



|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Book          | Procedures   |
| Section       | I: Instruction   |
| Title         | Promotion and Retention of Students                          |
| Number        | IKE  |
| Status        | Active   |
| Legal         |  |
| Adopted       | December 9, 1982   |
| Last Revised  | November 17, 2014  |
| Last Reviewed | November 17, 2014  |
| Secondary     | Mrs. Barbara Baker   |
| Origin        | Revised 9/11/86, 1/10/95, 3/10/99, 3/9/04, 3/11/14, 11/17/14 |

Through the instruction provided by the Garrett County Public schools, students will demonstrate, at minimum, continuous achievement of the required curriculum commensurate with the student's grade level throughout the school year. When this does not occur, and the student experiences a significant lack of progress, there is a need to provide intervention to prevent a possible retention of the student.

In particular, those students who are at risk of retention must be identified and provided with a Response to Intervention (RTI) process which will be initiated by the mid-term of the second grading period for the respective subject(s). The RTI process must document and provide, based on data from ongoing assessments, a prescriptive, evidenced-based intervention for the assessed deficit(s) that would lead to a decision to retain. The RTI process must provide evidence through data-based assessments which;

1. indicates the student's lack of progress (significant deficit(s)) in specific curriculum-based skills,
2. demonstrates that the intervention specifically addresses their identified deficit(s),
3. documents that the student is provided with an evidenced-based intervention
4. provides instruction that is aligned with the student's identified (assessed) learning style (strengths), and
5. provides ongoing assessment of the student's progress with the intervention.

This process will occur through use of the Professional Learning Community teams to provide ongoing monitoring and review of the deficits, interventions and progress of the student. When a student does not make sufficient progress and is retained, the intervention plan will provide for continued prescriptive intervention during the following year of retention, and will continue until the student is achieving at their expected grade level. The intervention strategies must meet the five RTI criteria as specified above.

The decision to promote or retain a student is the final decision of the school principal with the exception of kindergarten, first or second grades retention, or those situations in which retention is recommended due to an exceptional circumstance. In these situations, any retention at the elementary or middle school level must be approved by the Director of Elementary and Middle Schools.

This decision to retain can only be appealed through the Student Grievance Procedures only for deviation from this policy and/or procedure, in compliance with Education Article 4-205 of the Maryland Annotated Code.

## I. Elementary Level

At the elementary level promotion/retention is based upon the student's achievement in comparison with the grade level expectancies. These factors would include classroom performance; his/her ability as measured by tests; his/her previous academic record; attendance; and social, physical, and emotional maturity.

The decision whether to promote or retain an elementary student is the primary consideration of the student's teacher(s) and the school principal. However, due to the developmental and maturational differences of the young child, and the capability of providing modifications and adaptations for the lower elementary grades, the retention of students in grades kindergarten through second grade should occur rarely, if at all. At this grade level, retention will only occur upon the recommendation of the principal, in conjunction with the approval of the Director of Elementary and Middle Schools, and the support of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). For elementary students in grades three through five, the decision for promotion/retention will be recommended by the student's teacher, with the principal having final authority. Students who are at risk for retention must be provided with the previously noted Response to Intervention (RTI) process. The involvement of the parent(s)/guardian(s) in the intervention process is encouraged, and is an important component for the retention to contribute to a positive outcome for the student. A student may be retained only once during the elementary grades unless there is an exceptional circumstance which is documented and the retention is approved by the Director of Elementary Education.

- A. Following the end of the first grading period and prior to the mid-term progress report for the second grading period, the school will notify the parents/guardians by letter of any student who may be considered for retention.
- B. At the end of each subsequent grading period a letter will be issued to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- C. A conference involving the parents/guardians and school personnel must be scheduled as soon as possible after the notification prescribed in I.A. above, and by the mid-term progress report of the second grading period.
- D. A retention management plan, based on the RTI process as specified within this procedure requires documentation of curriculum-based assessment of deficits, the prescriptive use of evidenced-based strategies to remediate deficiencies in alignment with the student's strengths, and ongoing assessment of the student's progress. This plan will be prepared and presented at this conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) (noted in C). and retained in the student's file. The plan will document the specific RTI procedures noted above, indicating the schedule and timeline for intervention and the person(s) responsible for the intervention. (Refer to attached documentation: Individual Student Academic and Behavior Progress Monitoring Data Sheet, and Student Academic and Behavior Progress Summary Sheet.
- E. Conferences to review the student's progress will be held with the parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the end of the second and third grading periods.

