



STUDENTS: Promotion and Retention

1. Elementary

a. General Procedures

Most students enrolled in Baltimore County Public Schools will participate in six years of elementary education, kindergarten-5. Throughout this period, the school staff will work with the student and parent(s) or guardian(s) in providing a program that will enable each student to grow intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally. Evaluation of the student's progress will be a continuing process throughout the total elementary experience.

Although most students will spend six years in a kindergarten-5 program, continuous progress for some may mean moving at a slower rate. Some students will need fewer than six years to complete the elementary program.

In order for a principal to accelerate a student to the next higher grade, it shall be necessary for the principal to submit to the appropriate assistant superintendent in the Division of Instruction a report containing achievement scores, other test results, recommendation of the student's teacher, and a statement indicating such a move has the involvement of the general supervisor and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

b. Conditions for Promotion or Retention

The decision to retain a student at the elementary level is made when the student's needs cannot be met adequately at the next grade level. Many factors must be considered in determining if a student should be promoted or retained. Among these are:

- Achievement level of the student
- Report card record
- Age of the student
- Uniqueness of the Student
- Needs of the student
- Attendance record of the student

- Developmental level of the student
- Ability level of the student
- Emotional factors
- Previous retention

It is anticipated that a student would not be retained more than once during the elementary experience. In those rare instances when the school determines a student would profit by a second retention during the elementary school experience, the Pupil Services Team should participate in the decision.

Every effort shall be made to consider the alternative to a second retention before making such a recommendation. These decisions must take into account the total experience of the student and the effect it would have on future school experiences. Any recommendation for a second retention must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum.

c. Criteria

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten

A planned articulation process between prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers must be established. Prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers should receive support from the school administration to identify the needs of children as soon as possible. We anticipate very few retentions in prekindergarten and kindergarten, and these decisions should be made with the involvement of the elementary supervisor.

Grade 1

Since children vary widely in their readiness in grade 1, we anticipate that age-appropriate instruction would reflect a variety of needs. The recognition that young children need time to move through these various stages often makes it difficult to measure growth in yearly time segments. The decision to retain in first grade, while the ultimate responsibility of the principal, shall involve teachers, parents, and other appropriate staff.

Grades 2 and 3

A child may be retained in grades 2 and 3 when the achievement is so far behind peers that it is impractical to differentiate the program to meet the child's needs.

Grade 4

A student may be retained when failing reading and another subject such as mathematics, English language arts, social studies, or science.

Grade 5

Students in grades 5 who have failing grades in reading and another subject such as mathematics, English language arts, social studies, and science and who have never been retained should not be promoted to middle school. Students who receive asterisked grades indicating performance below grade level may be considered for retention.

d. Timeline

Teachers are encouraged to identify early in the school year those students who are having problems which require intervention and to consult with the parents of these students. Students who are being considered for retention shall receive indication of this on the mid-year report card whenever possible. During the month of May, the appropriate staff should meet to make a decision. It is important that the principal has the benefit of the viewpoint of the teachers, parents, and staff before making a final decision at the end of the school year.

2. Middle School

a. General Procedure

The middle school staff shall continue to provide an individualized program that will enable each student to develop intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally. Decisions regarding student placement shall be in keeping with the philosophy of continuous progress and opportunities for academic success. Exceptions to regular progression from grade to grade shall be determined by the professional staff after conferences with the parents and the student.

b. Candidates for Retention

A student will be considered for retention at the current grade under the following conditions:

- Failure in two of the following courses: English, reading, mathematics, science, or social studies
- Failure in any three subjects, including special subjects
- Failure to enroll in and satisfactorily complete prescribed summer school courses. These review courses may be recommended by local schools for individual retention candidates as a condition of promotion to the next grade level. Student eligibility for a summer school recommendation is determined by:
  - The local school principal in concert with teachers, staff, counselors, and parents.
  - The availability of the appropriate review courses.
  - The number of courses failed. A student who fails more than three subjects should not be a candidate for summer school review courses as a condition for promotion.

c. Considerations for Exception to Retention

Candidates for retention may be considered for movement to the next grade level based upon:

- (1) Previous retentions (It is desirable for all students to be in grade 9 by age 16.)
- (2) Double retentions (consecutive retentions at the same grade level.)

Under most circumstances, the effects of double retentions are detrimental to the total growth and development of a student. In the event that a school staff feels that this should be considered, the following step needs to be taken:

Any student considered for a double retention should be discussed at a Pupil Services Team conference so that decisions are based upon knowledge and information from all available sources.

- (3) Any recommendation for a double or second retention must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum.

Every effort should be made to consider the alternatives to a double retention before making such a recommendation. These decisions must take into account the total experience of the student and the effect it would have on the student's future school experience.

d. Special Attention for Candidates for Retention

Students who are in danger of failing shall be reviewed regularly by an existing group in the local school, i.e., pre-team, interdisciplinary team, instructional team, or Pupil Services Team, to:

- (1) Analyze reasons for failure
- (2) Refer students for assessment
- (3) Provide special assistance according to a designed plan.

