

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Code **IKE** Issued **9/17**

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The district affirms academic excellence for students. This promotion and retention policy describes the standards our students must meet in order to maintain academic excellence and to be considered for promotion from one grade to the next.

This policy will be applicable to all students who are in the regular school program. Students functioning in special education programs will be governed by their Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs). The district will administer this policy fairly, equitably, and consistently in schools.

### **Promotion**

Students in middle school are required to earn a 60 percent overall average or higher combined for the academic areas of math, language arts, science, and social studies in order to be promoted to the next grade. Students in elementary school will be promoted based on mastery of standards as measured by overall class assessment of state standards in ELA and math.

Students in grades nine through 12 will be awarded units of credit for courses that have been approved by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). Requirements for promotion to each grade level are as follows:

- promotion from grade nine to grade 10: a total of five units of credit, including English I and a unit of mathematics
- promotion from grade 10 to grade 11: a total of 11 units of credit, including English I and II; two units of mathematics; and one unit of science
- promotion from grade 11 to grade 12: a total of 17 units of credit, including English I, II, and III; three credits of mathematics; and two credits of science
- high school graduation: a total of 24 total units of credit, including English I, II, III, and IV; four units of mathematics; three units of science, including one in which an end-of-course test is administered; one unit of U.S. History; 1/2 unit of Economics; 1/2 unit of Government; one additional unit of social studies; one unit of physical education; one unit of computer science; and one unit of foreign language or career and technology education

### **Academic Assistance**

When a student is not progressing in core subjects, he/she will be provided appropriate interventions to help the student perform on grade level in identified subjects.

Students who are not substantially demonstrating proficiency in reading will be provided intensive in-class and supplemental reading interventions in accordance with state law and the district reading plan. A literacy assessment portfolio will be developed for each student who is not demonstrating grade-level reading proficiency to provide evidence of a student's progress in the area of literacy and to indicate the intensive instruction and interventions the student has been provided.

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### **Retention**

Any decision to retain a student in the same grade level will be made following considerable deliberation and consultation. A student will be retained only when the student has not demonstrated appropriate grade level competencies. The action of retention will be in the best academic interest of the student and will be based on the professional judgment of the school-based instructional personnel, with the ultimate decision made by the principal.

### **Read to Succeed State-Mandated Retention**

A student will be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the year as indicated by a score at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment. Parents/Legal guardians of each student not demonstrating third-grade reading proficiency will be notified in writing during the second grading period that the student is being considered for retention, and a conference will be held prior to a determination regarding retention.

Students eligible for retention under this requirement may enroll in a summer reading camp provided by the district in an effort to meet the required reading proficiency level prior to being retained.

Parents/Legal guardians may designate another person as an education advocate to act on their behalf to receive notification and to assume the responsibility of promoting the reading success of the child.

### *Good cause exemptions*

A student may be exempt for good cause from mandatory retention but will continue to receive institutional support and services and reading intervention appropriate for their age and reading level. Students who may qualify for an exemption include, but are not limited to those:

- who are classified as English learners and have less than two years of instruction in an English program
- with disabilities whose IEP indicates the use of alternative assessments or alternative reading interventions, and students with disabilities whose IEP or Section 504 plan reflects that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still does not substantially demonstrate reading proficiency
- who demonstrate third-grade reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board of Education and which teachers may administer following the administration of the state assessment of reading
- who have received two years of reading intervention and were previously retained
- who demonstrate mastery of the state standards in reading equal to at least a level above the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment through a reading portfolio
- who successfully participate in a summer reading camp at the conclusion of the third grade year and demonstrate through either a reading portfolio or an alternate assessment that the student's mastery of the state standards is above the lowest level on the state reading assessment

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## Information to Parents/Legal Guardians

The district will distribute this promotion/retention policy to every student and parent/legal guardian at the beginning of the academic year. The district will also make every effort to educate and inform parents/legal guardians and students of this policy through newsletters, student handbooks, PTO/PTA meetings, etc.

Adopted 8/17/82; Revised 6/21/83, 5/15/84, 12/16/86, 8/13/91, 5/12/92, 9/9/97, 10/13/98, 9/14/99, 11/12/02, 10/14/03, 4/12/05, 10/14/08, 6/11/13, 2/10/15, 2/14/17, 9/12/17

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### Legal References:

- A. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:
  - 1. Section 59-155-160 - South Carolina Read to Succeed Act, Mandatory retention.
- B. State Board of Education Regulations:
  - 1. R43-240 - Summer programs.
- C. South Carolina Department of Education:
  - 1. *Intervention Guidance Document, Kindergarten through Grade Five* (2017).
  - 2. *Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention Guidance Document, Fall 2016* (2016).