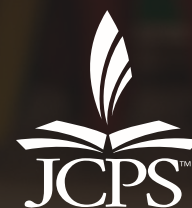


JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Student Progression and Promotion Handbook

Elementary School

2026-27

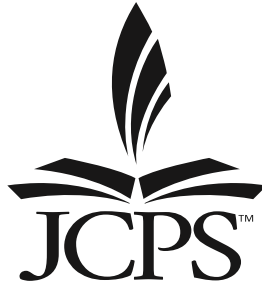




Jefferson County Public Schools

**Elementary School  
Student Progression and  
Promotion Handbook**

**2026-27~~2025-26~~**



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# Kentucky Education Goals

These capacity and goal statements of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), as found in Kentucky Revised Statutes, KRS 158.645 and KRS 158.6451, are the basis for instructional programs in Kentucky public schools. All students shall have the opportunity to acquire the following capacities and learning goals:

- Literacy, including communication ~~Communication~~-skills necessary to function in a complex and changing world civilization
- Knowledge to make wise economic, social, career, and political choices
- Core values and qualities of good character to make moral and ethical decisions throughout ~~his or her~~ life
- Understanding of our constitutional republic, the three (3) branches of government and, how government impacts citizens, governmental processes as they affect the community, the state, and the nation
- Sufficient self-knowledge and knowledge of their mental health and physical wellness
- Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student ~~students~~-to appreciate the student's own ~~their~~ cultural and historical heritage
- Sufficient preparation to choose and pursue their life's work intelligently
- Skills to enable students to compete competitively ~~favorably~~-with students in other states

Furthermore, schools shall:

- Expect a high level of academic achievement ~~from~~ of all students.
- Develop their students' abilities to:
  - Use ~~basic~~-communication and mathematics skills for purposes and situations they will encounter throughout their lives,
  - Apply core concepts and principles from mathematics, the sciences, the arts, the humanities, social studies, civics, and practical living to situations they will encounter throughout their lives,
  - Become self-sufficient individuals of good character exhibiting the qualities of altruism, citizenship, courtesy, hard work, honesty, human worth, justice, knowledge, patriotism, respect, responsibility, and self-discipline,
  - Become responsible members of a family, work group, or community, including demonstrating effectiveness in community service,
  - Think critically, creatively, and independently to solve problems in school situations and in a variety of situations they will encounter in life,
  - Connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge from all subject matter fields with what they have previously learned and build on past learning experiences to acquire new information through various media sources, and
  - Express their creative talents and interests in visual arts, music, dance, and dramatic arts.
- Increase their students' rate of school attendance.
- Increase their students' graduation rates and reduce students' dropout and retention rates.
- Reduce physical and mental health barriers to learning.
- Be measured on the proportion of students who make a successful transition to work, postsecondary education, and the military.

# Introduction

This uniform *Elementary Student Progression and Promotion Handbook* is reviewed and approved annually by the Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBE). The *Progression and Promotion Handbook* supports the philosophy and vision of Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) and complies with Kentucky law.

## Vision

All JCPS students graduate prepared, empowered, and inspired to reach their full potential and contribute as thoughtful, responsible citizens of our diverse, shared world.

## Mission

To challenge and engage each learner to grow through effective teaching and meaningful experiences within caring, supportive environments

## Core Values

**Caring**—All JCPS children are nurtured as if they are our own.

**Equity**—All students receive an education that gives them what they need to thrive through differentiated supports focused on removing social factors as a predictor of success.

**Excellence**—Empowering people to lead, create, and innovate is essential to creating a culture of excellence.

**Respect**—All students, staff, and families are treated with dignity and respect as members of a safe and welcoming learning community.

**Individuality**—Children learn differently and require personalized approaches to learning.

**Diversity**—Our diversity is a strength—differences of each are assets of the whole.

**Opportunity**—Effective teaching is the most powerful tool for engaging and motivating students to reach their full potential.

**Creativity**—The abilities to create, innovate, and solve challenging problems are critical skills for educators and children to develop and employ in teaching and learning.

**Collaboration**—Relationships, cooperation, and partnerships among students, staff, families, and community are fundamental to the success of our students.

**Stewardship**—Adults model integrity, respect, and responsibility through mindful stewardship of talents, resources, and time.

# Procedures for Elementary School

The JCBE has approved the following procedures for assessing the progress of JCPS students. The philosophy of continuous progress guides JCPS elementary schools. This means students are allowed to move through the curriculum with instructional design and placement being adjusted as needed. Progress is documented by teachers, and progression is determined by the students' application of skills, concepts, and understandings listed in the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS)/Program of Studies. Evidence of student learning progression is maintained for each student.

## Philosophy

JCPS provides every student, without exception, both the opportunity and the necessary support to benefit from a high-quality educational experience. We believe that student retention is not an effective practice.

Therefore, students who are struggling or who are at risk of failure will be identified early and provided the necessary support to meet state standards and to be prepared for the next instructional level. Formative assessment and evaluation are planned parts of the curriculum. Educators are expected to be actively involved with parents/guardians and students in assessing, evaluating, intervening, enriching, and communicating the progress of each student.

