

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

### (Promotion or Retention of Elementary Students; High School Course Pass or Fail)

#### Regular Education

The District's promotion policy is based on the premise that students should possess minimal competencies at each instructional level in order to be promoted. It is generally held that to be successful in school a student must be minimally competent in the basic skills of reading, language, and math. Therefore, the District places emphasis on the basic skills competencies, especially in the primary grades.

In making promotion/retention decisions, consideration should also be given to developmental factors affecting learning and classroom success. Nonpromotion (retention) should not be the first recourse for a student having difficulty meeting the criteria for promotion.

Criteria have been developed to provide each student with a maximum opportunity to succeed in school. Promotion is based on students achieving competency in skills necessary for success at each succeeding level.

Beginning in school year 2013-2014, the promotion of a student from grade three (3) shall be conditioned on the satisfaction of the applicable competency requirements prescribed by A.R.S. 15-701 and depicted in Administrative Regulation IKE-RB.

For a variety of reasons, some students may require more than the allotted time to develop their educational potential. Alternative instructional methods and materials may be required. For one who may be retained, an individual success plan will be developed to focus on the areas of deficiencies while maintaining other skill competencies. At such time as deficient competencies have been mastered, the student's grade-level placement may be reconsidered. Retention should not be a repetition of a grade without modifications in the instructional program. If retention is to occur, it should occur in the earliest possible years and generally no more than once during the elementary school experience. A student who has been retained once and continues to have difficulty meeting standards should be considered for evaluation and remediation.

Parents, students, and school personnel shall be made fully aware of the promotion standards. Arizona Revised Statute 15-521 states that every teacher shall make the decision for promotion or retention of students. A

parent or legal guardian who opposes the decision of the teacher(s) may appeal through the prescribed appeal process.

### **Special Education**

Promotion/retention decisions, when applied to students enrolled in special education, shall be on a case-by-case basis, consistent with the individualized education program and in accordance with A.A.C. R7-2-301 and R7-2-401.

Students who do not meet regular promotion requirements must meet the course of study and promotion requirements for special education under the guidance of A.A.C. R7-2-401. The programs for such students may need adaptations.

Any student unable to meet regular academic requirements for promotion must meet the requirements of an alternative curriculum derived from the regular curriculum, which will be developed by a multidisciplinary team on an individual basis. Students placed in special education will complete the course of study as prescribed in their individual education programs. Course work will be presented at a level commensurate with the student's ability. The student's permanent file shall identify the courses completed through special education; however, the student will receive the standard certificate of promotion.

*Adopted:* March 29, 2011

LEGAL REF.:       A.R.S. 15-203  
                          15-341  
                          15-342  
                          15-521  
                          15-701  
                          15-701.01  
                          15-715  
                          A.A.C. R7-2-301 and R7-2-401  
                          A.G.O. I84 - 016

CROSS REF.:       IHA - Basic Instructional Program  
                          IKF - Graduation Requirements

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**PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS****Procedure for Retention of Elementary School Students**

The student shall be promoted from an elementary school grade if *two (2) of the three (3)* following criteria are met.

- *Teacher evaluation of general readiness for promotion.* Consideration will be given to the student's social, emotional, and physical development, as assessed by anecdotal records, attendance patterns, and records of teacher conferences with students and parents. A teacher *may* use a social/emotional checklist.
- *Achievement on class assignments, projects and tests.* To be promoted, each student is expected to attain a minimum average achievement level of sixty percent (60%) or a letter grade of *D*, or higher on daily class assignments, required projects, and tests by subject for three (3) of the four (4) grading periods. At grade levels where these criteria are not applicable, each student must attain an overall average deemed "satisfactory for promotion" by the teacher for three (3) of the four (4) grading periods.
- *Proficiency in State Standards.* To be promoted, each student is expected to demonstrate competency in the Arizona Academic Standards for that grade level as measured by appropriate assessments. A student who does not demonstrate competence in a required subject area may be stronger in another subject area. The total number of standards in *all* subject areas may be used to determine competency.

Beginning in school year 2013-2014, the promotion of a student from grade three (3) shall be conditioned on the satisfaction of the applicable competency requirements prescribed by A.R.S. 15-701 and depicted in Administrative Regulation IKE-RB.

For a student who has been previously retained in grade or a student who enters school on or after March 1, the teacher(s) *may* consider only the first criterion (general readiness) and the second criterion (class achievement) for promotion to occur.

