

Descriptor Term: PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Descriptor Code: IHE

Rescinds:

Board Approved: 12/7/2020

Previously Approved: 6/18/2018

In compliance with state accreditation requirements, the Gulfport School District has adopted the following policy on promotion and retention of students. The policy provides students an opportunity to advance through the grades based on their mastery of established standards. Students are expected to achieve mastery of each grade in the sequence in which it is offered. Decisions for promotion or retention should be based upon the following performance standards:

I. GRADES 1 - 5

A. MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

1. Students should demonstrate mastery of the required content for each course. Mastery is defined as an average of seventy percent (70%) proficiency in all learning activities and subjects. The seventy percent standard will be applied to all assessments written, performed, or observed.
2. Content for the grade is defined as those objectives described in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula for all subjects taught.
3. Students must meet minimum attendance standards as stated in the elementary school handbook.

B. STUDENT CLASSIFICATION: GRADES 1 - 5

1. **To be classified as a First Grader:**
 - a. A student should demonstrate satisfactory mastery of content in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula for kindergarten.
 - b. Students not enrolled in a kindergarten program will be assessed and placed according to their readiness for school.

For promotion in grades 2-5, a student should demonstrate 70% mastery of the content in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula in the areas listed below:

2. **To be classified as a Second Grader:** reading
3. **To be classified as a Third Grader:** reading
4. **To be classified as a Fourth Grader:**
 - a. Reading and math; and
 - b. Earn a state approved score on the required 3rd grade reading summative state assessment or receive a Good Cause Exemption as defined by the

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Literacy Based Promotion Act.

5. **To be classified as a Fifth Grader:** reading and math

C. STUDENTS NOT MEETING PROMOTION STANDARDS

Students not meeting promotion standards may be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Students who do not meet the standards for promotion must be referred to the Teacher Support Team to address their learning needs via the district's safety nets.

D. STUDENTS EXCEEDING GRADE-LEVEL STANDARDS

Students exceeding grade-level standards at the 95% or higher level in a core course may be considered for an accelerated program of study. i.e., a first grader who is reading on a second grade level and who earns 95% or higher may take reading with the second grade students.

II. GRADES 6 - 8

A. MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

1. Students should demonstrate mastery of the required content for each course. Mastery is defined as obtaining a Core GPA of 65%. The standard will be applied to all projects and assessments, written, performed or observed.
2. Course is defined as that content to be learned and activities to be completed as described by the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula.

B. STUDENT CLASSIFICATION: GRADES 6 - 8

Students will be assigned to grades for administrative purposes and are expected generally to be moved from the sixth to the seventh to the eighth grade. The assignment of grades will be as follows:

1. **To be classified as a Sixth Grader:**

- a. A student should have achieved 70% mastery of the content in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula in reading and math and two (2) of the remaining three (3) courses: English-language arts, science, or social studies for fifth grade.

2. **To be classified as a Seventh Grader:**

- a. A student should have achieved a Core GPA of 65% in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula in English, math, social studies, science, and reading for sixth grade.

3. **To be classified as an Eighth Grader:**

- a. A student should have achieved a Core GPA of 65% in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness

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Standards, and local curricula in English, math, social studies, science, and Cyber Foundations for seventh grade.

C. STUDENTS NOT MEETING MASTERY REQUIREMENTS - GRADES 6-8

Students not meeting promotion standards may be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Students who do not meet the standards for promotion must be referred to the Teacher Support Team. Students who fail to meet the 65% Core GPA may also be required to attend an extended school day/year or summer school program. Students who are two or more years older than their peers and who have not met minimum requirements to be classified on grade level may be placed in a safety-net transition program.

III. GRADES 9 - 12/ Years 1 - 4

A. MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

1. Students should demonstrate mastery of the required content for each course. Mastery is defined as earning an average of 65% in all subjects. The standard will be applied to all projects and assessments written, performed, or observed.
2. Course is defined as that content to be learned and activities to be completed as described by the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula.

B. STUDENT CLASSIFICATION: GRADES 9 - 12/Years 1 - 4

Students will be assigned to grades for administrative purposes and are generally expected to be moved from grade-to-grade in sequential order: Year 1 to Year 2, Year 2 to Year 3, and Year 3 to Year 4.

The assignment to grade classifications will be determined as follows:

1. **To be classified as a Year 1 Student (Freshman):** A student must have achieved a Core GPA of 65% in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, STEM, and local curricula in English, math, social studies, science, for eighth grade.
2. **To be classified as a Year 2 Student (Sophomore):** A student must have passed four (4) of six (6) academic classes.
3. **To be classified as a Year 3 Student (Junior):** A student must have passed three (3) of five (5) academic classes.
4. **To be classified as a Year 4 Student (Senior):** A student must be able to meet MDE graduation requirements and be able to complete a course of study as outlined on the individual success plan (ISP).

