

## **Students**

### **Promotion/Acceleration/Retention**

The Board of Education is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled in its schools. Therefore, the District will establish and maintain the highest standards required for each grade and monitor student performance in a continuous and systematic manner. The administration and faculty shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on demonstrated and assessed successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on the CMT and CAPT statewide assessments and other testing instruments. Any necessary retention should take place as early in a student's educational career as possible.

Students who, on the basis of objective measures of academic proficiency, can reasonably be expected to meet the instructional/learning objectives at the next educational level may be promoted.

The Board of Education shall approve the grading and reporting systems as developed by the administration and faculty upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Board desires to eliminate the practice of promoting students to the next grade level for social reasons even though they are failing academically. The Board expects students to progress through each grade usually within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction should accommodate the varying interests and growth patterns of individual students and include strategies for addressing academic deficiencies when needed. Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade-level standards of expected student achievement. The student's readiness for work at the next grade level shall be required before he/she is promoted. Students who have mastered the appropriate skills will be promoted; those who have not will be retained.

Progress toward high school graduation shall be based on the student's ability to pass the required subjects and electives necessary to earn the required number of credits necessary for graduation, meeting the credit distribution requirement. The student must also satisfactorily demonstrate the district's performance standards, assessed in part by the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). Students who have not successfully completed the assessment criteria shall participate in a course of study designed to assist them attain a satisfactory level of competency prior to graduation. When high academic achievement is evident, the Superintendent or his/her designee may approve a student for acceleration into a higher grade level. The student's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

Schools shall identify students in danger of failing and being at risk for retention. This identification shall also include those students who fail to meet the remedial standards of the CMT and CAPT statewide assessment programs. Prior to deciding on retention for a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district shall provide and may require the student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance. Opportunities provided for supplemental and remedial instruction to assist the student in overcoming his/her academic deficiencies may include but are not limited to, after-school tutorial programs, Saturday tutorial programs, summer school, Reading Recovery, or student mentoring.

In all cases of promotion or retention, the parent/guardian is to be fully involved and informed throughout the promotion/retention decision-making process. Parents will be notified as early as possible

that retention is being considered and except in very unusual circumstances, no later than March 31. The Principal shall be responsible for making the final decision as to retention and assignment.

(cf. [5124](#) - Reporting to Parents)

(cf. [6146](#) - Graduation Requirements)

(cf. [6146.1](#) - Grading System)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

P.A. 99-288 An Act Concerning Education Accountability

[10-221\(b\)](#) Boards of education to prescribe rules.

[10-265g](#) Summer reading programs required for priority school districts. Evaluation of student reading level. Personal reading plans. (as amended by PA 01-173 and PA 06-135)

[10-265l](#) Requirements for additional instruction for poor performing students in priority school districts; exemption. Summer school required; exemption (as amended by PA 99-288, PA 01-173, PA 03-174 and PA 06-135)

Policy adopted: May 9, 2011

**5123**

## **Students**

### **Promotion/Acceleration/Retention**

It is the intention of the Stafford Board of Education that all students are placed in instructional programs in which they achieve academically as well as develop emotionally, socially, and physically. Students who have demonstrated satisfactory performance at an appropriate level relative to their grade placement, and as measured by criteria including district and state assessments, benchmarks, and grade level reporting, will be promoted to the next level. Students who do not meet these measurable, objective criteria will be supported through a range of programming options and services to develop their educational potential. A written plan will describe the individual program developed. The student's chronological age, motivation, and ability will be considered in program decisions. These options include more time for mastering skills as well as services that accommodate diverse academic needs and learning styles. Extra time for skill development may be defined as in-school intervention, after school, summer school, tutoring, or repetition of a course or grade level program.

Stafford Public Schools will:

- Identify objective criteria for promotion;
- Provide for measuring of the progress of students against such criteria and timely reporting to parents;
- Convene a Student Progress Team to determine appropriate programming options for students who are in danger of not meeting performance expectations. This plan may include more time for skill development and/or supplemental services (as described above). A written record of the Student Progress Team meeting shall be maintained. The final decision on an appropriate plan resides with the Student Progress Team. This does not curtail the rights of the parents/guardians to due process.

### **Appeal Process**

If the parents/guardians do not agree with the Student Progress Team's decision, they may indicate their disagreement in writing to the Superintendent of Schools for review prior to May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Superintendent

will respond to the parent letter no later than two weeks after it is received. If the student's parents/guardians object to the position of the Superintendent, they have the right to bring the matter to the Board of Education by forwarding a written request to the Board within two weeks of receipt of the Superintendent's response.

### **Grades Pre-K - 5 Student Progress Team Membership:**

Generally, the members of this team shall include the building principal, the student's parents/guardians, the student's classroom teacher(s), the school psychologist, and a representative of the EIP team. The Principal may include other appropriate school personnel as members of the team.

