

STUDENT PROMOTION AND RETENTION (REGULATION)

The decision of whether to promote a student to the next grade or to retain him or her in the current grade is a decision that the Stillwater Board of Education considers to be very important. Whether a student passes or fails an individual class is also important. Therefore, the process to make final determination of such situations shall be as follows:

The educational program shall provide for the continuous progress of students from grade to grade, with students generally spending one school year in each grade. However, retention may be considered in the following situation:

- The student is in grade pre-k-3rd, or, on rare occasions, when the student is in grades 4-8,
 - The student is achieving significantly below expected grade-level performance, and
 - The student has not been previously retained.
1. ~~Any third grade student who demonstrates end-of-year proficiency in reading at the third grade level through a screening instrument which meets the acquisition of reading skills criteria shall not be subject to retention. Upon demonstrating proficiency through screening, the district shall provide notification to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the student that they have satisfied the requirements of the Reading Sufficiency Act and will not be subject to retention pursuant to this section.~~
 2. ~~If a kindergarten to third grade student is identified at any point of the academic year as having a significant reading deficiency, which shall be defined as not meeting grade level targets on a screening instrument which meets the acquisition of reading skills criteria, the district shall immediately begin an Academic Progress Plan (APP) and shall provide notice to the parent of the deficiency.~~
 3. ~~If a student has not yet satisfied the proficiency requirements of this section prior to the completion of third grade and still has a significant deficiency, as identified based on assessments administered as required by law, or is not subject to a good cause exemption, then the student shall not be eligible for automatic promotion to fourth grade.~~
 4. ~~The minimum criteria for grade level performance of third grade students pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act shall be that students are able to read and comprehend grade level text. To determine the promotion and retention of third grade students pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act, the State Board of Education shall use only the scores for reading foundations/processes and vocabulary portions of the statewide third grade assessment and administered pursuant to Oklahoma law. The performance levels established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability shall ensure that students meeting the performance level criteria are performing at grade level on the reading foundations and vocabulary portions of the statewide third grade assessment.~~
 5. ~~A student not eligible for automatic promotion as provided for under paragraph 3 of this subsection and who does not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portion of the statewide third grade assessment may be evaluated for "probationary promotion" by the Student Reading Proficiency Team. The Student Reading Proficiency Team shall be composed of:
 - (1) the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the student,
 - (2) the teacher assigned to the student who had responsibility for reading instruction in that academic year,
 - (3) a teacher who is responsible for reading instruction and is assigned to teach in the next grade level of the student, and
 - (4) a certified reading specialist.~~

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The student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the team members unanimously recommend “probationary promotion” to the school principal and the school district superintendent or designee for their approval. If a student is allowed a “probationary promotion”, the team shall continue to review the reading performance of the student and repeat the requirements of this paragraph each academic year until the student demonstrates grade level reading proficiency, as identified through a screening instrument which meets the acquisition of reading skills criteria, for the corresponding grade level in which the student is enrolled, or transitions to a locally designed remediation plan after the fifth grade which shall have the goal of ensuring that the student is on track to be college and career ready.

6. ~~Students who do not meet the performance criteria established by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability on the reading portion of the statewide third grade assessment and who are not subject to a good cause exemption, and who do not qualify for “probationary promotion” and have not met the state approved screening instrument shall be retained in the third grade and provided intensive instructional services and supports.~~
7. ~~The school district shall annually report to the State Department of Education the number of students promoted to the fourth grade as required by law.~~

A third grade student may be promoted for a “good cause” exemption if the student meets one of the following statutory exemptions:

- (1) ~~English language learner students who have had less than two years of instruction in an English language learner program;~~
- (2) ~~Students with disabilities whose individualized education plans, consistent with state law, indicates that the student is to be assessed with alternative achievement standards through the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP);~~
- (3) ~~Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education;~~
- (4) ~~Students who demonstrate through a student portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the state standards beyond the retention level;~~
- (5) ~~Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide criterion-referenced tests and who have an individualized education plan that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation for reading and has made adequate progress in reading pursuant to the student’s individualized education program;~~
- (6) ~~Students who have received intensive remediation in reading through a program of reading instruction for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in pre-kindergarten for academic reasons, kindergarten, first grade, second grade or third grade for a total of two years; and~~
- (7) ~~Students who have been granted an exemption for medical emergencies by the State Department of Education.~~

~~Requests to exempt students from the mandatory retention requirements based on one of the good cause exemptions shall be made using the following process:~~

