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HANNA SKANDERA  
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED

May 5, 2016

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MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Superintendents and Charter School Administrators  
**FROM:** Hanna Skandera, Secretary of Education   
**RE:** **STUDENT PROMOTION DATA REPORTING**

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Current law outlines specific requirements regarding proficiency and retention for students in grades one through seven. When a child is not academically proficient, the statute requires a parent be notified by the end of the second grading period, and a conference must be held with the parent and the teacher to discuss available remediation programs. Early intervention and parent notification and engagement are essential to making the best decisions for children.

To ensure parents are engaged and students are receiving the supports they need, the Public Education Department (PED) is collecting pertinent data for school year 2015–2016 from district and charter schools.

The initial focus will be on first through third grade. Third grade is a pivotal point in a child's education—the time when students shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Research indicates that students who are not proficient readers by the third grade are four times more likely to drop out before graduation. In addition, interventions for struggling readers after third grade are seldom as effective as those in the early years.

Please find attached the following documents:

- Promotion Practices Guidance Document
- Promotion Data Collection Form
- Sample Parent Letter
- Assurance Form

Third Grade Promotion Practices Data

May 5, 2016

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The Promotion Data Collection Form should be completed by the district or charter school and returned electronically to PED by August 1, 2016 to [ped.literacy@state.nm.us](mailto:ped.literacy@state.nm.us).

Please contact Melinda Webster at 505-827-6567 or [melinda.webster@state.nm.us](mailto:melinda.webster@state.nm.us) with questions.

HS/DM/mw

# Promotion Practices

## Guidance Document



New Mexico Public Education Department  
300 Don Gaspar Ave.  
Santa Fe, NM 87501





## Promotion Practices Guidance

**Need for Early Literacy Skills:** Third grade is a pivotal point in a child's education, the time when students shift from learning to read and begin reading to learn. Students who are not proficient readers by the end of grade three are four times more likely to drop out before graduation. In addition, interventions for struggling readers after third grade are seldom as effective as those in the early years.

The legislature enacted Section 22-2C-6 NMSA 1978, governing the remediation and promotion of students, to ensure that students who are not proficient in reading receive timely intervention, and to ensure that they are not promoted without parental involvement and the skills necessary to succeed at the next level.

**Current New Mexico Law:** Section 22-2C-6 NMSA 1978, provides that:

E. A parent shall be notified no later than the end of the second grading period that the parent's child is not academically proficient, and a conference consisting of the parent and the teacher shall be held to discuss possible remediation programs available to assist the student in becoming academically proficient. Specific academic deficiencies and remediation strategies shall be explained to the student's parent and a written intervention plan developed containing time lines, academic expectations and the measurements to be used to verify that a student has overcome academic deficiencies. Remediation programs and academic improvement programs include tutoring, extended day or week programs, summer programs and other research-based interventions and models for student improvement.

F. At the end of grades one through seven, three options are available, dependent on a student's academic proficiency:

- (1) the student is academically proficient and shall enter the next higher grade;
- (2) the student is not academically proficient and shall participate in the required level of remediation. Upon certification by the school district that the student is academically proficient, the student shall enter the next higher grade; or
- (3) the student is not academically proficient after completion of the prescribed remediation program and upon the recommendation of the teacher and school principal shall either be:
  - (a) retained in the same grade for no more than one school year with an academic improvement plan developed by the student assistance team in order to become academically proficient, at which time the student shall enter the next higher grade; or
  - (b) promoted to the next grade if the parent refuses to allow the child to be retained. In this case, the parent shall sign a waiver indicating the parent's desire that the student be promoted to the next higher grade with an academic improvement plan designed to address specific academic deficiencies. The academic improvement plan shall be developed by the student assistance team outlining time lines and monitoring activities to ensure progress toward overcoming those academic deficiencies. Students failing to become academically proficient at the end of that year as measured by grades, performance on school district assessments and other measures identified by the school district shall be retained in the same grade for no more than one year in order to have additional time to achieve academic proficiency.

Further, Section 22-2C-6 NMSA 1978 states that:

I. Promotion and retention decisions affecting a student enrolled in special education shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the individual educational plan established for that student.

**Promotion Practices Data Form:** Please find attached a spreadsheet for completion. The form requests data on first through third graders from the 2015-16 school year, and requests the following information for each school:

- The number of students not proficient in reading
- The number of SAT teams convened for non-proficient students
- The number of retention letters sent to parents
- The number of waivers signed by parents
- The number of non-proficient students passed on to the next grade
- Description of the data indicators used to determine reading proficiency for informing promotion and retention decisions, and
- A copy of your district/charter's parent waiver letter, and copies of all letters actually sent to parents

**Using district and school retention data, please complete the Promotion Practices Data Collection Form and return to PED by August 1, 2016 via email to [ped.literacy@state.nm.us](mailto:ped.literacy@state.nm.us).**

Please contact Melinda Webster, Literacy Director, at 505-827-6567 or at [melinda.webster@state.nm.us](mailto:melinda.webster@state.nm.us) with questions.

**Retention Data Reporting Assurance**

I am the **[Superintendent/Charter school Leader]** for **[enter name of district or charter here]**. I hereby verify that that I have reviewed the data provided in the “Promotion Practices Data Collection Form” and the information is accurate and complete.

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**[Enter Title]**

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Date







## SAMPLE PARENT LETTER

Dear Parent or Guardian,

It is important for children to have the necessary skills to read on grade level by the end of third grade to ensure success in fourth grade and beyond. Studies have shown that children unable to read by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school. New Mexico state law requires that for children who are not academically proficient in grades one, two, and three, the following supports are provided:

- Parent notification no later than the end of the second grading period;
- Parent and teacher conference to discuss available remediation programs; and
- Written intervention plan developed

Based upon the written intervention plan, your child has received reading intervention services during the school year with the goal of reading on grade level by the end of the school year. The \_\_\_\_\_ reading test and other data including \_\_\_\_\_ indicate that your child is not on track for reading on grade level by the end of the school year.

Your child's teacher and I recommend that your child be retained in the current grade for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year to ensure that he/she gain the necessary skills to be a proficient reader.

Please complete the form below and return to your child's teacher by \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you,

*Principal*

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Please sign and return to your child's teacher.

My signature states that I have read and understand that my child is recommended to be retained in the current grade for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year.

I **do** consent for my child to be retained in current grade.

I **do not** consent for my child to be retained in the current grade. I understand that, by New Mexico law, my child will be promoted to the next grade with an academic improvement plan designed to address specific academic deficiencies developed by the school's student assistance team. If my child does not become academically proficient at the end of that year as measured by grades, performance on school district assessments and other measures identified by the school district, my child will be retained in the same grade for no more than one year in order to have additional time to achieve academic proficiency.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_