## Practices

School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Councils or Advisory Councils, in collaboration with all stakeholders, are encouraged to explore various organizational structures and instructional practices that support achievement of individualized learning goals through continuous progress for all students. By analyzing assessment results and differentiating instructional strategies, SBDM Councils or Advisory Councils, in collaboration with all stakeholders, develop a school culture and instructional program that will ensure the success of each student. The purpose of this handbook is to provide policies and procedures for:

- How learners progress through each level and are promoted.
- How learning will be assessed, captured, and communicated.

### **Our Guiding Purposes for Assessing Learning and Grading:**

- Monitoring student progress toward grade-/course-level, or above, standards and competencies
- Informing teaching to improve student learning
- Improving student ability to demonstrate, assess, and develop ownership of their learning
- Communicating the learning, growth, and achievements of learners to learners, families, and stakeholders

### **Our Guiding Principles for Assessing Learning and Grading:**

- Flexibility in meeting the needs of all learners
- Emphasis on learning, growth, and achievements
- Assessment that is learner-centered, authentic, and performance-based
- Grade reporting that is consistent, supports learning, and promotes communication amongst stakeholders
- Assessing progress and mastery will be done in a variety of ways that recognize the strengths and competencies of every learner.
- Communication of engagement will include descriptive feedback and/or competency-based rubrics that focus on standards and success skills.

### **Recommended Practices:**

- Performance-based assessments that are learner-centered and authentic
- Descriptive feedback reflecting student engagement
- Student self-assessment and reflection
- Emphasis on progress and mastery

- Supporting and encouraging revisions without penalty
- Use of rubrics and criterion-based feedback
- Formative assessments to determine both learning and next steps in teaching
- Focus on what was learned, rather than how or when
- Timely communication to students and families
- Elimination of “0” point grading due to the impact on overall grades

Each student will progress toward mastery of both academic standards and the development of capacities and dispositions necessary for success in college, career, community, and life. Those capacities and dispositions are exemplified through Success Skills as students provide evidence to demonstrate that they are Prepared and Resilient Learners, Globally and Culturally Competent Citizens, Emerging Innovators, Productive Collaborators, and Effective Communicators. All students will build a digital portfolio, which will include evidence of their transition readiness. Each student will demonstrate progress toward standards and success skills through a Defense of Learning during their fifth-grade year.

## **Student Support and Assistance**

Programs and support services are provided to ensure all students have equitable opportunities to demonstrate progress toward standards and success skills. JCPS programs and services may include the following:

- Counseling Services
- Exceptional Child Education (ECE) Services
- English Language Development (ELD)
- Extended School Services (ESS)
- Family Resource Centers (FRCs)
- Gifted and Talented (GT)
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- Mental Health Counseling
- Primary Talent Pool (PTP)
- Restorative Practices
- Title I Funded Programs
- Extended Learning Opportunities

# What Does This Mean for Learners, Educators, and Families?

It means moving away from a traditional grading system that:	It means moving toward a competencies-/ standards-based assessment approach that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is primarily designed to communicate how learners do overall, when compared to each other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is designed to communicate the level of learning and/ or progress made in relation to the criteria of many standards and competencies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often does not communicate criteria for success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has clearly identified and publicly communicated criteria for success in standards and competencies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Converts learning to points/percentages on a 100 percent grading scale that does not explicitly communicate the learning and/or progress toward demonstrating standards and competencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly and transparently communicates learning and/ or progress toward demonstrating competencies and standards via criterion-based rubrics.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes incomplete work and the use of zeros, which results in very low scores and emphasizes task completion more than accurately reflecting learning and/or progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicitly and consistently communicates the level of learning and/or progress in a few criterion-based categories, avoiding the masking and distorting effects of averaging and using zeros.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combines and averages a variety of learning achievements with effort, engagement, behavior, and possibly late penalties and/or extra credit to determine a final composite grade.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports a variety of distinguishable learning achievements, which build into milestones along the path of progressing toward mastery, while describing learner engagement and/or behaviors separately.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes when a task is completed/turned in without communicating what learning or progress has occurred (with less flexibility in how learning/ progress is demonstrated by the learner).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes what learning or progress toward a standard/competency has been demonstrated (with more flexibility in how and when the learning/progress is demonstrated by the learner).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses learners more on “What did I get?” and “How did I do compared to other students?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses learners more on “What did I learn?” and “What can I do?”</li> </ul>

Educators are expected to be actively involved with parents/guardians and students in assessing, evaluating, intervening, enriching, and communicating.

# Reporting of Student Progress

## Standards-Based Learning and Grading

*Standards-Based Learning and Grading* is an approach to learning, teaching, assessment, and grading that is based on students demonstrating understanding or mastery of academic disciplinary standards. Learning and progress are determined in comparison to these standards (concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do within an academic discipline). The criteria used to determine progress toward “meeting a standard” is defined in advance, often in a rubric, and teachers will evaluate learning progress and academic achievements in relation to these criteria. Grades for behaviors and work habits are important but are often reported separately from academic grades.

## Competency-Based Learning

*Competency-Based Learning* is an approach to learning, teaching, and assessment where learners advance through demonstrated progress toward, and mastery of, key competencies (i.e., integrative and interdisciplinary knowledge, skills, and dispositions that can be found and applied within, but also between and beyond, academic disciplinary standards).

Learners develop and hone these competencies—such as creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, working collaboratively, communicating effectively, and an academic or growth mindset (e.g., our ~~JCPS~~ Success Skills)—over time and through applying them in real-world tasks, contexts, and/or with authentic purposes. This approach often includes a flexible pace, sequence, progression, and/or means in which learners can demonstrate that they have reached key milestones along the path to demonstrating mastery of key competencies.

