not necessarily agreement.
6. At least one additional contact, by personal conference or in writing, regarding the student's progress, results of intervention strategies, and the possibility of retention or placement should be made during the second semester. In addition, written notification regarding retention of a student must be sent by first-class U.S. mail at least four weeks before the end of the school year. Documentation of parent(s)/guardian(s) notification must be kept by the school.
7. Although the school will try to involve parent(s)/guardian(s) to the maximum degree possible in an understanding of the student's progress and reasons for promotion, retention, or placement, the final decision for grades K-8 will be made by the SST or other committee as deemed appropriate by the principal and shall be based upon a review of all Fulton County Board of Education criteria (see I.A.) and the student's performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests in grades 1-8.
8. The SST or other like committee will develop an Alternative Instructional and Assessment Plan for any retained or placed student as well as for any student who does not achieve grade level on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test. The Plan shall describe the accelerated, differentiated or additional instruction and appropriate assessments for the following school year.

9. Written documentation of evidence that supports an individual retention decision, copies of parent notifications, and the Alternative Instructional Plan shall be placed in the student's permanent record folder and as appropriate SST or other like committee folder. Placements must be indicated by writing "placed" on the end of year report card and the permanent record folder.

D. Responsibility for Alternative Instructional Plans

1. Responsibility for ensuring implementation of the Alternative Instructional Plan rests with the principal of the school the student attends the following year.
2. At the beginning of the following school year, the principal or designee should review the Alternative Instructional Plan with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

II. Promotion, Placement, and Retention Requirements for Grades 3, 5, and 8 as phased in according to state law.

The following sections have been established to address the requirements of the Georgia Academic Promotion, Placement, and Retention Rule (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282, 283, 284, and 285). The following provisions shall be effective for students in Grade 3 in the 2003-2004 school year, in grade 5 in the 2004-2005 school year and in grade 8 in the 2005-2006 school year.

- A. When a student does not perform at grade level in grades on the CRCT 3 (Reading), 5 (Reading and Mathematics), or 8 (Reading and Mathematics), the following shall occur provided test score results and alternative assessments are available from the State in a timely fashion:
 1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the CRCT individual scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing, by first-class mail, the parent(s) /guardian(s) of the student regarding the following:
 - a. The student's below-grade-level performance on the CRCT reading and/or mathematics section(s);
 - b. The specific retest(s) to be given to the student and the testing date(s);
 - c. The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the CRCT(s); and

- d. The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.

The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and

The student shall be retested with the appropriate section(s) of the CRCT or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the Fulton County Board of Education.

- B. When a student does not perform at grade level on the specified CRCT in grades 3, 5, and 8, and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity for assessment, then the following shall occur:

The school principal or designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.

The school principal or designee shall notify in writing, by first-class mail, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the CRCT or the alternative assessment instrument on which the student failed to perform at grade level regarding the decision to retain the student.

1. The notice shall describe the option of the parent(s) /guardian(s) or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student;
2. The notice shall describe the composition and functions of the placement committee; it shall describe the option of the parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers(s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting; and
3. The notice shall include the requirement that the decision to promote or place the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), and the principal or designee.

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) or teacher(s) appeals the decision to retain the student, then the school principal or designee shall establish a placement committee to consider the appeal.

1. The placement committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the CRCT or the alternative assessment instrument on which the student failed to perform at grade level.
2. The principal or designee shall notify in writing, by first-class mail, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and teacher(s) of the time and place for convening the placement committee.
3. The placement committee shall review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the CRCT or alternative assessment instrument and promotion standards and criteria established by the Fulton County Board of Education, and make a determination to promote or retain the student.
4. The decision to promote the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee and must determine that if placed and given accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction during the next year, the student is likely to perform at grade level by the conclusion of the school year.
5. The placement committee shall prescribe such additional assessments as may be appropriate in addition to assessments administered to other students at the grade level during the year.
6. The placement committee shall provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.

A plan for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction must be developed for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grades 3, 5, or 8 on the CRCT(s) specified in section (a) above whether the student is retained, placed, or promoted for the subsequent year.

A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the CRCT in reading and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up days(s) shall take the CRCT in reading and/or mathematics on the second administration day(s) or an alternative assessment that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the Fulton County Board of Education. Promotion or placement of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

A student's failure to take the CRCT in grades 3, 5, and 8 in reading and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and the Fulton County Board

of Education may result in the student being retained. The option of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student shall follow the procedure set forth in Section II.B.3.

For students receiving special education or related services, the Individual Education Program (IEP) Team shall serve as the placement committee to consider appeals.

III. High School Promotion and Retention Procedures

- A. Students in high school progress toward graduation on a course by course basis. Students shall take courses based upon academic performance, academic needs, graduation requirements and previous credits earned.
- B. A student entering high school in Fulton County shall be assigned a graduation year. The graduation requirements in effect at the time of entrance shall apply for the student's entire high school career.
- C. Students shall stay intact with their entering class for all school activities including those related to courses for their freshman year only. Assignments beyond the freshman year will be determined by the number of credits earned by the student. That is, a student will remain a freshman until such time that he/she earns 5 credits to be a sophomore, 10 credits to be a junior and 16 credits to be a senior. Schools on an alternative schedule must meet or exceed these requirements and be approved by the Associate Superintendent for Instructional Services. With the exception of seniors, promotion to the next grade level will be determined by credits earned prior to the beginning of the next school year. Students who don't have enough credits for promotion should be considered by principal designated committee(s) or Informal Collaboration to review student performance and develop instructional strategies and interventions. Either of these committees may request assistance from the SST.
- D. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who are retained will be notified by first-class U.S. mail at the end of each year.
- E. Students who do not complete high school within the traditional four years shall be assigned to the open campus if this placement is deemed to be in the best interest of the student. The placement shall be determined during a conference including the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and appropriate school staff.

- F. At the end of the junior year, each high school shall provide notification by first-class U.S. mail to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student who may not graduate the following year. Additional written notification is required at the end of the first semester of the student's senior year. Copies of the notification shall be kept in the counselor's office and sent to the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student.

IV. Promotion and Retention of Students With Disabilities

The Staffing Committee which develops the Individual Education Plan (IEP) shall establish standards for promotion or placement for students with disabilities.

Cross References: IDFA - Interscholastic Athletics Procedure [Link to Procedure](#)
IHE – Promotion and Retention Policy [Link to Policy](#)

Legal Reference: O.C.G.A., 20-2-151(b) (2), 20-2-281,202-2-284; Bester v. Tuscaloosa City Board of Education, 722 F2d 1514 (C.A. 11th 1984); Debra v. Turlington, 644 F2d 397 (C.A. 5th 1981)

Reference:

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