- F. An end-of-the-year conference, involving the parents and school personnel, must be scheduled at least three weeks prior to the close of school.
- G. The parents, teacher(s), and principal must work together to make the best possible decision concerning the promotion/retention of the student. With the exception of kindergarten through second grade, or with retention due to exceptional circumstances, the authority to make the final decision rests with the principal. The principal may base this decision on the recommendation of the student's teacher(s), and may gather input from other school staff (Pupil Services Team, IEP committee, grade level team etc.); however the principal will make the final decision.
- H. This decision can be challenged through the Student Due Process Procedures only for deviation from procedures and/or policy.

## II. Middle School Level

The decision to promote/retain a student at these levels is based upon the student's grades, attendance, and previous retention record. The decision whether a student passes or fails a subject is recommended by the teacher, based upon the Garrett County grading policy and review by the principal. The decision whether to promote a student to the next grade level or retain the student at their current grade level is made by the principal and is specifically based upon:

1. The number of subjects the student passes or fails (fails two (2) or more full year classes in any given year.)
2. Fails the same subject two years in the areas of reading, language arts, science, math or social studies.
3. Fails to meet the conditions of the Garrett County attendance policy.

Students will be provided with appropriate opportunities for academic intervention through the RTI process and with opportunities for grade recovery. This process will provide for the identification of deficiencies and prescriptive intervention beginning by the second grading period. A middle school student will be retained only once at the middle school level unless there is an exceptional circumstance which is documented and the retention is approved by the Director of Secondary Education.

- A. Following the end of the first grading period and prior to the mid-term progress report for the second grading period, the school will notify the parents/guardian(s) by letter of any student whose performance places them at risk of retention based on the standards noted above.
- B. At the end of each subsequent grading period a letter will be issued to the parents/guardian(s).
- C. A conference involving the parents/guardians and school personnel must be scheduled as soon as possible after the notification prescribed in I.A. above and prior to the mid-term progress report for the second grading period.
- D. A retention management plan, based on the RTI process as specified within this procedure requires documentation of curriculum-based assessment of deficits, the prescriptive use of evidenced-based strategies to remediate deficiencies in alignment with the student's strengths, and ongoing assessment of the student's progress. This plan will be prepared and presented at a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) (noted in C.) and retained in the student's file. The plan will document the specific RTI procedures noted above, indicating the schedule and

timeline for intervention and the person(s) responsible for the intervention. (See attached documentation: Garrett County Middle School RTI Academic/Behavior Improvement Plan).

- E. The parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), and principal must work together to make the best possible decision concerning the promotion/retention of the student. Other than retention due to exceptional circumstances, the authority to make the final decision rests with the principal. The principal may base this decision on the recommendation of the student's teacher(s), and may gather input from other school staff (Pupil Services Team, IEP committee, grade level team etc.); however the principal will make the final decision.
- F. At the middle school level a student whose parents did not receive prior notification may still meet the criteria noted above to be retained. For example, a student who received minimal passing grades during each of the first three grading periods and then earned failing grades during the final grading period, may, as a result fail two full year subjects, or fail reading, language arts, science, math or social studies for two years. Parents/guardians are to be responsible for routinely monitoring reports of student progress as based on report cards, progress reports and the parent access to the computerized student information management system.
- G. This decision can be challenged through the Student Due Process Procedures only for deviation from procedures and/or policy.

### III. High School

At the high school level, promotion/retention is based upon the number of "Carnegie Units" credits earned and progress toward completion of an approved program of studies. The awarding of "Carnegie Units" credit is based upon the student's earning passing grades as defined in the Garrett County grading policy and having acceptable attendance as defined in the Garrett County attendance policy. Progress toward completion of an approved program of studies is defined as the possibility of scheduling the remaining course necessary to satisfy the entrance requirements of the University of Maryland, a career and technology program, or a program in advanced technology.

Opportunities will be provided for academic intervention and credit recovery based on the student's course deficiencies and state test performance requirements. Students who are not earning passing grades by the first progress report, and/or by the end of the first grading period for a respective course will be provided with academic intervention based on the priority of their needs for progress toward graduation and the RTI process. Students who do not obtain credit in a course will be offered an opportunity for credit recovery. Students will be provided with support to address other graduation requirements as needed.

