

Regulation

PROMOTION AND RETENTION (KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 8)

The educational program of the Passaic Public Schools is dedicated to the development of each student to his or her maximum potential.

- A. Although the primary determinant for promotion will be the academic progress of the student, including his/her mastery of the state grade-level curriculum standards or modification(s) thereof, the following factors should also be taken into consideration before deciding grade placements:
 - 1. Student ability and effort;
 - 2. Previous retentions;
 - 3. Student attendance;
 - 4. English language proficiency; and
 - 5. History of academic interventions and remediation efforts.

- B. Retentions shall be considered:
 - 1. When the student has not met the state grade-level curriculum standards or modification(s) thereof, in accordance with the Grading and Reporting board policy;
 - 2. Upon recommendation by the Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) committee and the school-based retention review committee;
 - 3. When the retention would have a reasonable chance of benefiting the student totally.

Standards for Student Promotion

- A. Curriculum Requirements
Students will be promoted if they have met their course requirements and are progressing in accordance with the district's curriculum, as aligned to the state standards.

Equal emphasis should be placed on both reading skills and math skills. Although the student's academic progress and their ability to meet the state standards are the primary determinants for retention, the recommendations for promotion, as described below, should also be taken into consideration before deciding grade placements.

- B. Promotion
Criteria for promotion includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Evidence of satisfactory student performance, including grades; work samples; district assessments and tests, and individual class assignments and tests/assessments will be used to determine student grades in a subject, in accordance with the Grading and Reporting policy. Such coursework may include the following:
 - i. Writing portfolios demonstrating progress over the academic year;

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- ii. Benchmark assessments demonstrating satisfactory understanding of grade level standards;
 - iii. Completion of classroom assignments and projects; and
 - iv. Teacher observations and notes relevant to student progress, such as running records and anecdotal notes.
 2. An average of 63, letter grade “D”, or indication of “Satisfactory Progress/ Meeting Standards” shall be considered a passing grade.
 3. Parents and students will be provided a minimum of four reports each year as to a student's progress towards meeting promotion standards.
- C. Intervention Programming
 1. Intervention opportunities must be offered to students averaging below a 70, or letter grade C-.
 2. Intervention opportunities may be offered during the school day, before or after school, on Saturdays, and/or during the summer.
 3. Students who do not attend the appropriate before or after school, Saturday, or summer intervention programs may not be eligible for promotion.
 4. Participation in intervention programs does not guarantee promotion; and
 5. The retention review committee may include participation in intervention programs as criteria for promotion.
- D. Summer School
 1. Students who do not demonstrate mastery of the state standards in Mathematics and/or English Language Arts (ELA) in accordance with the Grading and Reporting policy will be required to attend summer school.
 2. Attendance at the summer school will not guarantee promotion.
 3. The principal may use student performance in summer school criteria for promotion.
- E. Retention
 1. Every effort should be made to meet individual needs by means of remediation as an ongoing part of the student's educational program as evidenced through appropriate interventions, intervention and referral team files, and review by student support services, including the guidance counselor and/or social worker.
 2. It is not advisable to retain students unable to meet the district's minimum reading standards and the district's minimum mathematics standards when they are demonstrating significant effort, including attendance in before or after school, Saturday, and summer academic programs, working to their abilities, exhibit acceptable attendance patterns and the retention will cause them to be two or more years older than their classmates.
 3. Whenever possible, the principal or his/her designee will inform the parent if the student is being considered for retention by the end of the second marking period or the second half of the course.

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4. Principals should confer with the student's teachers, a learning disability specialist, school counselor and/or social worker, and the student's parents prior to finalizing retentions.
5. Students identified for retention will be required to attend the summer academic program, and may have the retention reconsidered at the conclusion of the summer program.
6. When the student has been retained and still functions below the state standards, a request for screening and consultation will be submitted to the child study team. Students who are retained in a grade must have an instructional plan for the following year developed by the retaining teacher(s), in consultation with the Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee.
7. The final decisions for grade placements will be determined by the building principals.
8. The parent/guardian will be notified no later than four (4) weeks prior to the end of the year when the possibility of a student not being promoted is determined.
9. Parents/guardians may appeal a retention decision to the Superintendent, whose decision shall be final. All appeals must be made no later than ten (10) days after the start of the school year.

F. Acceleration

1. Acceleration may include additional and advanced coursework in a student's current grade/classroom or movement from one grade level to a higher grade level.
2. Students must be consistently performing at a minimum of one grade level above their assigned grade in all subject areas, as evidenced by district and/or state curriculum-aligned assessments.
3. Students' social maturity and emotional growth are consistent with the academic grade level for which they are being considered.
4. The principal or his designee will inform the parent as soon as possible if the student is being considered for acceleration.
5. Students evaluated for acceleration must show a consistent attendance record in school and participate in the evaluation assessments determined by the district.
6. Parents/guardians may request that a student is considered for acceleration prior to or within the first ten (10) days of school, at which time the above process will be initiated.
7. A letter of acceptance by the parent/guardian of the change in grade status must be completed and submitted.
8. Parents/guardians may appeal an acceleration decision to the Superintendent, whose decision shall be final.

Attendance

In accordance with the Attendance, Absences, and Excuse policy, students must meet the district requirements for attendance in accordance with state regulations.

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Retention Review Committee

Classroom teachers shall provide input to the principal who makes the decision concerning the promotion or retention of each student.

Each school shall convene a retention review committee to assess recommendations for retention, prior to any action on the school's part. The committee shall be made up of the principal and/or assistant principal, teacher(s), and members of the student support services team including the school guidance counselor and/or school social worker.

Principals will make the final determinations relative to grade placements.

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