



ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM

PROMOTION AND RETENTION (GRADES 4-5)

| 7011.6

As defined by State Board Regulation, each local school district is to have a promotion policy for kindergarten through grade 12. The promotion policy for grades 1–8 must also, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Students in grades 1–8 must receive instruction in English Language Arts (ELA) or its equivalent, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science each year as defined in the Delaware content standards.
2. Students in grades 1–8 must pass 50% of their instructional core each year (excluding physical education) to be promoted to the next grade level. One of the subject areas that must be passed is ELA or its equivalent. ELA or its equivalent includes English as a Second Language (ESL), and bilingual classes that are designed to develop the English language proficiency of students who have been identified as Multilingual Learners (EL). Classes in ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science include those that employ alternative instructional methodologies designed to meet the needs of ML students in the content areas.

In accordance with Board Policy 7011 Promotion and Retention, this administrative memorandum establishes the District's promotion and retention guidelines for grades 4–5.

Guidelines for Report Cards

1. In grades 4–5, the Elementary Report Card is issued four times each year, following the designated nine-week instructional periods.
2. Eliminate the use of zeros in grading. The lowest possible grade a student could earn would be a 50. The intended message for teachers is the overriding need to provide opportunities for students to complete missing work.
3. In fourth and fifth grade homework should account for no more than 5% of a student's total grade in any one content area.



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Performance will be reported in letter grades, which correspond to the performance levels designated on the report card.

A	Mastery of Standards	90 – 100
B	Proficiency of Standards	80 – 89
C	Approaching Proficiency toward Standards	70 – 79
D	Limited Progress toward Standards	60 – 69
F	Insufficient Evidence of Standards	50 – 59

- Documentation of progress will be kept through an electronic- based portfolio system that includes progress monitoring information and system-wide assessments, and other indicators of progress (e.g., informal reading inventories and running records.)
- Parent-teacher conferences are a vital part of the process to communicate student progress. Contents of the Reading/ELA and Math student portfolio should be shared in these conferences.
- Academic interim warning(s) shall be given to students and parents at any time during the marking period when there is a question about student progress. Copies will be given to the student, to the parent and one copy will be retained by the teacher for the cumulative record.
- Teachers shall indicate the reason for failure or low grades on the Comment Sheet or use the Remarks Codes available through the grade reporting system.
- Along with the report card, narratives may be used to further describe a teacher's observations of student progress. Narratives are required for students working below grade level. It is recommended that narratives be provided for students working two or more levels above grade level. Students receiving a series of grades that show a downward trend during the marking period or for the year must be identified, counseled, and assisted by the teacher and other appropriate school personnel. A downward trend is defined as dropping two letter grades in a marking period. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must be notified of the aforementioned assistance.



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9. Parents of students who are being considered for retention or placement must be notified in writing of the reason(s) for this recommended placement. Personal contact (documented conference, phone call, or written correspondence) with the parent/guardian must occur as a result of teacher and/or principal efforts. Notification of the potential for required summer school must be shared during this contact.

Retention

A student should achieve, at a minimum, a final passing grade of “D” in Reading, ELA, Mathematics, and either Social Studies or Science, as well as a final passing grade of “D” in three of the special subject areas such as Art, Health, Library, and Music. This policy satisfies state regulations as cited at the beginning of this administrative memorandum.

A student in grades K–5 may not be retained more than one time.

Placement in Grade

Students not promoted may be placed by the principal in the next grade level when such a placement is considered to be in the best interest of the student’s overall growth and development and *not prohibited by state law*. The principal will make this decision after consulting with the student’s teacher(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s). The principal will keep a master list of names and information relative to placements.

Promotion and Placement Requirements for Students with an IEP

For students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), including students who participate in a functional life skills curriculum, the IEP team will determine promotion and placement according to the provisions of the student’s IEP using all available data and in consultation with the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s).

Promotion and Placement Requirements for Limited English Proficiency/ML Students

For limited English proficiency/ML students, decisions for promotion and placement shall be made by the school principal in consultation with teacher(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s). After one year, promotion decisions for ML students shall be determined as for other students.



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Timeline

The following timeline is recommended for grades 4–5:

1. Prior to the end of the second marking period: Principal and teacher will review the academic progress of any student about whom the teacher has concerns. Plans to assist the students will be developed by the teacher and shared with the parent. A parent conference is held with the teacher and parent(s) discussing the student's progress and not meeting promotion criteria. Discussion of consideration of retention or placement will occur.
2. Interims for the third marking period: Academic interim warning(s) shall be given to students and parents at any time during the marking period when there is a question about student progress. Copies will be given to the student, and one copy will be retained by the teacher for the cumulative record.
3. Prior to April 15: The teacher, principal and other resource staff will meet to review remedial and corrective efforts developed prior to the end of the second marking period to assist student learning and reduce the risk of retention.
4. Prior to May 30: Recommendations will be made to the principal by the teacher as to whether a student, at this time, is expected to be promoted, placed in the next grade, or retained. The principal will notify in writing the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each child being considered for retention/placement, indicating that the child may be retained, placed, or required to attend summer school.
5. Prior to the last pupil day: The teacher will schedule a conference with the parent(s) of students who are considered for retention.

Questions about the information contained in this administrative memorandum should be directed to the Director of Elementary Schools.