

DE SOTO AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

345.4-Rule

RETENTION PROCEDURES

The following steps shall be taken when a student is being considered for possible grade retention.

Fourth through Eighth Grade Students

1. The classroom teacher shall contact the parent/guardian. It is imperative that the teacher attempt to establish a working relationship with the student's parent/guardian.
2. The teacher shall conduct a review of the student's records, which are available in each building school office. The teacher shall compile a brief summary of findings.
3. The classroom teacher shall refer the failing or near-failing student to the appropriate alliance committee. The teacher shall include his/her summary of his/her review of the student's records, documentation of parent/guardian contacts and the methods employed in working with the student.

The committee will then make additional recommendations for working with the student and his/her parents/guardians (e.g. an assignment notebook, supervised study program, the after hours program and/or a referral for special education intervention). This recommendation shall be in writing to the teacher with a copy placed in the student's cumulative file and a copy sent to the student's parent/guardian.

4. A formal written retention referral shall be made to the alliance committee by the referring teacher. No retention referrals will be accepted prior to the end of the first semester or after the end of the third quarter.

When a referral for retention consideration occurs, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing that a meeting with the parents/guardians will be called to discuss possible retention. The guidance office is responsible for these actions.

The final decision on retention will be made in May. The alliance committee will make the retention decision. Input

will be accepted from the student, parent/guardian and teachers. The guidance office will officially notify the parents/guardian in writing of the results.

It is not enough to simply repeat the work and methods of the prior year. Therefore, no retention will be considered unless the teacher provides written documentation of a second year plan for how the student will be worked with differently to assist him/her in having a successful year that specifically includes:

- a. Changes to the curriculum for this student.
- b. Changes in methodology of teaching this student.

5. An independent learning plan (ILP) shall be developed (usually in May) by the alliance committee in conjunction with the classroom teacher(s) for students who are being retained. The parents/guardians, student, teachers, counselors, principal and other specialists as necessary may be members of this committee. This committee meets prior to the beginning of the new school year to establish or review an ILP and twice during the year, once per semester, to review the student's performance and revise the ILP as necessary.

Students Below Grade Four

1. Contact parents/guardians before March 1

Since the rates of development among young children vary greatly and can change rapidly, decisions about possible retention recommendation should not be made before mid-year. Students exhibiting difficulties, however, who are being considered candidates for retention, should have their parents/guardians contacted by March 1 of the spring of the year retention is being considered.

2. Meet with the alliance committee

A decision to recommend retention should be made by the alliance committee, whose membership may include but not be limited to the classroom teacher(s), school psychologist, guidance counselor, reading specialist, parents/guardians, support staff, nurse and principal.

3. The alliance committee gathers information from the following sources:

- a. current test data
- b. Utilization of Lights Retention Scale (as a guideline)
- c. Parent/guardian/school progress monitoring
- d. Current vision, hearing and physical updates
- e. Remedial instructional alternatives (Title I)
- f. Classroom alternatives attempted in the past

4. Retention recommendation due by May 1st

When alternatives and possibilities have been explored and the alliance committee recommends retention to the parents/guardians, this should occur no later than May 1st. Along with the retention recommendation, informal goals should be presented indicating what is to be accomplished by the student during the year of retention.

5. The final decision on retention will be made in May. The alliance committee will make the retention decision. Input will be accepted from the student, parent/guardian and teachers. The guidance office will officially notify the parents/guardian in writing of the results.

6. Follow up during the next school year

After a student is retained, the alliance committee should monitor and follow up on the effectiveness of the retention process for that student. The goals to be accomplished by the retention process should be monitored and parent/guardian contact maintained. If the student is not retained, a plan will be developed by the child study team at the beginning of the next school year.

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