

DRAFT

Promotion and Retention Policy and Regulation 2012-2013

P5123

ST. LOUIS BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

STUDENTS

ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND SECONDARY

Progress

Promotion/Retention Standards

The Special Administrative Board of the Transitional School District of the City of St. Louis (The "Board") is committed to ensuring that all students enrolled in the St. Louis Public School District meet or exceed state standards for promotion annually from grade to grade, as defined by the State of Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Promotion or retention in the elementary and middle grades (K-8) is based on designated criteria established by Board regulations, pursuant to State law. In secondary schools (9-12), grade level classification is determined by units of credits students earn on the path to on-time graduation and college and career readiness. The St. Louis Public School District will implement an educational program that promotes success for all students, including English Language Learners and special needs students.

The SLPS Promotion Policy:

- defines the expectations teachers, administrators, parents, and other adults involved in the lives of students should hold for all students;
- frames the support strategies schools need to implement to ensure students' success;
- stipulates that promotion decisions are based on multiple measures of academic achievement;
- recognizes that promotion is earned and establishes a system that engages and supports students in rigorous, cognitively challenging work;
- recommends consistent, robust classroom interventions and/or extended learning opportunities for students to meet high standards;
- limits grade retentions;
- requires that students enter the next grade with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to successfully engage in grade-level work;
- encourages promotion decisions based on a student's achievement and/or evidence that the student will benefit from the instructional program at the advanced grade level; and
- ensures that all graduates possess the "habits of heart and mind" required for success in postsecondary opportunities and the world of work to become productive, responsible citizens.

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ST. LOUIS BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULATION
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this regulation is to provide guidelines governing the promotion and retention of students attending schools in the St. Louis Public School District. It establishes system-wide criteria with clearly defined standards and procedures for implementing the policy. The intent is to afford each student with opportunities and support to progress academically and, ultimately, to be prepared to graduate from District high schools ready to pursue postsecondary opportunities and 21st century careers.

STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION

Promotion decisions are based upon multiple criteria (e.g., teacher-made assessments, homework, portfolios, curriculum-embedded assessments, and teacher observation of student performance). Students who do not meet the prerequisite grade-level standards for success at the next grade level in communication arts (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and mathematics will receive targeted interventions and be required to participate in extended programs (e.g., before, during and/or after school tutorials, Saturday school and/or summer school).

A student's progress towards mastery of the grade-level content standards will be measured by curriculum-embedded assessments, standardized District assessments (e.g., TerraNova, Acuity, End of Course benchmarks), and current grade-level achievement. The student will be promoted if the established grade-level criteria are met or exceeded, as evidenced by the student receiving a passing grade in core subjects.

SLPS GRADING SCALE

90% - 100% A = Excellent or Outstanding
80% - 89% B = Above Average
70% - 79% C = Average
60% - 69% D = Poor/ Below Average
Below 60% F = Failure

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

KINDERGARTEN: To be promoted to grade 1, a student must meet the following requirements:

- demonstrate mastery of the communication arts (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) standards.
- demonstrate mastery of the mathematics standards.

GRADE 1: To be promoted to grade 2, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.

GRADE 2: To be promoted to grade 3, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.

GRADE 3: To be promoted to grade 4, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
 - **Retention decisions based on reading proficiency:** Senate Bill 319 requires students in grade 3 who are reading below a second-grade level to receive a “Reading Improvement Plan.” The Reading Improvement Plan must include, at a minimum, 30 hours of additional reading instruction outside of the regular school day during the fourth-grade year. The student may be required to attend summer school as a condition of promotion to the fourth grade.
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.

GRADE 4: To be promoted to grade 5, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing). To pass, students must earn a passing grade on course work and a passing score on a grade-level assessment in reading.
 - **Retention decisions based on reading proficiency:** Senate Bill 319 requires mandatory retention for a fourth-grade student who is reading below the third-grade level after the implementation of a “Reading Improvement Plan.” The Reading Improvement Plan must include, at a minimum, 30 hours of additional reading instruction outside of the regular school day during the fourth-grade year and mandatory summer school that offers a minimum of 40 hours of reading instruction. Retention requirements will be in place for a fourth-grade student who is reading below the third-grade level at the end of summer school.
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.
- receive a passing grade in science or social studies.

GRADE 5: To be promoted to grade 6, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
 - **Retention decisions based on reading proficiency:** Senate Bill 319 requires the District to “continually assess students with Reading Improvement Plans” to ensure that students are making progress towards attaining proficiency in reading at the end of 5th-grade.
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.
- receive a passing grade in science.
- receive a passing grade in social studies.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

GRADE 6: To be promoted to grade 7, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
 - **Retention decisions based on reading proficiency:** Senate Bill 319 requires the District to “continually assess students with Reading Improvement Plans” to ensure that students are making progress towards attaining proficiency in reading at the end of 6th-grade.
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.
- receive a passing grade in science.
- receive a passing grade in social studies.

