

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NO: 4760

PAGE: 1 OF 13

CATEGORY: Instruction, Academic Achievement

EFFECTIVE: 12-16-63

SUBJECT: Promotion/Retention and Placement/Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)

REVISED: 6-08-2001

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. To outline administrative procedures governing implementation of policies concerning at-risk placement, and promotion/retention criteria at the current grade.

2. **Related Procedures:**

Matriculation guidelines, program for students with severe handicaps	4233
Classroom grouping practices and counseling procedures	6020
Preregistration and registration, secondary	6123
Attendance accounting, secondary	6166
Cumulative recordkeeping, secondary	6510

B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

1. **Reference:** Board policy: A-4000, F-2000, F-7000, F-7030, F-7100, F-7400, F-8400; Education Code Section 48070.

2. **District Policy**

- a. The policy of San Diego Unified School District is to ensure the academic success of every student. Students are expected to meet grade-level standards and shall receive the necessary instructional support to enable them to be successful. The decision to promote or retain shall be based on consistently applied criteria for standards-based academic performance.¹
- b. Students shall be assigned to classes in such a manner that, in gender and ethnicity, each class is representative of the total population of students meeting the criteria for placement in each grade level or class (Procedure 6020).

C. GENERAL

1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions or questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Standards, Assessment, Accountability, and Compliance Department, Institute for Learning.

¹ This policy and this administrative procedure does not apply to students with curriculum designation of alternative standards (nondiploma-bound students). Achievement of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives should be used to report progress as per state and district requirements. See Administrative Procedure 4233.

2. **Definitions**

- a. **Accelerated program:** An intensive program of study designed to accelerate the pace of student learning.
- b. **At-risk student:** Student identified as at risk of not meeting grade-level standards, either through district-designated assessments or teacher judgment.²
- c. **Home/School Compact:** Documentation that delineates the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the learning process (teacher, principal, school board, parent/guardian, and student).
- d. **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A written statement developed by a team that delineates and ensures appropriate instruction and services for students with disabilities.
- e. **Individual Service Plan (ISP):** A written statement developed by a team that delineates the aids, accommodations, and services to be provided to children with disabilities who qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- f. **Learning Contract:** Documentation that serves as an agreement among classroom teacher(s), parent/guardian, and student outlining the responsibilities of each stakeholder in the intervention process. Documentation includes student academic performance, recommended interventions, and potential consequences. Contract attests to the school site's provision of, and the student's participation in, the identified interventions.
- g. **Monitoring:** Ongoing evaluation of student's academic progress as outlined in the student's Learning Contract.
- h. **Promotion:** Placement in the next higher grade at the end of a school year.
- i. **Retention in grade:** Placing a student in the same grade as the prior school year.
- j. **Placement:** Assignment of a student to a specific grade and class.

² Students at the entry grade level (6 at middle, 7 at junior high) who do not meet promotion criteria will be retained. Students at other grade levels who do not meet promotion criteria and do not participate in required supports and interventions may be retained.

- k. **Promotion criteria:** Performance levels required for entering the next academic grade.
3. **Identification and Monitoring of At-Risk Students³**
- a. **Identification/notification.** Identification of at-risk students is based on student academic performance as demonstrated by reading/language arts and mathematics assessment results or teacher judgment. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of at-risk students must receive written notification as early as possible, and no later than the tenth week of enrollment. The report card or Learning Contract may serve as the written notification if completed by the tenth week of enrollment.
- b. **Learning Contract.** A Learning Contract must be developed for all at-risk students.
- (1) **A Learning Contract will be developed for grades 6-8 at-risk students⁴** no later than four (4) weeks following the end of the nine- or twelve-week grading period or within four (4) weeks following identification for students who enroll after the first grading period. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of all at-risk students, regardless of class assignment, must receive a Learning Contract.
- (2) **The teacher will complete the Learning Contract.** The contract will include the intervention programs and strategies that the teacher/counselor and school will provide to help the student succeed, what the student and parent/guardian will work on at home, and how the teacher/counselor will keep the parent/guardian informed about the student's progress. The contract shall specify each party's responsibilities and potential outcomes. A copy of the contract shall be mailed to the parent/guardian.
- (3) **Established retention grades 6 (middle)/7 (junior high).** Following mailing of the Learning Contracts, the principal shall convene a general meeting for the parents/guardians of at-risk grade 6/7 students. The principal, teachers, and counselors will be present at the meeting and will explain the need for the Learning Contract, recommended interventions, the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, the established retention grade, and the possible consequences. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who would like an individual conference may request one at this time.

