

ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: April 4, 2011

AGENDA ITEM No. 11-04-10

ACTION: (Y/N) Y

SUBJECT: Student Promotion and Accountability Policy # 3420 - Revised – 1st Reading Approval

INFO. CONTACT Dr. Denise Morton PHONE: 732-8126

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Revised Student Promotion and Accountability Policy #3420

PURPOSE: To provide the Board of Education for 1st Reading Approval revisions to Board Policy #3420 – Student Promotion and Accountability.

BACKGROUND: On October 7, 2010, the State Board of Education (SBE) voted to end the state-required performance gateways effective with this school year, 2010-2011. According to the Department of Public Instruction state board policies GCS-N-002,-003, -006, -007, -008 are no longer in effect. These changes mean that students no longer have to score a level 3 on the EOG/EOC in order to be promoted and that the waiver process only needs to be used for those students that school administrators consider at-risk of moving to the next grade level.

This means that Board Policy #3420 – Student Promotion and Accountability and #3460 – Graduation Requirements, contains some provisions that are no longer supported by the State Board of Education policies.

The recommended revisions to Orange County Schools Board of Education policy #3420 removes reference to the state's waiver of the Student Accountability policy and to language which requires level 3 for grade promotion.

The revised policy will maintain level 3 proficiency standards, retesting requirements, required Personal Education Plans and remediation when needed. New policy revisions also include some additional new guidelines for retention/promotion decisions.

Retesting will still be used if the student does not score at level 3 on the first test administration; the higher of the two scores will be used.

Board Policy #3460 – Graduation Requirements will be revised and brought to the Board of Education for first reading at the April 18th meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends that the Board of Education approve for 1st Reading Approval the revisions to Board Policy 3420 – Student Promotion and Accountability.

STUDENT PROMOTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Date Reviewed/Approved:

Policy Number:
3420

Rescinds Policy Number: IDDB, IHE, IHE-R

Issued: 2/28/79, 4/28/86, 4/25/88, 9/3/96,
12/6/04, 3/17/08, 02/15/10

The goal of the Orange County Schools is to develop academically proficient students. The progress of students will be monitored at each grade level. Standards for proficiency are outlined below.

ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS: GRADES K-2

Students must demonstrate mastery at grade level or above in reading, writing, and mathematics ~~in order to be promoted in grades K-2~~. Grade level proficiency in these essential skills will be measured in a variety of ways including:

1. The North Carolina Grade Assessment in Reading;
2. The North Carolina Grade Assessment in Mathematics

ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS: GRADES 3-8

Students must perform at grade level or above and be able to succeed at the next grade level. Grade level proficiency in the essential skills will be measured based on the criteria outlined by the North Carolina state assessment ~~accountability mandates~~: **standardized assessment instruments**. Students are deemed proficient who earn:

Elementary Promotion Standards

1. A. test score of Level 3 or above on the NC End-of-Grade Reading Test and
B. test score of Level 3 or above on the NC End-of-Grade Mathematics Test.
2. To be **considered for promoted promotion** to the next grade level, students in grades 3, 4 and 5 ~~must~~ **should** score at least a Level 3 on state end-of-grade tests in both reading and mathematics, and meet local promotion standards (grades and attendance). Students who do not meet the promotion standards will be given remediation and retested. ~~Students who do not score at least at Level 3 on reading and mathematics after receiving remediation and retesting will not be promoted unless determined otherwise by the principal in accordance with the state Waiver of Student Accountability Standards policy.~~ The school system shall develop Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for students who are not proficient in reading and/or math.
3. Students in grade 4 should also demonstrate adequate progress ~~by scoring at or above Level 2.5~~ on the grade 4 writing assessment. Writing assessment strategies and a portfolio will be developed for use in the 5th grade for those students who did not pass the 4th grade writing assessment. Writing progress, as evidenced by the PEP documentation and writing portfolio documents should support whether the student should be recommended for promotion along with EOG information.
4. **Any student that does not score at least a level 3 on the state required EOGs will still be required to take a retest. The higher of the two scores will be used.**

Middle School Promotion Standards

1. To be ~~promoted~~ **considered for promotion** to the next grade level, students in grades 6, 7 and 8 should score at least a Level 3 on state end-of-grade tests in both reading and mathematics, and meet local promotion standards (grades and attendance). Students who do not meet the promotion standards will be provided remediation and retested. ~~Eighth grade students who do not score at least a Level 3 in reading and mathematics after receiving remediation and retesting will not be promoted unless otherwise determined by~~

