

Bearden Elementary School Policy 606

PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND FAILING GRADES PASS/FAILURE

PURPOSE: To provide information of parents'/guardians' right of appeals concerning promotion, retention and failing grades of students as required by Oklahoma law.

**Definitions**

*Promote or promotion* - This policy means to place a student successfully completing 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 the current grade level has been successfully completed.

*Retain or retention* - This policy is designed not 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 the current grade level has not been successfully completed.

*Grades 6-8 Promotion Policy*, A student shall be promoted to the next grade providing the student has earned five (5) units, four (4) of which must be in academic subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. If the student has failed to earn credit in as many as four (4) academic subjects, the student shall be retained in the same grade or be required to attend summer school before being promoted to the next grade.

As used in this policy, means the student is assigned a failing semester grade in a course of study and the failing grade will be recorded on the student's permanent cumulative record.

**Retention based on the Reading Sufficiency Act**

The District's Reading Sufficiency Testing Policy states that reading sufficiency testing will be conducted in the District to ensure that each student has attained the necessary reading skills upon completion of the third grade.

Beginning with students entering the first grade in the 2011-2012 school year, a student identified as having a reading deficiency, based on administered assessments, that is not remedied by the end of third grade, as demonstrated by scoring at the satisfactory level on the reading portion of the third-grade criterion-referenced test, shall be retained in the third grade. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

For students who do not meet the academic requirements for promotion, the District may promote the student for good cause only. Good-cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

1. Limited English-proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English language learner program;
2. Students on an individualized education plan (IEP) which indicates that participation in the statewide criterion-referenced tests are not appropriate;
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 on an IEP that reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade; or
6. Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade for a total of two (2) years. A student who is promoted according to this paragraph shall be provided intensive reading instruction during an altered instructional day that includes specialized

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diagnostic information and specific reading strategies for that student. The school district shall assist schools and teachers to implement research based reading strategies for the promoted student shown to be successful in improving reading among low-performing readers.

In addition to the good-cause exemptions set forth above, requests to exempt students from the academic requirements for promotion to the next grade shall only be made upon documentation, that shall consist only of a student portfolio, submitted from the teacher of the student to the school principal that indicates that the promotion of the student is appropriate and is based upon the record of the student.

The District will provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any student who is to be retained due to not meeting the reading proficiency required for promotion and the reasons the student is not eligible for a good-cause exemption. The notice shall contain a description of proposed interventions and intensive instructional supports that will be provided to the student to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.

#### **Grade Promotion After Participation in Summer Academy Programs**

If, by the end of the second quarter of the school year, a teacher determines that a third grade student is not reading at grade level, the parent or guardian shall be notified of the student's current reading level, the proposed program of reading instruction for the student, and the potential need for the student to participate in a summer academy or other program designed to assist the student in attaining grade-level reading skills.

A teacher who determines that a third grade student is unable to meet the reading competencies required for completion of third grade shall, after consultation with the parent or guardian of the student, recommend that the promotion of the student to the fourth grade be contingent upon the participation in and successful completion of the required reading competencies at a summer academy or other program. If the student does not participate in the summer academy or other program or does not successfully complete the reading competencies in the summer academy or other program, the student shall be retained in the third grade.

Third grade students who are on an IEP for reading and have met all of their IEP goals are not eligible to attend a Reading Sufficiency Act summer academy reading program.

#### **Mid-Year Promotion of Retained Third Graders**

The District implements the following policy for mid-year promotion of a third grade student retained due to a reading deficiency. Retained third grade students may only be promoted midyear to fourth grade prior to November 1 of the academic year. To be eligible for mid-year promotion, the student must demonstrate that he or she:

1. is a successful and independent reader, reading at or above grade level; and
2. is ready to be promoted to fourth grade; and
3. is demonstrating a level of reading proficiency required to score above the unsatisfactory level on the third-grade statewide criterion-referenced test; and
4. is showing progress sufficient to master appropriate fourth-grade level skills, as determined by the District. The tools that the District may use, in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education, in reevaluating a retained third grade student may include:

1. subsequent assessments,
2. alternative assessments,
3. portfolio reviews.

A mid-year promotion shall only be made upon agreement of the parent or guardian of the student and the school principal.

#### **Promotion/Retention and Failing Courses**

Bearden will form a committee to review and make decisions regarding retention and promotion. The committee must be composed of two classroom teacher, the principal and additional personnel who may be assigned by the principal or Superintendent, when

appropriate. Teachers selected to the committee must be familiar with the student's work in the subject areas of concern.

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

- Testing - Actually covers the subject matter presented to the student.
- Assignments - Directly related to the subject matter being taught.
- 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 listed above.

The student and the parent/guardian must be made aware of the possibility of the student's impending retention or failing grade in a course. Any student in danger of being retained or failing a course will be notified as soon as it becomes apparent that performance may be insufficient. The student's parents/guardians will be mailed a written notice. If the notification to the parents/guardians is by telephone, written documentation of the conversation should be maintained. The school staff will make every effort to help the student improve academic standing.

Promotion will be determined by successfully completed units of instruction to be established by the Superintendent.

### **Appeal Process**

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

*First Level of Appeal:* The Child's teacher

The parent/guardian may request review of the initial decision by letter to the Superintendent. If no request is received within five school days of the parent's/guardian's receipt of written notification of the initial decision, the initial decision will be final and nonappealable.

*Second Level of Appeal:* (to Superintendent or Designee)

The parent/guardian may request review of the Teacher's decision by letter to the Superintendent or designee. If no request is received within five school days of the parent's/guardian's receipt of Teachers written notification of the decision, the decision will be final and nonappealable.

*Final Level of Appeal:* (to Board of Education)

The parent/guardian may request review of the Superintendent's decision by letter to the Clerk of the Board. If no request is received within five school days of the parent's/guardian's receipt of the Superintendent's or designee's written notification of the decision, the decision will be final. The parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the Board meeting at which the decision will be reviewed. The Board's decision will be final and nonappealable. The parent/guardian may prepare a written statement giving reason(s) for disagreement, if any. The written statement will be placed in and become a part of the student's permanent cumulative record.

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