### **Student Progress Team Membership**

### **Grades 6 - 12 Student Progress Team membership:**

Generally, the members of this team shall include a building administrator, the student's parents/guardians, the student's classroom teacher(s), the school psychologist, and a guidance counselor. The Principal may include other appropriate school personnel and the student as members of the team.

### **Timeline for decision-making regarding promotion:**

#### **Grades Pre-K - 8:**

Teachers are required to meet with parents/guardians of students who are in danger of failing to meet the criteria for promotion.

1. Beginning in January but no later than March 1, teachers will notify the Principal that action for intervention is under consideration.
2. Beginning in January but no later than March 31, the Student Progress Team will meet to determine an individual plan to address the student's needs.
3. Beginning in January but no later than March 31, the Principal will inform the parents in writing that action for intervention is under consideration.

#### **Grades 9 -12:**

1. Teachers will invite parents of students who are in danger of failing to meet with them approximately halfway through the first quarter of each semester, which would typically occur in early October and early March. For full-year courses, both of these meetings will be arranged for parents.
2. Teachers will furnish a detailed written report concerning student performance to parents of students who are in danger of failing on approximately the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of each academic quarter. This is required for both full-year and single semester courses.
3. At the end of each academic quarter, typically in November, January, April, and June, parents will receive a written performance report that will reflect students' promotion status, e.g., "on probation" or academically "ineligible".
4. At the end of each academic quarter, typically in November, January, April, and June, the high school educational support team will review all students in danger of failing due to extenuating circumstances such as hospitalization, personal or family trauma, or suspension for consideration of a status of "incomplete", which would typically allow such students two school weeks to complete any missing assignments or to make up tests, at the discretion of the high school

principal.

## **Criteria for Promotion**

### **Grades Pre-K-3**

When considering the possible retention of students in pre-kindergarten through grade three, the team will consider the following factors:

1. Is the child's reading level significantly below expectation for the current level, based on Developmental Reading Assessment results and district-wide benchmarks?
2. Has the child received ongoing and systematic reading instruction? A lack of ongoing and consistent instruction may be due to frequent moves or other factors.
3. Has the child missed instruction due to poor attendance or tardiness? Does the child need the opportunity to receive the basic instruction that has been missed? What percentage of instructional time has the student missed in the last year?
4. Do the child's scores on the Stafford benchmarks indicate a significant lack of mastery of the current grade level curriculum?
5. Does the child independently complete classroom and homework assignments?
6. Are the child's social skills age and/or grade appropriate?
7. Does the family support the retention?
8. How will the child's experiences be different from the current experiences?
9. Are there any other factors that need to be considered?

### **Grades 6-8**

Students who have achieved satisfactorily and at an appropriate level relative to their grade, as determined by teacher assessment, will be promoted. A student shall be promoted from one grade to the next on the basis of academic performance. A student must have an overall average of 60 or above in four of the following five academic subjects: English, mathematics, science, social studies and either a world language or reading.

### **Retention**

In grades 6 through 8, the following factors will be considered by the Student Progress Team in regard to possible retention:

1. Student's chronological age
2. Student's potential
3. Student's academic achievement (students who are in jeopardy of failing two or more academic subjects)
4. Student's academic achievement (students who are in jeopardy of failing the same subject for the second time)
5. Student's work and study habits

6. Student's physical development
7. Student's social maturity
8. Student's emotional maturity
9. Student's attitude toward school
10. Student's attendance record

## **Grades 9-12**

### **Promotion Requirements**

High school promotion from grade to grade is based upon a student's earning of credit as follows:

To grade 10 - 4 ½ credits

To grade 11 - 10 or more credits

To grade 12 - 15 or more credits

To graduate - 22 credits as noted below

### **Requirements for a Stafford High School Diploma**

A minimum of twenty-two (22) credits is required for graduation from Stafford High School in the following distribution:

The Stafford Board of Education requirements for a Stafford High School diploma include earning at least twenty-two (22) high school credits in accordance with the required distribution of credits displayed below. Students must also successfully meet the Stafford Public Schools Performance Standards in math, science, and language arts.

### **Required Credit Distribution**

English 4 credits

Social Studies 3 credits

1 credit must be in U.S. History

*\*1.5 credits starting with the class of 2010,*

1 credit must be in World Cultures, and

0.5 credit must be in Civics.

Math 3 credits

Arts or Vocational Education 1 credit

Science (1 credit must be in Biology) 3 credits

Health ½ credit

Physical Education 2 credits

Technology ½ credit

(Graphic Design, CAD, Computer Programming may be substituted)

Electives 5 credits

**Total 22 credits**

Students are required to have a schedule carrying at least 5.5 credits each school year.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

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