Academic grades shall provide evidence of what students know and are able to do. Academic grades shall represent student learning and growth toward acquisition of grade-level or course-level academic standards and competencies. To that end, grading practices shall focus on standards and competencies—not on the completion of tasks or activities.

**Student Mastery:** Since mastery of grade-level standards and success skills is an end-of-year goal, academic grades assigned throughout the school year measure progress toward mastery. **Students shall have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery without penalty.**

### Evidence and Artifacts

The artifacts used to provide evidence of student progress toward mastery shall depend on the academic standards and/or competencies being assessed. Some examples of appropriate artifacts include, but are not limited to, the following: Anecdotal notes, class assignments, demonstrations of learning, exit tickets, performance assessments, presentations, proficiency assessments, quizzes, and writing samples.

### Rubrics and Success Criteria

Regardless of the artifacts used as evidence of student progress toward mastery, students shall understand the success criteria—what they must say, do, make, or write in order to demonstrate sufficient progress. The use of a criterion rubric with clear expectations provides success criteria.

# Grading Practices to Advance Learning

## The purpose of grading is to do the following:

- Monitor student progress toward mastery of grade-level or course-level standards and competencies
- Inform teaching to improve student learning
- Improve student ability to demonstrate, assess, and develop ownership of their learning
- Communicate student learning, growth, and achievement to students, families, and stakeholders

## With these purposes in mind, teachers shall do the following:

- Provide **descriptive feedback** designed to advance learning
- Provide **multiple opportunities** for students to demonstrate learning related to a specific skill or competency
- Provide **multiple ways** (different types of artifacts and/or assessments) for students to demonstrate learning
- Provide **equitable access** and opportunities for students to complete assignments and assessments
- Provide **optional** homework as an opportunity for practice to strengthen learning, but not as evidence counting toward an academic for a grade. Teachers may review completed homework to guide instruction and provide feedback.
- Use a designation of “incomplete” for missing assignments and shall **not** assign grades of zero

Evidence of student learning and growth is to be reported based on student work and/or performance that demonstrates progress toward and/or acquisition of standards and competencies (Success Skills) and thus reflects what the student has learned and/or is able to do. Teachers will also offer students descriptive feedback regarding student engagement with competencies (Success Skills) and standards, but student engagement is not included in the determination of a grade. Student learning and growth must be represented with a variety of sources and kinds of evidence/assignments.

- Participation should be noted in descriptive feedback only, and academic grades are not reduced as punishment for misconduct or inappropriate behaviors, including submitting late work or not having supplies.
- These behaviors should be reflected in the student’s conduct report.
- Teachers must ensure that all students have equitable access and opportunities to complete class and homework and provide support for students to overcome barriers.
- A copy of the teacher’s ~~reporting~~ procedures for grading and other reporting of learning and growth must be provided to students, parents/guardians, and the principal/designee.

Category of Academic Grades	Evidence/Assignments Toward Mastery Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
<b>Student Mastery of Standards, Competencies, and Success Skills:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shall count for 100% of the total academic grade.</li> </ul>	Projects (e.g., project or problem-based), demonstrations of learning, authentic assessments, presentations, defenses, other evidence of learning toward mastery, or tests/proficiency assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one assignment can count for more than 20% of the entire Mastery category. Students should be afforded multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning and mastery, with some tasks and/or assignments able to be revised and resubmitted after feedback and/or practice to demonstrate mastery.</li> </ul>	

# Explanation of Learner Progress

This handbook is reviewed and approved annually by the Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBE) and shall be used by schools for the assessment of individual student progress. Student progress for core subjects is reported using the following performance codes:

## Primary Program (Grades K–3) and Special Areas (Grades K–5)

O	Outstanding	Work consistently meets or exceeds grade-level expectations/standards.
S	Satisfactory	Work meets grade-level expectations/standards.
NI	Needs Improvement	Improvement is needed to meet grade-level expectations/standards.
U	Unsatisfactory	Work does not meet grade-level expectations/standards.
I	Incomplete	There is insufficient evidence to assess student progress.
N/A	Not Applicable	Not taught during this grading period

## Intermediate Program (Grades 4–5)

A	90–100%	Meets or Exceeds Standards
B	80–89%	Approaching Standards
C	70–79%	Developing Understanding <u>of Standards</u>
D	60–69%	Below Standards
U	Below 60%	Significantly Below Standards
I	Incomplete	There is insufficient evidence to assess student progress.
N/A	Not Applicable	Not taught during this grading period

**Incomplete Resolution Deadline**—All incompletes must be updated/resolved to academic grades prior to the conclusion of the following grading period or if a student withdraws, whichever comes first. Incompletes are not allowable during the final grading period of the school year.

## Standards-Based Reporting (Grades K–5)

Standards-Based Reporting Scale	Performance Description
4	Meets or Exceeds Standards
3	Approaching Standards
2	Developing Understanding <u>of Standards</u>
1	Below Standards

# Competency- and Standards-Based Reporting

## Philosophy

In order to maintain a collaborative relationship within a school's learning community, the following process should be followed when making significant changes to a school's report card in order to report progress on competencies and standards:

- 1) The principal shall form a report card committee with a representative membership, including school-based educators and parents/guardians.
- 2) The report card committee shall work with the District-based Assessing Learning and Grading Framework team and Teaching and Learning leaders to assess school values and utilize a competency and/or standards-based progress reporting system, parent and family communication plans, and other supporting structures.
- 3) The committee's decisions will be subject to the approval of District leadership, as applicable, and does not supersede JCBE Policies, administrative procedures, or reporting formats.

