

Proposal for a Year-Long Student-Centered Elementary Promotion Policy for CPS

Beginning of year	First quarter	Mid-year	Third quarter	End of Year	Summer school
<p>Beginning on the first day of school, all students identified last school year as needing Personal Learning Plans¹ receive indicated supports.</p>	<p>First quarter report cards provide parents and school staff with initial indication of student progress based on teachers' professional judgment over 10 weeks.</p> <p>Scores from any standardized tests selected as useful and appropriate by teachers and principals will be used as additional information about students and given to any parent who requests them, but are not included in report card.</p>	<p>End of semester report cards issued.</p> <p>PLPs are created for students receiving a D/F in any academic subject if the student does not already have one.</p> <p>Any needed changes will be made in PLPs for students with existing PLPs who receive Ds or Fs in academic subjects.</p> <p>Scores from any appropriate standardized tests may be reviewed as part of the information used for this process.</p>	<p>Third quarter report cards provide parents and school staff with teacher's best judgment about which students may be prepared to move to the next grade and which may need to attend summer school.</p> <p>Continued adjustments are made to PLPs of struggling students to leverage needed school resources for these students.</p> <p>Scores from appropriately used standardized tests may continue to be used as part of the student assessment process and shared with parents on request.</p>	<p>No later than five weeks prior to final report cards, parents of students determined by teachers as likely to receive a failing grade in any academic subject will be notified that they must attend summer school and that 8th graders with failing academic grades will not graduate. Last-minute excellent work may allow reversal of this decision by teacher and principal.</p> <p>Final report cards are issued. Students who have been notified at the fifth week will go to summer school unless they have made significant last-minute improvements in the judgment of the teacher and principal.</p> <p>Parents of students with PLPs meet with teachers and other appropriate school personnel to review PLPs and adjust if necessary.</p>	<p>Summer school is an opportunity for struggling students to receive help in the specific area where they have struggled, taught in a small class setting by qualified, experienced teachers.</p> <p>If a student fails to attend summer school, receives a failing grade in any summer school class, or is otherwise considered to need additional help, parents and school personnel will determine jointly if it is in his/her best interests to repeat the grade. In any case, retention is rare. Instead, students are promoted with real support.</p>
Reason for change	Reason for change	Reason for change	Reason for change	Reason for change	Reason for change
<p>CPS has failed in the past or has been very slow to provide promised follow-up supports for flunked students.</p>	<p>Focus must be on a fuller, more accurate academic evaluation and not on one narrow set of skills tested on quarterly versions of annual high-stakes tests. Students whose parents choose to opt them out of standardized testing will experience no negative repercussions.</p>	<p>Struggling students need help during the year, and should not have to wait until the end of the year for action to be taken to meet their needs.</p>	<p>By the third quarter, students and parents should have a good idea if student will be ready to move to the next grade or will need additional help in summer school (no surprises), but efforts to assist students who continue to struggle must ramp up.</p>	<p>Summer school assignments must never be based on an arbitrary cut-off point on one standardized test.² Rather, it must be a decision based on the students' overall performance throughout the year as assessed by the teacher. Any questions about the reliability of teacher grades should be addressed by other school policies.³</p>	<p>CPS summer school forces students to take both reading and math even if they only need help in one area. The curriculum is focused on mind-numbing test prep.</p> <p>The research on retention is clear: it does not work and harms too many students.⁴</p>