**345.41**

**BIG FOOT AREA SCHOOLS**

**K-8 GRADE ADVANCEMENT POLICY**

The Big Foot Area Schools are committed to ensuring that every student has the knowledge and skills needed for academic achievement and success in life. Academic standards are necessary to guide outcomes for the range of students served in public education. At the same time, the diverse learning needs of students require varied instructional approaches, opportunities, services, and interventions to promote student achievement. These districts support the use of longitudinal intervention strategies as the preferred method to address student achievement needs rather than grade retention. The educational research from the past two decades indicates that grade retention may result in the following outcomes:

1. An increased drop-out rate for those retained;
2. A high percentage of retention among students with minority and low income status and children rated low in social adjustment; and
3. No improvement in academic performance following retention.

As students progress from grade to grade, it is the responsibility of the District to provide them with multiple opportunities to learn and then to certify that they have the knowledge and skills needed for academic achievement at the next level. The academic performance criterion for the fourth and eighth grades identifies the minimum criteria for academic achievement in the curriculum and in standards-based assessment using the state assessment. While the districts believe that data-informed decision making is important, there is no empirical evidence which supports denying a student grade promotion based solely on scoring below a certain value on a standardized assessment. This promotion policy is designed to afford students several different ways to demonstrate their knowledge while at the same time providing flexibility so students with disabilities may continue to be included with their nondisabled peers.

The Big Foot Area Schools will use multiple assessments indicating academic achievement criteria when considering whether to advance a student to a given grade K-8. The measures shall include, but not be limited to: (1) standardized and research-based achievement tests, (2) scores on the Wisconsin State achievement tests, (3) teacher/staff recommendations, and (4) grade level report cards.

**CRITERIA**

**Grades K-3 and 5-7 Promotion:** Each student’s level of academic achievement and progress will be measured throughout the school year using a variety of assessments. Criteria for promotion in grades K-3 and 5-7 will be as follows:

1. Students will be at or above grade level in reading and math as measured by a research based screener. These screeners will be administered multiple times per year grades K-8 and will be the primary index of a student’s growth in math and reading;
2. Students will score “basic” or above on the state’s assessments for grades 3-8; and
3. Students will score at or above grade level on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment which will be administered twice a year in the primary grades in accordance with state guidelines. This instrument helps identify those students at risk of reading difficulties.

Districts will document student growth and convene the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team, which may have different names in different districts throughout the consortium, in the event that adequate progress toward the identified promotion criteria is not made within an identified timeline. Although assessment instruments are subject to change and evolve, those listed above, along with classroom level assessments, teacher and parent input, and attendance, represent the measures we currently use to gather a variety of data points regarding each student’s academic achievement and the acceptable achievement on each.

**Fourth Grade Promotion**

Students must meet the criteria below to be promoted from 4th to 5th grade:

1. State Assessment:

Students must have a score of “basic” or higher on all six of the content area sub-tests (reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) on the fourth grade state assessment.

2. District Assessments:

1. In districts issuing letter grades, students must receive the equivalent of satisfactory progress or an average grade of “D” or above during the first three quarters, or first two trimesters, on his/her fourth grade report card in each of the five content areas tested on the state assessment.
2. In districts issuing standards based grades, 60% of the standards/skill based measurements must be at the proficient or advanced level in each of the six content areas tested on the state assessment by the end of the first three quarters or two trimesters.
3. If the student has a disability and successfully meets his/her individualized education program (IEP) goals, the student will be promoted.
4. If a student is eligible for services under Section 504 or has ELL/Bilingual Learner Needs, promotion consideration will be based upon information from a variety of sources including annual proficiency testing as well as a review of any accommodation plans or conferences.

Districts will document student growth and convene the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team, which may have different names in different districts throughout the consortium, in the event that adequate progress toward the identified promotion criteria is not made within an identified timeline. Although assessment instruments are subject to change and evolve, those listed above, along with classroom level assessments, teacher and parent input, and attendance, represent the measures we currently use to gather a variety of data points regarding each student’s academic achievement and the acceptable achievement on each.

If the student does not meet the promotion criteria outlined in (1) and (2) above, the school’s RtI Team must review the case. The team, including the principal and other school personnel as determined at the site level, will consider promotion, retention, or writing an Academic Improvement Plan for the student including possible interventions to help the students make adequate educational progress. If an Academic Improvement Plan is required, the RtI Team will reconvene following the student's completion of the Academic Improvement Plan to review the student's case and circumstances and issue a recommendation either for or against promotion. Other considerations may include, but are not limited to, classroom performance, attendance, parent input, and teacher recommendations

**Eighth Grade Promotion**

Students must meet the criteria below to be promoted from 8th to 9th grade:

1. State Assessment:

Students must have a score of “basic” or higher on all six of the content area sub-tests (reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) on the eighth grade state assessment.

2. District Assessments:

1. In districts issuing letter grades, students must receive the equivalent of satisfactory progress or an average grade of “D” or above during the first three quarters, or first two trimesters, on his/her eighth grade report card in each of the five content areas tested on the state assessment.
2. In districts issuing standards based grades, 60% of the standards/skill based measurements must be at the proficient or advanced level in each of the six content areas tested on the state assessment after the first three quarters or two trimesters.
3. If the student has a disability and successfully meets his/her individualized education program (IEP) goals, the student will be promoted.
4. If a student is eligible for services under Section 504 or has ELL/Bilingual Learner Needs, promotion consideration will be based upon information from a variety of sources including annual proficiency testing as well as a review of any accommodation plans or conferences.