## Procedure

Teachers are encouraged to use the Standards-Based Grading Scale and performance descriptors before converting to a percentage-based grading scale.

Communication with students and families concerning student progress is critical. Report card grades are determined and recorded at the end of weeks 9, 18, 27, and 36 of the school year. Grades are posted to students' transcripts so receiving schools can access data regarding students who enroll in a new school. The JCPS District-approved report card is distributed to students following every nine-week grading period. Explanatory comments shall accompany all below-standard grades on the report card. If a student is not making satisfactory progress, parents/guardians must be notified by phone or in writing by the teacher at least two weeks prior to the end of the grading period. Parent contact must be documented by the teacher. An intervention plan must also be developed and implemented to assist struggling students.

Concerns regarding a grade are to be directed to the teacher first. If the concern is not resolved, the parent/guardian shall request a meeting with the teacher and a counselor/assistant principal to discuss the concern. If the concern is not resolved at the meeting, a meeting with the principal is scheduled. The principal will review documentation and inform the parent/guardian of the decision regarding the appeal. This is the final step in the grade reporting appeal process. In cases that involve students with disabilities, the procedures mandated by federal and state law for students with disabilities shall be followed.

Once posted, a grade may be changed in collaboration and consultation between the teacher and a school administrator. The parent/guardian shall be notified of any grade change.

The Individual Education Program (IEP) for Exceptional Child Education (ECE) students and Program Services Plans (PSPs) for Multilingual Learners (MLs) may be considered in the appeal.

In addition to completing report cards, teachers collect, maintain, and analyze data to determine if a student with disabilities is making expected progress toward IEP goals using the IEP progress report. This progress report is sent to parents/guardians on the same report card schedule as specified by the District for all students.

# Primary Program Progression

Kentucky's Primary Program is the part of the elementary school program in which students are enrolled from the time they begin school until they are ready to enter the Intermediate Program (fourth grade). The Primary Program includes the following critical attributes: continuous progress, developmentally appropriate educational practices, authentic assessment, multi-age and multi-ability classrooms, qualitative reporting methods, professional teamwork, and positive family involvement. The Primary Program is based on continuous progress (704 KAR 3:440). In a continuous progress educational model, students never start over; they move forward in individual or flexible group instruction to achieve expectations, meet benchmarks, and master standards. To accomplish these goals, students may require an additional year in the Primary Program. Students may also exit the Primary Program early.

Students struggling to meet academic and/or age-appropriate behavior expectations will be provided interventions based on the MTSS framework. The school shall communicate with the parent/guardian about the provided intervention.

## Early Admission to Kindergarten

The first year for Primary school begins with students who turn age 5 on or before **August 1**. In accordance with KRS 158.031(6), JCPS has established criteria for early entrance to Primary 1 (P1), also known as kindergarten. Students who turn 5 years old between **August 2** and **October 31** will be eligible for early entrance enrollment, provided that the students meet criteria established by the District. Contact [jcpsgifted@jefferson.kyschools.us](mailto:jcpsgifted@jefferson.kyschools.us) for more information.

Criteria for Early Entrance to Kindergarten (P1):

- Child must be a resident of Jefferson County, Kentucky; and
- Child must turn 5 between **August 2** and **October 31** of the admission year; and
- Child must meet the benchmark on the screening assessments identified for use by the District.

## Primary Program—Accelerated Placement

A school team—which must include the parents/guardians, teachers, and a school administrator—will collect and review a student's assessment records when considering the promotion of any student in the Primary Program.

Following this review, the school-based team (in consultation with the student's parents/guardians) will determine if the student should be promoted within the Primary grades (e.g., from second grade [P3] to third grade [P4]). A district-designated form shall be used to document this process and make a recommendation to the principal. The Early Exit/Accelerated Placement Recommendation to the Principal Form is available on the JCPS website.

For any student who will move from Kindergarten (P1) to first grade (P2) before reaching the age of 6 by the enrollment age deadline, the state-required procedures must be followed and occur within the first six weeks of enrollment.

The principal must inform the parents/guardians of their decision, in writing, within five instructional days of the school team's recommendation. The principal must also inform the parents/guardians of the appeal process. If it is determined that the student merits promotion within the Primary Program, the written documentation (i.e., completed and signed copy of the JCPS District-designated form or the Kentucky Department of Education [KDE] Accelerated Placement in Primary Program [5-year-olds]) shall become part of the student's permanent record.

## Primary Program—Early Exit

A school team—which must include the parents/guardians, teachers, and a school administrator—will collect and review a student’s assessment records when considering the early exit of any student in the Primary Program.

Following this review, the school-based team (in consultation with the student’s parents/guardians) will determine that the student has made satisfactory progress and may merit early exit from the Primary Program for promotion to the Intermediate Program. A District-designated form shall be used to document this process and make a recommendation to the principal. The Early Exit/Accelerated Placement Recommendation to the Principal Form is available on the JCPS website.

