

# Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Promotion, Retention, and Administrative Placement

**Where can I find the current policies, regulations, flow charts, and other documents pertaining to the promotion/retention process?**

This information can be found on the web at <http://apskids.org/teach>. Look for the Promotion/Retention Documents link on the left of the page.

These policies and regulations place special requirements on students in grades three, five, and eight.

## About Third Grade

**What does the policy say about promotion for current third graders?**

". . .no third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve grade level (level 2 or 3) on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in reading and meet local system promotion standards and criteria established by the Board."

**What are the local system promotion standards and criteria that have been established by the Board?**

Grades 1-5

- a. The student must perform at or above grade level in reading and language arts and mathematics on the student report card.
- b. The student must be recommended for promotion by the classroom teacher and principal based on satisfactory classroom performance.

**Is the third grade promotion based solely on passing the CRCT at level 2 or 3?**

No, the student must meet or exceed the standard on the CRCT AND meet local

## About Fifth and Eighth Grade

**What does the policy say about promotion for current fifth (eighth) graders?**

". . .no fifth (eighth) grade student shall be promoted to the sixth (ninth) grade if the student does not achieve grade level (level 2 or 3) on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in reading and the Criterion-referenced Competency Test in mathematics and meet local system promotion standards and criteria established by the Board."

**What are the local system promotion standards and criteria that have been established by the Board?**

Grades 1-8

- c. The student must perform at or above grade level in reading and language arts and mathematics on the student report card.
- d. The student must be recommended for promotion by the classroom teacher and principal based on satisfactory classroom performance.

**Is the fifth (eighth) grade promotion based solely on passing the CRCT at level 2 or 3?**

promotion standards and criteria stated above for grades 1-5.

**Are we expected to retain students who are currently repeating third grade?**

If a student who is repeating third grade presently fails to meet or exceed standards in reading/language arts on the CRCT, the student's parents must be notified according to the policy guidelines . Parents should be strongly encouraged to enroll the students in summer school prior to the CRCT or alternative assessment retests. If the child fails the retest, the appeals process should convene immediately resulting in an individual instructional plan for the student.

If a student meets or exceeds standards but does not meet local promotion criteria, the appeals process must convene immediately. The committee must review the documented support provided for the student this current year and the student's progress. The documentation may include, interventions agreed upon by the SST committee, extra help referrals by the teacher, other staff and/or parents, and request for an initial evaluation. This data will be used to develop an individual instructional plan for the student with the recommendation of placement in the fourth grade. The individual instruction plan must include progress benchmarks and indicators of success.

No, the student must meet or exceed the standard on the CRCT AND meet local promotion standards and criteria.

**Does the Appeals/SST Committee only look at student's whose parent or guardian requests an appeal?**

Since the law allows appeals to be generated by either the parent/guardian or teacher, APS has decided that all students who are retained for whatever reason are to be examined by the Appeals/SST committee to ensure the most appropriate placement. Thus, an appeal will be made on behalf of every student who is not promoted.

**What options must the Appeals/SST Committee consider if a student does not meet local promotion criteria and/or meet or exceed standards on the CRCT?**

A student's instructional plan may include accelerated, differentiated or additional instruction in the form(s) such as participation in a research-based instructional program, transition class, tutoring, summer school, etc.

**Are the promotion criteria the same for students who receive ESOL services?**

Yes, all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students must meet or exceed standards on the CRCT. The three - year grace period of policy enforcement for LEP and ESOL students that is cited in IHE Section I.A.5 applies only to the local promotion criteria.

**Are the promotion criteria the same for PEC students?**

Most PEC students will fall under the promotion requirements. This will be specified in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP committee will act as the Placement Committee for promotion purposes and has the responsibility and authority to find the most appropriate placement for the PEC student.

**When can we expect to receive tests results?**

The GADOE has stated that districts can expect to receive test results 14 days from the date tests are received at the testing center for scoring. In our case, it is likely that we will receive third and fifth grade results prior to the last day of school for students. However, if we do not have the results by the last day the students are in school, please make sure of to accomplish the following:

- Disseminate information to all third and fifth grade parents regarding the promotion requirements.
- Use ongoing assessments to identify students who met or did not meet local promotion criteria, who may need extra support and who would benefit from summer school in order to better prepare them for the next grade.
- Notify the students' parents who fall in the above-mentioned category. Strongly encourage them to enroll their children in the summer programs.
- Make sure that you have accurate contact information for all current third and fifth graders in SASI.

