

Parent Guide to Understand New State Laws for Student Promotion

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What is social promotion and why is there a problem?

California has been addressing the issue of student accountability for the past several years. Too many students are not successful in middle school and high school because their reading, math, and language arts skills are not sufficient enough to allow them to complete class work satisfactorily. These students are referred to as non-proficient students, or students who have not mastered grade level skills.

What will be done about the problem?

Growing concerns about students who are not grade level proficient resulted in newly enacted laws that require school districts to retain, or hold back, students. The purpose of retaining students is to provide additional opportunities for a student to learn grade level skills. School districts must offer a retained student a program designed to meet his/her learning needs.

Education Code sections 48070.5 and 60648, Pupil Promotion and Retention, requires all school districts to establish a promotion and retention policy, based on the student's achievement of grade level standards (skills) for students between grades 2 and 3, 3 and 4, and 4 and 5, as well as between elementary and middle school, and middle school and high school.

Until January 1, 2003, Education Code section 37252.5 requires school districts to offer supplemental instruction to students in grades 2 through 8 with low reading, writing, or math achievements.

When will parents be notified?

If your child is at risk of being retained, you must be notified as early in the school year as possible. The notice should provide parents with an opportunity to meet with the teacher recommending retention or promotion. Notification could occur in any of the following ways:

- Letter or Retention Notice mailed to parent(s)
- Report Card/Progress Report comments
- Parent conference/Student Study Team meeting with parent

What assistance will my child receive?

Additional help will be provided for any student who is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade. This assistance will be planned to help the student improve his/her academic achievement. Programs may include: tutorial programs, after-school programs, intersession programs, Saturday school program, summer school, family counseling, and many other programs of additional instruction.

What Can Parents Do?

1. Ask your child's teacher to explain math, reading, and language arts grade level expectations and skills your child has not achieved.
2. Ask the teacher to share how the supplemental instructional program will help your child with his/her specific needs.
3. Make arrangements for your child to attend programs designed to help students at risk of being retained.
4. Set regular times of the day and week for you to work with your child on the skills he/she needs to learn.
5. Explain to your child how you will help at home and how the school will help to support your child in attaining grade success.
6. Praise your child for their effort and their good work.
7. Carefully monitor your child's progress. If your child continues to struggle, contact your child's teacher.