

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE MENOMONIE AREA**

345.4

**STUDENT GRADE PLACEMENT AND PROMOTION****Effective Date**

The effective date of this policy is July 1, 2025, and the promotion criteria specified herein first apply to third grade promotion decisions that occur at the end of the 2025-26 school year.

This policy addresses initial student grade level placement, end-of-year, grade-to-grade promotion, and retention decisions that are made at any point prior to a student's attendance in any high school program in the District (i.e., prior to the start of ninth grade or any program-specific equivalent to ninth grade). As required by state law, the District has established specific criteria within this policy for promoting a student from third grade to fourth grade, and from fourth grade through ninth grade.

**Overview**

At all grade levels, decisions to place, promote, or retain a student shall be based on the evaluation of: (1) academic factors, (2) relevant non-academic factors (e.g., social, developmental, etc.), (3) evidence-based practices, and (4) available input from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and designated school district representatives.

Except for early entrants, initial placement of students in kindergarten (4K and/or 5K) shall be determined by the student's parent or guardian upon the recommendation of the professional staff. Placement of students at all other grade levels shall be determined as follows:

**Promotion and Retention Decisions in Kindergarten, First Grade, and Second Grade**

The District will not retain a 4-year-old kindergarten student who will be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the next school year unless a student's parent or guardian has identified specific needs in collaboration with district staff who support retention.

The District will not retain a student in 5-year-old kindergarten, first grade, or second grade against the wishes of the student's parent or guardian, provided that the student meets the following criteria:

1. enrolled in and regularly attended school during the applicable school year
2. had access to and actively participated in substantially all of the applicable grade-level curriculum
  - a. For the purpose of the above, substantially all means a student who has attended ninety percent or more of scheduled school days. (i.e. not considered chronically absent).

For any 5-year-old kindergarten, first grade, or second grade student who meets the criteria identified above and who is promoted to the next grade level, the District will use an intervention-based and referral-based approach in any situation where the District determines that the student's academic or other developmental progress indicates that the student is at risk of substantial learning or academic difficulty.

If the District determines that a student has not met the criteria identified above, then the following shall apply:

1. The District will attempt to meet with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the student's current academic and developmental progress and its possible impact on future learning.
2. The student will be promoted to the next grade level. The District shall individually monitor the student's general academic progress and, if appropriate, implement an intervention plan.

3. Such a student may be involuntarily retained at their current grade level only if the District determines at or near the conclusion of the relevant school term that the student's lack of exposure to substantial portions of the school's curriculum is so significant that an approach of combining grade-level promotion with an individualized monitoring and intervention plan would be developmentally inappropriate for the student. The building principal (or an administrative-level designee with instructional responsibilities) shall review and expressly approve any staff recommendation to retain a student on this basis involuntarily.

### **Promotion and Retention Decisions in Third to Fourth Grade**

A third grade student shall be promoted to fourth grade without further evaluation being required unless the available information about the student's academic progress (not limited to any single test or assessment result) indicates that:

1. The student is not meeting second grade academic standards and learning goals at a level below basic proficiency in math and reading/language arts; or
2. The student is not meeting first grade academic standards and learning goals at a level below basic proficiency in math or reading/language arts.

### **Promotion to Fourth Grade without Completing a Required Personal Reading Plan**

If the District promotes a student from third grade to fourth grade, and the student had a legally-mandated personal reading plan (PRP) in place during third grade that the student did not complete (as completion is defined in state law), then, subject to limited exceptions, state law requires the District to do all of the following for the student:

1. Notify the student's parent or guardian, in writing, that the student did not complete the personal reading plan and include a description of the intensive instructional services and supports that will be provided to the student to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency.
2. Provide the student with intensive instructional services and supports during fourth grade.
3. Monitor the progress of the student's reading skills.
4. Provide the student with an intensive summer reading program as determined appropriate by the school district each summer until the student scores at grade level in reading on a summative assessment. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may decline to have their child participate in any such summer reading program that is offered by the District.

### **Promotion and Retention Decisions in Fourth Grade through the end of Eighth Grade**

**The District will not retain a student in fourth grade through eighth grade against the wishes of the student's parent or guardian, provided that the student meets the following criteria:**

1. There is evidence that the student's current mathematics skills and reading comprehension/language arts skills meet or exceed the proficiency standards the District has established for a student who has successfully completed the prior grade level.
2. The student would not need remedial assistance in these areas.

