

**PROMOTION/ACCELERATION/RETENTION****Acceleration from Kindergarten to First Grade**

Any student who meets the age eligibility requirement and has completed one year of kindergarten shall be admitted to first grade unless the parent/guardian and the Superintendent or designee agree that the student shall continue in kindergarten. (Education Code 48010, 48011)

*(cf. 5111 - Admission)*

A student who does not meet the age eligibility requirement may be admitted to first grade at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee and with the consent of the parent/guardian upon determination that the student is ready for first-grade work, subject to the following minimum criteria: (Education Code 48011; 5 CCR 200)

1. The student is at least five years of age.
2. The student has attended a public school kindergarten for a long enough time to enable school personnel to evaluate his/her ability.
3. The student is in the upper five percent of his/her age group in terms of general mental ability.
4. The physical development and social maturity of the student are consistent with his/her advanced mental ability.
5. The parent/guardian of the student has filed a written statement with the district approving the placement in first grade.

**Continuation in Kindergarten**

Whenever the Superintendent or designee and the parents/guardians agree that a student shall continue in kindergarten for an additional year, the Superintendent or designee shall secure an agreement, signed by the parent/guardian, stating that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. (Education Code 46300, 48011)

The Superintendent or designee shall not approve a student's continuation in kindergarten until the student has been enrolled in kindergarten for close to one school year.

**PROMOTION/ACCELERATION/RETENTION****Retention at Other Grade Levels**

If a student is identified as performing below the minimum standard for promotion to the next grade level based on the indicators specified in Board policy, the student shall be retained in his/her current grade level unless the student's regular classroom teacher determines, in writing, that retention is not the appropriate intervention for the student's academic deficiencies. This determination shall specify the reasons that retention is not appropriate for the student and shall include recommendations for interventions other than retention that, in the opinion of the teacher, are necessary to assist the student in attaining acceptable levels of academic achievement. (Education Code 48070.5)

*(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)*

*(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)*

*(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)*

If the teacher's recommendation to promote is contingent on the student's participation in a summer school or interim session remediation program, the student's academic performance shall be reassessed at the end of the remediation program, and the decision to retain or promote the student shall be reevaluated at that time. The teacher's evaluation shall be provided to and discussed with the student's parents/guardians and the principal before any final determination of retention or promotion. (Education Code 48070.5)

*(cf. 6176 - Weekend/Saturday Classes)*

*(cf. 6177 - Summer Learning Programs)*

*(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)*

When a student is identified as being at risk of retention, the Superintendent or designee shall so notify the student's parent/guardian as early in the school year as practicable. The student's parent/guardian shall be provided an opportunity to consult with the teacher(s) responsible for the decision to promote or retain the student. (Education Code 48070.5)

*(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)*

The Superintendent or designee shall also provide a copy of the district's promotion/retention policy and administrative regulation to those

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parents/guardians who have been notified that their child is at risk of retention.

**At Risk Designation**

School personnel shall formulate annually, no later than October 31, a list of names of students whose performance is found to be comparably below “grade level standards” based on ~~other~~ data (including “test histories” where available), classroom work, report card grades and such information as may be available or developed “on an individual basis.” This inclusive listing shall include all currently enrolled students who are “at risk of being retained” at each school and grade level.

In case of Special Education participants, the determination of “at risk” status shall be based on the IEP process as reviewed by the appropriate classroom and/or Special Education teacher. English Language Learners shall be held to the same “grade level standards” but shall not be retained because of their language proficiency level.

School personnel shall then compile a listing of those students who are determined to be “at risk....,” subject to district-level review by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent for Schools. Following this review, school-level personnel shall meet with or otherwise notify the parents/guardians so listed after nine weeks before the end of the first semester to review this designation, program requirements, and parental rights of appeal. (This meeting and related notices shall conform to a model meeting format and letter to be developed by the district for use at the school level. The district shall also provide a checklist for the recording of the due completion (by date) of each step in the process under which students might be designated as “at risk” and, possibly, retained.)

Nine weeks before the end of the second semester of each school year, the status of each student previously identified as “at risk of being retained” shall be reviewed by the appropriate teachers in consultation with the Principal at each site, based on work which may have been completed subsequently in either the student’s regular classroom program and/or in such supplemental programs as have been provided. Parents shall be advised in writing at this time of a pending decision to recommend actual retention in grade and/or to require that a student attend summer school or other supplemental program. The appeal process shall be explained to parents.

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The determination that a student shall be retained and/or required to participate in specific remedial/supplemental programs subject to teacher approval, parental appeal(s) and district-level review, shall be based solely on an objective review of the student's performance with respect to "grade level standards." Students who are being retained may be placed at their previous grade level or may also be required to participate in designated programs during the upcoming school year. Pending a review of their subsequent performance (at the end of each semester) in these settings/programs, students who are then able to meet appropriate grade level standards may be returned to their prior grade placement (by cohort).