GRADE 7: To be promoted to grade 8, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.
- receive a passing grade in science.
- receive a passing grade in social studies.

GRADE 8: To be promoted to grade 9, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in communication arts (reading and writing).
- receive a passing grade in mathematics.
- receive a passing grade in science.
- receive a passing grade in social studies.

HIGH SCHOOL PROMOTION GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

GRADE 9: To be promoted to grade 10, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in a required English course.
- receive a passing grade in a required mathematics course.
- receive a passing grade in a required science course.
- receive a passing grade in a required social studies course.
- earn the prerequisite number of credits to be classified as a sophomore.

GRADE 10: To be promoted to grade 11, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in a required English course.
- receive a passing grade in a required mathematics course.
- receive a passing grade in a required science course.
- receive a passing grade in a required social studies course.
- earn the prerequisite number of credits to be classified as a junior.

GRADE 11: To be promoted to grade 12, a student must meet the following requirements:

- receive a passing grade in a required English course.
- receive a passing grade in a required mathematics course.
- receive a passing grade in a required science course.
- receive a passing grade in a required social studies course.
- earn the prerequisite number of credits to be classified as a senior.

GRADE 12: To graduate, a student must earn 24 units of credits in the following core requirements:

- Four (4) units of credit in communication arts
- Three (3) units of credit in mathematics
- Three (3) units of credit in science
- Three units (3) of credit in social studies
- One (1) unit of credit in fine arts
- One (1) unit of credit in practical arts
- One (1) unit of credit in physical education
- One-half (1/2) unit of credit in personal finance

(Note: Personal finance taught by a certificated social studies teacher *may* count as one-half unit of credit of social studies.)

- One-half (1/2) unit of credit in health
- Students must also pass the Missouri and the U.S. Constitution exams.

Note: Students who have completed their required courses prior to the end of their fourth year in high school should be enrolled in elective course established by the individual high schools (including Advanced Placement courses, internships, community service activities, and independent study programs) or in dual enrollment courses in local colleges and universities.

Grade level classification is determined by units of credits students earn on the path to on-time graduation.

1. Classifications:

SLPS High School students must accumulate the appropriate number of credits to be classified as a freshman, sophomore, junior or senior.

The Grade Level Classifications and required number of credits are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| a. Freshman | 0-6 units of credit |
| b. Sophomore | 7 or more units of credit |
| c. Junior | 13 or more units of credit |
| d. Senior | 19 or more units of credit |

2. In order to earn one standard unit of high school credit, a student must earn a passing grade in that course. A standard unit of credit is defined by a course that meets for seven thousand eight hundred thirty (7,830) minutes during a school year. Half-and quarter-units of credit may be earned for courses meeting proportionately fewer minutes.

Note: Schools may establish standards that exceed the minimum requirements established by this regulation.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISIONS (STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES)

Missouri State Law (Senate Bill 319 and State Statute 162.1100) may exempt students receiving special education services from the promotion/retention requirements in reading. Students with disabilities are protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and are governed by law.

The following standards will be adhered to for students with disabilities:

- Goals must be aligned with the general core curriculum to enable a student to master the expected competencies to the maximum extent appropriate to their individualized needs and documented on the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- Consideration will be given on an individual basis to the possible accommodations and modifications that a student needs to demonstrate academic progress.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISIONS (ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS)

Missouri State Law (Senate Bill 319 and State Statute 162.1100) may exempt ELLs from the promotion/retention requirements. It is essential for the success of ELLs that instruction in all of the curricular areas be aligned with the student's level of English proficiency and supported by the necessary and required additional and appropriate services.

- Mastery in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as other core curricular areas will be measured through curriculum-embedded assessments and annual measurable benchmark gains.
- ELLs who are initially assessed at the beginning levels of English proficiency will not be considered candidates for retention during the first three years of enrollment in English language programs. However, these students will be expected to meet established World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards.
- ELLs who are assessed at the intermediate and advanced levels of English proficiency may be considered for retention when it is determined that the students have not met the achievement standards established for English-only students and the ELP prerequisite standards appropriate for the proficiency level and grade level.
- ELLs who are at/or above the advanced level and are fluent in English may be considered for retention when it is determined that the students have not met the achievement standards for their grade levels.