**What are the local requirements for promotion in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 4, and 5?**

See Policy IHE. Also review IHE-R.

In summary, kindergarten students must demonstrate readiness for 1<sup>st</sup> grade on the state assessment. Students in grades 1-5 must demonstrate mastery in reading, language arts

and mathematics. Students who perform below 70 in any one of the aforementioned subjects must attend summer school.

Upon receiving and reviewing the CRCT test results, the SST will convene to determine promotion or retention (provided test results return to the district before that determination has been made) and to develop an instructional plan for students who did not meet or exceed standards.

### **What are the local requirements for promotion in grades 6 – 8?**

See Policy IHE and Regulation IHR-R.

In summary, the student must perform at or above 70 in reading, language arts and mathematics and pass eight subjects each year. Students in grades 1 through 8 who are performing below 70 in reading/language arts or mathematics are required to attend summer school. The SST will review all documentation regarding student achievement to determine the weaknesses and develop a plan for additional time and opportunities for student learning that may include being promoted, administratively placed, or retained. The SST will have a parent conference to discuss the areas of weakness and to finalize the plan. The plan will be monitored during the school year, with an update of the student's progress in a conference with the parent by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

Neither the policy nor the regulations state specifically how many times a 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grader may be retained. However, research strongly suggests that retention for multiple years is not an academic or social/emotional benefit for students. Therefore, you are urged to consider students' retention on a case-by-case basis.

### **What are the local requirements for promotion in grades 9 –12?**

Students in grades 9-12 will be promoted based on earned units. Promotion to 10<sup>th</sup> grade requires 5 units; promotion to 11<sup>th</sup> grade, 10 units; and promotion to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 15 units. A grade of 70 or above is needed for the student to earn credit in the subject area.

The SST process described in the middle school section above is applicable here. Decisions regarding students in special education will be guided by the IEP. Decisions regarding the ESOL student will be guided by approved modification.

### **Are we still administratively placing students? If so, what is the process?**

Technically, we are no longer "administratively placing" students. Instead, each student who has not qualified for promotion will be examined by the Appeals/SST Committee at the school. If this Committee finds that the best placement for the student is promotion, then the student is promoted. They may find, however, that retention is the best placement, in which case the parent may choose to continue the appeals process to the

Executive Director, who may decide to promote or affirm the Committee's decision. No administrator may determine the placement of any student independent of the decision of the Appeals/SST Committee. A thorough review of the student's performance by the SST committee, including the results of interventions, tutorials, individualized instruction, social services, etc., must be considered for placement.

If a 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student does not take the CRCT, may they be promoted?

Students who do not take the CRCT must be given the option to attend summer school and to take the CRCT at the summer testing in order to determine placement.

If a student does not attend summer school, will they be allowed to take the summer retest of the CRCT?

Yes, we can only offer a student the opportunity to attend summer school; we cannot require them to do so. They must, however, take and pass the summer CRCT retest to be promoted.

If a student does not take the CRCT or the summer retest of the CRCT, may they appeal their retention?

Yes, all students have the right to appeal if retained for any reason or circumstance. In fact, the school *must* hold an appeal/SST hearing for every student who has been retained to find the most appropriate placement.

I'm the principal of a middle school and am concerned that the feeder elementary schools may use the appeals process to promote students who are not ready to attend middle school. How do you make sure this does not happen?

The Appeals/SST Committee at the elementary school **MUST** have a member representing the middle school to which the student might be promoted. The decision of the Appeals/SST Committee must be unanimous before the student may be promoted.

I'm the principal of a high school and am concerned that the feeder middle schools may use the appeals process to promote students who are not ready to attend high school. How do you make sure this does not happen?

The Appeals/SST Committee at the middle school **MUST** have a member representing the high school to which the student might be promoted. The decision of the Appeals/SST Committee must be unanimous before the student may be promoted.

In the past, we had a regulation stating that no student may be retained more than once in elementary school. Do we still have that rule?

No. The Appeals/SST Committee will, however, take past retentions into consideration as part of the appeals process.