

**Shared Decision-Making Committee
Position Statement on Retention
February 26, 2015**

Statement: It is the position of the District Shared-Decision Making Committee that the use of *retention as an intervention* to improve student performance on grade level learning standards and subject area mastery be used only after all other interventions have been tried without success and documented as such.

Many factors must be considered before making a recommendation to retain a student. Considerations include the following:

- Chronological age at school entrance
- Gender
- Attendance
- Homelessness
- Mobility
- Lack of preschool experience
- Trauma such as death, divorce, violence
- Known disability
- Physical size of the student in relation to peer group
- Child's and parent's support for retention
- Previous retention or additional year of learning time, such as Pre-First Grade
- Language proficiency (ELN)
- Interventions provided

Potential Negative Impact on Retained Students and Community:

- Increased risk of dropping-out or non-completion of school
- Depression, low self-esteem, poor social interactions with peers, general dislike of school, increased behavioral problems
- According to middle school students, repeating a grade is “as stressful than wetting in class, being caught stealing, going blind, or losing a parent”
- Costs estimates for the additional learning year range from \$9,319 for a general education student, to \$22,005 for a special education student.

Recommended Interventions: Research studies and National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) suggests that school personnel collaborate to provide the following:

- Multitiered problem-solving models (RTI, AIS) to provide early and intensive evidence-based instruction and intervention to meet the needs of all students across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains
- Equitable opportunities to learn for all students
- Universal screening for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional difficulties
- Frequent progress monitoring and evaluation of interventions
- Extended learning opportunities beyond the school day and the school year
- Evidenced-based alternatives to grade retention and promotion
- Parental involvement to further support extended learning opportunities

Summary: The District Shared Decision Making Committee strongly recommends that *retention as an intervention* is considered only on an individual, case by case basis involving a multidisciplinary team to include teachers, service providers, school psychologist, building principal, parent, and child where appropriate. Because of the potential for long-term negative impact on the student, retention should only be considered after all other interventions have been tried, documented, and proven unsuccessful.

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