Districts will document student growth and convene the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team, which may have different names in different districts throughout the consortium, in the event that adequate progress toward the identified promotion criteria is not made within an identified timeline. Although assessment instruments are subject to change and evolve, those listed above, along with classroom level assessments, teacher and parent input, and attendance, represent the measures we currently use to gather a variety of data points regarding each student’s academic achievement and the acceptable achievement on each.

If the student does not meet the promotion criteria outlined in (1) and (2) above, the school’s RtI team team must review the case. The RtI Team, including the principal and other school personnel as determined at the site level, will consider promotion, retention, or writing an Academic Improvement Plan for the student including possible interventions to help the students make adequate educational progress. If an Academic Improvement Plan is required, the RtI Team will reconvene following the student's completion of the Academic Improvement Plan to review the student's case and circumstances and issue a recommendation either for or against promotion. Other considerations may include, but are not limited to, classroom performance, attendance, parent input, and teacher recommendations

**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (Grades K-8)**

All students’ progress toward proficiency as defined by the promotion criteria for each grade level will be monitored. For those students failing to meet the promotion criteria, the school’s RtI (Response to Intervention) team will identify the area of concern and determine appropriate, research-based interventions to be implemented within the RtI model; that is, additional instruction beyond the instruction provided to all students will be provided. The progress of these students will be monitored to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. If sufficient progress is not made, an alternative research-based intervention will be utilized with the same process. The parents/guardians of students identified for interventions will be notified and updated regarding their child’s progress on a regular basis.

1. The Response to Intervention Team**,** led by the building principal, may include the school psychologist, school counselor, core/classroom teacher(s), and other relevant staff who work with the student on a consistent basis. As appropriate, the parent(s) or guardian(s) and other individuals will be invited to contribute to team discussions.
2. The team will meet regarding each student who has not responded to academic supports that have been implemented and who remains far below academic benchmarks for his or her grade level.
3. Coordinated and scheduled by the principal, meetings and decisions regarding student retention will occur as soon as possible after the student is identified, but no later than the last day of school. An exception to this deadline is acceptable only if summer school remediation is necessary in order to make a decision regarding promotion. In this case, a decision must be made no later than August 15.
4. The team will review multiple assessments indicating academic achievement. In addition, the team should review attendance records, previous retention(s), and previous recommendations for retention(s). The team should also study the student’s ability to learn as reflected in 504 plans and IEPs for students with special needs.
5. After reviewing all pertinent information for a particular student, the team will render a decision on grade advancement.

**COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Both the promotion policy and process outlined above will be shared with all families in the district at the beginning of each school year. Results of the assessments listed above will be shared with parents/guardians via mail, parent-teacher conferences, school counselor meetings, and/or other such meetings as necessary. For students failing to meet growth expectations, the RtI team will complete and provide the necessary documentation for the DOCUMENTATION OF GRADES K-8 STUDENT INTERVENTIONS form as well as complete and mail the NOTICE OF POSSIBLE STUDENT RETENTION to parents/guardians of students by the end of the third quarter or second trimester.

**APPEAL PROCESS:**

If the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) believes that the procedures/process outlined in this policy have not been followed, an appeal may be made to the Superintendent who will determine if due process was followed. If the parent or guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the matter may be taken to the School Board.

ADOPTED: July 31, 2002

REVISED: July 9, 2013

REVIEW DATE:

**DOCUMENTATION OF GRADES K-8**

**STUDENT INTERVENTIONS**

Student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

School Year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I. Academic Achievement/Progress

A. Attach documentation of State Assessments; Universal Screener, EXPLORE, PALS, report cards, and other relevant assessments.

B. Narrative regarding assessments. The RtI team and/or a classroom teacher will prepare a narrative regarding student assessment, achievement, and progress. (Attach the narrative to this form.)

II. Interventions

A. Narrative regarding interventions. The RtI team and/or the classroom teacher will prepare a narrative explaining the progress or lack of progress regarding each intervention and the amount of time each intervention was employed. (Please attach the narrative to this form).

III. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Contacts

The RtI team and/or the classroom teacher will prepare a document confirming multiple parent/guardian contacts. Each bullet in the narrative should identify: (a) date of contact; (b) parent(s) or guardian(s) involved; (c) employee(s) involved; (d) format of the contact [email, postal mail, meeting, etc.]; (e) nature of the contact. (Attach the narrative to this form.)

**NOTICE OF POSSIBLE RETENTION**

**Student’s Name Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**School Grade**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Careful review of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_'s performance indicates several areas of continued performance deficiencies that may necessitate retention in grade \_\_\_\_\_\_ for another year. Specific reasons for this possibility include those items documented below. A committee will be convened to make the final decision with parental input. If retention is advised, a new intervention plan will be developed for the next year.

**Academic Performance**

The following grades were received in these courses:

\_\_\_ Reading \_\_\_Language Arts \_\_\_ Math \_\_\_ Science \_\_\_ Social Studies

Comments:

**Standardized Test Performance**

The following standardized assessments revealed concerns that factor into the potential for retention:

\_\_\_\_\_ SCREENER \_\_\_\_\_ WI State Assessments \_\_\_\_\_EXPLORE \_\_\_\_\_ PALS \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Comments:

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**Teacher's/Team Leader’s Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Principal’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Date :\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Notice of Possible Retention*:***

*Please sign and return one copy to student's teacher.*

**Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Date : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_