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5. **To become a Gulfport High School Graduate:** A student must have completed MDE Graduation requirements and Carnegie units detailed in the Graduation Requirements Policy IHF and a course of study as defined by the student's individual success plan (ISP) or Graduation Plan.

C. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS NOT MEETING MASTERY – YEAR 1 - 4 STUDENTS

1. Students who do not meet the minimum performance standards established for a given academic course may be required to attend a summer school program to receive credit.
2. Students who fail to achieve the minimum scores required for the state or district mandated exams must be provided special remediation in the area(s) of deficiency(ies).
3. Students not meeting promotion standards may be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

NOTES:

Entering new students' transcripts will be reviewed to determine placement using maximum potential, which is defined as an individual student's opportunity to have earned high school credit. For example, a student completing his or her freshman and sophomore years in another school district with a traditional six-period schedule has the maximum potential to earn twelve (12) units: six (6) units in the ninth (9th) grade and six (6) units in the tenth (10th) grade.

Students entering school after the ninth grade/year one from a school outside the State of Mississippi may be exempted from the Mississippi History/Civic requirement.

IV. SUPPORT PROCEDURES

A. ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

Students may be enrolled in the regular program leading toward placement in a diploma program, or students who continually fail to master specified course objectives may be evaluated for alternative programs such as:

1. Special Education, which may include Extended School Day or Extended School Year;
2. Remediation for deficiencies on state or district mandated exams;
3. The District's drop-out prevention program

B. TRANSFERS

1. Transfers from an accredited school (*Mississippi Accredited, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, other regional accreditation agencies, or an accreditation association recognized by the Mississippi Department of Education*):
 - a. A student who transfers into the Gulfport School District during the school year will be enrolled in the appropriate instructional year and subjects equivalent to the grades and subjects of the previous placement.
 - b. A student who transfers into the Gulfport School District before the

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beginning of the school year will be placed in the instructional year equivalent to the grade level to which he/she has been promoted.

- c. After careful observation and evaluation of the student's progress and after consultation with the parent or guardian, the student may be reassigned.

2. Transfers from any non-accredited school including home school:

- a. A student who transfers into the Gulfport School District will not be placed permanently in a grade or course until the student's academic skills can be evaluated by the principal.

1. The student will be administered standardized achievement test(s) or teacher-made special subject test(s) to determine the appropriate classification of the student within thirty (30) days after filing for transfer.

2. Notice of administering of such test(s) shall be given to the applicant not less than five (5) days prior to the date of administration of such test.

- b. The principal's evaluation may also include the following:

1. the student's performance on a nationally standardized test in areas which, at a minimum, include language, mathematics, and reading;

2. in grades 6-12, the student's performance on the district's cumulative tests for the most recently completed courses and for all courses for which Carnegie units are requested; and

3. the student's educational performance at previous school(s).

C. EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

1. **Academically accelerated students**

Exceptional academically talented students may be promoted (accelerated) beyond the normal classification sequence if the following conditions are met:

- a. A committee, composed of a gifted education teacher, the school counselor, the student's teachers, the Director of Instructional Programs, and the appropriate principal, recommends the exception.

- b. The committee develops and reviews the following factors:

1. Education Profile;

2. Psychological Profile;

3. Social Behavior; and

4. Social History.

- c. The Superintendent approves the recommendation.

2. **English Language Learners**

- a. Students enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program who fail to meet promotion criteria for their grade levels will be administratively promoted if, upon the recommendation of the Teacher Support Team (TST), the principal determines that substantial progress has been made by the student so that he or she will be successful at the next grade level.

Students will not be allowed to fail a course where the language barrier is the primary cause for the impending retention.

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- b. Student grades will coincide with the state's recommended English Language grading scale.
- c. Students not enrolled in ESL education programs who fail to meet the established standard for their grade levels to be promoted will be retained.

Source: Mississippi Guidelines for English Language Learners

3. **Students with unusual or unique disabilities**

Students with special disabling conditions may be awarded special status and classified at the same grade as their age appropriate peers if the following standards are met and compliant with state and federal regulations:

- a. Placement represents the student's least restrictive environment;
- b. The IEP committee recommends the placement; and
- c. The Superintendent or a designee approves the recommendation.

V. **MONITORING PUPIL PROGRESS**

It is the responsibility of each teacher to identify pupils not making satisfactory progress toward achieving grade level/course objectives based on the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and local curricula. Parents must be notified during each grading period if their child is not meeting minimum mastery levels. Each school will have a Teacher Support Team (TST) comprised of teachers and other personnel that will continually evaluate students' academic progress as measured by the state assessments, district and school level assessments, and other pertinent information. The TST will make ongoing recommendations about instructional decisions and interventions in accordance with the three-tier intervention process outlined in Board Policy IEI.

VI. **ADMINISTRATIVE OPTION**

The principal may make recommendations regarding exceptions to any portion of this policy and, with the approval of the Superintendent, so act.