

DRAFT

WITHDRAWN

01-1219-PO2

December 19, 2001

AMENDED POLICY ON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROMOTION

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education adopt the amended policy on elementary school promotion.

The policy is hereby amended by deleting the language stricken through and adding the language underscored as follows:

PURPOSE: In accordance with the **Children First Education Plan**, the purpose of this policy is to provide the standards for promoting elementary school students. In providing these promotion guidelines, the Chicago Board of Education demonstrates its commitment to several key objectives: (1) the promotion of high educational standards for its students; (2) ensuring that there is consistency in the educational opportunities provided to all students; (3) implementation of a plan of system-wide monitoring to verify that the quality of instruction and type of instructional materials provided to students are calculated to achieve student mastery of the skills and knowledge which are assessed in making promotion decisions and (4) ensuring that the district's educational objectives are met in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

PRESENT POLICY: The current policy, Board Report 99-0825-PO4, is hereby rescinded.

HISTORY OF BOARD ACTION: The Promotion Policy of the Chicago Board of Education has been successively codified in the following Board Reports:

- 77-212-12 (adopted July 13, 1977)
- 94-0323-PO1 (adopted March 23, 1994)
- 96-0327-PO1 (adopted March 27, 1996)
- 97-0827-PO6 (adopted August 27, 1997)
- 98-0923-PO2 (adopted September 23, 1998) and
- 99-0825-PO4 (adopted August 25, 1999)

1. Standards Demonstrating Mastery of Reading and Mathematics Skills

Effective with the start of the 2000-2001 school year, students in the third, sixth and eighth grades ("the benchmark grades") will be promoted to the next grade if they possess the knowledge and skills appropriate to their grade levels as demonstrated by their performance on multiple measurements including the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and, as appropriate, the assessment of other factors described in Section 2 below.

Students at the benchmark grades whose scores are at or above the following levels and have passing classroom grades in reading and mathematics shall automatically be promoted to the next grade level:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>ITBS Score Range</u>
8th Grade	8.0 or above
6th Grade	6.0 or above
3rd Grade	3.0 or above

2. Determination of Promotion for Students Scoring Below the ITBS Cut-Off Score

For all students at the benchmark grades who score below the cut-off scores set forth in Section 1, additional criteria will be reviewed automatically by the Office of Schools and Regions as set forth in Section 3 below, in conjunction with the ITBS score, to determine promotion to the next grade level. Consistent with the framework established for use of the ITBS, CPS has established a scoring range at each benchmark grade which, when examined in conjunction with other criteria, will be determinative of promotion to the next grade level.

Effective with the 2000-2001 school year, the acceptable score ranges on the ITBS at each of the benchmark grades shall be the following.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>ITBS Score Range</u>
8th Grade	7.4 - 7.9
6th Grade	5.5 - 5.9
3rd Grade	2.8 - 2.9

In determining whether to promote students in benchmark grades to the next grade, the score on the ITBS will be considered in conjunction with the following criteria to determine whether the student has achieved mastery at the appropriate grade level in math and reading:

- (a) classroom grades of "B" or better in reading and mathematics for the academic year;
- (b) passing reading and mathematics unit test scores;
- (c) the student's attendance during the academic year at a rate of 90% or better;
- (d) the student's consistent completion of homework assignments during the academic year; and\
- (e) the student's conduct during the academic year (i.e., the absence of any significant disciplinary infractions).

The Chief Education Officer or her designee will develop and distribute to the schools a form on which a compilation of this information will be provided and the promotion and review process conducted by the Chief Education Officer or her designee will be described.

3. Determining Promotion

In June of each year, the total academic performance of students in the benchmark grades will be reviewed and promotion decisions will be made. The following methodology will be used for determining grade placement and whether summer school attendance is required.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Action</u>
A. Students who achieve or exceed the minimum Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) criterion score and have passing classroom grades in reading and mathematics.	Promote to next grade (No summer school).
B. Students who fall within the promotion criteria range and meet all five of the additional criteria listed above in (2(a)-(e)).	Promotion to next grade with satisfactory completion of mandatory summer school.

