

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

It is essential that each child experience both challenge and success from school activities. To this end, the Bethlehem Central School District (the District) will make every effort to place each student in the most appropriate learning level for a successful educational experience.

District curriculum guides indicate goals for achievement by the “average” student at each grade level. However, academic growth, like physical growth, does not take place at the same pace or time for all individuals. Certain students may achieve mastery in a shorter period, while others need additional time. Early identification and intervention, promotion, and retention are methods of meeting the needs of such children.

The following guidelines shall govern student progression:

Early Identification/Intervention

Classroom teachers are expected to make every effort to identify early those students at risk of failing. The principal and the parents and/or guardians must be notified promptly if retention is anticipated, and a special support program shall be designed for each child identified as in danger of failing. Such support services may include, but are not limited to, individualized assistance before, during, or after the school day; remedial classes; a change in instructional program; and, where appropriate, referral to the Committee on Special Education for evaluation.

Promotion/Retention

Elementary schools

At the elementary level, students who pass all subjects will be promoted. Students who do not make satisfactory progress in one or more basic subjects (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science) shall have their cases considered on an individual basis and may be retained. Retention shall be limited to those situations where the best interest of the child is reasonably assured. Diligent effort shall be made to use all available resources to determine the child's appropriate placement.

Middle Schools

Students who pass all subjects but one shall have the failure evaluated and a determination made as to the reason for the failure. The student may be required to repeat the subject, but in typical cases shall be promoted with recommendation for either summer school or assignment to a more appropriate academic ability group. The decision shall be arrived at by consensus from a case conference approach involving the teacher, principal, and guidance counselor.

Students who fail two subjects shall have their cases considered on an individual basis through a case conference approach described above.

Students who fail more than two subjects may fail for the year and may be retained.

High School

In general, promotion from one class to the next shall be contingent upon the passing of all required subjects and the accumulation of four or five units of credit at each level.

Retention

A decision to retain shall be arrived at by consensus from a case conference approach involving the teacher, principal, other appropriate school personnel, and parents and/or guardian. Factors to be considered include teacher recommendation; classroom achievement; assessments; social and emotional development; results of the family conference; and, for identified students, recommendations by the Committee on Special Education. If a consensus cannot be reached, the decision of the principal shall be final.

No student will be retained without an appropriate educational plan defining how the student will be supported in the next academic year. Once the educational plan has been implemented, the student will be monitored regularly.

Ref: Education Law §§1709; 2503(4); 3202
8 NYCRR §100.4
Isqwith v. Levitt, 285 App. Div. 833; 137 N.Y.S.2d 497 (1955)
Matter of Eckert, 13 EDR 270 (1979)
Op. Counsel, 1 EDR 775 (1952)

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