IKE Promotion and Retention of Students

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Richland School District Two parents/legal guardians, teachers instructional staff, administrators, and community members have high expectations for student achievement. The South Carolina Curriculum Standards establish challenging standards for curriculum and student performance.

The district affirms academic excellence for all students. This promotion/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 general education school program. Students functioning in special education programs will be governed by their Individual Education Program (IEP). The district will administer this policy fairly, equitably, and consistently in the schools.

Promotion and Retention

The principal will be responsible for the decision to promote or retain a student in grades K through eight. The principal will take into consideration the academic aspects as well as other relevant educational aspects (social, emotional, and physical maturity) of the student's development and will be responsible for ensuring that parents are adequately apprised of their child's progress and options. Consistent with policy JH (Student Absences and Excuses), a student with excessive absences may be subject to retention.

The purpose for promotion or retention is to ensure the success of the student. It is recommended that a child not be retained more than once prior to entering third grade. The decision to retain a K through eighth grade student will be accompanied by a written plan for academic progress.

Students in grades six through eight will be required to complete and pass courses in each of the core content areas in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for promotion each year.

The purpose for promotion or retention is to ensure the success of the student. It is recommended that a child not be retained more than once prior to entering third grade. The decision to retain a K through eight student will be accompanied by a written plan for academic progress.
Students in grades nine through twelve will be awarded units of credit for courses that have been approved by the South Carolina Department of Education. Requirements for promotion to each grade level are as follows:

- promotion from grade nine to grade ten: a total of five units of credit, including one unit of English and one unit of mathematics
- promotion from grade ten to grade eleven: a total of 11 units of credit, including two units of English and two units of mathematics
- promotion from grade eleven to grade twelve: a total of 17 units of credit, including three units of English and three units of mathematics
- high school graduation: a total of 24 total units of credit, including four units of English; 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; ½ unit of Economics; ½ unit of Government; one additional unit of social studies; one unit of physical education or Junior ROTC; one unit of computer science; one unit of foreign language or career and technology education; and seven electives, including ½ unit of health

**Parent Conferences**

By the end of the first nine weeks, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian of each K through eighth grade student performing below grade level of the need for a conference. Standardized test results and/or school level assessments will be used to determine which students are performing below grade level. At the conference, the student, parent/legal guardian, and appropriate school personnel will discuss and develop a plan to ensure student success.

At the end of the second nine weeks, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian of each K through eighth grade student who continues to perform below grade level. Parents/Legal guardians will be invited to schedule a conference to review/revise their student's plan.

At the end of the third nine weeks, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian of each K through eighth grade student who continues to perform below grade level about the student's progress toward performing at grade level and/or meeting the objectives established in the student's plan.

Before the end of the school year, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian of each K through eighth grade student who is still performing below grade level and/or not meeting the objectives established in the student's plan. The parent/legal guardian will be informed that the student will be retained and given an opportunity for a conference.
School Multi-Disciplinary Team Review

The school will establish a multi-disciplinary team of school professionals to review all retention decisions and make recommendations to the principal. The team will use this policy and review students' plans to determine a student's readiness to proceed to the next grade level. The principal is responsible for the final decision to promote or retain a student in grades K through eight.

Appeals Process

The district will have an appeals process in place for the parent or student to appeal retention.

The parent/legal guardian will submit any appeal for a retention decision in writing to the school principal within 10 business days following the distribution of the final report cards. The principal will respond in writing within 10 business days of the appeal. The principal may choose to meet further with the parent/legal guardian.

Within 10 business days of receipt of the principal's written response, the parent/legal guardian may place in writing an appeal and documentation to the superintendent or his/her designee if he/she feels that there is a compelling reason that the student not be retained. Upon receipt of an appeal, the superintendent's designee will review the information and respond to the parent/legal guardian within 10 business days.

The district will also make every effort to educate and inform parents/legal guardians and students about the promotion/retention policy through parent/student handbooks, newsletters, School Improvement Council, and Parent Teacher Organization/Parent Teacher Association meetings.

Read to Succeed State-Mandated Third Grade Retention

Beginning in 2017-18, 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. The parent/legal guardian of each student not demonstrating third grade level reading proficiency will be notified in writing during the fourth 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 attend a Read to Succeed 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.

**Third Grade Retention - Good Cause Exemptions**

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

- with limited English proficiency and less than two years of instruction in an English as a Second Language 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 Read to Succeed 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 in reading is equal to at least a grade level above the lowest level on the state reading assessment

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Legal References:

S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:
- [Section 59-155-160 - South Carolina Read to Succeed Act, Mandatory retention.](#)

State Board of Education Regulations:
- [R-43-240 - Summer programs.](#)

South Carolina Department of Education:
- [Intervention Guidance Document, Kindergarten through Grade Five (2017).](#)
- [Read to Succeed Third Grade Retention Guidance Document, Fall 2016 (2016).](#)

Richland County School District Two