Conferences, written communications, and interventions with the student’s parents or guardians, teachers, and other involved personnel shall be documented.

e. Timeline

The following timeline will ensure a support system for the students and will provide the appropriate means for effective communication.

| DATE      | ACTIVITY   | PERSONS RESPONSIBLE   |
|-----------|--|---|
| September | <p>1. Review Baltimore County Public Schools’ procedures for handling retentions - Policies and Rules 5200, 5210, and 5220:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Procedures</li> <li>- Timelines</li> <li>- Role of teachers in the process</li> <li>- Role of Pupil Services representatives</li> <li>- Maintenance of record of student progress (grading policy, interim reports, and attendance)</li> <li>- Strategies for assisting parents</li> </ul> <p>2. Identify students who were retained or were considered for retention during the previous year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schedule immediate contact with student.</li> <li>- Inform teachers</li> <li>- Monitor progress for possible Pupil Services Team referral</li> </ul> | <p>Principal<br/>Principal<br/>Principal<br/>Guidance Chairman<br/>Teacher</p> <p>Administrator,<br/>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor</p> <p>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor<br/>Counselor<br/>Administrator,<br/>Counselor, Teacher</p> |

RULE 5200

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| <p>Mid Point of first marking period</p> | <p>Issue Interim Reports to parents for students not progressing satisfactorily - Rule 5520.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify appropriate strategies for both home and school intervention.</li> <li>- Confer with student (and parent if appropriate) to plan for improvement.</li> </ul>   | <p>Teacher</p> <p>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor<br/>Teacher</p>   |
| <p>End of first marking period</p>       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review records of all students receiving grades of D and E: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ascertain possible need for further testing</li> <li>- Consider appropriateness of a referral to Pupil Services Team</li> <li>- Seek additional reasons for underachievement (changes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Reprogram for students where needed.</li> <li>3. Identify additional resources and strategies (as needed). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schedule parent conferences</li> <li>- Refer to outside agencies</li> <li>- Implement alternative classroom management strategies (progress report, homework sheet, behavioral modification)</li> <li>- Use attendance referrals as needed</li> </ul> </li> </ol> | <p>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor<br/>Administrator,<br/>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor<br/>Administrator,<br/>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor</p> <p>Administrator,<br/>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor</p> <p>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor<br/>Counselor<br/>Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor,<br/>Administrator<br/>Administrator</p> |
| <p>End of First Semester</p>             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a list of student who are being considered for retention</li> <li>2. Contact parent(s) to discuss possibility of retention (follow procedures indicated on timeline, end of first quarter) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send letter to parents indicating possibility of retention</li> </ul> </li> </ol>   | <p>Administrator,<br/>Counselor</p> <p>Administrator,<br/>Teacher/Teaching Team</p> <p>Administrator</p>   |
| <p>Mid point of third quarter</p>        | <p>Follow Interim Report procedure</p>  | <p>Teacher/Teaching Team</p>   |

RULE 5200

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| <p>End of third quarter</p>        | <p>1. Review records of all students who may be retained<br/>         - Refer to Pupil Services Team as needed</p> <p>2. Send letter to parent(s) indicating possibility of retention</p>  | <p>Teacher<br/><br/>         Administrator,<br/>         Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor</p> <p>Administrator</p>   |
| <p>Mid point of fourth quarter</p> | <p>1. Follow Interim Report procedure</p> <p>2. Continue to review list of possible retentions</p>   | <p>Teacher<br/><br/>         Administrator,<br/>         Teacher/Teaching Team, Counselor</p>  |
| <p>May/June</p>                    | <p>1. Schedule a conference with teachers and counselors to make final recommendations for retention or promotion according to Baltimore County Public Schools' policies and rules. Authorize promotion or retention.</p> <p>2. Send letter to parents indicating retention of student<br/>         - Provide materials for summer school where appropriate</p> <p>3. Send student profiles to summer school centers</p> <p>4. Follow recommended articulation activities with elementary schools</p> <p>5. Follow recommended articulation activities with high schools</p> | <p>Principal</p> <p>Administrator</p> <p>Teacher/Administrator</p> <p>Middle School Principal</p> <p>High School Principal</p>                                   |
| <p>Summer</p>                      | <p>1. Confirm enrollment in summer school of those students recommended</p> <p>2. Review grades of students required to attend summer school</p> <p>3. Retain students who have not successfully completed summer school. Ensure that previous and double retention procedures have been followed.</p> <p>4. Return profiles to home schools with comments and grades.</p>   | <p>Administrator, Counselor, Summer School Administrator</p> <p>Administrator</p> <p>Administrator, Counselor</p> <p>Summer School Teacher and Administrator</p> |

f. Special Attention for Retained Students

Schools shall monitor the progress of each student retained in grades 6, 7, or 8. An administrator and the teaching team shall address specific needs and shall consider the following strategies:

