

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN RETENTION

When considering whether a student at any level should be retained or promoted, the following factors should be considered by researching the following questions through the utilization of all available resources.

A. Student Achievement

- What is the student's pattern of achievement in relation to grade level and ability?
- What has been the pattern of academic achievement in the past? i.e. standardized tests, grades, individual assessments.
- What specific skills does the student lack that would hinder success at the next grade level?
- Does the student have an existing IEP or 504 plan?
- How do parents feel about achievement and daily performance?

B. Academic Potential

- Does this student possess the academic potential to benefit from retention?
- What valid documentation of academic ability for school learning tasks is available?
- What is the discrepancy between what the student does and what he/she should be able to do?
- Is there a difference in potential in the various curriculum areas?
- How do the parents assess the student's academic potential?

C. Attendance

- Has the student's pattern of attendance (excess absence from school) affected his/her progress?
- Has the student's pattern of attendance been consistent over his/her school years?

D. Health

- Have special health problems affected the student's achievement? (Long or short term illness)
- Have vision, hearing and other physical characteristics been evaluated to determine any underlying cause for the student's status in school.

E. Maturity

- Is the student's social development compatible with peers at a lower level vs. his/her peers at grade level?
- Will the student's future social development create problems?
- Is the student able to accept responsibility for his/her actions, decisions, and school requirements commensurate with his/her age group?
- A consistent cycle of the student having difficulty at the beginning of a school year followed by increased success later in the year.
- They don't seem to relate to their peer group.
- They play with students of a younger age.
- A feeling that they have the ability, there's just something about them that you can't put your finger on.
- Parents feeling that had they known what they know now, they never would have started them in kindergarten then.

F. Physical Size and Age in Relation to Grade Placement

- Will a student's physical size make him/her stand out among his/her classmates?
- What is the student's chronological age in relation to grade placement? Is there more than two years difference?
- Has the student been retained at a previous grade level? What difference has it made?
- What is the student's projected graduation age if retained?

G. Student Attitude

- How does the student perceive retention?
- What signs are there that the student is overly concerned about how his/her peers will feel about him/her being retained?
- Does the student understand and accept the need for achievement of skills to advance to other levels?
- How does the student feel about him/her self? Has this attitude been consistent throughout school?
- Is there a consistent pattern the student's relationship with teachers, i.e. personality clashes, male vs. female authority figures, etc.?
- How is the student's attitude about school different from his/her attitude about other things?

H. Parent Attitude Toward Retention

- Do parents fully understand the reasons retention is being considered?
- Are the parents supportive of the need and potential benefits of an additional year at a specified grade level?

I. Program Options

- What kind of different program, at a particular grade level, can be provided for this student to insure there will not be a repetition of the same materials and program elements from the previous year if they repeat the grade?
- How will specific skill deficiencies be addressed in order insure mastery and readiness for the next level?
- What appropriate remedial programs are available at the next grade level?

J. Out of School Influences

- How many changes of school has the student experienced? At what grade levels?
- Will there be siblings in the same grade, class or school if a student is retained?
- Are there family pressures (death, divorce, abuse) that have affected the student's learning? Will these conditions change in the next school year?
- How will peer pressure effect the student outside of school?

Cross Reference: IKE – Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students

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