Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the

Implementation of the Student Accountability Standards

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Prepared by: Instructional and Accountability Services

Contact: Henry L. Johnson



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301 North Wilmington Street • Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825 • Website: www.ncpublicschools.org

Implementing the Student Accountability Standards Executive Summary

By request of the Education Oversight Committee, the Department of Public Instruction is providing specific requested information for the 1999-2000 school year:

- 1. LEAs that implemented student promotion standards prior to the State policy;
- 2. The number of children by LEA who scored Level I and II on the end-of-grade tests (EOGs) at the State gateways; and
- 3. interventions considered most successful by LEAs who have had a student promotion policy prior to the State policy.

This report provides information on those questions as well as share "Words of Advice" offered by superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents from those LEAs that have already implemented promotion standards. Also included are responses from those LEAs to a statewide survey on implementation of the Student Accountability Standards.

On July 1, the United States Department of Education released a 72-page guidebook designed to help schools find ways to end social promotion. Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion: A Guide for Educators and State and Local Leaders. The majority of the document is devoted to strategies schools and communities may want to consider when ending social promotion, and the key strategies are outlined in this report.

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LEAs Implementing Student Promotion Standards Prior to the State Policy

In an effort to determine which local education agencies (LEAs) have adopted student accountability standards (beyond the state requirement), the Department of Public Instruction recently conducted a statewide survey of all LEAs and charter schools. The survey also collected data on the impact the student accountability standards had on student achievement/retention rate and the most successful interventions to help students meet the local student accountability standards.

The Department identified nine LEAs that implemented a student promotion policy prior to the adoption of the State Student Accountability Standards on April 1, 1999. These LEAs are

- 1. Durham County
- 2. Winston-Salem/Forsyth Schools
- 3. Johnston County Schools
- 4. Lenoir County Schools
- 5. Nash-Rocky Mount Schools
- 6. Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools
- 7. Transylvania County
- 8. Watauga County Schools
- 9. Wilson County Schools

Student Achievement Data

Percent of Students At or Above Grade Level in Reading and Mathematics at State Gateways¹

| | 199 | 07 | 199 | 98 | 199 | 99 |
|---------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|
| Gateway | Reading | Math | Reading | Math | Reading | Math |
| Grade 3 | 65.8 | 70.2 | 71.6 | 68.2 | 73.6 | 70.0 |
| Grade 5 | 70.8 | 73.1 | 75.2 | 78.0 | 75.8 | 82.4 |
| Grade 8 | 75.0 | 68.9 | 79.5 | 76.3 | 79.9 | 77.6 |

Percent of Students Below Grade Level in Reading and Mathematics at State Gateways²

| LEA | | 1997 | | | 1998 | | | 1999 | |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|----------|----------|------|------|------|
| | | | | Grad | e Levels | <u> </u> | | | |
| | 3 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Durham County | 49.9 | 40.4 | 35.5 | 49.7 | 36.2 | 34.5 | 45.0 | 32.3 | 34.0 |
| Winston-Salem/Forsyth | 39.5 | 33.7 | 37.9 | 38.9 | 34.8 | 31.8 | 40.6 | 26.4 | 31.1 |
| Johnston County | 30.5 | 28.7 | 25.6 | 29.8 | 21.7 | 18.1 | 30.4 | 20.9 | 17.9 |
| Lenoir County | 40.4 | 39.8 | 33.8 | 40.8 | 25.8 | 22.8 | 39.9 | 27.0 | 23.1 |
| Nash-Rocky Mount | 41.0 | 36.0 | 42.0 | 36.7 | 32.7 | 32.0 | 35.5 | 31.6 | 34.2 |
| Elizabeth City-Pasquotank | 49.7 | 40.9 | 47.6 | 43.0 | 42.0 | 38.9 | 46.0 | 40.4 | 35.6 |
| Transylvania County | 17.9 | 8.2 | 14.7 | 17.0 | 11.7 | 8.3 | 27.8 | 8.6 | 7.3 |
| Watauga County | 27.2 | 22.2 | 22.6 | 26.3 | 18.4 | 18.1 | 22.9 | 15.3 | 17.0 |
| Wilson County | 47.1 | 46.1 | 46.5 | 39.4 | 34.2 | 33.6 | 32.0 | 30.9 | 33.0 |
| State | 40.4 | 36.3 | 36.5 | 38.9 | 31.2 | 29.4 | 36.6 | 28.5 | 28.3 |

¹ Recent Trends of Selected Statistics, Department of Public Instruction, October 1999.
² Includes students with both reading and mathematics test scores

| Percent of Students at Levels I and II in Reading ³ | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| LEA | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |
| Durham County | 37.1 | 35.5 | 34.7 | 36.5 | 35.8 | 32.4 | 30.3 | 30.0 |
| Winston-Salem/ Forsyth | 32.7 | 32.7 | 30.2 | 29.9 | 30.2 | 26.9 | 25.2 | 26.5 |
| Johnston County | 34.8 | 35.2 | 30.3 | 27.9 | 23.9 | 18.7 | 17.7 | 18.3 |
| Lenoir County | 39.5 | 42.6 | 39.9 | 35.6 | 32.7 | 27.6 | 25.4 | 22.3 |
| Nash-Rocky Mount | 42.2 | 39.0 | 37.5 | 34.8 | 32.8 | 29.0 | 28.0 | 25.8 |
| Elizabeth City-Pasquotank | 42.1 | 41.8 | 42.7 | 36.7 | 37.4 | 32.8 | 32.2 | 31.7 |
| Transylvania County | 29.0 | 21.8 | 16.6 | 13.8 | 12.0 | 10.3 | 10.2 | 9.5 |
| Watauga County | 22.3 | 20.1 | 17.0 | 17.3 | 16.4 | 15.8 | 13.6 | 11.5 |
| Wilson County | 40.0 | 42.0 | 39.9 | 39.6 | 38.8 | 31.0 | 24.0 | 22.8 |
| State | 36.6 | 34.7 | 33.0 | 32.0 | 31.1 | 27.0 | 25.1 | 24.7 |

