

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Code **IKE-R** Adopted **10/17**

Read to Succeed State-Mandated Third Grade Retention

Early in the school year and/or when a third grade student transfers to a district or school, parents/legal guardians will be given a general notice regarding the requirements for promotion and retention.

Retention conference

During the second grading period of the third grade, parents/legal guardians of students that are not demonstrating third-grade reading proficiency will be notified in writing that their child is being considered for retention. A parent/teacher conference will be scheduled and held, at which time the conference participants will review the student's intensive instruction and intervention plan. Within two weeks following the parent/teacher conference, copies of the plan will be provided to the principal, parent/legal guardian, teacher, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy.

If a parent/legal guardian is unable to attend the conference after two varied attempts at contact, the parent/legal guardian should be mailed a copy of the student's intensive instruction and intervention plan.

An additional parent/teacher conference will be held during the third nine-week grading period for students still being considered for retention.

Retention determination

The principal, classroom teacher, and other school personnel who are working with the child on literacy will review the recommendation for retention and provide suggestions for supplemental instruction. Recommendations and observations of the principal, teacher, parent/legal guardian, and other school personnel who are working with the student on literacy will be considered when determining whether to retain the student.

If it is determined that retention is appropriate, the student may be eligible to enroll in a summer reading camp provided by the district. District summer reading camps will be operated in accordance with the guidelines provided by the South Carolina Department of Education. Parents/Legal guardians may elect to opt their child out of participation in summer reading camp, with the understanding that the child will be unable to qualify for a good cause exemption on that ground. Information regarding the summer camp will be provided by the school or can be requested from the district office.

Good cause exemption determinations

To request an exemption for good cause, the teacher of a student identified as potentially meeting one of the state-approved exemptions will submit documentation to the principal on the proposed exemption and include evidence that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the student's academic record. This evidence will be limited to the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), alternative assessments, or student reading portfolio.

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The principal will review the documentation and determine whether the student should be promoted. If the principal determines the student should be promoted, the principal will submit a written recommendation for promotion to the superintendent for final determination.

The superintendent will determine whether a student may be exempted from the mandatory retention policy. The superintendent's acceptance or rejection of the principal's recommendation will be in writing and a copy will be provided to the child's parent/legal guardian.

Good cause exemption determinations for students with disabilities

A third grade student with disabilities will be exempt from the mandatory retention policy if the student is eligible to take a South Carolina alternative assessment and receives instruction aligned to the state's alternative achievement standards, or the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years.

To demonstrate intensive remediation in reading, there must be:

- documentation that the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance have resulted in one or more annual goals and that the student received specialized instruction and/or related services in the area of reading for two or more years
- documentation of intensive general education interventions in the area of reading for two or more years
- a combination of special education services and intensive general education intervention in the area of reading for two or more years

Any evidence submitted to document intensive remediation or evidence-based interventions will be in addition to the student's 90 minutes of daily reading and writing instruction as required by law.

Appeal of a retention determination

A parent/legal guardian may appeal the decision to retain a student to the superintendent if there is a compelling reason why the student should not be retained. To initiate an appeal, the parent/legal guardian must notify the superintendent in writing within two weeks after receiving notification of the retention decision. The letter must be addressed to the superintendent and must include the reasons why the student should not be retained. The superintendent will render a final, written decision and provide copies to the parent/legal guardian and the principal.

Appointment of an education advocate

Parents/Legal guardians are permitted to designate another person as an education advocate to act on their behalf to receive notification of their child's level of reading proficiency and to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the child. Parents/Legal guardians interested in appointing such an advocate should contact the principal in writing to make their request.

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