The principal must inform the parents/guardians of their decision, in writing, within five instructional days of the school team’s recommendation. The principal must also inform the parents/guardians of the appeal process. If it is determined that the student will exit the Primary Program early, the written documentation (i.e., completed and signed copy of JCPS District-designated form) shall become part of the student’s permanent record.

## Primary Program—Additional Time

### Philosophy

In general, JCPS does not recommend retention in elementary grades. There is a wealth of research showing that retention is not effective in improving learning outcomes and can be detrimental to a student’s long-term goals and learning outcomes, with the potential to negatively affect a student’s graduation timeline and social development.

### Practices and Procedures

A student may require additional time in the Primary Program in order to demonstrate readiness for progression. The decision of whether the additional year in the Primary Program occurs in early Primary or late Primary is to be based on multiple sources of data. A school team, which must include the parents/guardians, teachers, and a school administrator, will collect and review a student’s assessment records and social emotional learning data as well as review current research regarding retention during the Primary Program, when considering delayed exit for any student in the Primary Program. This conference shall take place at least 30 school days before the final day of the school year in which a decision is considered.

In accordance with KRS 158.305(9)(a):

1. A kindergarten student who had a reading improvement plan for the school year may remain in kindergarten for an additional school year if a school determines that the student:
  - a. Did not meet grade-level benchmarks in reading while in kindergarten as determined by the universal screener given in accordance with KRS 158.305(6);
  - b. Did not master the Kentucky reading academic standards for kindergarten students based on assessments given in accordance with KRS 158.6453(8); or
  - c. Is not properly prepared to be successful in the first grade; and
2. A first-grade student who had a reading improvement plan for the school year shall remain in first grade for an additional school year if a school determines that the student:
  - a. Did not meet grade-level benchmarks in reading while in first grade as determined by the universal screener given in accordance with KRS 158.305(6);
  - b. Did not master the Kentucky reading academic standards for first-grade students based on assessments given in accordance with KRS 158.6453(8); or
  - c. Is not properly prepared to be successful in the second grade.

Based on this review, the team will determine if the student needs to spend an additional year in the Primary Program. Individual placement decisions for children who are eligible for special education and related services shall be determined by the appropriate Admissions and Release Committee (ARC), pursuant to 707 KAR 1:350.

A district-designated form shall be used to document this process and make a recommendation to the principal. The Additional Time in the Primary Program Form is available on the JCPS website. The principal must inform the parents/guardians of their decision, in writing, within five instructional days of the team's recommendation.

The principal must also inform the parents/guardians of the appeal process. If it is determined that the student will spend an additional year in the Primary Program, school personnel will consult the Department of Pupil Personnel to inform correct Infinite Campus coding and completion of the required paperwork, which is to be included in the student's permanent record.

## **Intermediate Program Progression**

All students will have access to the standards and curriculum aligned with the KAS/Program of Studies. All students struggling to meet performance expectations will be provided academic supports and interventions based on the JCPS MTSS framework.

The decision to promote a student is made by local school administrators and is based on observations and the student's demonstrated performance of the curriculum and academic expectations. Documentation of student performance may include report card grades, formative and summative assessments, other standardized assessments, teacher observations and logs, anecdotal records, and related MTSS data.

### **Philosophy**

In general, JCPS does not recommend retention in elementary grades. There is a wealth of research showing that retention is not effective in improving learning outcomes and can be detrimental to a student's long-term goals and learning outcomes, with the potential to negatively affect a student's graduation timeline and social development.

### **Practices and Procedures**

A conference that includes the principal/counselor, teacher(s), and parents/guardians is required when considering retention in the Intermediate grades. The following information shall be reviewed in the conference: documentation of student progress; evidence of implementation of academic supports or interventions (MTSS); assessment records; social emotional learning data; work samples in reading, writing, and mathematics; anecdotal records, logs, and evidence of frequent teacher/parent communications; and current research regarding retention during the elementary grades when considering delayed exit.

Following the staff/family conference, the parents/guardians are sent a written notification of the retention decision via U.S. Mail no later than the thirtieth week of the school year. If retention is recommended, documentation shall become part of the student's permanent record. The parents/guardians must also be informed of the appeal process.

If the school makes a decision to promote an Intermediate student and the parent/guardian disagrees with that decision, the steps outlined for appeal of retention of an Intermediate student shall apply.

## **Intermediate Program—Early Exit From Elementary School to Middle School**

A school team—which must include the parents/guardians, teachers, the elementary school administrator, and a middle school administrator—will collect and review a student's assessment records when considering the early exit for any student from elementary school. The principal must inform the parents/guardians of their decision, in writing, within five instructional days of the school team's recommendation. The principal must also inform the parents/guardians of the appeal process. If it is determined that the student will exit elementary school early, the written documentation (i.e., completed and signed copy of the JCPS District-designated form) shall become part of the student's permanent record.

# Appeals

*Note: It is the responsibility of the school administrators to provide parents/guardians with instructions for completing appeals and to ensure equitable access for an appeal (i.e., translated documents, names and addresses, email access).*

## Grade Reporting Appeals

Concerns regarding a grade are to be directed to the teacher first. If the concern is not resolved, the parent/guardian shall request a meeting with the teacher and a counselor/assistant principal to discuss the concern. If the concern is not resolved at the meeting, a meeting with the principal is scheduled. The principal will review documentation and inform the parent/guardian of the decision regarding the appeal. This is the final step in the grade reporting appeal process. In cases that involve students with disabilities, the procedures mandated by federal and state law for students with disabilities shall be followed.

