

<u>Section I:</u>  <b>Instructional Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>Knox County Board of Education Policy</b>		
	<b>Promotion, Retention, Acceleration</b>	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:
		<b>I-340</b>	
		Issued:	<b>7/95</b>
		Reviewed:	<b>8/23</b>
		Revised:	<b>8/23</b>

Promotion, retention, or acceleration shall be considered on the basis of what is best for the child. The parents may appeal the decision to the principal, the Director of Schools, and the Board of Education.<sup>1</sup>

## **PROMOTION**

The academic program implemented in each school shall be designed to help students achieve the expectations of the grade-level State Board of Education approved Tennessee Academic Standards and meet the requirements for promotion to the next grade. Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on the successful completion of required academic work or demonstration of satisfactory progress in each of the relevant academic areas.<sup>2</sup>

A student in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade shall not be promoted to the next grade level unless the student is determined to be proficient in English Language Arts (ELA) on the student's achieving a performance level rating of "met expectation" or "exceeded expectations" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) test.

For the purposes of this policy, a student's most recent TCAP test is the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade spring ELA TCAP, or the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA TCAP retest opportunity, whichever score is higher.

A student in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade who scores "approaching expectations" on the ELA portion of the TCAP test may be promoted to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade if the student meets the requirements of any one (1) of the following pathways:

1. Pathway 1: The student is an English language learner and has received less than two (2) full school years of ELA instruction or if it is determined that the student is not proficient in ELA based solely on a lack of English language proficiency;
2. Pathway 2: The student was previously retained in any of the grades Kindergarten through three (K-3);
3. Pathway 3: The student is retested in accordance with Department guidelines before the beginning of the next school year and scores proficient on the retest;
4. Pathway 4: The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the beginning of the upcoming school year, maintains a 90% attendance rate at the camp, and student's performance on the post-test at the end of the learning loss bridge camp, as required under T.C.A. § 49-6-1502(4)(f), demonstrates adequate growth;
  - a. Adequate growth is defined as a student improving scores between a baseline assessment and the post-test by at least five (5) percentage points. The baseline assessment is the ELA portion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade spring TCAP (excluding writing), unless a student moves into the

“approaching” performance level as a result of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade TCAP retest, in which case the baseline assessment for that student is the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retest score. The post-test will be the Department of Education-developed, standards-aligned assessment administered at the conclusion of summer camps.

- b. A student is eligible for this adequate growth promotion pathway if the student scores “approaching” on either the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade spring TCAP or on the ELA portion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade TCAP retest opportunity.

- 5. Pathway 5: The student receives high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring for the entirety of the upcoming school year from a Tennessee accelerating literacy and learning corps (TN ALL Corps) tutor. “High-dosage, low-ratio tutoring” means a minimum of two (2) thirty (3) minute sessions per week with a one to three (1:3) teachers to student ratio. TN ALL Corps tutoring may be provided through the following options:

- a. A tutor recruited and trained through the Department’s TN ALL Corps grant program; or
- b. A district recruited tutor who has completed the Department’s TN ALL Corps training.

The parent or legal guardian of a student achieving a performance level of “approaching” may appeal directly to the Tennessee Department of Education.<sup>5</sup>

A student who is not proficient in ELA, as determined by the student's achieving a performance level rating of “below” on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test may be promoted if the student meets the requirements of any one (1) of the following pathways:

- 1. Pathway 1: The student is currently receiving ELL services and has received less than 2 years of English instruction or if it is determined that the student is not proficient in ELA based solely on a lack of English language proficiency;
- 2. Pathway 2: The student was previously retained in any of the grades Kindergarten through three (K-3);
- 3. Pathway 3: The student retested in accordance with Department guidelines before the beginning of the next school year and scores proficient on the assessment;<sup>3</sup> or
- 4. Pathway 4: The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the beginning of the upcoming school year, maintains a 90% attendance rate at camp, and receives high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring for the entirety of the upcoming school year from a TN ALL Corps tutor.

A student who is promoted to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade pursuant to Pathway 4 or Pathway 5 must show adequate growth on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade ELA portion of the TCAP test before the student may be promoted to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

A student shall not be retained in 4<sup>th</sup> grade more than once.

There shall be no graduation exercises at any grade level prior to graduation from high school.

**RETENTION**

In accordance with State Board of Education policy, schools shall identify students who demonstrate difficulty in achieving the requirements for promotion to the next grade level and therefore may be considered for retention by February 1. Factors used to identify students who may be considered for retention shall, at a minimum, include:

1. The student's ability to perform at the expectations of the current grade-level standards;
2. The results of local assessments, screening, or monitoring tools;
3. State assessments, as applicable;
4. The overall academic achievement of the student;
5. The student's likelihood of success with more difficult material if promoted to the next grade;
6. The student's attendance record; and
7. The student's social and emotional maturity.

If a student is considered for retention, the school shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian within fifteen (15) calendar days of identification. The school shall develop and implement an individualized promotion plan to help the student avoid retention.

If a retention decision has been made, then the school shall develop an individualized academic remediation plan for the retained student prior to the start of the next school year. The academic remediation plan shall be developed in coordination with the student's teachers and may include input from the student's parents and other appropriate school personnel. A student shall not be retained more than one (1) time in any given grade level.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to send the Director of Schools a list of pupils who have been retained stating pupil's name, grade, and/or subject.

**ACCELERATION**

The teacher, in consultation with appropriate professional staff and parents, will make the decision for the promotion of a pupil to an upper grade.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR SUSPECTED DISABILITIES**

Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, a student in the third grade receiving a score of "approaching" or "below" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test may be promoted if they meet certain requirements set out in the law. This applies to students with and without disabilities. However, a student may not be retained based on their disability or suspected disability. Retention and promotion decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis and should be made in consultation with the IEP and/or 504 team to determine whether the student's performance on the ELA TCAP was due to his/her disability. Such consultation should include but is not limited to a review of evaluation and eligibility data, input from the student's teachers and parents, benchmark assessments, and classroom performance.

Likewise, a student may not be retained solely due to a suspected disability. If the LEA has reason to suspect a disability (e.g., the student is not making progress when provided research-based intervention, the student has been referred but not yet evaluated for special education, or parents have provided documentation of a disability), the student may not be retained if the reason for their TCAP performance may be due to the suspected disability.<sup>4</sup>

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Legal References:

1. Tennessee State Board of Education Policy 3.300.
2. T.C.A. § 49-6-3106.
3. T.C.A. § 49-6-3115.
4. T.C.A. § 49-6-1507.
5. State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.16.
6. Tennessee Department of Education, Learning Loss, Special Education FAQs for Districts and Schools,  
[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/2020-21-leg-session/Learning%20Loss\\_SPED%20FAQ.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/2020-21-leg-session/Learning%20Loss_SPED%20FAQ.pdf)

Approved as to Legal Form  
By Knox County Law Director 7/27/2023  
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