A student who does not meet the foregoing promotion criteria must attend summer school. If, after attending summer school, the student meets the foregoing criteria, the student may then be promoted.

### **Limited English Proficiency**

The second criterion (achievement of class assignments) and the third criterion (proficiency of State Standards) will be in English, according to Arizona law.

Students identified as LEP through established District procedures will not be retained if the basis for retention is the student's lack of proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, or writing in English. Such students should be provided with alternative instruction within the ESL program or through individual success plans that outline adaptations for classroom instruction.

### **Special Education**

A student enrolled in a special education program must meet the course of study and graduation requirements of pupils enrolled in special education under the guidance of Arizona Department of Education Rule R7-2-401.

Promotion or retention determinations for special education students shall be made by the student's individualized education program (IEP) team based on consideration of the following:

- Present level of functioning.
- Extent of achievement of goals as state in their IEP.
- Degree to which student approaches grade level curriculum standards or individual expectancy levels.

### **Chronic Health Conditions**

Students who suffer from chronic health conditions due to illness, disease, or accidents have the opportunity to complete missed assignments and not lose credit because of absences. District attendance policies shall not penalize students with chronic health conditions as long as required course work is completed.

### **Review of Promotion/ Retention Decision**

A.R.S. 15-521 states that every teacher shall make the decision for promotion or retention of students. A parent/legal guardian cannot overturn a teacher's decision on promotion or retention under Arizona law, but a parent/guardian who opposes the teacher as provided in A.R.S. 15-521 may appeal the teacher's decision to the Governing Board by utilizing form IKE-EE. Whether the Governing Board should hear the appeal will be recommended by a hearing officer pursuant to Regulation IKE-RD.

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**

### **Competency Requirements for Promotion of Students from Third Grade for School Years 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013**

The District shall:

- provide for universal screening of pupils in preschool programs, kindergarten programs and grades one (1) through three (3) that is designed to identify students who have reading deficiencies in accordance with A.R.S. 15-704.
- provide an annual written notification to parents or guardians of students in kindergarten programs and first (1st), second (2nd) and third (3rd) grades that a student who obtains a score on the reading portion of the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) test, or a successor test, that demonstrates the student is reading far below the third (3rd) grade level will not be promoted from the third (3rd) grade.

If the student is determined to be substantially deficient in reading before the end of grade three (3), the District shall provide to the student's parent/guardian a separate written notification of that deficiency that includes the following information:

- A description of the current reading services provided to the student;
- A description of the available supplemental instructional services and supporting programs that are designed to remediate reading deficiencies;
- Parental/guardian strategies to assist the student to attain reading proficiency; and
- A description of the District policies on midyear promotion to a higher grade.

### **Competency Requirements for Promotion of Students from Third Grade for School Years 2013-2014 and Thereafter**

A third (3<sup>rd</sup>) grade student shall not be promoted if he/she obtains a score on the reading portion of the AIMS test, or a successor test, that demonstrates the student's reading skills fall far below the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) grade level.



## **Good Cause Exceptions**

Upon a finding of a good cause exception to the competency requirements stated above, the Governing Board may promote a student from the third (3rd) grade. The following are good cause exceptions:

- The student has a disability as defined in A.R.S. 15-761, and did not take the AIMS test or a successor test;
- The student has a disability as defined in A.R.S. 15-761, has taken the AIMS test, or a successor test, and has previously been retained in a grade;
- The student is English language learner or a limited English proficient student as defined in A.R.S. 15-751 and has had fewer than two (2) years of English language instruction; and/or
- The student has demonstrated reading proficiency on an alternate assessment approved by the State Board of Education (SBE).

## **Process for Consideration of Good Cause Exception**

A parent/guardian may appeal for a good cause exception to the Governing Board by utilizing form IKE-EE. Whether the Governing Board should hear the appeal will be recommended by a hearing officer pursuant to Regulation IKE-RE. At a minimum, the written request must include documentation showing that promotion of the student is appropriate based on the student's academic record, including:

- ▲ Academic progress reports.
- ▲ Student's Individualized Education Program (if applicable).
- ▲ Letters from the student's teacher(s) and the principal of the school recommending the pupil be promoted from the third (3rd) grade.

An acceptance or rejection of the exemption request will be provided within thirty (30) days after receipt of the parent/guardian's request.