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| C. | Students who fall within the promotion criteria range but have one or more significant deficiencies on the additional assessments. | Promotion to next grade with satisfactory completion of mandatory summer school. |
| D. | Students who fall below the promotion criteria range, or have a failing final report card grade in reading or mathematics or have more than 20 days unexcused absences. | Promotion to next grade only with retesting and evaluation for promotion in August based on ITBS score, satisfactory completion of summer school, and attendance at a rate of 90% or better. |

Based upon review of the above standards, students whose performance falls within criteria A - C above, shall be automatically promoted in June to the next grade level.

Subject to review described in Section 7, below, students whose performance falls within category D will not be promoted in June and shall be required to attend mandatory summer school. At the conclusion of the summer school bridge program, the ITBS will be re-administered. Students whose scores fall within the range designated in Section 2, above, who have successfully completed summer school with attendance of 90% or better, will be promoted in August to the next grade level.

Subject to review described in Section 7, below, students re-taking the ITBS in August whose scores fall below the minimum range scores set forth in Section I above, shall be retained at grade level.

A copy of the Review procedures described in Section 7, below, will be provided with all notices sent to parents informing them that the student must attend summer school and/or will be retained in grade.

Eighth Grade Students. In addition to the promotion criteria set forth in Section 2, eighth grade students must pass the United States and State of Illinois Constitution tests in order to graduate. Limited English-proficient students may take the constitution test in English or it may be administered in their native language as deemed appropriate in the judgment of the classroom teacher in consultation with other knowledgeable persons, including the parents.

Students who are 15 years of age or who will be 15 years of age before December 1st of the following school year and who have not successfully completed the summer bridge program will be assigned to a designated academic preparation center. The curriculum of the academic preparatory centers has been designed to provide intensive skills development in reading and mathematics in smaller classroom settings and to provide other academic support. The ITBS will be administered to all students in academic preparatory centers in January of each year. Students obtaining ITBS scores with the range of 7.4 to 7.9 in reading and mathematics will be promoted to high school. No student assigned to an academic preparatory center will be promoted to high school before their second semester in attendance at the center.

Students with Disabilities. Students with disabilities are expected to master the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible with the use of supplementary aides and other services. The designated ITBS scores and other criteria used to determine promotion shall apply to students with disabilities unless the Individual Education Plan ("IEP") contains modifications to the designated ITBS score required and/or other educational criteria to be reviewed.

Commencing with the 2000-2001 school year, the Chief Specialized Services Officer shall develop a plan under which periodic reviews of student IEP's are conducted to ensure that promotion decisions for students with disabilities are made in conformance with their IEPs.

Bilingual Students and English Language Learners. The District will evaluate test instruments and results of all limited English proficient students to ensure that the tests measure effectively the students' knowledge and skills in math and reading. Accommodations will be provided, as appropriate, to limited English proficient test takers, as follows. English language learners (ELL) will complete the curriculum in their native language and/or English in accordance with Office of Language, Culture and Early Childhood guidelines. In addition to the curriculum completed by all students in the Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program and in Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI), all such students will also complete the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. In making promotion determinations regarding English language learners, the level of English proficiency for first and second year students shall not be considered.

The performance of first and second year ELL students will be evaluated in their home language and pursuant to ESL proficiency. In the third year, ELL students will be evaluated on their ELL and English language proficiency in classroom instruction. The student's ITBS score will only be used for determining whether the student is ready to exit the bilingual education program to the general education program. All promotion decisions will be based upon the policies and procedures adopted in Department of Language, Culture and Early Childhood Guidelines, entitled "The Framework for Success". First and second year ELL students will attend mandatory summer school based on examinations administered in their home language. Third year ELL students will be required to attend summer school based upon teacher recommendations in reading, mathematics and ESL..