2. ~~the school principal in accordance with the state Waiver of Student Accountability Standards policy.~~ Local school systems shall develop PEP's for those students who score a level 1 or 2 on the EOG's.
3. Students in grade 7 should also demonstrate adequate progress ~~by scoring at or above Level 2.5~~ on the writing assessment. Writing assessment strategies and a portfolio will be developed for 8th grade students who did not pass the 7th grade writing assessment. Writing progress, as evidenced by the PEP documentation and writing portfolio documents should support whether the student should be recommended for promotion along with EOG information.
4. **Any student that does not score at least a level 3 on the state required EOGs/EOCs will still be required to take a retest. The higher of the two scores will be used.**

REVIEW PROCEDURES: K-8

1. Students in grades 3-8 who score below Level 3 on the state end-of-grade reading and mathematics tests shall be provided intervention in the area(s) of deficiency. Following remediation, students shall be given a second test within a reasonable time from the receipt of test results, but no later than three weeks after the parents receive the test results. If a student has achieved at Level 3 or better in both reading and mathematics and other requirements for promotion are also met, the student shall be promoted. If the student does not score at Level 3 on the second test in the area(s) of deficiency, the student will be ~~retained and provided intervention, unless the student is provided a waiver~~ **considered for retention.**

Principals have the authority to promote and to retain students in accordance with state law and based upon the standards set by the board and the State Board of Education. Promotion and accountability standards for students in the Orange County Schools consist of the following:

- North Carolina high school graduation requirements.
- Local promotion standards and course requirements adopted by the board.
- Attendance requirements as set forth in board policy.

Local Promotion Standards

In grades K-8, recommendation for retention should be based on consideration of the following factors:

- (1) classroom performance of the student in relationship to his/her academic ability and/or exceptionality;
- (2) chronological age and physical size;
- (3) attendance;
- (4) performance on state and local tests; and
- (5) potential success at the next grade level.

In K-1, particular consideration should be given to language development and variations in ability and achievement.

High school students in the Orange County Schools shall be promoted from grade to grade by attaining credits that are earned through successful completion of high school courses. While promotion in high school is determined by course credits earned, in order to stay on track for graduation students must take the courses required by the State Board of Education in the Future-Ready Core Course of Study and meet the requirements of Policy 3460, Graduation Requirements. Middle and high school counselors and administrators will ensure that students are advised regarding the necessary coursework and course progression for graduation.

High School Promotion Standards:

- To be promoted from grade 9 to grade 10: a minimum of six (6) credits.
- To be promoted from grade 10 to grade 11: a minimum of twelve (12) credits.
- To be promoted from grade 11 to grade 12: a minimum of twenty (20) credits.

Students not meeting promotion requirements may be referred to a school placement committee as outlined in the "Waiver of Promotion Standards" section, below. Any request for a mid-year promotion will also be referred to a school placement committee for a recommendation. School placement committees review information about each student and make a recommendation to the principal whether a waiver of promotion standards or mid-year promotion is appropriate. The principal holds final authority regarding promotion or retention. The principal's decision on promotion or retention can be appealed according to the Student and Parent Grievance Policy.

Any student that does not score at least a level 3 on the state required EOCs will still be required to take a retest. The higher of the two scores will be used.

INTERVENTIONS: K-8

1. Students not meeting **student promotion and accountability** standards will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The plan may be developed at any time during the school year based on student performance. A plan must be developed at the end of the school year for any student who is retained.
2. Every Personal Education Plan will include:
 - a. diagnostic evaluation
 - b. specific *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* objectives with intervention strategies
 - c. monitoring strategies
3. Students who do not meet the **student promotion and accountability** standards shall be provided focused intervention that will involve extended instructional opportunities which are different, supplemental, and specifically designed to improve the student's performance to grade level proficiency.
4. During the first 9 weeks of school, students not demonstrating grade level performance in reading and mathematics will be referred to a school committee (classroom teachers, school administrators, and a school counselor) to develop a PEP. Parents and the student may provide input into the PEP.

5. At the midpoint of each grading period, parents/guardians will receive an interim report of students performing below grade level.
6. By February 15, midpoint of the 3rd marking period the school will mail a letter to the parents/guardians of any student in danger of not meeting accountability promotion standards.