## **Intervention and remedial strategies**

For students who are not promoted from the (3rd) grade, the Governing Board shall offer at least one (1) of the intervention and remedial strategies developed by the State Board of Education (SBE). The student's parent/guardian, the student's teacher(s) and his/her principal may choose the most appropriate strategy(ies) for that student, which will include:

- ⤴ A requirement that the student be assigned to a different teacher for reading instruction;
- ⤴ Summer school reading instruction;
- ⤴ Intensive reading instruction in the next academic year that occurs before, during, or after the regular school day, or any combination of before, during and after the regular school day; and/or
- ⤴ Online reading instruction.



**PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**

**(Procedure for Review of  
Promotion/Retention/ Failure Decision  
and Failure Grade Appeals)**

Teachers make the decision to promote or retain students in the common grades and to pass or fail students in the secondary grades. A parent/guardian who does not accept the decision of the teacher may request in writing that the Governing Board review the teacher's decision. Only the Governing Board can overturn the teacher's decision.

A.R.S. 15-342 provides that the student has the burden of proof to overturn the decision of a teacher to promote, retain, pass or fail the student. In order to meet that burden of proof, the student must demonstrate that he/she has mastered the academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to A.R.S. 15-701 and 15-701.01 (the state standards). ~~The Governing Board can only overturn the teacher's decision based upon a written finding that the student has mastered the appropriate state standards.~~

To request a review of the teacher's decision, the student/parent/guardian must complete form IKE-EE and return it to the student's last school of attendance within thirty (30) calendar days of the teacher's decision. The Principal will forward this form with the child's pertinent education records to the Superintendent within ten (10) working days. The Superintendent will appoint an administrative officer to conduct a review.

The administrative officer will:

- review the teacher's decision;
- review the applicable state standards;
- review the student/parent/guardian's applicable documentation;
- consult with the student's teacher(s);
- perform what further investigation is deemed necessary.

Upon the conclusion of the review, the administrative officer will prepare a report to the Superintendent. The report will indicate whether the student/parent/guardian has presented information which suggests that the student may have mastered the relevant state standards. If such evidence is presented, the administrative officer will recommend that the Board convene a hearing to consider and determine the appeal. If no such evidence is presented, the administrative officer will recommend that the Governing Board decline to hear the appeal. A copy of the hearing officer's report will be sent to the student/parent/guardian.

Upon receipt of the administrative officer's report, the Superintendent will prepare an agenda item for the next Governing Board meeting with a recommendation as to whether or not the Board should hold a formal hearing to hear the appeal.

If the Board determines to hear the appeal, that hearing will be held in confidential Executive Session during the next Governing Board meeting. Notification of the formal hearing before the Governing Board will be provided to the parent/guardian at least five (5) days prior to the meeting and will include:

- The date, time, and place of the hearing;
- A copy of the teacher's decision;
- A copy of the state standards at issue or direction to the parent as to the location of the standards on the internet;
- Notification that the student or parents may be represented by counsel at their expense; and that the decision of the Board is final.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FLOW CHART

School \_\_\_\_\_
Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_
Date \_\_\_\_\_
Ethnic Code \_\_\_\_\_
Student's primary language \_\_\_\_\_
Parent's primary language \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Retention \_\_\_\_\_

If the process should be discontinued for any reason, please note the reason for discontinuance and date, and retain within the student's cumulative folder. All communication with the parent/guardian(s) must be in the parent's primary language.

TASKS

\_\_\_\_\_ Student manifests potential educational problems that may require retention

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher determines if student previously retained: (reasons, grades, dates)

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher determines if student previously considered for retention: (reasons, grades, dates)

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher refers student to failure prevention team (FPT)

The FPT will provide assistance to teacher(s) through modified instructional materials or techniques; individual or group counseling; student behavioral management; parental involvement; and/or program modification. A retention history will be formulated, if applicable. Goals will be set for the remainder of the school year.

FPT membership:

Teachers/Specialists:

- Audiologist
General Education
Nurse/Health
SEI (if LEP student)
Speech/Language
Special Education
School Psychologist
REACH (if gifted student)

Other Representatives:

- Advocate
Agency Representative
Counselor
LEA Representative
Other:
Other:

- February 1** Deadline to send progress report to parent indicating potential educational problems that may require retention. Prior to reporting to parent, regular classroom teacher must collaborate:
  - with special education teacher, if special education student
  - with SEI/REACH teacher, if LEP student

\_\_\_\_\_ Send progress report to principal; if warranted, include teacher/support staff input

- March 15** Send permission form to parent for *only* those students who require additional educational data collection from psychologist, LD teacher, SEI teacher and/or the lower quartile teacher.