Incoming Students. Students who were previously enrolled in other school districts who enroll in the District in grades 4, 7 and 9 shall be evaluated for appropriate grade placement.

4. System-Wide Monitoring of Instruction and Instructional Materials

The District affirms the critical importance of high quality classroom instruction and use of appropriate instructional materials in fostering student academic achievement. In particular, because student promotion decisions will evaluate, in addition to ITBS scores, classroom grades and attendance, the District will undertake the following steps to ensure that student achievement is maximized, that the utilization of the designated educational criteria is done in a manner that ensures consistency throughout the school system, and that there is a strong alignment between the tests and other assessment criteria, the curriculum, and the classroom instruction.

All schools must ensure that instruction is conducted at the correlative grade level for each grade so as to best meet the educational needs of the child. For most children and in most program areas, this means providing instruction at the correlative grade level for each grade. In Reading instruction, students should receive some instruction at their "reading level" as opposed to their "grade level" when there is a significant disparity between these. In grades K-3 a significant disparity is a difference greater than one grade level, and in grade 4-12, it is a difference of more than two grades levels as measured by an informal reading inventory. To promote accountability with this mandate, the Chief Education Officer or her designee and the Office of Accountability will implement a system for monitoring classroom instruction that will include random unannounced classroom visits conducted to confirm that instruction at grade level is occurring and that the assignment of student grades for classroom work is consistent with District Policy.

Standardized Curriculum. Effective no later than October, 15 of the 2000-2001 school year, all elementary schools where aggregate student reading scores on the ITBS indicate that less than 50% of the school's students tested at or above national norms in reading, may be required to use a standardized reading curriculum provided by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Textbook Committee. Effective with the start of the 2000-2001 school year, a district-wide Textbook Committee shall be created which will be chaired by the Chief Accountability Officer or his designee. It shall be the responsibility of the Textbook Committee to (i) develop district-wide textbook lists specifying recommended mathematics and reading texts; these lists will be developed by January, 2001; (2) the Committee may mandate the use of specific mathematics and reading textbooks to ensure the greatest possible correlation to grade level instruction and (3) the Committee shall develop procedures for effectively monitoring the purchase of textbooks and other instructional materials at the individual school level.

5. Support for Students Determined to be Academically at Risk

Consistent with its demonstrated record of providing a variety of supplemental programs and other academic support to all students and specifically those students deemed to be academically at risk (i.e., students who have a deficit in classroom grades and/or who have excessive unexcused absences), one or more of the following additional types of support may be provided: (1) mandatory attendance in an extended day ("Lighthouse") program; (2) required participation in after-school tutoring in a small group or on an individualized basis; (3) participation in a daily pullout class for remedial instruction in reading and/or mathematics and (4) provision of after-school assistance with homework assignments.

Recognizing the fact that facilitating academic achievement requires a cooperative effort between the student, parent and teacher, the District may implement the use of a "contract" developed for the student with the participation of the teacher(s), parent or guardian and the student. The contract will establish general progress objectives for the student each semester which will be reviewed weekly by the teacher(s) and provided to the parent or guardian with a requirement for sign-off by the parent. In addition, quarterly parent/student/teacher conferences will be held to discuss student progress.

Notwithstanding the availability of the foregoing services to students deemed at academic risk, the District is committed to providing individualized support to students who manifest chronic academic deficiencies even though they have received intensified support. For example, students who were enrolled in school for the first time at a late age or students who have consistently tested two years or more below grade level on the ITBS, often require individualized academic support. The District will provide such assistance, to the greatest extent possible, including conducting diagnostic testing when appropriate, in an effort to identify the impediments to student learning.

6. Parental Notification

Beginning with the first week of the school year and prior to October 1st of each school year, principals will be required to notify parents in writing of the promotion policy of the District. The policy will clearly articulate the right of a parent/ guardian to seek review of the District's determination not to promote a student. Copies of the policy will be distributed at every elementary school within the district.

