



ORCUTT Union School District

Where a Dedicated Staff Means Kids Come First

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August 5, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As you may have heard, on July 1, 2021, Assembly Bill 104 was signed by Governor Newsom as urgency legislation, effective immediately. Among other things, the bill allows families of an eligible student to formally request that the school allow their child to repeat the grade. In order to be eligible for retention, your student must have received deficient grades (a D, F, No Pass) in at least half of their courses during the 2020-2021 school year.

Typically, the District does not recommend retention of students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Research shows that grade retention is not likely to enhance a child's learning, and that simply having a child repeat a grade is unlikely to address the problems a child is experiencing¹. Evidence further indicates that grade retention, when compared with social promotion of similar children, is an ineffective and possibly harmful intervention, and is one of the most powerful predictors of high school dropout.² Retained students tend to have lower levels of academic adjustment in later grades, and in adolescence, retained students are more likely to experience problems such as poor interactions with peers, disliking school, behavior problems, and lower self-esteem³. If your child has an IEP, rather than retention, often the better approach is careful consideration in the development and implementation of their IEP.

However, if you would like to consult with the District about the possibility of retention for your student, please contact Rusty Gordon, Executive Director of Education at 805-938-8960 to schedule a meeting. In that meeting, you and others from the District staff will discuss other available learning recovery options, the research on the effects of retention, the benefits of particular interventions and supports for your student, your student's academic information and IEP, and anything else relevant to whether grade retention is in their best interests, both academically and socially.

The District will issue a decision on your retention request within 10 calendar days of the consultation meeting. If your student is retained, they will be offered specified supplemental interventions and supports. If your student is not retained, they will be offered the same specified supplemental interventions and supports, in addition to access to prior semester courses in which they received a deficient grade or another form of credit recovery, and/or other specified supports.

¹ Jimerson, Shane, Sarah M. Woehr, and Amber M. Kaufman., (2007) "Grade Retention and Promotion: Information for Parents". Bethesda, Maryland: National Association for School Psychologists.

² *Ibid.*

³ Sipple, J.W., Killeen, K. & Monk D.H., (2004), "Adoption and Adaptation: School District Responses to State Imposed Learning and Graduation Requirements." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 143-168).