

**District:** Tupelo Public School District  
**Section:** I - Instructional Program  
**Policy Code:** ICHI - Literacy Based Promotion

### **BOARD POLICY**

1. In compliance with the "Literacy Based Promotion Act," it is the intent of the District to improve the reading skills of kindergarten through third grade students ("Students") so that every Student completing the third grade is able to read at or above grade level.
2. Each Student's progress shall be determined by the Student's proficiency in reading.
3. Immediately upon the determination of a reading deficiency, and subsequently with each quarterly progress report until the deficiency is remediated, the District shall notify the Student's parent/legal guardian of the deficiency in accordance with procedures outlined in this policy. If a Student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of the third grade year, the Student will not be promoted to the fourth grade.
4. Social promotion is prohibited. A Student may not be assigned a grade level based solely on the Student's age or any other factors that constitute social promotion.
5. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, if a Student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of the third grade, the Student shall not be promoted to fourth grade. The District will provide written notification to the parent/legal guardian of any third grade student who is retained that the student has not met the proficiency level required for promotion and, if applicable, the reasons the student is not eligible for a good cause exemption. Any third grade student who is retained shall be provided with a high-performing teacher.
6. The Board will cause to be published with local newspaper(s) all reports required by state law and provide the reports to State Board of Education (SBE).

7. The Board authorizes the superintendent to establish procedures consistent with state law and this policy.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

### **1. Intensive Reading Instruction and Intervention**

A. Each Student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time, as demonstrated through performance on a reading screener approved or developed by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) or through locally determined assessments and teacher observations conducted in kindergarten and grades 1 through 3 or through statewide end-of-year assessments or approved alternate yearly assessments in grade 3, shall be given intensive reading instruction and intervention immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency.

B. The universal reading screener or locally determined reading assessment may be given in the first thirty (30) days of the school year and repeated if indicated at midyear and at the end of the school year to determine Student progression.

C. If it is determined that the Student continues to have a reading deficiency, the District shall provide Student with continued intensive reading instruction and intervention until the reading deficiency is remedied. A Student exhibiting continued reading deficiency with continued intensive interventions should be considered for exceptional criteria evaluation. A Student identified with a deficiency in reading shall be provided intensive interventions in reading to ameliorate the Student's specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment. The intensive intervention shall include effective instructional strategies, and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the Student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the next grade. A Student identified with a reading deficiency or not promoted may be placed in a transition class.

### **2. Parent Notification of Reading Deficiency**

Immediately upon the determination of a reading deficiency, and with each

quarterly progress report until the deficiency is remediated, the parent/legal guardian of a Student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading shall be notified in writing by the Student's teacher of the following:

1. That the Student has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading;
2. A description of the services that the District is currently providing to the Student;
3. A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency which the District plans to provide the Student;
4. That if the Student's reading deficiency is not remediated before the end of the third grade year, the Student will not be promoted to fourth grade unless a good cause exemption specified below is met;
5. Strategies for parents/guardians to use in helping the Student to succeed in reading proficiency; and
6. That while the state annual accountability assessment for reading in third grade is the initial determinant, it is not the sole determiner of promotion and that approved alternative standardized assessments are available to assist the District in knowing when a Student is reading at or above grade level and ready for promotion to the next grade.

### **3. Good Cause Promotion**

A. A third grade Student who does not meet the academic requirements for promotion to the Fourth Grade may be promoted by the District only for good cause. Good cause exemptions for promotion are limited to the following Students:

1. Limited English proficient Students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in an English Language Learner program;
2. Students with disabilities whose individual education plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate, as authorized under state law;
3. Students with a disability who participate in the state annual accountability assessment and who have an IEP or a Section 504 plan that reflects that the Student has received intensive remediation in reading for more than two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and previously was retained in kindergarten or first, second or third grade;
4. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative standardized assessment approved by the SBE; and
5. Students who have received intensive intervention in reading for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who previously were retained in kindergarten or first, second or third grade for a total of two (2) years and have not met exceptional education criteria. A Student who is promoted to fourth grade with a good cause exemption shall be provided intensive reading instruction and intervention informed by specialized diagnostic information and delivered through specific reading strategies to meet the needs of each student so promoted. The District shall assist

schools and teachers in implementing reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in improving reading among students with persistent reading difficulties.

