

THIRD GRADE PROMOTION

The Appleton Area School District adopts this 3rd grade Promotion Policy as of June 23, 2025, beginning with the 3rd grade class, effective September 1, 2027. For any student who has not exited their personal reading plan by the end of the student's 3rd grade year, the District will engage in a process to determine whether to promote that student to the 4th grade or not. This process will consider all factors that contributed to the student not completing their personal reading plan and alternatives to retention that can help support the student to achieve reading proficiency. This process will be described in the AASD Family Policy Manual and Handbook.

Process for Making Promotion Determinations

For any student who has not exited their personal reading plan by the end of the 3rd grade year, the District will engage in a process to determine whether to promote that student to the 4th grade or not. This process will consider all factors that contributed to the student not completing their personal reading plan and alternatives to retention that can support the student to read proficiently.

Based on a holistic evaluation, the team will select one of the following options:

1. Promotion to 4th grade (with applicable services/supports) is more appropriate than retention in 3rd grade, and the student is promoted.
2. The parents or guardians and school/district representatives agree that retention in the 3rd grade (with applicable services/supports) is more appropriate than promotion to 4th grade, and the student's parent or guardian gives written consent to retention.
3. The school/district representatives recommend retention in the 3rd grade but the student's parent or guardian does not consent to retention. Regardless of any other facts, circumstances, or analysis, the student is promoted to 4th grade.

Any student who enrolls as a 3rd-grade student late in the school term without any record of a personal reading plan shall be promoted to 4th grade under the criteria that the student did not have a personal reading plan in effect at the end of 3rd grade. The District will ensure the student has an appropriate personal reading plan.

If a student transfers into a school enrolled as a 4th grade student and the records indicate the student may have met requirements to be retained in 3rd grade, the District will provide necessary supports, including the intensive instructional services, supports, progress monitoring, and parent notification referenced under Wis. Stat. §118.33(5m)(a).

Post Promotion Mandates and Exceptions

Per Wis. Stat. §118.33(5m)(a), any student promoted to 4th grade after the determination process will be provided with all of the following:

1. Intensive instructional services, progress monitoring, and supports to address the areas of deficiency;
2. Notification to the student's parent or guardian, in writing, that the student did not complete the personal reading plan, and includes a description of the intensive instructional services and supports that will be provided to the student to address the identified areas of reading deficiency; and
3. An intensive summer reading program each summer until the student scores at grade level in reading on a summative assessment.

Legal Reference: Wisconsin State Statute 118.33

Adoption Date: June 23, 2025

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DETERMINATION PROCESS

- I. Third Grade Promotion Team Membership: A team of individuals will engage in the determination process, which shall include but is not limited to the student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) as defined by Wis. Stat. §115.76(12) and school/district representatives who have knowledge of the reading instruction and interventions provided to the student, as well as how the student responded to both instruction and intervention. School representatives may include the school principal, teacher(s) of record, literacy interventionist, a staff member who has provided additional reading support and conducted progress monitoring, and/or a student services professional(s) with knowledge of the social and emotional implications of grade retention.
- II. Good Cause Exceptions: Representatives from the District will determine whether the student is eligible for a good cause exception and communicate that to the parent or guardian. Any student who meets one or more of the following good cause exceptions may be exempt from the promotion policy, the intensive summer reading program, and/or the intensive reading intervention requirements:
 - A. The student is identified as a “Limited-English proficient pupil” as that term is defined under Wis. Stat. §115.955(7);
 - B. The student has an individualized education plan (IEP) that indicates that neither taking the universal reading screener nor the state summative assessment in reading is appropriate for the pupil;
 - C. The student scores as proficient in reading on the alternative statewide standardized summative assessment
 - D. The student has an IEP or a plan to provide accommodations or services under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that indicates that the student has received intensive intervention in reading for more than 2 years, continues to demonstrate a deficiency in reading, and was previously retained in 5K, grades 1, 2, or 3.
 - E. Regardless of these good cause exceptions, the district is responsible for providing instruction that meets all state and federal requirements, including, but not limited to Wis. Stat. §121.02(1)(L)4 for Districts and Wis. Stat. §§118.01(2)(c)7 and 8 for school districts, often known together as Act 31. If promoted to 4th grade and if a “good cause” exception applies to the student under Wis. Stat. §118.33(5m)(b), then the District will provide adequate and necessary support, including the intensive instructional services, supports, progress monitoring, and parent notification referenced under Wis. Stat. §118.33(5m)(a).

III. Procedure:

- A. The Third Grade Promotion Team will:
 - 1. Consider all available data demonstrating the student's response to reading instruction and intervention and data demonstrating the student's progress towards meeting personal reading plan goals. This data may include, but is not limited to, the most recent and previous universal reading screener data, diagnostic reading assessment data, progress monitoring data, classroom data, and observations and data related to the student's social, emotional, and behavioral functioning.
 - 2. Communicate long-term risks of retention to the student's parent or guardian.
 - 3. Consider alternatives to retention available to the student in the District and communicate these alternatives to the student's parent or guardian.
- B. The District will not deny any student advancement to 4th grade based solely on the student's performance in reading on the 3rd grade state summative assessment or the universal reading screener.
- C. The team may conclude that promotion (with applicable services/supports) is in the best interest of a student even if the team also concludes, based on clear documentation, that the student was unable to complete their personal reading plan.

IV. Recommendation:

- A. After reviewing all data and considerations named above, the Third Grade Promotion Team will make a recommendation of promotion or retention to the student's parent or guardian.
- B. If the Third Grade Promotion Team recommends retention, the team will identify and communicate the following to the student's parent or guardian:
 - 1. Supports that will be provided to the student that will mitigate the harm that is likely to occur as a result of retention, including social stigmatization, loss of friendships, damaged self-esteem, and other mental health impacts; and
 - 2. The additional academic services and support that will be provided to the student as they repeat 3rd grade to ensure they reach grade level proficiency by the time they complete 3rd grade the second time.
- C. If the Third Grade Promotion Team recommends retention in the 3rd grade but the student's parent or guardian does not consent to retention, regardless of any other facts, circumstances, or analysis, the student is promoted to 4th grade. Regardless of parental determination to promote, the district is responsible for providing instruction that meets all state and federal requirements.