³ This procedure applies only to diploma-bound students.

⁴ IEP will serve as the Learning Contract for special education students in special day classes.

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

PAGE: **4 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

- (4) **Other grades.** A general meeting for the parent(s)/guardian(s) of at-risk students is strongly recommended.

c. **School site monitoring of at-risk students**

(1) **Principal**

- (a) Monitor development of Learning Contracts and communication with parents/guardians.
- (b) Monitor student participation in intervention programs.
- (c) Monitor students' academic progress by reviewing student achievement results and meeting with teachers during the year to discuss specific plans for instruction.
- (d) Coordinate compliance with the guidelines and timelines outlined in this procedure.
- (2) **Classroom teachers** will monitor the academic progress of students throughout the school year, base their instruction on student needs, implement appropriate interventions, and communicate student progress to the parent/guardian.
- (3) **Counselors** will monitor the academic progress of students throughout the school year and students' participation in available interventions.
- (4) **Instructional leader.** During school visits, the instructional leader will discuss with the principal the progress of at-risk students and monitor the overall improvement of achievement at the school site.

4. **Performance Criteria and Guidelines.** Student performance criteria have been defined based on common, districtwide assessment measures in literacy and mathematics. Cut-points have been set which identify student performance as above/at/close to, below, or significantly below grade level. An annual circular will be distributed to school sites identifying performance cut-points to identify students for support/intervention and promotion/retention.⁵

⁵ Refer to annual circular for specific criteria for fluent English-speaking students and for English learners.

5. **Promotion/Retention Guidelines**

- a. **Established retention grades.** The established retention grades for students significantly below grade level are grade 6 at the middle level and grade 7 at junior high. Students retained at these grade levels will be placed in an accelerated instructional program.
- b. **Retention at other grade levels.** Retention may be considered at any grade, 6-8, if the student has not met the criteria and has not participated in required support and intervention opportunities.
 - (1) Retention should occur early in a school level, rather than at an exit grade.
 - (2) Students ordinarily will be retained only once in kindergarten through grade 8. For students in the sixth/seventh grade who are not meeting promotion criteria but have already been retained once, a consultation among the teacher(s), principal, counselor, and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be held to determine the best placement for the student.

6. **Promotion/Retention Decision.** As specified by Education Code Section 48070.5, the assigned classroom teacher makes the final decision concerning promotion/retention of grade 1-8 students.

- a. **Year-end reevaluation.** Within the last six (6) weeks of instruction, each student identified at risk must be reevaluated by the assigned classroom teacher to determine if the student meets the specified Promotion Criteria (as provided in the annual circular).
- b. **Discussion with parent/guardian.** As specified by Education Code Section 48070.5, the teacher's evaluation concerning the student's progress shall be discussed with the parent/guardian before the teacher makes the final determination of pupil retention or promotion. The discussion may occur via a teacher/parent/student conference (preferred), telephone call, a general parent meeting, or home visitation. When possible, the discussion is to be conducted in the primary language of the parent/guardian.

c. **Decision and placement**⁶

- (1) The teacher may determine that the student is:
 - (a) **Above/at/close to grade level** and promote the student to the next grade.
 - (b) **Below grade level** and promote the student to the next grade level with recommended interventions as specified by the teacher.
 - (c) **Significantly below grade level** and retain the student in current grade with promotion contingent upon successful completion of summer school. If sufficient progress has been made and the student meets the promotion criteria at the end of summer school, the student will be promoted with recommended interventions as specified by the teacher.
 - (d) **Significantly below grade level** and retain the student with recommended support as specified by the teacher.

d. **Documentation and communication of the final decision**

- (1) Within the last six (6) weeks of instruction, the teacher will indicate the final decisions regarding student promotion or retention and placement recommendations for the following year. The teacher should complete and submit to principal for signature the “Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8” form.
- (2) The principal will sign the form and provide the parent/guardian a copy at least three (3) weeks prior to the last day of instruction. For students recommended for retention, the “Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8” form should be discussed with the parent/guardian during a conference. Copies of the form are distributed among the student’s cumulative file; the parent/guardian; the principal; and the Standards, Assessment, Accountability, and Compliance Department.

⁶ For special education students who are being considered for retention, an IEP meeting must be held to discuss decisions affecting student placement. For students with Individual Service (504) Plans, the SST/504 Team must be reconvened.

