

7605: Promotion—Retention Policy

The E-WG School Committee is aware that passing on a student who is not ready for promotion usually assures the student will be unable to succeed in the higher grade, and will require increasing amounts of costly interventions mandated by state and federal governments.

Proclamation

The school committee directs the superintendent to implement standards for student promotion and detention, and to develop and implement alternative intervention and remedial education plans for faltering and retained students in accordance with this policy.

Scope

This policy sets forth standards for student promotion, and establishing intervention and remedial programs for faltering and retained students in each school. Responsibilities for students, parents, school administrators and the accountability for resources are included. There is a process for students and parents to appeal a denial of promotion.

Definitions

In the context of this policy, definition of terms used is as follows:

Parents—will mean parents or guardians.

Student and parent—will mean student and parents only when the student is of sufficient age and maturity to be involved in meetings, discussions and notifications affecting his or her promotion.

Faltering student—will mean a student who is accumulating “D” or “F” grades in one or more courses required for promotion or graduation.

Standards for promotion—will mean benchmarks that students, for their promotion, must achieve in the core subjects math, reading and writing.

Intervention plan—will mean assessment, monitoring and analysis of a faltering student’s difficulty in achieving grade level expectations, and the planning and implementing of changes to instruction that will assure the student’s promotion or graduation.

Remedial plan—will mean determining and analyzing the cause for the detained student’s failure(s) and the planning and implementing changes to subsequent instruction, which will improve the student’s academic success.

Standards for Promotion

The standards herein apply equally to all regular education students K-12. For promotion: K-6 special education students must achieve the grades prescribed in their IEP; Junior High and Senior High School students must take courses from among the courses allowed by their IEP and must achieve the passing grades prescribed in their IEP for the courses taken.

Primary and Elementary Schools—Promotion of primary and elementary students will require an accumulation of grades of not lower than “D” in all required subjects. There will be no exception to this standard in either reading or math. Intervention programs K-5, with added emphasis K-3, will be in place to minimize student failure in these grades.

Junior High School—The JHS teaches a focused curriculum consisting of required and elective courses, which prepares students for high school work. The required-to-take courses (such as English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies) and the minimum credits required in each of these courses are prescribed in the student handbook—published annually. Credits shall be accumulated by passing grades of not less than “D”. To be promoted, students must accumulate a minimum of 4.5 credits within the required-to-take courses and elective courses in each the seventh and eighth grades as prescribed in the handbook.

Senior High School— The task of the high school is to graduate all students. The changing course and accumulated credits requirements for high school students are prescribed for each

graduating class in accordance with school committee policy 7603: Graduation Requirements, which also sets forth HS administration and guidance responsibilities to annually advise each student of his or her course completions and peripheral requirements to graduate. The required credits will be accumulated by receiving passing grades of not less than “D” for each required course.

Intervention

The prime interest of all involved is that every student succeeds. The school committee is committed to this end, and herein directs the superintendent to assure that each school provides intervention in the education of faltering students. Intervention plans will be provided in the core subjects of math, reading and writing. Personal literacy plans K-12 will be implemented in response to RIDE mandates emanating out of NCLB.

An intervention plan will be developed and implemented as soon as a teacher(s) detects that a student is faltering. School principals may consult with the curriculum director and may form a team from among the student’s teachers and parents to design and implement the student’s intervention plan. Such plan may include additional instruction by the student’s teachers or others school instructors. Progress of students with intervention plans will be regularly monitored and changes made as indicated. School administrators may also suggest personal tutoring provided by the parents.

Parental Notification—Parents will be notified as soon as it is determined that their student is faltering. Thereafter student progress will be regularly reported to parents at least quarterly. Such notices will be in addition to student report cards. All parental conferences, written notices and telephone reports to parents regarding a student’s intervention plan will be documented by the teacher or school administrator making the parental contact.

Special Education—Regular education students who are faltering will not be referred to SPED, unless there is supporting medical or educational diagnosis developed in accordance with IDEA guidelines and RIDE regulations that leads to an IEP.