1. ~~Documentation submitted from the teacher of the student to the school principal that indicates the student meets one of the good cause exemptions and promotion of the student is appropriate. Documentation shall be limited to the alternative assessment results or student portfolio work and the individualized education plan (IEP), as applicable;~~

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2. ~~The principal of the school shall review and discuss the documentation with the teacher. If the principal determines that the student meets one of the good cause exemptions and should be promoted based on the documentation provided, the principal shall make a recommendation in writing to the school district superintendent or designee; and~~
3. ~~After review, the school district superintendent or designee shall accept or reject the recommendation of the principal in writing.~~

~~In the elementary and middle schools, a placement committee consisting of the principal, counselor, and teacher(s) shall determine if a student is to be assigned to the next higher grade. The committee shall consider, among other factors, standardized test scores and the student's age.~~

Teachers and administrators are expected to adhere to the district's retention regulations when considering retention as an educational recommendation. These regulations will be reviewed annually to ascertain their continuing efficiency and applicability.

Retention considerations should take place in a timely manner. Retention discussions regarding identified students with disabilities will include the special education director.

When considering the retention of a student in grades Pre-Kindergarten through second and fourth through eighth, these steps will be followed.

Step One:

1. Prior to the end of the third quarter of the school year, a profile of the student is compiled by the school team (principal, teacher, specialists, etc.).
2. The profile may include the review of the student's cumulative records, including, but not limited to attendance, behavior, health information, interventions, special referrals, tests, work samples, progress reports, and classroom observation and documentation.
3. The team, including the parent, will meet to review the profile and discuss the student's progress.
4. Unsuccessful attempts to involve the parent/guardian will result in school personnel conducting the meeting in their absence and inform the parent/guardian in writing of the student's progress and consideration for retention.

Step Two:

1. Prior to the end of the school year, a grade placement conference with the parent/guardian will take place to review the student's progress.
2. A final decision regarding retention shall be made.
3. Parents will be provided a written copy and an explanation of the appeal process.
4. Unsuccessful attempts to involve the parent/guardian will result in school personnel conducting the meeting in their absence and inform the parent/guardian in writing of the grade placement decision and the appeal process.

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Retention Appeal

Whenever a school team recommends that a student be retained at the present grade level, the parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the principal within ten calendar days of receipt of the retention recommendation. The principal will review information and documentation and communicate a decision in writing to the parent or guardian within ten calendar days.

The parent or guardian may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent within ten calendar days of receipt of the written decision. The superintendent shall review the previous decision and consider new information. The superintendent shall communicate a decision in writing to the parent or guardian within ten calendar days.

The parent or guardian may appeal the superintendent's decision to the Stillwater Board of Education by requesting placement on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board or a special meeting called for that purpose. The board shall review the previous decisions and consider additional information as it deems appropriate. The decision of the board shall be final. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the board's decision, he/she may prepare a written statement to be placed in and become a part of the permanent record of the student, stating the reason(s) for disagreeing with the decision.

If the parent or guardian supports retention of the child and the final decision of the school district is to promote, the decision of the board is also final. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the board's decision, he/she may prepare a written statement to be placed in and become a part of the permanent record of the student, stating the reason(s) for disagreeing with the decision.

Failure in any step of this procedure to appeal to the next level within the specified time limits shall be deemed to be acceptance of the decision at that level. Failure to communicate the decision at any step of this procedure within the specified time limits shall permit the parent or guardian to proceed to the next level. Time limits at any level may be extended by mutual agreement, and such agreement shall be in writing.

Midyear Promotion to Fourth Grade

~~A student retained in third grade in accordance with the Reading Sufficiency Act may be eligible for a midyear promotion to fourth grade. The midyear promotion of a retained student will be considered if the student demonstrates that the student is a successful and independent reader, is reading at or above grade level, and is ready to be promoted to the fourth grade. Tools that may be utilized to reevaluate any retained student may include subsequent assessments, alternative assessments, and portfolio reviews, in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education. Retained students may only be promoted midyear prior to November 1 and only upon demonstrating a level of proficiency required to score at or above the proficiency level on the third grade statewide criterion referenced test and upon showing progress sufficient to master appropriate fourth grade level skills, as determined by the school district. A midyear promotion shall be made only upon the agreement of the parent/guardian of the student and the school principal.~~

REFERENCE: 70 O.S. §24-114.1
70 O.S. §1210.508C