

RETENTION POLICY

The philosophy of the Stratford Public Schools is that all students should participate in instructional programs where they can achieve academically and develop socially, emotionally, and physically. While it is expected that the vast majority of students will experience success in our schools, there may be some children for whom retention may be considered. We believe that retention as a remediation vehicle is not a solution unto itself and that retention without interventions and a planned program of support is detrimental in the long run.

Decisions on retention will be based on collaborative review of data and the whole child before a decision is made. Criteria appropriate to each level must be established so that multiple assessments are considered such as research-based assessment designs, local criteria such as classroom grades, results of mastery testing, social development, performance assessments, parental input, and staff recommendations.

Neither social promotion nor retention is supported by available research as a first option for students experiencing academic difficulty. Therefore, the Stratford Public Schools will continue to identify and implement other options, including: professional development for staff, targeted support for students, quality classroom assessments that inform instruction, individualized instruction, tutoring, reading support, use of extended day and summer programs as dictated by the individual needs of students, and a variety of other aggressive intervention systems. Before retention can be considered, it is essential that sufficient strategies to support student growth are implemented, and that the parents be kept informed of the student's achievement at all levels of development.

Retention Guidelines:

Elementary Level / Grade Kindergarten – Six

1. In the event that retention is possible the parent/guardian should be informed at mid year.
2. The principal, the student's teacher and other school team members shall closely examine the student's performance, study habits, assessment data, and other pertinent information. The advantages and disadvantages of retention to the student will be considered as well.

3. When a child is being considered for retention, a conference will be arranged by the teacher with the parents to discuss the student's progress, attitude, ability, and the advantages and disadvantages of retaining the student.
4. The decision to retain a student will be made by the school team and principal in consultation with the parent. If retention is recommended and finalized, a plan for improving the student's performance must be developed. This may include aggressive intervention and support strategies. The final decision regarding retention will rest with the school administration.
5. A final report of students being retained with action plans to improve student performance in the new school year must be completed and sent to the Assistant Superintendent before the close of school.
6. Applies to Grade Five and Six only:

In addition, a student in grade five or six with a failing cumulative average in three or less of the core subjects (Reading, Written Expression, Mathematics, Science or Social Studies) at the end of the school year will be required to attend summer school at parent expense. Upon completion of summer school, retention will be recommended if it is determined that the child has not progressed to a passing level through his/her summer school course work and attendance. A student with a failing cumulative average in four or more core subjects will be retained.

Replaces existing policy dated September 25, 2006.

Approved by the Stratford Board of Education on May 29, 2007