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

PAGE: **7 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

- (3) The notification will inform the parent/guardian that he/she may request a conference regarding the student's academic program in the coming school year. Should the parent/guardian wish a conference, the assigned classroom teacher/counselor will coordinate and convene the meeting.
 - (4) The notification will inform the parent/guardian of the appeal process.
- e. **Parent appeal process.** School sites shall provide parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to appeal the decision of the assigned classroom teacher.
- (1) The appeal shall occur prior to the end of the school year.
 - (2) Upon receipt of the appeal, the teacher will complete the appropriate placement recommendation forms for literacy and mathematics, and the principal or designee shall review all related evidence and convene a hearing with the assigned classroom teacher, counselor, parent/guardian, and student.
 - (3) The hearing discussion will include the student's progress, assessment results, participation in prescribed intervention programs, and overall readiness for promotion. When possible, the proceedings are to be conducted in the primary language of the parent/guardian.
 - (4) Following the proceedings, the teacher will make the final promotion/retention decision.
 - (5) The principal or designee shall contact the parent/guardian regarding the disposition of the appeal; a written notice shall be provided shortly thereafter.
 - (6) **A decision by the assigned classroom teacher to promote or retain a student cannot be overturned unless "determined to be a direct result of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith or incompetency."**
- f. **Placement modification due to summer school results.** Following completion of summer school, the teacher and counselor will review student assessment results, and modify the promotion/retention decision if necessary. The teacher will complete and the principal sign a new "Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8" form and mail a copy to the parent/guardian at the end of summer school.

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

PAGE: **8 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

7. **Placement Review Conference.** Teachers, counselors, or parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a Placement Review Conference if they wish to discuss the assessment of student performance and/or the recommended course placement.
- a. Upon request for a Placement Review Conference, the teacher(s) will complete the appropriate placement recommendation forms for literacy and mathematics, and the principal or designee shall review the evidence for the recommended course placement.
 - b. The counselor will convene the conference, which will involve the teacher(s), counselor, site administrator, parent/guardian, and student in reviewing the evidence of student academic achievement that makes a strong case for overriding the assessments results.
 - c. Participants at the conference should discuss whether the student is above/at/close to, below, or significantly below grade level; and the student's course placement for the following year.
 - d. Based on the discussion, the student's performance level and course placement are determined and recorded on the appropriate placement recommendation form for literacy and mathematics. The teacher(s), counselor, and principal complete the name and signature portion of the placement recommendation section. If in agreement with the placement, the parent/guardian checks the "I agree" box and completes the name and signature portion of the form. If in disagreement with the placement, the parent/guardian checks the "I decline" box and completes the name and signature portion of the form. Parent/guardian signature acknowledges understanding of the future consequences including the possibility of not passing the California High School Exit Exam. Copies of the placement recommendation form are distributed among the student's cumulative file; the parent/guardian; the principal; and the Standards, Assessment, Accountability, and Compliance Department. For students articulating to another school, the parent/guardian should be referred to the receiving school with questions regarding course placement decisions for the following year.
8. **Articulation**
- a. **Between elementary and middle-level schools.** At the end of each academic year, the elementary school principal will ensure that the student's "Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8" form is filed in the student's cumulative record. The middle-level principal and counselor(s) must review the

“Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8” form in the cumulative record before developing the student’s academic programs and placing students in extended day/year interventions.

- b. **Between middle-level and senior high schools.** At the end of each academic year, the middle-level school principal and counselor will notify the receiving high school of students promoted with recommended interventions. This notification will include student academic achievement results and the interventions specified by the middle school teacher on the “Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8” form. The principal will ensure that the student’s “Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8” form is filed in the student’s cumulative record. Parents/guardians of students promoted to high school who have questions regarding course placement decisions should be referred to the receiving school.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

1. At-Risk/Placement and Promotion/Retention Timeline

Action Date	Action Taken	Responsible Party
FIRST SEMESTER		
a. First four (4) weeks of student enrollment	Provide information to parents/ guardians about district promotion/retention policy (e.g. <i>Facts for Parents</i> , School Handbook).	Principal
	Distribute/collect Home/School Compact.	Principal
b. No later than the tenth week of enrollment	Formally identify students at risk based on assessment information and teacher judgment; ensure that students who were promoted last year “with interventions” are included in the identification process.	Assigned Classroom Teacher(s)
	Notify parent/guardian of student at-risk status.	Teacher(s)
	Initiate placement of student in appropriate interventions available at school site.	Teacher(s)