If a student does not meet the above criteria, the District may still promote the student if, upon a further evaluation that considers (1) academic factors, (2) relevant non-academic factors (e.g., social, developmental, etc.), (3) evidence-based practices, and (4) available input from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), a designated representative of the District concludes that both of the following apply:

1. If promoted with available interventions, the District would be able to provide the student with at least a realistic opportunity to participate in grade level curriculum in a meaningful manner and make more than negligible progress in reducing the gap(s) that exist between the student's present level of academic progress and grade-level standards (i.e., with a "realistic opportunity" meaning that it is reasonable to think that those academic outcomes would be possible, not that those outcomes are assured or even highly likely); and
2. That either (1) promotion with interventions is at least equally likely to be in the overall best educational interests of the student or (2) retention with interventions is likely to be in the overall best educational interests of the student, however, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) select promotion with interventions for their child.

### **Students with Disabilities**

1. If a student's IEP includes materially modified academic content and achievement standards in reading, math, or both, then the student shall be promoted if the student's IEP team determines that promotion will be the appropriate setting for the student in the following year based on relevant academic and non-academic factors, evidence-based practices, and the educational best interests of the student.
2. All other students with disabilities are subject to the same promotion criteria and screening and evaluation processes as students without disabilities, except as may be required to comply with state or federal law in an individual case.

### **Parent Requests for Reconsideration**

If the student's parent or guardian disagrees with the District's promotion or retention decision under this policy, they may request reconsideration. The administrator designated to respond to the request will modify the initial decision only if, upon a review of all relevant and reasonably available information, they conclude that the policy was applied incorrectly.

### **Retention in Extraordinary Circumstances**

A parent or guardian who believes that, under extraordinary circumstances, their child should be retained even though the child was determined to be eligible for promotion under this policy may request retention as a special program and curriculum modification under section 118.15(1)(d) of state law. The District reserves all lawful discretion to deny such requests.

### **Responsibility for Promotion and Retention Decisions**

Promotion and/or retention decisions for kindergarten through eighth grade shall be determined by the building principal or other designated administrator after consultation with the grade-level classroom teachers. Teachers shall consult and document contact with designated pupil service staff, principal, and parent(s) or guardian(s) by May 1 if a retention recommendation is contemplated. A written retention recommendation by a teacher must be sent to the parent(s) or guardian(s) before May 15, with copies to the principal, designated pupil service staff, and the student's file. The principal shall make a final determination before the end of the school year.

### **Promotion and Retention Decisions for Students While in High School**

Students promoted from eighth grade to high school shall be placed in the freshman class. A minimum number of credits must be earned each year to change grade classification and meet graduation requirements of 25 credits.

### **Assessments to be Considered as part of Promotion and Retention Decisions**

The determination to place, promote, or retain a student shall not be limited to any single test or assessment result, rather information from multiple assessment sources including academic screening assessments, classroom summative assessments, required state assessments, individual student grades, along with other information deemed to be relevant to making the decision will be considered.

### **Legal References:**

#### **Wisconsin Statutes**

[Section 118.016\(1\)\(a\)](#) [definition of “at risk” with respect to reading readiness assessments]  
[Section 118.016\(5\)\(d\)](#) [completion of a personal reading plan by a 3rd grade pupil]  
[Section 118.15\(1\)\(d\)](#) [parent requests for program and curriculum modifications]  
[Section 118.24\(2\)\(a\)](#) [district administrator authority to manage the promotion of students]  
[Section 118.33\(5m\)](#) [post-promotion service and support mandates for certain students promoted to 4th grade; good cause exceptions]  
[Section 118.33\(6\)\(a\)](#) [policy requirements for 3rd, 4th, and 8th grade promotion criteria]  
[Section 118.33\(6\)\(cm\)](#) [policy requirement for kindergarten to 1st grade promotion criteria]

#### **Wisconsin Administrative Code**

[Section PI 13.09\(1\)](#) [limitations on using test results and test exemptions to make promotion and retention decisions for students with limited English proficiency]

**Adopted:** June 23, 2025

/s/ Dominique Stewart  
Clerk