## Primary Program Promotion Appeals

The appeal process is initiated by the parent/guardian and proceeds according to the following:

1. Within ten days of receipt of the written decision from the principal, the parent/guardian submits a letter to the appropriate assistant superintendent for review and consideration.
2. The appropriate assistant superintendent shall send a written response to the parent/guardian and the principal stating the final decision. This is the final step in the appeal process.

## Intermediate Program Progression Appeals

The appeal process is initiated by the parent/guardian and proceeds according to the following:

1. Within ten days of receiving notice of retention/promotion, the parent/guardian informs the school principal in writing that reconsideration is requested, giving reasons for initiating the appeal process.
2. Within five days of receiving a parent's/guardian's letter, the principal will review the documentation and rationale used to make the initial decision.
3. The principal will then notify the parent/guardian in writing of the decision concerning the appeal, scheduling a conference if needed.
4. If the parent/guardian wants to appeal the principal's decision, a letter shall be sent within ten days to the appropriate assistant superintendent requesting review and reconsideration.
5. The appropriate assistant superintendent will send a written response to the parent/guardian and the principal stating the final decision. This will be the last step in the appeal process.
- 6.

## Transfer of Students Grade Reporting

When an elementary student transfers, the sending school shall include the JCPS Withdrawal and Release Form (available on the JCPS website) and the elementary transcript indicating the student's academic progress for the current grading period. One copy of each shall be placed in the Student Cumulative Record Folder. Grades shall be posted to the student's transcript so the receiving school can access data regarding the student who enrolls in a new school. In some instances, when a transfer occurs before a student has completed the required number of assignments in a grading period to demonstrate student learning, the grade will be assigned based on the available meaningful evidence of progression and mastery.

# Evaluation of Non-JCPS Transcripts

Parents/Guardians of non-JCPS or homeschooled students who wish to enroll their child in JCPS should schedule an appointment with the school administrator. Students who miss the state assessments will be expected to demonstrate competency in reading, on-demand writing, and mathematics. The principal/designee will determine the appropriate grade placement based on a review of the following:

- Transcript—record of grades earned by the student
- The name, author, and publisher of textbook(s) used
- Attendance manual—record of days and times taught
- An outline of materials covered in each subject
- Selection of student's best works from each subject
- Additional assessments considered helpful in determining grade placement
- Students who are identified under IDEA should be evaluated by the ARC and assigned to the class or grade to which the students are best suited.

After a homeschooled student is accepted into JCPS, the parent/guardian must notify the Pupil Personnel Office in writing to terminate the homeschool status. The letter should include the student's name, date of birth, and grade.

## ~~Evaluation of Non-JCPS Transcripts for Advance Program Placement~~

The JCPS Advance Program provides challenging schoolwork for academic high achievers. Parents/Guardians need to submit the following information to the District's Gifted and Talented/Advance Program supervisor to determine if placement in the JCPS Advance Program is appropriate for their child:

- Copies of the student's last two years' report cards
- Copies of the student's latest standardized achievement test scores

# Considerations and Requirements for Special Populations

## Exceptional Child Education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not address standards of promotion or retention for students with disabilities. Generally, IDEA does not require the ARC to make the decision on promotion or retention. If the student is on track for a regular diploma, the ARC does not determine if the student will be retained. For students who are on Alternate Assessment or those who plan on staying enrolled until 21 years of age, please contact the school's Exceptional Child Education (ECE) Implementation Coach for further information.

Determining if a student with disabilities will be promoted or retained shall be a collaborative process with the parent/guardian, school administrator, special education teacher, and others who are knowledgeable about the student's educational needs and disability. A retention or promotion decision is not the same as placement decisions for IDEA purposes. Students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are to receive the specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services as described within the IEP. If a student with a disability is not making progress, the ARC may need to reconvene to determine if additional instruction or supports are needed. Students with disabilities are to be provided a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Nothing in this handbook replaces or substitutes any student rights as guaranteed by IDEA or state law. Students with a disability will always be entitled to the rights and protections afforded to them by state and federal law.

For information regarding students with disabilities, including students in the referral process, please refer to the ~~JCPS Jefferson County Public Schools~~ *Exceptional Child Education Procedures Manual*, available on the JCPS website, 707 KAR 1:002 to 707 KAR 1:380, and Federal Regulation 34 F.R. Part 300. Parents/Guardians may also request a copy of the above information by contacting their school's administration or the Executive Officer, Chief of Exceptional Child Education at (502) 485-3890, VanHoose Education Center, 3332 Newburg Road, Louisville, Kentucky, 40218 or at (502) 485-3664.

## Gifted and Talented **Students**

Students in grades four through twelve (4–12) shall be identified for Gifted and Talented in accordance with 704 KAR 003:285. That administrative regulation references the definition of *exceptional children* in KRS 157.200, which includes a category of "exceptional students" who are "identified as possessing demonstrated or potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychosocial or leadership skills, or in the visual or performing arts." Once identified as qualifying for gifted education services in grades four (4) through twelve (12), a student need not be re-evaluated, except to determine suitability of services.

