
Promotion and Retention Policy 3.300

The Background:

This item proposes revisions to the State Board’s Promotion and Retention Policy 3.300 in accordance with State Board Promotion and Retention Rule 0520-01-03-.16 and T.C.A. § 49-6-3115.

The State Board of Education approved the Promotion and Retention Rule 0520-01-03-.16 in July 2022. Requirements for K-8 promotion and retention contained in the Promotion and Retention Policy were moved into the rule. Therefore, this item removes those requirements from the policy now that they are contained in rule and narrows the policy to focus on promotion and retention requirements for 3rd and 4th grade students in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-3115.

Chapter 1 of the Public Acts of 2021, 1st Extraordinary Session (PC 1), which included the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act also updated the state’s third grade retention law. Specifically, section 2 of PC 1, now codified at T.C.A. § 49-6-3115, requires the following:

“Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, a student in the third grade shall not be promoted to the next grade level unless the student is determined to be proficient in English language arts (ELA) based on the student's achieving a performance level rating of "on track" or "mastered" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent Tennessee comprehensive assessment program (TCAP) test.”

The law then authorizes students who achieve a “below” or “approaching” performance level on the third grade ELA TCAP to be promoted if the student meets one of the exemption requirements outlined in the law, including certain retest, summer learning, and tutoring opportunities.

For students who score “approaching,” promotion opportunities include:

- The student retests on the TCAP and scores proficient on the retest;
- The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the beginning of the school year, maintains 90% attendance, and demonstrates adequate growth on the post-test administered at the camp; or
- The student is assigned a TN ALL Corps tutor for the entirety of the upcoming school year.

For students who score “below,” promotion opportunities include:

- The student retests on the TCAP and scores proficient on the retest; or
- The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the beginning of the school year, maintains 90% attendance at the camp, and the student is assigned a TN ALL Corps tutor for the entirety of the upcoming school year.

This item provides additional detail on how a student who scores “approaching” would demonstrate “adequate growth” to be promoted to the 4th grade if the student pursues a learning loss bridge camp as a promotion opportunity. The policy defines “adequate growth” as a student improving scores between a baseline assessment and the post-test by at least 5 percentage points. The baseline assessment is identified in the policy as the student’s score on either the ELA portion of the 3rd grade spring TCAP or the ELA portion of the 3rd grade TCAP retest opportunity, whichever is higher. The post-test will be the TDOE-created, standards-aligned assessment administered at the conclusion of summer camps. This definition is intended to capture a reasonable amount of growth a student could achieve during a 4-week camp relative to the student’s achievement during an entire school year. This policy also states that LEAs and public charter schools may provide students with opportunities over the summer to make up missed days of learning loss bridge camps and outlines the requirements that must be included in local policies regarding make-up days.

This item was initially presented on first reading at the Board’s March 2023 special called meeting but the vote was deferred to the May meeting. Additional edits have been made to the policy at the request of Board members and the revised policy is proposed for approval on first and final reading at this meeting.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department prepare a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA in addition to the authorizing legislation.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item supports the State Board’s strategic focus on literacy outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring early grade students demonstrate growth toward mastery of state standards before being promoted to the next grade level.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of this item on first and final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.