In order for a student to be considered in the ninth grade, he/she must have successfully completed eighth grade and be enrolled in an approved program of studies leading toward high school completion. For ninth grade students to be eligible for participation in extra-curricular activities during the first semester of high school, they must have met the high school academic eligibility requirements during their eighth grade year which includes not failing more than one course (subject) for each reporting period.

In order for a student to be considered in the tenth grade, he/she must have been previously enrolled in high school at least one year, be enrolled in an approved program of studies and have earned a minimum of five (5) credits.

In order for a student to be considered in eleventh grade, he/she must have been previously enrolled in high school at least two years, have earned at least nine (9) credits, and be enrolled

in an approved program of studies.

In order for a student to be considered in twelfth grade, he/she must have accumulated at least sixteen (16) credits, have been previously enrolled in high school at least three years, and be able to satisfy all program completion requirements.

A student's attendance record must meet the criteria established in the Garrett County's attendance policy.

- A. The graduation/completion requirements are publicized to each student and their parents/guardians through the Student Education Planning Guide. These requirements are reviewed periodically with the student.
- B. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that he/she identifies and successfully completes all the requirements for graduation/completion.
- C. At the mid-point of each grading period, teachers will issue a progress report for each student who is failing a course. The Progress Report must be returned to the teacher with parent/guardian signature within 5 school days. In the event a signed progress report is not returned or parent signature is questionable, the teacher will call or otherwise contact the parent/guardian.
- D. Students who are failing at the end of the first grading period of the respective semester will be provided with academic intervention, based on the RTI process. The priority of the intervention will be based on the class(es) which they are at risk of failing and their need to complete state testing requirements. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by letter of the student's current grades, the academic intervention being offered, and that the parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a conference to review the student's lack of progress. High school teachers will provide documentation of the RTI process and requirements (assessment, interventions and progress) through RTI log entries in the Power School Student Information Management System. Teachers will use the Garrett County High School RTI Monitoring Plan as a guideline to the documentation of assessment, interventions, progress and Tiered response for students in the Power School RTI log entries.
- E. At the completion of the ninth and tenth grades, the counselor will attempt to reschedule required courses for those students who did not earn "Carnegie Units" (credits) in required courses. They will also notify parents/guardians of students who have not satisfied service learning requirements. Opportunities for credit recovery will be offered for classes in which a student failed to earn credit.
- F. At the completion of eleventh grade, the school will review the credit status of each student and attempt to schedule the necessary courses which are needed for program completion. Opportunities for credit recovery will be offered for classes in which a student failed to earn credit. Prior to the beginning of the following school year, parents/guardians of students not achieving twelfth grade status will be notified and be provided with an explanation of the deficiencies.
- G. At the end of first semester for twelfth grade, students and parents/guardians will be informed of failing performance when it appears that it will affect the student's opportunity to graduate. This will include grade and attendance requirements, program completion, assessments and service learning requirements.
- H. It is possible for a student whose parents/guardians were not notified to fail to achieve satisfactory performance in program completion, assessments, service learning, or final grades and the loss of credits. Parents/guardians are to be responsible for routinely monitoring reports of student progress as based on report cards, progress reports and the parent access to the computerized student

information management system.

- I. This decision can be challenged through the Student Due Process Procedures only for deviation from procedures and/or policy.

### III. Special Education

The decision to promote or retain special education students, including Alternative Learning Outcome (ALO) students is made by the school principal. The principal may consult with the student's teacher(s), other school staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the IEP team to review this decision. Consideration may be given to factors such as attendance, educational levels and performance, progress toward achievement of I.E.P. goals and objectives, and class peers. When this decision results in the special education student transitioning from one school level to another (i.e., elementary to middle; middle to high school), the IEP will reflect this transition and will include the services needed by the student at that level. The principal will consider factors such as age, social and emotional development and maturity, progress toward achievement of I.E.P. goals and objectives, appropriateness of curriculum, and other social considerations, such as peers and/or extra-curricular activities in this decision.

#### Attachments:

[Promotion-Retention Procedure Timeline](#)

[Student Academic & Behavior Progress Summary Sheet \(Elementary\)](#)

[Individual Student Academic & Behavior Progress Monitoring Data Sheet \(Elementary\)](#)

[Garrett County Middle School RTI Academic/Behavior Improvement Plan](#)

[Garrett County High School RTI Monitoring Plan](#)

Last Modified by Karen Brewer on November 18, 2014