Summer School—To bolster a student’s opportunity to succeed, summer school may be suggested to parents with advisement that success will depend solely on student performance and attendance. Parents must pay for their student to attend summer school.

Retaining Young Immature Students

Some kindergarten, first and even second grade students may not have reached the maturity level needed to assimilate into their classroom environment. This may severely limit their ability to learn. To resolve this learning impediment in the best interest of students and the school, parents and school administrators are permitted to enter into an agreement to retain such students.

The Promote or Retain Decision

If a student who is receiving intervention assistance continues to fail a course (s) required for promotion, the principal and guidance counselor will convene a promotion status meeting with the student and parents to review the circumstances and significance of the student’s failures.

When promotion is to be denied due to student failure, the student and parents will be informed of all requirements to makeup deficient grades that the student must meet to be promoted prior to the start of the subsequent school year. The parents, at their expense, may opt for summer school for the makeup, however not more than two failed subjects will be allowed for summer school makeup. Parents will be advised that the acceptance of the student’s summer school work for promotion will depend solely on successful student performance and attendance.

Any dilemma faced by school administrators, teachers and parents regarding whether to promote or retain a student will be resolved strictly in accordance with the afore Standards for Promotion.

Retention

A stimulating remedial education program can restore success to a retained student. Such remedial program will be implemented for each retained student. Albeit retained students will be assigned to classrooms at the grade level where their failure occurred, no student will be recycled through the same educational process.

Student and Parent Responsibilities

Student and parents have an essential part in the success of the intervention and remedial plans. Their roles in and the expectations for the second chance afforded to the student by these plans will be fully explained to each the student and his or her parents by the principal.

Administrator's Responsibilities

To insure the integrity of the decision to retain a student the school principal will do the following: (Note: Policies 7603 and 7604 will be in affect in the high school.)

Provide written notice to the student and parents identifying the deficiency(s) that disqualified the student for promotion.

Have at least two staff representatives from among assistant principal, principal, guidance counselor, or involved teacher present at the status meetings where a student's eligibility for promotion is discussed with the student and parents.

Reduce to paper record the content of all promotion status meetings; include all recommendations and decisions made by the administration that affect the student's promotion. Include the date and names of all present. Provide a copy to the student and parents and place the original into the student's school file.

Responsibility for Resources

Under provisions of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act, each school is accountable for the education of every student. The act's requirements are manifested in RIDE regulations, directives and mandates. The above prescribed intervention and remedial plans are essential to this accountability. The school committee directs that, to the extent practical, the instructional employees and materials as needed to implement these plans be provided with existing resources.

Appeal Process

Students and their parents will be afforded due process to appeal administration decisions that deny a student's promotion. The appeal process will be as follows:

The appeal of failing grade marks must start with the student's teacher, and if the student and or parents are not satisfied with the teacher's response, continue with the principal.

(The school committee charges the teaching staff and school administration with the responsibility for maintaining the standards of education. The teacher is responsible for conducting classroom instruction that is fair and consistently demanding on every student. In so doing, the teacher is given professional discretion to assess student performance according to the student's ability and work effort. This requires that the teacher's expectations be clear to all students. The school committee's policy prohibits school administrators from changing marks given by the classroom teacher without just cause.)

Appeal of the principal's decision must be directed to the superintendent. The superintendent will review the circumstances of the promotion denial and conduct a hearing for the student and parents. If the superintendent's decision upholds the denial, the student and parents will be informed that they may refer the appeal to the school committee.

Applicable Federal and State Laws and Regulations

Federal No Child Left Behind ACT of 2001, Title 1, Part B, Section 1208

Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement ACT (IDEA) of 2004

RIDE Personal Literacy Guidelines, June 2005

RIDE Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements

RI Regents High School/Middle School Regulations

RI Diploma System

RIGL 16-2-9 General powers of school committees —(a) (5), (16), (17) and (20)

Dissemination

This policy will be disseminated to all policy book holders.

Effective Date

The Standards for Promotions section will become effective on the date that the policy is adopted. The requirement for developing and implementing intervention and remedial plans will begin September 1, 2007.

First Reading: December 12, 2006

Second Reading: March 13, 2007

Adopted: March 27, 2007