

Promotion and Retention

Promotions are made on the basis of the ability of the pupil to do the work at the next level of instruction. The decision to promote or retain a child should be made jointly by principal and teacher. If any decision to retain or to plan for a longer-than-average time in a particular series of grades occurs, the school will notify the parents prior to the year's terminal report card. Any desire to change grade placement for the betterment of the child must be discussed with parents. The welfare of the student is the primary consideration.

In order to help assure appropriate achievement as students progress through their school experience, the Houston County Board of Education establishes the following basic promotion and retention criteria for use in the school system.

First Grade Eligibility Guidelines

To be eligible for enrollment in the first grade program, a child must attain the age of six by September 1, except as otherwise provided in O.C.G.A. §20-2-150 and specified in Policy JBB.

Students enrolled in public kindergarten shall be assessed using the State Board-adopted readiness assessment within their kindergarten year.

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) shall establish standards for promotion to or enrollment in first grade for students with disabilities.

Georgia High School Exit Examinations

Students must meet the requirements of the State Assessment Program as related to high school graduation.

Retention for Athletic Purposes

The practice of retaining student for athletic purposes is prohibited in the school system.

Acceleration

Under its general authority to govern and manage the schools within its district, the Houston County School System assigns students to schools and grades within the schools. It is not the policy of the Houston County School System to promote students beyond the next grade or level.

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For the academically talented or gifted student, the Houston County School System in its regular academic program provides enrichment learning experiences and a program in gifted education. Also available for the student capable of superior performance is the College Board's Advanced Placement Program.

Special Education

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) shall establish promotion standards for students with disabilities.

Progress

The extent of each student's progress toward school adopted goals shall continually be of central concern to the school staff. Within the assumptions inherent in the grading system, student progress shall be viewed comprehensively in light of promotion standards outlined in this policy.

Retention or promotion decisions will be the responsibility of the certificated staff. Parents, teachers, the student involved and other concerned persons must be included in the discussions leading to a decision.

A student may earn a maximum of six (6) Carnegie units of credit per year, summer school excepted.

STANDARDS-PROMOTION/RETENTION

Elementary School Promotion and Retention Standards

Promotion of students annually is desirable; however, it is recognized that under certain circumstances retention must be considered for some students. Retention of elementary school students shall conform to the following:

1. Every effort shall be made to identify potential retainees as early as possible during the school year and to work with the students' parents to improve academic performance.
2. Attendance regulations set forth in Houston County Board of Education Policy JBD shall be enforced.

Promotion of students in grades 3 and 5 shall follow requirements set forth in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11.

Grade 3

Effective the 2003-2004 school year, no third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in reading and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.

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Grade 5

Effective the 2004-2005 school year, no fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in reading and the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.

Grades 1, 2, 4

Effective the 2003-2004 school year, results of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test may be considered in addition to grades, attendance, and other local requirements for promotion. Test results shall also be used to determine a student's need for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction.

The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education.

In the case of retention the following must occur:

1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:
 - (i) The student's below-grade-level performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests;
 - (ii) The student has one opportunity to retest in the specified testing area;
 - (iii) The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);
 - (iv) The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests; and
 - (v) The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.
2. In grades 3 and 5, when a student does not perform at grade level on the second opportunity to take the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test, the principal or designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11.
3. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

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All other provisions of Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11 shall apply.

Middle School Promotion and Retention Standards – Grades 6, 7 and 8

Promotion of students in grades 6, 7 and 8 shall follow the requirements set forth in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11 and the local Board of Education.

Each student must take six subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and two courses during the exploratory block and will receive six grade averages at the end of a school year.

In order to be promoted, a student must pass a minimum of five subjects each year. Further, a student must pass all four core academic subjects (language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) in order to qualify for promotion to the next grade. Within specified guidelines, schools shall have the authority to “place” a student who does not meet promotion requirements based on the best educational interest of the child.

Attendance regulations set forth in Houston County Board of Education Policy JBD shall be enforced.

Grades 6 and 7

Effective the 2005-2006 school year, results of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test may be considered in addition to grades, attendance, and other local requirements for promotion. Test results shall also be used to determine a student’s need for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction.

Grade 8

Effective the 2005-2006 school year, no eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in reading and the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.

The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education.

In the case of retention the following must occur:

1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:

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- (vi) The student's below-grade-level performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests;
 - (vii) The student has one opportunity to retest in the specified testing area;
 - (viii) The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);
 - (ix) The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests; and
 - (x) The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.
2. In grade 8, when a student does not perform at grade level on the second opportunity to take the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test, the principal or designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11.
3. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee.

All other provisions of Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11 shall apply.

High School Promotion and Retention Standards

- 9th Grade: All students must take 6 courses per semester. Five Carnegie units are required for promotion to the 10th grade.
- 10th Grade: All students must take 6 courses per semester. Ten Carnegie units are required for promotion to the 11th grade.
- 11th Grade: All students must take 6 courses per semester. Sixteen Carnegie units are required for promotion to the 12th grade.
- 12th Grade: All students must take 6 courses per semester. Students must earn 22 Carnegie units for graduation and meet all other requirements listed under "Graduation Requirements." (See IHF)

Progress:

A student, grades 9-12, may earn no more than 3 ½ Carnegie units per semester, or 7 Carnegie units per school year, summer school excepted. Students who transfer into Houston County Schools from a regionally accredited high school and who have earned more than 3-1/2 units per semester, grades 9-12, may receive credit for units earned. In such cases, the student's required units for graduation shall be increased by the number of units awarded beyond 3-1/2 per semester, or 7 per year.

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A student may earn a maximum of two Carnegie units in summer school.

Students enrolled full time at the Houston County Career and Technical Center (HCCTC) may be exempt from these limitations by approval of the HCCTC principal.

STATE REF.: State Standards B1 (1a.18); I3.6(1a); I17.1
Georgia High School Association By-Laws

LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A., §20-2-281(b)

APA RULE: 160-3-1-.10

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HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM