



Guidelines for Grade Retention of Students AP 200.46

Procedure for: Principals, Vice-Principals, Teachers, Support Staff **Adopted:** November, 2005
Submitted by: Leslie Telfer, Superintendent of Education **Revised:** May 28, 2013; September 1, 2018
Category: Students

Purpose

This procedure will provide administrators, teachers, and support staff with direction regarding the grade retention and acceleration of students. The intention for this procedure is that it be used as a foundation in making sound decisions regarding placement of students.

Considerations

A holistic approach needs to be utilized throughout the decision-making process when considering the retention of a child. Factors to be considered include academic achievement, cognitive abilities, social and emotional development, as well as physical, medical, and other pertinent information. The following criteria are to be used as guides in the decision-making process:

1.0 Curriculum-Based Assessments/Academic Achievement

- Early identification information
- Report card marks
- Teacher assessments, portfolios, Developmental Reading Assessment, Developmental Writing Assessment
- EQAO results
- Standardized Assessments
- Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (C.C.A.T.)
- Testing information (if available and necessary) using various standardized measures, conducted by special education resource teachers and/or system special education resource teachers
- Assessments by speech and language pathologists and/or Board consulting psychologist, or outside agency personnel

2.0 Emotional Maturity

- Student's ability to regulate and show self-control of emotions and behavior appropriate to age, attitude, motivation and interests

3.0 Social

- Student's ability to socialize and interact with peers, other students and adults as well as sibling issues (e.g., multiple births, close-in-age siblings)

4.0 Medical

- Medical/psychiatric diagnoses which may have an impact on all factors and areas of development

5.0 Other

- Extenuating circumstances which may have an impact on the student's learning.
- Parental support of the acceleration or retention of their child

Procedures

- The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board believes in the continuous progress of students throughout their elementary years and supports the placement of students with their age-appropriate peers.



- The superintendent, principal, classroom teacher(s), special education resource teacher, other school and system support staff, and parents must be involved in developing strategies for the success of all students.
- Retention should be used only in rare cases.
- Research indicates that, in most cases, retention at grade level is not effective. Promotion with required remediation, enrichment or other intervention programs should be the norm in district schools.
- Clear and compelling reasons for retention must be present. Among these reasons is significant difficulty with the grade specific curriculum expectations and anticipated significant difficulty with the next grade's expectations (see "Considerations" section).
- "Progressing with some difficulty / Promotion at risk" students should be identified as early in the school year as possible and communication made with the students' parents/guardians. Final decisions regarding promotion or retention should be made by the school team in consultation with parents/guardians and, where appropriate, the student.
- It is expected that a student demonstrates consistent and repeated difficulty with mastering curriculum expectations despite attempts by school personnel, parents and outside agencies to provide assistance for the student.
- It is expected that the student's skills and knowledge are assessed using a variety of assessment methods. As well, it is expected that evidence-based intervention and instructional strategies, as well as environmental accommodations and assistive technology are considered, tried and found not to be successful or sufficient to improve student achievement. [See Appendix A]
- Behavioural difficulties are insufficient in themselves to warrant consideration for retention.
- A student who is identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), or is in the process of being identified, should not be retained.
- Grade retention should not be considered during the junior kindergarten and kindergarten year(s). All junior kindergarten and kindergarten children will normally move into a grade one placement. If it is an extraordinary case, and after careful evaluation of the student's needs, it is considered necessary to extend the junior kindergarten or kindergarten experience for an additional school year, or part thereof, the appropriate superintendent shall be involved in the deliberation and subsequent decision.
- The retention of a student beyond the primary level is not deemed advisable, nor is retaining a student who is placed in a special class.
- Students who have successfully completed the Grade 8 expectations will be promoted from elementary school and admitted to a secondary school.
- For those students with an IEP who are working on modified Grade 8 expectations, planning decisions will be made at the Grade 8 transition meeting or IPRC Annual Review (if the student was IPRC'd in our board). The students will be placed in an appropriate secondary school program. This will be a consultative process involving members from the elementary school, secondary school, the student and their parents.

