

RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Students entering kindergarten shall be screened for physical, behavioral and cognitive ability as well as potential for learning and social background. Students who exhibit deficiencies in any of these areas shall be recommended to be evaluated for a potential disability. Occasionally it is to the advantage of the child to allow an additional year of development before entering school.

It is the intention of the board that students are to be placed in learning situations where they can compete effectively and have their abilities challenged. This placement is intended to foster the maximum total development of the child, leading to a successful, rewarding life. The majority of children should progress through the grades at the rate of one grade per year. Promotion of more than one year should be rare and permitted only when the student exhibits exceptional skills. Final decisions regarding promotion of more than one year shall be a cooperative effort between the student's teachers, the building principal and the parent/guardian. A decision regarding retention shall be made after careful considerations of the student's age, cognitive ability, emotional status, grade placement, previous grade retention, background and attendance record. Final decisions regarding grade retention, in grades other than fourth and eighth, shall be a cooperative effort between the child's teachers, the building principal and the parent/guardian.

The School District of West Salem is committed to ensuring that students make appropriate progress during the course of their academic career. The board recognizes that social promotion is not in the best interest of a student's academic development. For this reasons, and in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 118.33(6)(a) 1, all students being considered for promotion to fifth and ninth grades must exhibit satisfactory performance on the *Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE)*. Students must obtain a rating of *proficient or advanced* in two of the five scored areas and no lower than *basic* in the remaining scored areas. In addition, students must obtain a passing grade (D- or above) for all three trimesters (4th grade) in reading, language arts, math, science and social studies or both the first and second semesters (8th grade) in math, language arts, science and social studies.

If a student fails to meet either of the above requirements, it should be determined if the student has a current special education Individualized *Education Program (IEP)*. If the student does have a current IEP, the student's IEP team shall make the decision regarding promotion or retention. If the student does not have a current IEP, the decision regarding the student's promotion shall be submitted to the Grade Advancement Committee (GAC). At the elementary level, the GAC should be comprised of the building principal, a guidance counselor, all fourth grade core teachers and a school psychologist. At the middle school level, the GAC should be comprised of the building principal, a guidance counselor, all eighth grade core teachers and a school psychologist.

The GAC has the discretion to formulate a corrective action plan and specific requirements that are necessary for the student to be promoted. If the student satisfies the requirements of the GAC's decision, the student will be promoted to the next grade. If the student fails to satisfy the requirements of the GAC's decision, the student will be retained. Parents have the right to appeal to the board of education. Appeals may be made on the basis of a violation of policy and/or procedure. The board will not hear appeals regarding an attempt to overturn the decision of the GAC.

APPROVED: October 25, 2004