- March 31** Deadline for parent conference to communicate specific reasons for student's lack of progress. Conference should include teacher(s), principal; special education student advocate and school psychologist (if special education student); SEI teacher (if LEP student); REACH teacher (if gifted student); and other personnel as necessary. *Goals will be set and/or modified for remainder of school year.*

- May** (First week – optional) Re-administer appropriate assessments for state standards academic proficiency

- May** (On/before last day of school) Conference to report/discuss decision to promote/retain student. Conference should include teacher(s), principal; special education student advocate and school psychologist (if special education student); SEI teacher (if LEP student); REACH teacher (if gifted student); and other personnel as necessary. Report shall include:
  - All recommendations
  - Retention rationale
  - Individual success plan for retained student

\_\_\_\_\_ Send copy of Promotion/Retention Flow Chart to appropriate Associate Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_ Retain copy of Promotion/Retention Flow Chart in student cumulative folder

\_\_\_\_\_ If appropriate, Principal will forward parental appeal of a teacher's promotion/retention decision to Superintendent

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT RETENTION REPORT

School \_\_\_\_\_  
School Year \_\_\_\_\_  
Report Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Decision of the teacher(s)

The above-named student shall be retained in grade \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year for not meeting the minimum requirements in the areas indicated below. I acknowledge and affirm that my decision was made in accordance with the Amphitheater School District policy IKE.

- General readiness for promotion
- Achievement on class assignments, projects, and tests
- Proficiency in State Standards

Signature(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Pursuant to A.R.S. §15-521, the teacher shall make the decision for the promotion or retention of a student. Such decisions may not be overturned except as provided in A.R.S. §15-342 and Governing Board Policy IKE. See also, Student Retention Report - Parent/Guardian Response

**PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**

PUPIL RETENTION REPORT - PARENT OR GUARDIAN RESPONSE

School \_\_\_\_\_  
School Year \_\_\_\_\_  
Report Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian Response in Agreement**

- I have been informed of the decision to retain my student in grade \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year. I understand and agree with that decision.
- I also understand that documentation and/or records of this decision will be placed in my student's permanent educational record.

Signature(s) of parent(s)/legal guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian Response in Disagreement**

- I have been informed of the decision to retain my student in grade \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year. I disagree with that decision.
- I request a review of the decision by the Amphitheater School District Governing Board. I understand to initiate an appeal of the teacher's decision, I must provide a written appeal and the following information to the District Superintendent:
  - Academic progress reports;
  - Student's Individualized Education Program (if applicable); and
  - Letters from the student's teacher(s) and the principal of the school recommending my student be promoted.
- I also understand that, upon request, my student must provide a demonstration of his/her ability to meet the State Standards (as set forth in A.R.S. 15-701).

- My student is in the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) grade and should be granted a good cause exception to retention because (check all that apply):
  - He/she student has a disability as defined in A.R.S. 15-761, and did not take the AIMS test or a successor test;
  - He/she has a disability as defined in A.R.S. 15-761, has taken the AIMS test, or a successor test, and has previously been retained in a grade;
  - He/she is English language learner or a limited English proficient student as defined in A.R.S. 15-751 and has had fewer that two (2) years of English language instruction; and/or
  - He/she has demonstrated reading proficiency on an alternate assessment approved by the State Board of Education (SBE).
- I understand that only the Governing Board has the authority to overrule the teacher's decision and promote my student.
- I also understand that any documentation and/or records of this decision and appeal shall be placed in my child's permanent record.

Signature(s) of parent(s) or legal guardian(s):

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Decision**

- Insufficient evidence to support the appeal within the prescribed timelines. No further action will be taken.
- The student did not meet prescribed State Standards. The appeal will not be forwarded for Governing Board review.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent/Designee

Board agenda date:\_\_\_\_\_.

The teacher's decision is:

- sustained  reversed

Grade placement for the above-named student for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year shall be \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_

For the Governing Board

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**  
RETENTION – INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS PLAN

School \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Ethnic Code \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_  
Student's primary language \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's primary language \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Academic performance** (standardized testing, informal assessment results, strengths, weaknesses) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**General performance** (social, behavior, strengths, weaknesses) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Recommended Long-Term Goals** (\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Recommended Long-Term Objectives** (\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Summary:** Please report how the goals and objectives will be met, to include modifications of materials, instructional techniques, etc. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Retention Team Members**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Title Date