Definitions – N/A



References

Education Act and Regulations

Guide to the Provincial Report Card Grades 1–8

AP 200.42 –Assessment, Evaluation, Grading & Reporting

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1–8. English as a Second Language

English Literacy Development A Resource Guide, 2001

Grade Retention- Synopsis of Research

Research Findings for Parents, (January, 2010). “What Does Research Say About Grade Retention?” Produced by OISE and CEA.©

http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/rspe/UserFiles/File/Research_Findings_for_Parents_3.pdf

Jacob, B. and Lefgren, L. (2007). The Effect of Grade Retention on High School Completion. NBER Working Paper Series.

Jimerson, S.R. (2009). Meta-analysis of Grade Retention Research: Implications for Practice in the 21st Century. *School Psychology Review*, 30(3): 420-437.

Jimerson, S.R., Carlson, E., Rotert, M., Egeland, B., & Sroufe, L.A. (1997). A Prospective Longitudinal Study of the Correlates and Consequences of Early Grade Retention. *Journal of School Psychology*, 35(1): 3-25.

Jimerson, S.R., Anderson, G.E., & Whipple, A.D. (2002). Winning the Battle and Losing the War: Examining the Relation between Grade Retention and Dropping Out of High School. *Psychology in the Schools*, 39(4): 441-457.

Manacorda, M. (2008). The Cost of Grade Retention. CEP Discussion Paper No 878. Centre for Economic Performance.

McCoy, A.R. and Reynolds, A.J. (1999). Grade Retention and School Performance: An Extended Investigation. *Journal of School Psychology*, 37(3): 273-298.

Roderick, M. (1994). Grade Retention and School Dropout: Investigating the Association. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(4): 729-759.

Roderick, M. (1995). Grade Retention and School Dropout: Policy Debate and Research Questions. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 15: 1-6.

Westbury, M. (1994). The Effect of Elementary Grade Retention on Subsequent School Achievement and Ability. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 19(3): 241-250.



INTERVENTIONS TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO A RETENTION DECISION

NOTE: The following in no way reflects an exhaustive list

Suggested Intervention	Primary Division	Junior Division	Intermediate Division
INTERVENTIONS:			
Use of software that targets skill development in an area of weakness, e.g. Destination Reading, Reading Upgrade.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access checklists from S.E.R.T. that provide diagnostic data that will offer insight into the child's area of strength and weakness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access checklists which provide insight into the student's learning style (i.e., multiple intelligence).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the computer software in the school as a differentiated instruction strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of adult volunteers for review and drill of a skill that is an area of weakness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Request School Team Meetings early in the year to express concerns and allow brainstorming of strategies by your colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange access to peer tutors or "homework buddies".	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offer support opportunities for the student who requires additional assistance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Suggested Intervention	Primary Division	Junior Division	Intermediate Division
HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTIONS:			
Provide the name of a tutor for the family to consider.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide home lists of sight words.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Develop in-service opportunities for the parent(s)/guardian(s) so that they become familiar with teaching strategies to implement at home that complement the school program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Develop guidelines for the family with regard to homework skills, i.e. study habits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare a home reading and/or writing program developed by the teacher, which includes careful instructions for the parent in assisting their child in the use of all reading strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Develop positive communication with family early to determine the best “next steps”.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Appendix A

Suggested Intervention	Primary Division	Junior Division	Intermediate Division
TEACHING PRACTICE:			
Develop literacy and numeracy skills, using differentiated instruction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use Ministry documents such as the Guides to Effective Instruction in Mathematics and Literacy and Think Literacy for teaching strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enlist the support of Student Achievement staff for ideas, programs, materials and advice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enlist the support of fellow staff members through sharing opportunities such as Professional Learning Communities (PLC's).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff should take advantage of all professional development opportunities. Consider current research on effective strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider creative grade/level groupings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>