Each school shall provide a differentiated, articulated curriculum in accordance with Kentucky Administrative Regulations. Curricular materials shall be those designed to challenge the formally identified gifted learner (grades four through twelve~~4–12~~) and further develop the diagnosed talent and/or area of giftedness.

Service options for the formally identified gifted learner (grades four through twelve~~4–12~~) shall be described in the Gifted and Talented Students Services Plan (GSSP), shall match the learner's needs, interests, and abilities, and shall be qualitatively differentiated from those provided in the standard curriculum.

Source: JCPS Administrative Procedure 08.132 AP.1.1 <sup>1</sup>; JCPS *Online Policy and Procedure Manual*

## **Homeless Children and Unaccompanied Youth**

Consistent with JCPS Administrative Procedure 09.12 AP.25, 704 KAR 7:090, and KRS 156.160(p), to the extent feasible, the District shall support a homeless child or unaccompanied youth by awarding and accepting credit, including partial credit, for all coursework satisfactorily completed by a student while enrolled at another school.

### **Requesting and Sending Transfer Records**

Upon enrollment of a student who has been identified as a homeless child or unaccompanied youth, as defined in Board Policy 09.12, the receiving school shall:

1. Request the student's entire education file from the sending school, including cumulative records, full or partial credits, special education records, homeless and foster care status, and immunization records. If these records are not received within the timeline set forth in this section, the receiving school shall follow up with the sending school to ensure their prompt submission;
2. Immediately notify the school homeless liaison and school counselor of the student's enrollment; and
3. Notify the student and the parent/guardian of the name, contact information, office location, and hours of the school homeless liaison.

A sending public school in Kentucky, upon receiving a request, shall provide all student records within the student data system maintained by the Kentucky Department of Education by the end of the working day on the day of receipt of the request. If a record provided to the new school is incomplete, the sending school shall provide the completed record within three (3) business days of the original request.

A sending non-public school or school in another state, upon receiving a request, shall be asked to provide a copy of the youth's entire education file within five (5) business days of receipt of the request to ensure appropriate placement and scheduling.

Student records shall not be withheld from the requesting school or school district because of any fees, fines, or books owed by the student or their caregiver.

### **Evaluation of Incoming Transfer Records**

A student who is identified as a homeless child or youth as defined in Board Policy 09.12 shall be evaluated based on:

1. Available school records;
2. Information provided by the child or the adult enrolling them; and
3. The student's age.

If records are unavailable, a student shall be immediately enrolled and placed in classes. The school principal may extend the evaluation timeline when appropriate and in the best interest of the student.

### **Participation in Nonacademic and Extracurricular Activities**

Homeless children and youths who meet the relevant eligibility criteria shall have an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including, but not limited to, extracurricular athletics, intramural athletics, and clubs.

## Multilingual Learners

Federal guidance requires that multilingual learners (MLs) with a Program Service Plan (PSP) shall have equal access to high-quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential (joint guidance from U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education). This is achieved by providing grade-appropriate, rigorous, and standards-aligned standard-aligned instruction with differentiation, and scaffolds, and accommodations.

A student's ~~Program Services Plan (PSP)~~ outlines the instructional and assessment accommodations that must be implemented. MLs receive instructional and assessment accommodations in the classroom to support access to grade-level standards. These accommodations are part of the student's ongoing instructional program and are used consistently as part of the routine instruction. Accommodations from the PSP can be viewed in Infinite Campus under the English Learner tab, "English Learners (EL) Accommodations."

Teachers design, scaffold, and modify instruction, assignments, and ~~assessments tests~~ based on students' English language proficiency levels in reading, writing, listening, and speaking as determined by the by World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener and/or summative assessments and/or ELP summative assessments (WIDA screener and ACCESS). Teachers ~~use can find ELP assessment information from the ELP assessment and PSP to inform their instructional and grading practices. ELP assessment information is located in Infinite Campus under the English Learner tab, "English Learners (EL Assessments" or Ellevation~~ the student's PSP to inform their instructional and grading practices.

Grades are to reflect PSP instructional and assessment accommodations without limiting the student from earning the highest grade in the content area. Students shall not receive "below or significantly below standards" on assignments solely based on their English proficiency level. A student could receive "below or significantly below standards" only if the student's lack of performance on appropriately modified or accommodated work warrants such a grade. Conversely, a student could receive "meets or exceeds standards" on a mastery assessment given that PSP accommodations were provided and instruction was planned and delivered with ~~World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Can-Do Descriptors in mind.~~

~~The WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework is to be used as a tool to support the integration of language and content.~~ The WIDA Can-Do Descriptors in Ellevation highlight examples of what MLs can do at each English proficiency level. It is a grade-specific resource designed to guide teachers in planning meaningful activities with MLs, including Newcomer MLs (Newcomer ML students in their first calendar year or less of enrollment in a U.S. school ~~and who scored less than 2.0 overall composite on the WIDA ELP assessment~~).

## Primary Talent Pool

The Primary Talent Pool is a group of students who possess demonstrated or potential ability to perform at exceptionally high levels in the primary years (P1–P4; Kindergarten through Third Grade). These students may be referred to as high-potential learners. The purpose of selecting students to participate in a Primary Talent Pool is to provide early enrichment for those students whose talents must be nurtured in order for those talents to fully develop. These students are not automatically identified as gifted once they reach the fourth grade. They must be formally identified by meeting certain criteria. Once selected as qualifying for Primary Talent Pool services, a primary student need not be re-evaluated, except to determine suitability of services, until the end of the third grade.

