

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

Because the Hamden School System is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student, the certified staff will place the students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially and emotionally.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade or level to level. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the certified staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will always be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents or guardian, but the final decision will rest with the school Principal.

All decisions concerning the promotion, retention or graduation of students will be made by the Principal after consultation with appropriate staff members. In addition, the granting of credits in the high school program rests solely with the school Principal or his/her designee.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

P.A. 99-288 An Act Concerning Education Accountability

10-221(b) Boards of education to prescribe rules.

10-265g Summer reading programs required for priority school districts. Evaluation of student reading level. Personal reading plans. (as amended by PA 01-173)

10-265l Requirements for additional instruction for poor performing students in priority school districts; exemption. Summer school required; exemption (as amended by PA 99-288, PA 01-173, and PA 03-174)

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

Grades K-6

In general, children shall be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially and emotionally. The education program shall provide for the continuous progress of children from grade to grade, with children spending one year in each grade. Acceleration may be considered for the exceptional child who is academically, socially, and emotionally capable of being advanced. Some children, however, may benefit from remaining another year in the same grade. Retention may be considered within the following guidelines:

- a. Retention has a reasonable chance of benefiting the child.
- b. No student will be retained more than once in a given grade.
- c. No student will be retained at the middle school if he/she will reach the age of 16 by January one of the school year.

Whenever such retention is being considered, for the next school year but no later than February 15 of the current school year, the teacher shall confer with the Principal, parent and Child Study Team to discuss specific areas of concern. The parents shall then be invited to a meeting with the teacher, and/or Principal, and other staff members no later than April 15 for an updated discussion of the matter. This discussion shall consist of an explanation to the parent of their child's current academic standing in relationship to program objectives and individual ability. No later than June 1st, a subsequent meeting will be held to review the student's progress. At this time, the final decision of retention shall be made at the elementary level and no later than June 30th at the middle school level. The final decision shall be made by school authorities (principal, classroom teacher and child study team) with parental consultation.

Guidelines for K-8 Promotion/Retention

These guidelines have been prepared to provide a overall direction to staff in the Hamden Public Schools regarding the efficacy of student retention. While there is no definitive formula designed to make these decisions easier; criteria listed on the subsequent pages should be seriously considered when making a decision on whether or not to retain a student.

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

| CRITERIA | Factor for Promotion | Factor for Retention | Not a Significant Factor |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>1. <u>Estimated Developmental Age</u> The developmental age of a child is the age at which a child is behaving holistically (physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually) i.e., functioning age. Considering the developmental age is most applicable to the first four years of formal school attendance, K-3 or for chronological ages of four through eight.</p> | | | |
| <p>2. <u>Academic Achievement</u> Assess how well a student is achieving in basic skill areas, particularly reading and mathematics, based on daily classroom work, information on the student's report card, and standardized testing results.</p> | | | |
| <p>3. <u>Apparent Learning Potential</u> As evidenced by group and/or individual test results, what is the apparent ability level of the student? Research suggests that the student who demonstrates achievement close to average ability is the one who can most benefit from retention.</p> | | | |
| <p>4. <u>Present Grade Placement</u> According to research, retention has been beneficial if implemented in the primary grades for those students currently in kindergarten, first or second grades.</p> | | | |
| <p>5. <u>Previous Retentions</u> Consider whether the child has been retained previously and/or did not attend kindergarten when he/she reached the age of five.</p> | | | |
| <p>6. <u>Motivation/Work Habits</u> Consider whether the student makes an effort to complete his/her school work independently, and/or shows interest in his/her classroom assignments and homework.</p> | | | |

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

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|---|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>7. <u>Learning Styles</u> Accommodations should be made to address the child's individual learning style: visual, auditory, tactile-kinesthetic. Have modifications in teaching been effective?</p> | | | |
| <p>8. <u>Social Behavior</u> Factors such as the following should be considered: how well the child relates with peers; association with younger children; ability to follow school rules, and/or presence of significant anti-social behavior, if any.</p> | | | |
| <p>9. <u>School Attendance</u> A poor attendance record may result in significant gaps in the child's basic skills; how has the child's attendance record affected his/her learning?</p> | | | |
| <p>10. <u>Transiency of Family</u> The highly transient child may benefit from retention, primarily because this pattern may be likely to continue.</p> | | | |
| <p>11. <u>Emotional Behavior</u> Emotional characteristics of the child should be considered; are there consistent signs of distractibility, depression, hyper-activity, withdrawal, nervousness, etc., or is the child generally free from signs of troubled emotional development.</p> | | | |
| <p>12. <u>Attitudes of Parent/Child</u> The projected or stated attitude of parent/child toward retention should be considered.</p> | | | |

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

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|---|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>13. <u>Family Life Atmosphere</u> Has there been a recent divorce, significant death or other traumatic occurrences which may be influencing the student?</p> | | | |
| <p>14. <u>Sibling/Placement in Family</u> Consideration should be given to whether the child, if retained, would be placed in the same grade as a younger sibling.</p> | | | |
| <p>15. <u>Physical Development/Health History</u> Factors such as the following should be considered: gross and fine motor skills, physical size, history of illnesses, hospitalizations, hearing or vision problems, etc.</p> | | | |
| <p>16. <u>Special Services</u> Has the child study team been convened? What special services have been provided to the child; what has been the result and what is expected in the future? If so, list services here:</p> | | | |
| <p>17. Other Mitigating Factors (<i>list</i>)</p> | | | |

Students

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (continued)

Grade 7-8

Chronological Age

Any student reaching the age listed below, prior to the first day of the upcoming school year, is to be placed in the appropriate grade:

- a. Age 14 will be enrolled in grade 7;
- b. Age 15 will be enrolled in grade 8; and
- c. Age 16 will be enrolled in grade 9

Report Card Grades

Any student with two or more core course failures will be retained, except in extenuating circumstances. In this situation, the final decision will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Grades 9-12

In general, class placement is based on the number of credits earned in the previous years. Successful completion of Grade 8 is required for promotion to Grade 9. Minimum requirements for official high school class standing and promotion are:

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|--------------------|------------|
| Sophomore Standing | 5 credits |
| Junior Standing | 9 credits |
| Senior Standing | 15 credits |
| Graduation | 21 credits |