ACCOUNTABILITY PROMOTION STANDARDS: GRADE 12 GRADUATION

To receive a high school diploma in Orange County, students will meet the following requirements:

1. Completion of locally-required units of credit with content areas specified by the state. ~~Beginning with middle school students in the 2007-2008 school year, students who pass mathematics or foreign language courses during grades 6-8 that are described in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for Grades 9-12 must achieve level III or IV on an EOC, if available to meet that high school graduation requirement. High school mathematics and foreign language courses taken in grades 6-8 which do not have an EOC shall use high school course codes and shall be aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for Grades 9-12. (Policy ID Number: HSP-M-001)~~
2. Minimum of Level 3 on the NC End-of-Course exams is required. ~~Algebra I, Biology, English I, Civics and Economics, Geometry, Algebra II, Physical Science and US History. Any student who does not score Level 3 on any EOC will be required to take Retest I. Any student who scores Level 3 or 4 on any retest is to be counted as proficient. Any student that does not score at least a level 3 on the state required EOCs will still be required to take a retest. The higher of the two scores will be used.~~
3. Passing grades as reflected on the student's report card. Performance on the NC End-of-Course tests and all final exams will constitute 25% of the final year grade.

REVIEW PROCEDURES: GRADES 9-12

1. Parents of students in grades 9-12 will receive Interim Reports at the mid-point of each grading period as notification of possible course failure.
2. School personnel, including the principal, and/or his/her designee will develop a PEP for improvement for all students at risk of failure.

INTERVENTIONS: GRADES 9-12

Students not demonstrating proficiency on the North Carolina Test of Computer Skills, NC end-of-course tests, and not meeting local graduation requirements, will have a PEP for improvement with various options such as: after-school tutoring, assignment to reading and/or math remediation classes, retesting, Saturday tutorials, and course repetition.

WAIVER OF STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY PROMOTION STANDARDS

Waiver Requests

~~Within 10 days of receiving test scores, teachers or parents may request a waiver of student accountability standards for students scoring below Level 3 on the NC End-of-Grade tests in grades 3-8 and NC End-of-Course tests after the second administration of the test. School personnel may determine the need for a waiver~~

review of any child at risk or failure of not being promoted. Teachers shall provide documentation of the student's performance during a review process. Documentation must include: student work samples; other test data; information supplied by parents; for students with disabilities, information that is included in the PEP; and other information that verifies that a student is at grade level or, for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, is making adequate progress to meet grade level requirements.

Waiver Review Committee

~~The Superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint a Waiver Review Committee to review student waiver requests. The Committee shall be composed of teachers and either principals from other schools or central office staff. Special education personnel shall be on the committee if a student with a disability is being considered for a waiver. English as a Second Language teaching staff shall be on the committee if a student with limited English proficiency is being considered for a waiver. Upon request, the parent(s) of any student being presented for review shall have the right to be a non-voting participant of the Waiver Review Committee and to speak on behalf of their child.~~

~~The Waiver Review Committee~~ **When making promotion or retention decisions, the principal** shall consider and provide ~~written~~ findings on the following issues:

1. Whether the student has previously been retained and, if so, how many times;
2. Whether the student is performing at grade level ~~in spite of the NC End-of-Grade or NC End-of-Course tests.~~
3. If working below grade level, whether the student could reasonably be expected to be able to "catch up" to grade level and/or be successful at the next grade level in spite of the deficiencies;
4. ~~Why the Committee~~ **school personnel** believes ~~its~~ **their** recommendation to promote or not to promote is in the best interest of the student;
5. If promotion is recommended, what additional or special instruction or resources would be necessary to provide the student with a reasonable opportunity for success in the next grade level.

~~Within 10 working days after receiving a waiver request, The committee~~ **School personnel** shall make a recommendation to the principal about whether the student should be promoted to the next grade, based upon documentation provided by the student's teacher(s). ~~Within 5 days after receiving the committee's recommendation, The principal shall review the recommendation and decide whether to promote or retain the student. The principal shall consider the committee's written findings and may promote the student if he/she determines that the student can reasonably be expected to be successful at the next grade level and/or that promotion is in the best interest of the student. The principal shall make written findings about why he/she believes the student should be promoted or retained. The principal shall notify the student's parent(s) of his/her decision. and provide the parent(s) with copies of his written findings and the Waiver Review Committee report.~~

Appeals

1. To the Superintendent – Within 5 working days of receiving the principal's written decision, the student's parent(s) may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent may overturn the principal's decision only upon a finding that the principal's decision was arbitrary and capricious (i.e., without rational basis) or otherwise an abuse of discretion.

