

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A. Purpose:

A need exists for a uniform policy governing the circumstances and considerations to be weighed in determining whether to promote a student to the next grade or retain the student in the same grade for an additional year.

The *Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act* (70 O.S. 1210.508A-508E) and applicable rules adopted by the Oklahoma State Board of Education (210.15-27-1-2) govern certain retentions of third grade students. The Reading Sufficiency Act (70 O.S. 1210.508 C) provides that for those students who do not meet the academic requirements for promotion and who are not otherwise promoted...a school district may promote the student for good cause only. The District will comply with law and rules applicable to the Reading Sufficiency Act.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for teachers and administrators to follow in determining whether to promote or retain students in the District, and to establish a uniform procedure to be followed in cases where retention is appropriate. This policy is adopted in compliance with 70 O.S. § 24.114.1.

This policy establishes an appeal procedure as required by Oklahoma law by which parents may challenge the decision to retain or to promote a student or to not pass a student in a course.

B. Definitions

1. "Promote" or "promotion" means to place a student who has successfully completed the requirements of a particular grade level into the next higher grade level following the end of the school year and to record on the student's permanent cumulative record that he or she has successfully completed his or her current grade level.
2. "Retain" or "retention" means a decision to decline to advance a student into the next higher grade level following the end of the school year and to indicate on the student's permanent cumulative record that he or she has not successfully completed the requirements of his or her current grade level.
3. "Not passed in a course" or similar wording, means the student is assigned a failing semester grade in a course of study which failing grade will be recorded on the student's permanent cumulative record.

C. Promotion/Retention and Failing Courses

Each school will form a committee to review and make decisions regarding retention and promotion. The committee will be composed of a classroom teacher,

a counselor when available, the building principal and additional personnel who may be assigned by the principal or Superintendent when appropriate. The committee will carefully consider each case on an individual basis, taking into account the academic, social and emotional needs of the student and consider whether promotion would be in the student's best interest, or whether such student would be better served through retention.

Supportive evidence must be presented to the student and parent regarding a promotion or retention decision. This evidence must be based on:

1. Testing which actually covers the subject matter presented to the student.
2. Assignments directly related to the subject matter being taught.
3. Consideration will also be given to the student's level of maturity (physical, mental, emotional, and social) and to the student's attendance record, although these matters will not bear the same weight as items 1 and 2.
4. Any other factors relevant to the student's promotion or retention.

Promotion is the ultimate goal for every student and will be determined by review of the student's circumstances as a whole, including, but not limited to: successfully completed units of instruction to be established by the Board of Education, the Superintendent and the building principal.

In cases where retention is a possibility, the student and the parent must be made aware of the possibility of the student's retention or failing grade in a course. The student's parents will be mailed or e-mailed a written notice prior to the end of the school year during which the student's performance is insufficient. The school staff will make every effort to help the student improve the state's academic standing.

D. Appeal Process

Any parent may request reconsideration of a retention or a promotion decision or a decision to not pass a student in a course by taking the following steps:

1. First Level of Appeal: The parent may request review of the initial decision by letter to the building principal within five (5) days of receipt of the initial decision. Within five (5) days of receipt of an appeal letter from the parent, the building principal will review the written appeal and respond in writing to

the parent. If no appeal request is received within five (5) days of the parent's receipt of written notification of the initial decision, the initial decision will be final and non-appealable.

2. Second Level of Appeal: The parent may request review of the principal's decision by letter to the Superintendent or designee within five (5) days of receipt of the principal's written response to the parent's appeal. Within five (5) days of receipt of an appeal letter from the parent, the Superintendent or designee will review the written appeal and respond in writing to the parent. If no appeal request is received within five (5) days of the parent's receipt of the principal's written notification of his or her decision, the principal's decision will be final and non-appealable. .
3. Final Level of Appeal: The parent may request review of the Superintendent or designee's decision by letter to the Clerk of the Board of Education within five (5) days of receipt of the Superintendent or designee's written response to the parent's appeal. If no appeal request is received within five (5) days of the parent's receipt of the Superintendent or designee's written notification of his or her decision, the Superintendent or designee's decision will be final.

If a written appeal is timely received by the Clerk of the Board of Education, the item will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The parent will be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the Board meeting at which the decision will be reviewed. The review of the record will be conducted in Executive Session by the Board of Education. There will not be a hearing or oral presentation, but the parent's letters, in addition to the initial written decision, the principal's written decision, and the Superintendent or designee's written decision will all be reviewed. The Board's decision will be final and non-appealable. If a parent disagrees with the Board's decision, he or she may prepare a written statement stating the reason(s) for disagreement, which will be placed in and become a part of the student's permanent cumulative record.