Final notice by certified mail shall be sent before the last day of school each year regarding promotion, placement and/or required program participation during the upcoming school year. A list of retained students will be submitted to the Elementary and Secondary Program Directors.

In the implementation of the above guidelines, personnel from the Division of Instruction shall be available to advise both school personnel and parents. The Division shall also provide test score data, and approved checklists, forms, sample letters, etc., to assist in the implementation of these policies/regulations.

No child may be retained more than once during grades K-5.

**Retention Policy at the Middle School and High School Levels**

1. Retention at the Middle School Level
  - a. The retention policy at the middle school level has been developed within the limits established by the district. Failure to complete one or more of the requirements below may result in a student not being promoted.
    - (1) Student success in the required course content during any semester in grades 6-8 or its equivalent as measured by teacher evaluation.
    - (2) Student progress in emotional, physical, and intellectual growth; exploration experiences; assimilation and application of skills; and socialization.

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- b. The principal of the middle school may advance a failing student because of over age.
2. Retention at the High School Level
  - a. High School students who fall behind grade level credit requirements are provided opportunities to remediate at Twilight School and Summer School.
  - b. A student may become ineligible for such privileges as participation in extra/co-curricular activities.

*(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular Activities)*

3. Retention of Special Education Students. Retention or acceleration of special students is a decision of the Individualized Education Program (I. E. P.) Team. Such decisions must be made in an IEP Team meeting and recorded on the IEP document.

**Appeal Process**

Whenever a student's parent/guardian appeals the teacher's decision to promote or retain a student, the burden shall be on the parent/guardian to show why the teacher's decision should be overruled. (Education Code 48070.5)

To appeal a teacher's decision, the parent/guardian shall submit a written request to the Superintendent or designee specifying the reasons that the teacher's decision should be overruled. The appeal must be initiated within 10 school days of the determination of retention or promotion.

The teacher shall be provided an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which his/her decision was based.

Within 30 days of receiving the request, the Superintendent or designee shall determine whether or not to overrule the teacher's decision. Prior to making this determination, the Superintendent or designee may meet with the parent/guardian and the teacher. If the Superintendent or designee determines that the parent/guardian has overwhelmingly proven that the teacher's decision should be overruled, he/she shall overrule the teacher's

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decision.

The Superintendent or designee's determination may be appealed by submitting a written appeal to the Governing Board within 15 school days. Within 30 days of receipt of a written appeal, the Board shall meet in closed session to decide the appeal. The Board's decision may be made on the basis of documentation prepared as part of the appeal process or, at the discretion of the Board, the Board may also meet with the parent/guardian, the teacher, and the Superintendent or designee to decide the appeal. The decision of the Board shall be final.

*(cf. 9321 - Closed Session Purposes and Agendas)*

*(cf. 9321.1 - Closed Session Actions and Reports)*

If the final decision is unfavorable to the parent/guardian, he/she shall have the right to submit a written statement of objections which shall become part of the student's record.

*(cf. 5125 - Student Records)*

*(cf. 5125.3 - Challenging Student Records)*

**Articulation Procedures Between School Levels****1. Articulation Between Elementary/Middle Schools**

a. Purpose. Articulation procedures and orientation programs are designed to assist in developing mutual respect for and understanding the educational programs in both elementary schools and middle schools. Articulation procedures must include ways of providing information for:

- (1) Elementary school students and their parents to facilitate a smooth transition to the middle school.
- (2) Parents of middle school students which will answer specific questions about the high school program.
- (3) Middle school personnel that will enable them to continue the guidance provided individual students in elementary school.

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2. Procedures. Although schools may modify individual programs to meet the needs of their students, it is important that all schools include the following articulation procedures.
  - a. Middle school personnel should visit elementary schools to inform students about the middle school program. When an elementary school contributes students to several middle schools, personnel at the middle schools should coordinate their visits to the elementary school.
  - b. Elementary school students and/or their parents should have an opportunity to visit the middle school which the student will attend. All elementary schools contributing to a middle school should be notified of visitation dates, even though only one or two students are scheduled to attend a given middle school.
  - c. Orientation meetings for parents of students in middle school are scheduled in March each year.
  - d. The middle school counselor should meet with elementary school personnel to discuss the needs of individual students, including those enrolled in special classes.
3. Suggested Additional Procedures. The development of mutual respect for and understanding of the educational programs of both elementary schools and middle schools can be facilitated by such procedures as the following:
  - a. Develop a regular schedule for visits to elementary school classes by middle school personnel.
  - b. Organize meetings that involve elementary school personnel and teachers representing various departments in middle school to discuss curricula, teaching methods, and problems. Such meetings should be held regularly.
  - c. Encourage visitations in both elementary schools and middle schools frequently enough to provide information concerning the present content of courses, methods of instruction, and guidance and counseling services.