At the end of the fifth week, fifteenth week, twentieth week, twenty-fifth week and thirtieth week, parents shall be notified in writing if their child is in danger of receiving a failing grade in reading or mathematics. Student assistance shall be provided in manner described in Section 5 above at the earliest point the child is identified as being at risk for obtaining a failing grade in either reading or mathematics. If the student receives a failing grade in reading or mathematics at the end of the twentieth week, notification must be sent to the student's parent or guardian by certified mail. If the parent or guardian does not attend a Report Card pick up conference at the thirtieth week, notification must be sent to the parent by certified mail. Within ten days of the receipt of the ITBS scores, parents will be notified regarding whether their child will be promoted and whether summer school attendance is required. Consistent with Section 3, above, the notice will include a copy of the Review procedures.

If a student has accumulated 10 days of unexcused absence (including absence created by an out of school suspension), schools shall be required to notify the parent or guardian by certified mail that the student may be required to attend summer school. The same notification must be made, in writing, and via certified mail if the student reaches 15 days of unexcused absence. Final notification shall be given by certified mail if the student reaches 20 days of unexcused absence and has scored below the minimum ITBS score established for his/her grade level.

7. Request for Review of Promotion Determination

The District shall maintain a centralized process that is applied consistently throughout the District for determining whether any student whose performance falls below the promotion criteria range or who has more than 20 days unexcused absence should be exempted from the requirements of the promotion policy. As set forth in Section 6 above, parents/guardians shall be notified within ten days of receipt of the ITBS scores regarding if their child will not be promoted in June and is required to attend summer school. Within 10 calendar days from the date the promotion decision is communicated to the parents/guardian, a parent/guardian or the principal of the school which the student attends has the right to request review of the determination that the student not be promoted in June and is required to attend summer school. The review procedures will be provided to parents/guardians in writing consistent with Sections 3 and 6, above. All such requests for review shall be in writing, and shall contain the following information: the cumulative grade card, attendance record, conduct information and whether the student has a disability. If the parent/guardian does not have the information then the request for review should contain a statement describing the student's grades, attendance and conduct. The request forwarded shall be directed to the Office of Schools and Regions, which will undertake review of the student's performance, based upon the criteria established under Section 2 of this policy or any other evidence of acceptable reading and math skills and knowledge, and shall notify the parent/guardian with five days of the decision to grant an exemption from this policy.

8. Assessment Validation and Maintenance of Data

The District will on a periodic basis, review use of the ITBS (or any other standardized assessment used), in part, as a factor in determining student mastery of reading and mathematics skills. The frequency of review will be determined based upon generally recognized educational and testing standards. The evaluation will include review of the construct validity of the ITBS or other assessment used, test development, revisions and use implementation to ensure that testing measures are both accurate and appropriate for the knowledge bases measured and the student population for which the measures are obtained.

In addition, the District will maintain all testing data by race and national origin of test takers and shall annually review this data with regard to students who are promoted and retained pursuant to the requirements of the policy in order to ensure that there is no disparate impact based upon race or national origin created by operation of the policy. All such data shall be made available to any parent upon request.

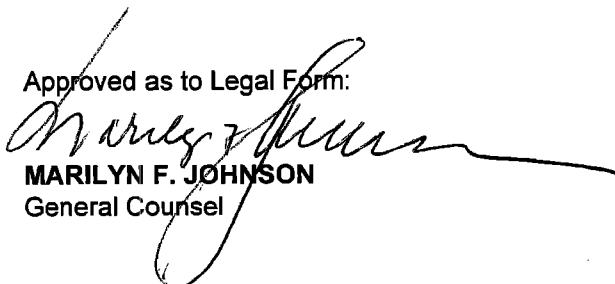
Approved for Consideration:

Respectfully submitted,

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Approved as to Legal Form:



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