



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

260 W. Madison ▪ Oak Park ▪ Illinois ▪ 60302 ▪ ph: 708.524.3000 ▪ fax: 708.524.3019 ▪ www.op97.org

TO: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools
Board of Education

FROM: Sheryl Marinier, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

SUBJECT: Policy Committee Update

DATE: December 1, 2020

The policy committee (Gavin Kearney, Katherine Liebl, Dr. Kelley and Sheryl Marinier) met on Friday, November 20, 2020. Also in attendance were Felicia Starks Turner, Eboney Lofton and attorneys Michelle Weber and Caroline Roselli. They reviewed three policies and agreed to bring them to the board for consideration. The summary for each is shared below.

Policy 6:280 (Grading and Promotion)

Research indicates that student retention often results in:

- Increased dropout rates
- Zero to minimal academic gains compared to peers who had not been retained over time
- Higher rates of special education identification and placement
- Lower academic achievement growth

More importantly, retention is not a substitute for the implementation of evidence-based intervention. The proposed policy (6:280) language is reflective of the district's commitment to designing and delivering support to students prior to considering retention. The policy calls for school teams to identify students who may require additional support to continue on to the next grade and for schools, as well as district administration, to exhaust all avenues of support via the district's [Multi-Tiered System of Support](#) framework prior to making a retention recommendation.

David, J.L. (2008). What research says about grade retention. *Reaching the Reluctant Learner*, 65(6), 83-84

Hughes, J.N., West, S.G., Kim, H. & Bauer, S.S. (2018). Effect of early grade retention on school completion: A prospective study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 110(7), 974-991

Policy 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools)

The District 97 Policy Committee is recommending revisions to Board Policy 7:50, in an effort to clarify and ensure consistent practices regarding the age of enrollment and grade level assignments of kindergarten and first grade students first entering the District. The Policy Committee has proposed revisions to Board Policy 7:50 that are reflective of the District's commitment to ensuring consistent and equitable practices. The policy revisions provide clear guidelines that, beginning the 2022-2023 school year, students who turn five years old on or before September 1 will be enrolled in kindergarten and students who turn six years old on or before September 1 will be enrolled in first grade. The proposed language also allows for limited exceptions to the age of enrollment or grade level assignment of these students, where extenuating circumstances exist and delayed enrollment, or enrollment in a grade level below age-appropriate grade level, is in the best interest of the student.

Policy 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Administration indicated the need to identify a district data privacy officer. This title is usually given to one of the senior administrators, and quite often the head of technology. Dr. Kelley requested that the policy be revised to identify the Senior Director of Technology as the data privacy officer. Policy 7:345 had been modified using IASB language to fulfill this request.