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

PAGE: **10 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

	Action Date	Action Taken	Responsible Party
c.	No later than four (4) weeks following 9- or 12-week grading period	Complete Learning Contract.	Teacher(s)
		Mail copy of Learning Contract to parent/guardian.	Principal
		Convene general meeting for parents/guardians of at-risk students.	Principal, Teacher(s), Counselor(s)
d.	Ongoing	Implement student intervention strategies outlined in Learning Contract.	Teacher(s)
		Assess student progress on an ongoing basis.	Teacher(s)
		Communicate with parent/guardian concerning the student's progress, and document communications.	Teacher(s)

SECOND SEMESTER

At end of first grading period of second semester, repeat steps a.-c. for "new" students at school site identified as at risk of retention.

e.	End of second grading period	Inform parent/guardian of student progress through report cards.	Principal
f.	March - April	Inform parents of student reading performance based on district-designated assessments.	District
g.	Within last six (6) weeks of instruction	Evaluate the student's academic performance based on designated performance measures and, if needed and appropriate, additional evidence of student academic achievement, participation in support and intervention opportunities, and readiness for the next grade level.	Teacher(s)
		Consult with the principal and the student's parent/guardian.	Teacher(s)
		Convene meeting with parents/guardians upon request to discuss student's academic program for the coming year.	Teacher(s)

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

PAGE: **11 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

Action Date	Action Taken	Responsible Party
	Make the promotion/retention decision. Complete "Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8" form and submit to principal for signature.	Teacher(s)
h. At least three (3) weeks prior to the end of the school year	Sign "Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8" form; notify parent/guardian of decision and the opportunity to convene a meeting to discuss student's academic program in the coming year or appeal the decision.	Principal
i. Prior to end of school year	Conduct appeal process if requested by parent/guardian including review of placement forms for literacy and mathematics where appropriate.	Principal/ Counselor Teacher(s)
	Conduct placement review conference if requested by parent/guardian including review of placement forms for literacy and mathematics where appropriate.	Principal/ Counselor Teacher(s)
j. End of school year	File all original documents in the student's cumulative folder.	Principal
	Notify receiving high school of students promoted with recommended interventions.	Principal/ Counselor
k. End of summer school	Review student progress and assessment results. Confirm or revise promotion/retention decision. Mail copy of new "Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8" form to parent/guardian.	Teacher(s)/ Counselor, Principal
	File original document in student's cumulative folder.	Principal

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

PAGE: **12 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES

1. Annual Circular Regarding Promotion Criteria
2. Home/School Compact
3. Learning Contract for Grades 6-8 Students, Stock Item 41-T-8030
(Parent page available in: Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8031; Cambodian, Stock Item 41-T-8032; Vietnamese, Stock Item 41-T-8033; Lao, Stock Item 41-T-8034; Hmong, Stock Item 41-T-8035; for Somali and Tagalog, call the Standards, Assessment, Accountability, and Compliance Department)
4. Teacher/Counselor Follow-Up Log: Student At-Risk of Not Meeting Grade-Level Standards, Stock Item 41-T-8008
5. Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8, Stock Item 41-T-8036; English/Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8037
6. Placement Recommendation Form: Literacy, Stock Item 41-T-8070; English/ Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8071
7. Placement Recommendation Form: Mathematics, Stock Item 41-T-8080; English/Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8081

F. REPORTS AND RECORDS

1. Home/School Compact
2. Learning Contract for Grades 6-8 Students, Stock Item 41-T-8030
(Parent page available in: Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8031; Cambodian, Stock Item 41-T-8032; Vietnamese, Stock Item 41-T-8033; Lao, Stock Item 41-T-8034; Hmong, Stock Item 41-T-8035; for Somali and Tagalog, call the Standards, Assessment, Accountability, and Compliance Department)
3. Teacher/Counselor Follow-Up Log: Student At-Risk of Not Meeting Grade-Level Standards, Stock Item 41-T-8008
4. Teacher Decision to Promote or Retain: Grades 6-8, Stock Item 41-T-8036; English/Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8037

SUBJECT: **Promotion/Retention and Placement/
Articulation, 6-8 (Middle)**

NO: **4760**

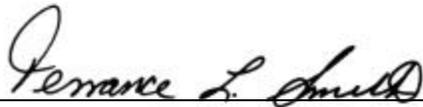
PAGE: **13 OF 13**

EFFECTIVE: **12-16-63**

REVISED: **6-08-2001**

5. Placement Recommendation Form: Literacy, Stock Item 41-T-8070;
English/Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8071
6. Placement Recommendation Form: Mathematics, Stock Item 41-T-8080;
English/Spanish, Stock Item 41-T-8081

G. APPROVED BY



Chief of Staff, Terrance L. Smith
For the Superintendent of Public Education