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- d. Exchange curriculum publications frequently, and encourage teachers to become familiar with the curricula of both elementary schools and middle schools.
  - e. Plan in-service education projects that include both elementary and middle school teachers.
4. Transfer of Records to Middle Schools. The elementary school shall send the cumulative records, health cards, the physical fitness card, and other required documents to the middle schools when requested. The middle school thereafter shall be responsible for all records received.
5. Articulation between Middle School and High School
- a. Procedures for Processing Data for students scheduling uniformity for certain articulation materials and procedures is required since some middle schools contribute students to more than one high school.
  - b. Materials Provided to Middle Schools. Each high school forwards copies of the materials listed below to its contributing middle schools. These materials shall be sent as mutually agreed upon by the two schools. The materials must be in sufficient quantities to provide copies for each student who will enroll in the high school.
    - (1) A list of the required and elective courses available to student at the school.
    - (2) Instructions that will assist students and their parents in planning high school programs.
    - (3) If any other supplementary orientation materials are used, copies should be mailed to the student's home by the high school or distributed to the student at the time the high school counselor conducts individual student interviews.
  - c. Group Meetings of Middle School Students. The high school



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arranges for group meetings of middle school students and their parents to explain the high school program of study. It is strongly recommended that the middle school invite parents to attend these meetings.

- d. Individual Conferences with Middle School Students. In accordance with prearranged schedule, high school counselors visit the middle schools to counsel individually with students regarding their plans for high school.
6. Instruction for Enrollment for First Day of School. The high school notifies members of the middle school graduating class in writing for program adjustments, I. D. pictures, bus passes, etc., prior to the first day of the semester. Whenever possible, this communication should be in the form of an individual letter addressed to each student.

**SOCIAL PROMOTION/RETENTION PHILOSOPHY**

The social promotion/retention legislation (AB1626 and 1639) indicates clearly that a school's job is to identify students who are low in skills and lack the understanding of basic concepts in reading, writing, and mathematics by helping them become competent, but not to hold students back as a primary focus. Therefore, in the Pasadena Unified School District, our intent is to identify students who may be at-risk of retention many months before considering such an event and give them as much support and intervention as possible so that they can truly become successful. Our intent is not to punish students. We recognize that an underachieving student, significantly below grade level, may not become grade level proficient in a single year. But if we intervene early with these students and implement alternative teaching strategies, both during the school day and outside of the regular school day, then these students will not become victims of retention. Initial determination that a student is at-risk of being retained shall be based on district benchmarks and assessments.

The performance of these students will be further studied through the Student Study Team (SST) or other school-site process to develop interim teaching strategies, interventions in and out of the classroom, and/ or guidance assistance for the student and their families. This process and any final designation of a student as "at-risk" will be subject to the review

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of the classroom teacher(s).

After this, students whose performance still does not improve to grade-level either in the school year or during summer school as seen in classwork or the state/district assessment test in the current year, must be retained. Parents will have the right to appeal the decision.

Throughout the process, it is imperative that parents be notified in writing of the designation of their student as at-risk, of any interim supports that might be offered or required. They must also be informed of their rights to appeal and/or decline to participate in such programs as the District establishes to assist students to meet its standards. It is equally important that schools maintain records of such notices and decisions regarding each student.

It is also our policy that English Language Learners not be designated as being at-risk solely as a result of their language abilities. Rather, they are to be given the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of grade level content in other subject areas. During this interim period, their progress on the English Language Development (ELD) must be monitored closely. Finally, it is the intent of the District policy that any decisions regarding the retention of Special Education students be based solely on their Individual Education Plans (IEP).

**COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/ GUARDIANS**

Because parental involvement contributes greatly to student achievement and conduct, the Governing Board encourages frequent communication between parents/guardians and teachers by means of parent-teacher conferences, class newsletters, mail, telephone, and school visits by parents/guardians.

*(cf. 1250 - Visits to the Schools)*

*(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)*

As part of this communication, teachers shall send progress reports to parents/guardians at regular intervals and shall encourage parents/guardians to communicate any concerns to the teacher. Communication to parents/guardians shall be both in English and in the family's primary language when so required by law. Whenever a teacher learns that student's parent/guardian is for any reason unable to understand the

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district's English communication, the principal or designee may assist the parent/guardian in establishing appropriate means of communication.

*(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)*

*(cf. 5121 - Grades/ Evaluation of Student Achievement)*

*(cf. 5145.6 - Notifications Required by Law)*

*(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements/ Standards of Proficiency)*

*(cf. 6146.5 - Elementary School Promotion/ Standards of Proficiency)*

*(cf. 6162.5 - Research/ Standardized Testing)*

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

*49067 - Mandated regulations regarding pupil's achievement*

*49069 - Absolute right to access (parents' right of access to student records)*

*51216 - Pupil proficiency; assessment; conference to further pupil's progress;  
instruction in basic skill for pupil not demonstrating sufficient progress*

**Regulation**

**PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Pasadena, California

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