Capital School District
Board of Education Policy

Section: Instruction
Title: Promotion/Retention Policy
Policy #: 600-12
Date Approved: July 19, 2016
Date: June 8, 2016

Purpose:
The needs of the students must be the central concern in all decisions made regarding promotion and retention. Promotion and retention of students shall be based on attainment or non-attainment of approved standards in core academic content areas as well as the laws, rules, regulations or policies set forth by the Department of Education and the Capital School District. Due consideration should be made when student retention is being discussed. If through retention a student is likely to, through an extra year at the grade level, obtain the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful and maintain pace with his/her new cohort in future years, retention may be considered an option.

Students are expected to progress annually from grade to grade. Schools and teachers are responsible for ensuring that students experiencing academic difficulties are identified early and that appropriate intervention strategies and/or support systems are used to assist students in performing to grade level. Schools and teachers are responsible for informing parents/guardians of a student's academic progress and to seek active partnership with parents/guardians when academic performance is not at a proficient level.

General Requirements for Promotion
In order for a student to be promoted from one grade to the next, the student must:

1. Receive a passing grade in 50% of their instructional program. One of the subject areas that must be passed is Reading/English Language Arts or its equivalent.
2. Successfully complete local requirements as determined by teacher assessment of student performance on instructional outcomes and on the judgment of the teacher(s) in consultation with the principal.

Note exception for students receiving special education under Title 14 of the Delaware Code, Chapter 31, and the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (the "IDEA"), the principal will make the decision to retain or promote the student based upon the requirements set forth above. For students receiving special education under Chapter 31 and the IDEA, promotion and retention decisions shall be made by an IEP team.

Specific Requirements for Promotion

Student promotion in grades kindergarten through grade three is based on a team decision reflecting students meeting the benchmark criteria outlined in the K-3 Report Card Rubrics and ongoing assessment data. All students in grades 1-3 are required to pass Reading in order to be promoted as noted:

Grade 1: A student must receive a "2" or better overall in Reading on the report card for two or more of the last three marking periods.

Grades 2-3: A student must receive a passing grade in Reading for two or more of the last three marking periods.

Students in grades 4-8 must pass at least three core courses including:

Grade 4-6: Reading & Math – A student must receive a passing grade for two or more of the last three marking periods.

Grades 7-8: English/Language Arts & Math

Core courses are defined as follows:

Grade 4 – Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Social Studies

Grades 5-6 – Reading, ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies

Grades 7-8 - English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies

Requirements for Grades 9-12 can be found in Policy #700-29.

Other Factors

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities shall be governed by their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Students with disabilities may be exempt from promotion/retention standards if an IEP Team determines that the student does not have the ability to successfully complete general curricular standards in the time allotted for completion.

To the maximum extent appropriate, students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) shall be governed by their Educational Plan. Students identified as ELL may be exempt from promotion/retention standards if the retention is determined not to be an appropriate action at the time.

Students must be in attendance to receive instruction for at least 90% of the time established by the district-wide calendar in a given school year. For any student who is not in attendance to receive instruction for 90% of the time established by the district-wide calendar in any given school year, the principal must review indicators of academic success to determine whether the student should be retained or assigned the following school year.

Promotion decisions shall be based upon performance recorded on the report card, standardized testing and input from the teacher(s) and parent(s) in consultation with the building principal. When there is a disagreement between parties, the principal will make the determination of promotion, assignment or retention.

Failure to Meet Promotion Requirements
If a student fails to meet promotion requirements at any grade level, administrative assignments may be made, as determined by state or federal law or regulations, for:

1. ELL students whose progress is impeded by a language barrier
2. Students receiving special education services under Chapter 31 of the Delaware Code
3. Students who have already been retained for 2 years for academic reasons

Promotion or Retention Procedures
The Superintendent, or his/her Designee, shall establish procedures consistent with this policy and state law and regulations to process promotion and/or retention decisions. The Superintendent will develop guidelines to notify parents in a timely fashion when students are not meeting standards and provide parents with ways in which they can help their children or get additional assistance from the schools or in the community.

English Language Learners are faced with the dual challenge of learning a new language and trying to meet academic requirements. Their ability to demonstrate English proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking may take up to 7 years, depending on many variables such as the English proficiency level, age and time of arrival at school, level of academic proficiency in their native language, and the degree of support in achieving academic proficiency. Therefore, ELL students MAY NOT be retained based on their English proficiency level. It is expected that they will receive ELL support and accommodations as needed and be promoted along with their peers. The grading of ELL's should be guided by Capital's Grading of ELL Student Guidelines.

To reduce the potential of a student having a negative experience due to a placement or retention decision, the final decision to promote, place or retain a student shall be made by the principal of the school in consultation with grade level teachers. Students who are more than two years chronologically above the age level of other students in the grade where they are placed may be considered for administrative assignment into the next grade level based on a review of the needs of the student.

Appeals
Parents have the right to appeal a principal's decision on the assignment, retention or promotion of their children. Appeals should be made in writing to the Superintendent or Designee, with a copy of the appeal made to the principal of the student's assigned school.

Summer School Attendance, Procedures, etc.
A student whose performance is not meeting grade level expectations may be recommended to go to summer school if offered at that grade level.