

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY	3.300

Policy Sections

- (1) Promotion
- (2) Retention

This policy outlines the promotion and retention guidelines for students in grades kindergarten through eight (K-8). Each Local Education Agency (LEA) shall adopt a local promotion and retention policy in compliance with this policy.

- (1) Promotion
 - (a) The academic program implemented in each school shall be designed to help students achieve the expectations of the grade-level State Board of Education-approved Tennessee Academic Standards and meet the requirements for promotion to the next grade.
 - (b) Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on the successful completion of required academic work or demonstration of satisfactory progress in each of the relevant academic areas.
 - (c) Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3106, a local board shall submit to the State Board for approval any local policy adopted for determining the competency of students who have completed kindergarten to advance directly to grade two (2).
 - (d) Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-3115, a student in the third (3rd) grade shall not be promoted to the next grade level unless the student has shown a basic understanding of the curriculum and the ability to perform the skills required in the subject of reading as demonstrated by the student's grades or standardized test results. However, such student may be promoted if the student participates in an LEA-approved, research-based intervention prior to the beginning of the next school year.
 - (e) If it is determined through performance on a statewide assessment or on a reading screener or diagnostic administered by the school or LEA that a student in grade kindergarten through three (K-3) is not meeting the expectations of the grade-level standards in reading, the school shall notify the student's parent or guardian within fifteen (15) days of such determination.
 - (f) Schools shall identify students who demonstrate difficulty in achieving the requirements for promotion to the next grade level and therefore may be considered for retention.

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- (g) Factors used to identify students who may be considered for retention shall, at a minimum, include:
1. The student's ability to perform at the expectations of the current grade-level standards;
 2. The results of local or state assessments, if applicable;
 3. The overall academic achievement of the student;
 4. The student's likelihood of success with more difficult material if promoted to the next grade;
 5. The student's attendance record; and
 6. The student's social and emotional maturity.
- (h) If a student is considered for retention, the school shall notify the student's parent or guardian within fifteen (15) days of identification and develop an individualized promotion plan to help the student avoid retention. All promotion plans shall include evidence-based promotion strategies and shall be tailored to the student's learning needs. Each promotion plan shall also include expectations and measurements that can be used to verify that a student has made sufficient progress to be promoted to the next grade level. Evidence-based promotion strategies may include:
1. Special education services for students who qualify based on applicable state and federal guidelines;
 2. Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) to address deficits in student learning;
 3. Modification and personalization of curriculum and instruction;
 4. Extended learning time beyond the regular school day or school week;
 5. Individual or small group tutoring; or
 6. Other personalized programming to augment the individual student's classroom learning and instructional experiences.
- (i) A copy of a student's promotion plan shall be provided to his or her parent or legal guardian, and the school shall offer to parents or legal guardians the opportunity for a parent-teacher conference to discuss the promotion plan.
- (j) A student who demonstrates sufficient academic progress with the strategies included in his or her promotion plan during the school year shall be promoted to the next grade level and shall be enrolled in a summer reading or learning program, if available.
- (k) If a student is not making progress on his or her promotion plan, then the promotion strategies shall be modified to support the student in the goal of promotion to the next grade level.

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- (l) If a student has not demonstrated sufficient academic progress on his or her promotion plan by the end of the school year, then the student shall be enrolled in a summer reading or learning program, if available.
 - 1. LEAs shall make every effort to ensure summer reading or learning programs are accessible to all students. If a student is enrolled in a summer program, then a decision for retention shall be made after completion of a summer program.
 - 2. A decision for retention shall be made and communicated to the student's parent or guardian at least ten (10) days prior to the start of the next school year. If a student is not enrolled in a summer program, then a decision for retention shall be made and communicated to the student's parent or guardian at least thirty (30) days prior to the start of the next school year.
 - 3. Parents and guardians shall be notified of their right to appeal a retention decision pursuant to local board policy.

(2) Retention

- (a) Retention shall be considered only when it is in the best interests of the student. Retention decisions affecting a student receiving special education services shall be made in consultation with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and in accordance with the provisions of the IEP.
- (b) If a retention decision has been made, then the school shall develop an individualized academic remediation plan for the retained student prior to the start of the next school year. The academic remediation plan shall be designed to help the retained student attain and demonstrate learning proficiency and shall include at least one (1) of the following strategies:
 - 1. Adjustment to the current instructional strategies or materials;
 - 2. Additional instructional time;
 - 3. Individual tutoring outside of school hours;
 - 4. Modification to the student's classroom assignment to ensure the student receives instruction from a highly effective teacher; or
 - 5. Attendance or truancy interventions.
- (c) A copy of the academic remediation plan shall be provided to the student's parent or guardian within ten (10) days of development of such plan.
- (d) A student shall not be retained more than one (1) time in any given grade level.
- (e) Retention shall **not**:
 - 1. Be used without an academic remediation plan that includes strategies and enhancements that are different from the previous year;
 - 2. Be used as a punitive or disciplinary measure;

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3. Be based solely on English language proficiency; or
 4. Be based solely on a student's social and emotional maturity.
- (f) The progress of a retained student shall be closely monitored and reported to parents a minimum of three (3) times during the school year in which the student is retained.
- (g) The Director of Schools shall keep an annual record of each student who is retained.