Students in the Primary Talent Pool should receive differentiated services that are matched to their needs, interests, and abilities. There should be multiple service delivery options at each grade level.

Source: <https://kagegifted.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Primary-Talent-Pool-Brochure.pdf>.

# Board of Education Policies

## Promotion and Retention (Board Policy 08.22)

All schools shall implement the uniform student progression, promotion, and grading procedures which have been developed by a broad-based committee and approved by the administrative staff and the Board. Written reports shall be sent to parents at established intervals.

Students may advance through the established program of studies in accordance with the prescribed requirements, pre-kindergarten to grade 12.

Student progress through the educational program shall be determined by criteria that reflect mastery of state-required capacities and is aligned with the Kentucky Academic Standards and as outlined in the *Elementary Student Progression and Promotion Handbook*.

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, a kindergarten student who had a reading improvement plan in place for the school year may remain in kindergarten for an additional school year if the school makes a determination based on the criteria set forth in KRS 158.305.

A first-grade student who had a reading improvement plan in place for the school year shall remain in first grade for an additional year if the school makes a determination based on the criteria set forth in KRS 158.305.

A student who remains in kindergarten based on the criteria set forth in KRS 158.305 shall not subsequently be required to remain in first grade, and a student shall not be required to remain in first grade for more than one (1) additional year.

The school shall reevaluate and make necessary changes to the reading improvement plan of any student remaining in kindergarten or first grade and shall continue to provide all programs and services required by KRS 158.305 during the additional year of kindergarten or first grade.

A student provided an additional year of kindergarten or first grade may advance through the primary school program when it is determined by the school to be in the best educational interest of the student.

## Students With Disabilities (Board Policy 08.22)

In cases that involve students with disabilities, the procedures mandated by federal and state law for students with disabilities shall be followed.

## Notification of Student Performance (Board Policy 08.221)

Parents/Guardians shall be notified annually of the procedures used to evaluate the academic performance of students. If a student is exhibiting unsatisfactory performance or is experiencing changes in performance, parents/ guardians must be notified in a timely manner prior to the distribution of the progress report or report card.

## Student Conferences (Board Policy 08.221)

Teachers shall be available for conferences requested by students. Teachers may initiate such conferences without a student request when the need is evident.

## Parent Conferences (Board Policy 03.1332 and 0.8221)

Certified employees shall be available for conferences requested by parents. Reports to parents shall include provision for a parent or teacher request for a conference. Such conferences shall be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time to the extent possible. The Board shall endeavor to provide for parent-teacher conferences within the school calendar.

Parents shall be encouraged to attend two (2) parent-teacher conferences annually.

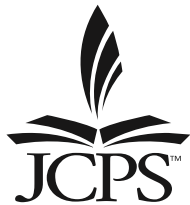
## Homework (Board Policy 08.211)

Each school shall establish guidelines for out-of-school assignments. These guidelines shall encompass amounts and types of reasonable homework assignments by grade level.

Homework shall be assigned for the improvement of learning. Curriculum-related assignments shall not be used for disciplinary purposes. Assignments should have meaning for the student, should be clear and specific, and should be of an amount and type that may be accomplished in a reasonable period of time.

# Glossary

- Advance Program** .....A program designed to provide instruction for academically gifted students
- ARC** ..... Admissions and Release Committee
- Assessment** .....The evaluation of progress and/or achievement made by an individual or group
- Developmentally Appropriate** .. Instructional practices that address the physical, aesthetic, cognitive, emotional, and social domains of students and that permit students to progress through an integrated curriculum according to their unique learning needs
- Differentiated Instruction** .....Individualized or customized instruction. The teacher offers different learning experiences within a lesson to meet students' varied needs or learning styles-
- ECE** .....Exceptional Child Education
- EL** .....English Learner
- ELD** .....English Language Development
- ESS** ..... Extended School Services
- Formative Assessment** ....A way to assess student learning and to provide feedback for adjustments in learning used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning
- IEP** .....Individual Education Program
- GSSP** .....Gifted Student Services Plan
- GT** .....Gifted and Talented Program (Grades 4–12)
- Intermediate Program** .....Grades four and five constitute the Intermediate Program-
- Intervention** ..... Implementation of strategies and services to students not performing at grade level
- KAS** ..... Kentucky Academic Standards
- KERA** .....Kentucky Education Reform Act—The 1990 legislation enacted to restructure schools in the Commonwealth of Kentucky
- KSA** .....Kentucky Summative Assessment
- LEA** .....Local Education Agency—The term for a school district in federal law and regulation. JCPS is an LEA.
- ML** ..... Multilingual Learner
- MTSS** .....Multi-Tiered Systems of Support—A multi-tiered instructional and intervention framework designed to maximize student achievement, promote positive behaviors, and identify learning differences
- PSP** .....Program Services Plan
- PTP** .....Primary Talent Pool (Grades K–3)
- Primary Program** .....The part of elementary school in which students are enrolled from the time they begin Primary (i.e., kindergarten) until they are ready to enter grade four
- SBDM** .....School-Based Decision Making
- Summative Assessment** .....An accountability measure that is generally used as part of the grading process
- WIDA** .....World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment



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