- (1) Conferences with parents and students
- (2) Discussion at Pupil Services Team conferences
- (3) Review of health records
- (4) Frequent written reports to the home
- (5) Regular student-counselor contacts
- (6) In-depth study of students' educational needs

g. Articulation with the High School Regarding Exceptions to Standard of Promotion

A vital part of the normal articulation activities which occur when students are moving from grade 8 to grade 9 is a conference regarding students who have not achieved promotion in the conventional manner. Prior to the end of the school year, a meeting called by the high school principal involving administrators, counselors, and other appropriate personnel from both schools shall be held to review all previous interventions at the middle school level and to agree upon special provisions for the student at the high school.

These provisions may include:

- (1) Peer tutors
- (2) Study skills assistance
- (3) Mentor programs
- (4) Basic Education courses
- (5) Special Education programs/services
- (6) Work-study programs
- (7) Referral to differentiated staffing personnel

Following this meeting, a list of these students will be forwarded to the area assistant superintendent on the form provided each spring by the Director of Middle School Instruction.

3. High School

a. General Procedures

The majority of students entering the ninth grade will meet graduation requirements within a four-year period. During this time, the school staff, working with students and their parents, will provide programs which will enable each student to continue to develop intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally.

b. High School Graduation Requirements

High school students must meet the following graduation requirements to be awarded a Maryland High School diploma:

- |                    |                          |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---|---------|---|----------------|---|------------|---|--------------------|-----|--------|----|------|---|---------|---|----------|----------|--------------|--|
| (1)                | Enrollment Requirements: | 4 years beyond grade 8  |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| (2)                | Competency Requirements: | Maryland Test of Citizenship Skills<br>Maryland Functional Reading Test<br>Maryland Functional Math Test<br>Maryland Writing Test   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| (3)                | Credit Requirements:     | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>English</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social Studies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fine Arts*</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical Education</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Math</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Science</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CHIVES**</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>1</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;">Total 17 &amp; 3</td> </tr> </table> | English | 4 | Social Studies | 4 | Fine Arts* | 1 | Physical Education | 1.5 | Health | .5 | Math | 3 | Science | 2 | CHIVES** | <u>1</u> | Total 17 & 3 |  |
| English            | 4                        |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Social Studies     | 4                        |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Fine Arts*         | 1                        |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Physical Education | 1.5                      |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Health             | .5                       |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Math               | 3                        |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Science            | 2                        |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| CHIVES**           | <u>1</u>                 |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |
| Total 17 & 3       |                          |   |         |   |                |   |            |   |                    |     |        |    |      |   |         |   |          |          |              |  |

(4 credits must be earned after grade 11)

\*Fine Arts- Students must earn 2 one-half credits from two of the three programs listed

- Art Seminar
- Music Perspective
- Theater Arts

\*\*CHIVES - Computer Studies, Home Economics, Industrial Arts/Tech Ed, Business Education, or Vocational Education

c. Candidates for Retention

Students moving from one grade level to another must pass either social studies or English. Students who fail English or social studies may move to the next grade level by doubling, with the approval of the principal, in the one they fail or by attending an alternative education program such as Evening school or Summer school. Simultaneous doubling in both social studies and English in the day school is not allowed.

d. Grade 10- Have a minimum of 4 credits and pass grade 9 social studies or English

Grade 11- Have a minimum of 9 credits and pass grade 9 English and social studies and Grade 10 social studies or English

Grade 12- Have a minimum of 13 credits and schedule the required courses to complete the 20 required to graduate

e. Timeline

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|-----------|--|
| September | Counselors visit classrooms to review and verify credit count with seniors.  |
| October   | Interim Reports are issued. *  |
| November  | Report cards are issued. Contact is made with parents of seniors who are failing or in danger of failing semester courses required for graduation. |
| December  | Interim reports are issued. * Registration information is given out including requirements for graduation and promotion.                           |
| January   | Interim reports are issued. * Registration information, credit counts, and promotion requirements are distributed and reviewed with all students.  |
| February  | Report cards are issued. Contact is made with parents of seniors who are failing or in danger of failing courses required for graduation.          |

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| March | Interim reports are issued. *   |
| April | Report cards are issued. Interim reports are issued. * Letters are sent to parents of seniors who are failing or in danger of failing courses required for graduation and/or who do not meet State competency requirements. |
| May   | Interim reports are issued to underclassmen. *  |
| June  | Report cards are issued. Letters are sent home to parents of underclassmen who failed a course and/or a State competency requirement and are eligible for summer school.  |

\*As outlined in Policy and Rule 5220

Rule  
Approved: 11/21/68  
Revised: 12/16/76  
Revised: 2/9/89  
Revised: 10/18/90

Superintendent of Schools