The Superintendent must render a decision within 10 working days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent may support the principal's decision, remand it back to the principal for consideration of additional issues, or reverse the decision.

The Superintendent's findings shall be in writing and shall be provided to the parent(s).

2. To the Board of Education – Within 5 working days of receiving the Superintendent's decision, the parents may appeal to the Board of Education. The Board will review the appeal at its earliest convenience, but no later than 30 days following receipt of the appeal request. The Board will overturn a retention decision only upon finding that the decision was arbitrary and capricious or otherwise an abuse of administrative discretion. The Board will provide the parents with a written decision.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities will be held to the same standards as all other students to the most extent possible. All intervention and other opportunities, benefits and resources that are made available to students without disabilities shall be made available to students with disabilities who participate in student promotion standards. Such opportunities will be in addition to the special education services provided to the student.

STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

1. Students of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) shall meet the same standards as all students. However, in accordance with federal law, English language proficiency cannot be the factor that determines whether a student has not met performance standards at each gateway. Therefore, should an LEP student be presented to the ~~Waiver Review Committee~~, **principal**, an instructional portfolio containing documentation of the student's English language proficiency and progress in all academic areas shall be submitted for promotion consideration. The ~~committee~~ **principal** will determine whether the documentation supports the student's advancement to the next level. ~~The Waiver Review Committee~~ **He or she** shall examine the student's instructional portfolio to determine if:
 - a. the student's level of language proficiency is having an impact on the student's ability to perform at grade level on the required test or alternative assessment.
 - b. documentation indicates that the student is making adequate progress in all academic areas to be promoted to the next level.
2. Limited English proficient students shall meet the same standards as other students for high school graduation.
3. The school district shall provide focused intervention for LEP students until they have met statewide promotion standards and high school graduation requirements (up to age 21). This intervention shall involve extended, supplemental instructional opportunities included in the PEP with the following components:
 - Diagnostic evaluation
 - Specific North Carolina Standard Course of Study objectives with intervention strategies
 - Monitoring strategies

ACCELERATION

Some students may need less time to learn the curriculum or to be introduced to the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to challenge these students by expanding the curriculum, providing opportunities to explore the subject in greater detail, or providing different types of educational experiences. To sufficiently challenge a student, the principal may reassign the student to a different class or level of study and/or may identify other concurrent enrollment or other curriculum expansion options.

The principal, after consulting with the professional staff and parents, may determine that skipping a grade level is appropriate. If permitted by State law or State Board policy, credit toward high school graduation may be awarded for a student's advancing or placing out of a high school course. The superintendent shall provide any additional criteria necessary to make the determination as to whether credit may be awarded.

REPORTING

~~The Orange County Schools will report annually to the Department of Public Instruction their progress in increasing the number of students who meet the standard for grade-level promotion. Percentages of students above grade-level proficiency and those who have moved from Level I to Level II shall be used to compare progress from year to year. The Board of Education shall report the following information by race, ethnicity, exceptionality, and socio-economic status to the NC Board of Education:~~

- ~~1. number and percent of students promoted by school who did not score at Level 3 or above on the designated tests at gateway grades of 3, 5, and 8.~~
- ~~2. number and percent of students who have moved across achievement levels in reading and mathematics at gateway grades of 3, 5, and 8.~~

FINAL DECISION REGARDING PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The final decision to promote or retain a student remains the legal responsibility of the principal. In order to be promoted to the next grade, students must pass all local and state promotion standards, including classroom performance, and attendance. Principals must also consider the following when making the decision to promote or retain:

- Teacher recommendation
- Whether the student has been previously retained.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -45(c), -47, -81, -105.21, -174.11, -288(a); 16 N.C.A.C. 6D.0501 through .0507 and 6E.0202; State Board of Education Policy No. HSP-N-000 through -008; N.C. High School Athletics Association Handbook; Guidelines for Testing Students with Limited English Proficiency (Department of Public Instruction)

Cross References: Student and Parent Grievance Procedures (policy 1740), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Dual Enrollment (policy 3426), Graduation Requirements (policy 3460), Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations (policy 3620), Fiscal Management Standards (policy 8300)