OVERALL PROMOTION AND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS GRADES 1-8

1. In kindergarten through eighth grade, retention shall be considered only when it is in the best interest of the student based on the assessed needs, specifically in reading and/or math. Prior to a retention decision, strategic interventions will be implemented to address the areas of deficiency. Students will be required to participate in identified interventions for promotion. Retention will be considered only after ongoing, sustained, and intensive intervention efforts have been unsuccessful.
2. Each school site will be responsible for implementing strategic interventions and the maintenance of records (e.g., Individual Academic Plan) of systematic classroom and support interventions for students not making progress toward mastery of content standards. Prescribed interventions will be designed to address lack of growth toward attainment of prerequisite content standards with documentation on the Individual Academic Plan (IAP) starting at kindergarten.
3. Retention recommendations will be made by the teacher and principal after a careful and systematic review of documentation of interventions administered over time that addressed the student's communication arts (reading and writing) and/or math deficiencies. Parents have the right to request an administrative review to appeal the final decision.

PROCEDURES FOR POTENTIAL RETENTION CANDIDATES GRADES 3-8

The following procedures are to be followed for a student in grades 3-8 who has been identified as at-risk of being retained for not meeting subject or grade level standards, specifically in communication arts (reading and writing):

- a. At the beginning of the school year, the Office of Accountability and Assessment will provide a summary report for students in grades 3-8, identifying any “at-risk” student who is performing one or more grade levels below the student’s grade level in reading.
- b. The principal and referring/grade level content teacher will collaborate to develop appropriate interventions to address the student’s identified deficiencies. An individualized “Reading Improvement Plan,” encompassed in the IAP, shall be implemented. Additionally, a variety of options will be considered to address areas of deficiency:
 - analyzing and modifying current instructional strategies or materials;
 - providing access to additional instructional time (before, during, after school or Saturdays);
 - providing tutoring (before, during, after school or Saturdays);
 - adjusting the schedule to meet the needs of the students;
 - modifying the students’ classroom assignments;
 - referring students to other support services (e.g. social service, health-related services); and/or
 - collaborating and problem-solving with other individuals who may have an impact on the student’s achievement.
- c. The St. Louis Public School District’s Retention Checklist will be implemented for each identified student.
- d. At the conclusion of the school year’s first semester, each school will provide the superintendent/designee with a list of those students previously identified who continue to read more than one grade level below their current grade placement level.
- e. The assigned Central Office personnel will work collaboratively in the determination of additional interventions/efforts to be implemented for the designated students.
- f. The scheduled interventions and monitoring will be implemented for the identified students.
- g. At the end of each school term, the principal shall send the superintendent/designee a summary report of retained students, including information regarding their deficiencies, attendance, recommendations, and other information deemed relevant by the superintendent/designee.
- h. Any student who is retained or remains at-risk, even though they were promoted, will be provided with additional safety-net supports, including tutoring and Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies.

MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS ANNUALLY TOWARD PROMOTION

Each school will have the responsibility for providing ongoing, data-driven reviews of student progress and performance. Academic feedback and planning for individual student success is the shared responsibility of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other school site staff. Monitoring student progress towards achievement of state standards is the responsibility of the principal and school staff.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Every teacher, administrator, parent and other adult staff member in the school community shares in the collective responsibility to ensure that students achieve success in SLPS.

- **Central Office personnel are responsible** for working with principals and teachers, providing high-quality professional development, technical assistance, and support to ensure that schools have the resources to improve student learning outcomes.
- **Schools are responsible** for ensuring that students have a safe, high-quality, supportive learning environment with a highly qualified teacher where every student has the opportunity to maximize their potential.
- **Parents are responsible** for ensuring their children attend school daily, arrive on time, and are ready to learn.
- **Students are responsible** for coming to school and class on time every day prepared to work. Students will be encouraged to attain at least 90% attendance.

PARENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Board policy requires parent notification and involvement in the implementation of:

- prescribed interventions; and/or
- retention; and/or
- grade/course acceleration decisions.

The support and approval of parents/guardians are important factors contributing to a student's success. Parents should be notified of the student's lack of progress and the decision not to promote their child. Parents will be advised in the early part of the school year, but not later than the Fall parent-teacher conference, that the student's performance in core content areas is falling below standards (refer to the SLPS grading scale). Early notification to parents will provide the opportunity to review student work, discuss support strategies and interventions, establish benchmarks for improvement, and clarify responsibilities in moving the student towards successful completion of grade-level requirements toward promotion. Schools are responsible for maintaining records of ongoing communication with parents (i.e., phone calls, report cards, parent-teacher conferences, assessment of the student's work, and instructional interventions and progress). The spring parent-teacher conference offers an additional opportunity to discuss student progress toward achieving promotion at the end of the school year.

Decisions regarding promotion and retention will be made with the appropriate staff input and parent consultation. Parents have the right to appeal the decision to promote or retain a child. Parents must submit a written appeal to the principal within 10 days after the formal decision is made to retain or promote the child. All promotion or retention decisions on appeal will be reviewed by the District Superintendent or designee; the final decision on the appeal will be made by the District Superintendent or designee.

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