B. Good Cause Request: A request for good cause exemptions for a third grade student from the academic requirements established for promotion to fourth grade shall be made consistent with the following:

1. Documentation shall be submitted from the student's teacher to the principal which indicates that the promotion of the student is appropriate and is based upon the student's record. The documentation shall consist of the good cause exemption being requested and shall clearly prove that the student is covered by one (1) of the good cause exemptions listed above.
2. The principal shall review and discuss the recommendations with the teacher and parents/guardians and make a determination as to whether or not the student should be promoted based on requirements set forth by law. If the principal determines that the student should be promoted, based on the documentation provided, the principal shall make the recommendation in writing to the superintendent, who, in writing, may accept or reject the principal's recommendation.

C. The parents of any student promoted may choose that the student be retained for one (1) year, even if the principal and superintendent determine otherwise.

#### 4. Retained Third Grade Students

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, the District shall take the following actions for retained third grade students:

A. Provide them with intensive instructional services, progress monitoring measures, and supports to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency, including a minimum of ninety (90) minutes during regular school hours of daily, scientifically research-based reading instruction that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, and other strategies prescribed by the ~~school~~ District, which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Small group instruction;
2. Reduced teacher - student ratios;
3. Tutoring in scientifically research-based reading services in addition to the regular school day;
4. The option of transition classes;
5. Extended school day, week or year; and
6. Summer reading camps.

- B. Provide written notification to the parent/guardian that the student has not met the proficiency level required for promotion and the reasons the student is not eligible for a good cause exemption. The notification must include a description of proposed interventions and supports that will be provided to the child to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency. This notification must be provided to the parent/guardian in writing, in a format adopted by the SBE in addition to report cards given by the teacher.
  
- C. Provide them with a high-performing teacher, as determined by student performance data, particularly related to student growth in reading, above-satisfactory performance appraisals, and/or specific training relevant to literacy.
  
- D. Provide parents/guardians with a "Read at Home" plan outlined in a parental contract, including participation in regular parent-guided home reading.

## **5. Intensive Acceleration**

The District may provide, where applicable, an intensive acceleration class for any student retained in grade 3 who was previously retained in kindergarten or grades 1 through 3. The focus of the intensive acceleration class should be to increase a student's reading level at least two grade levels in one school year. The intensive acceleration class will provide reading instruction and intervention for the majority of student contact each day and incorporate opportunities to master the Grade 4 state standards in other core academic areas.

## **6. Annual Reporting**

Within thirty (30) days of final SBE approval of state accountability results, the Board shall publish, in a newspaper having a general circulation within the District, and report to the SBE and the Mississippi Reading Panel the following information relating to the preceding school year:

1. Student progression and the District's policies and procedures on student retention and promotion;
2. By grade, the number and percentage of all students performing at each level of competency on the reading and math portion of the annual state accountability system and the number and percentage of students given an approved alternative standardized

reading assessment and the percentage of these students performing at each competency level on said alternative standardized assessment;

3. By grade, the number and percentage of all students retained in kindergarten through grade 8;
4. Information on the total number and percentage of students who were promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause described by law; and
5. Any revisions to the Board's policy on student retention and promotion from the prior school year.

## **7. Student Handbook**

Provisions required by the Literacy Promotion Act shall be provided as an addition to the District's published handbook of policy for employees and students beginning in school year 2013-2014.

LEGAL REF.: SB 2347 2013 Literacy Based Promotion Act

**Adopted Date:**

**Approved/Revised Date:**

**District:** Tupelo Public School District  
**Section:** I - Instructional Program  
**Policy Code:** IEB - Speech - Language Screening

### **BOARD POLICY**

The District will evaluate students for articulation, language, voice, and fluency disorders before the end of Grade 1.

1. If a student fails the screener, the parent or legal guardian will be notified of the results of the screener, and the District may, in its discretion, perform a comprehensive speech-language evaluation.
2. If a parent/guardian of a student who fails the speech-language screener exercises the option to have a subsequent evaluation performed, such evaluation shall be administered by a speech-language pathologist. The subsequent evaluation obtained by the parents shall be considered by the District for eligibility in the area of speech-language in accordance with the procedures mandated by federal law for a placement in a speech-language program within the current school or to apply for a Mississippi speech-language therapy scholarship for placement in a speech-language program in a nonpublic special purpose school.
3. A parent/guardian may provide written notification to the District opting out of the mandatory screening provided by the District.
4. The Board authorizes the superintendent to adopt administrative procedures consistent with this policy.

### **Definitions**

**Speech-language impairment:** A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, including articulation disorders, fluency disorders, resonance or voice disorders, receptive language disorders and expressive language disorders.

**Speech-language pathologist:** A specialist who has met the requirements and acquired a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, or who has completed training in a department approved American Speech-Language-Hearing Association based speech-language pathology training program attaining an AA license in speech-language pathology.

**Adopted Date:**

**Approved/Revised Date:**