| Percent of Students at Levels I and II in Mathematics ⁴ | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| LEA | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |
| Durham County | 38.6 | 38.5 | 37.4 | 36.7 | 35.2 | 31.8 | 28.4 | 27.5 |
| Winston-Salem/Forsyth | 36.1 | 33.6 | 30.4 | 30.3 | 29.7 | 26.0 | 23.2 | 21.9 |
| Johnston County | 38.0 | 35.1 | 31.6 | 26.0 | 19.9 | 14.9 | 13.4 | 13.8 |
| Lenoir County | 46.4 | 47.4 | 40.5 | 34.3 | 27.8 | 22.6 | 19.1 | 17.0 |
| Nash-Rocky Mount | 46.2 | 42.8 | 38.7 | 34.8 | 29.5 | 25.8 | 22.1 | 20.5 |
| Elizabeth City-Pasquotank | 45.9 | 46.7 | 47.9 | 38.6 | 34.1 | 27.8 | 26.8 | 26.3 |
| Transylvania County | 27.7 | 20.4 | 13.2 | 7.7 | 7.8 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 7.5 |
| Watauga County | 24.0 | 19.5 | 15.8 | 15.6 | 14.9 | 13.9 | 10.6 | 9.0 |
| Wilson County | 42.2 | 44.3 | 40.7 | 39.3 | 36.0 | 27.5 | 20.2 | 15.9 |
| State | 38.8 | 36.0 | 33.0 | 30.4 | 28.3 | 23.9 | 20.7 | 19.8 |

³ Includes students with both reading and mathematics test scores ⁴ Ibid.

| | Grade 8 | 2.8% | 2.4% | 2.4% |
|---|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| te For Gateways | Grade 5 | 1.0% | 1.2% | 1.1% |
| Nonpromotion Rate For Gateways 1997-99 | Grade 3 | 2.5% | 2.9% | 2.9% |
| | School Year | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 |

| | | Percent of | MLD | 2.9 | | 2.4 | 2.2 |
|--|------------|------------|--------------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| | | Revised | Nonpromotion | 3,069 | 1,102 | 2,275 | 6,446 |
| Impact of Summer School on Nonpromotion Rate for Gateways 1998-99 | | Summer | Promotion | 1,272 | 1,323 | 3,680 | 6,275 |
| onpromotion Ra 3-99 | | Summer | Enrollment | 1,704 | 1,536 | 4,036 | 7,276 |
| ner School on Nonpr 1998-99 | | Percent of | MLD | 4.1 | 2.4 | 6.3 | 4.3 |
| Impact of Sumn | | Year-End | Nonpromotion | 4,341 | 2,425 | 5,955 | 12,721 |
| | Membership | Last Day | (MLD) | 105,058 | 99,424 | 93,885 | 298,367 |
| | | | Grade | Three | Five | Eight | Total |

LEA Data on Student Retentions⁵

Johnston County Schools
Benchmark Data for Grades 3-8

| | 199 | 1996-97 | 1997 | 1997-98 | 199 | 1998-99 | 199 | 1999-00 |
|---------------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| Benchmark | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Number of Students | | | | | | | | |
| Tested | 8271 | 100.0% | 8830 | %6.66 | 8752 | 99.5% | 9404 | %1.66 |
| Below Level III | | | | | | | | |
| on First Test | 2644 | 32.0% | 2000 | 22.6% | 2003 | 22.9% | 2187 | 23.2% |
| Waived by Previous | | | | | | | | |
| Retentions (local policy) | 403 | 4.9% | 6469 | 7.3% | 835 | 9.5% | 872 | 9.2% |
| Number Eligible for | | | | | | | | |
| Retesting | 2241 | 27.1% | 1354 | 15.3% | 1168 | 13.3% | 1315 | 13.9% |
| Below Level III | | | | | | | | |
| on Second Test | 1394 | 16.8% | 884 | 10.0% | 622 | 7.1% | 649 | %6.9 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| EC and LEP Waivers | 159 | 1.9% | 82 | %6.0 | 84 | 1.0% | 84 | %6.0 |
| Grade Level Waivers | | | | | | | | |
| Granted | 144 | 1.7% | 104 | 1.2% | 116 | 1.3% | 107 | 1.1% |
| Below Level III on | | | | | | | | |
| Third Test | 493 | %0.9 | 307 | 3.5% | 242 | 2.8% | 209 | 2.2% |
| | | | | | | | | , |

⁵ As reported by LEAs

Wilson County Schools Percent of Students Retained after Summer School in Grades 3, 5, and 8

Reading

| | Black Male | White Male | Black Female | White Female |
|---------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Official EOG | 26.3 | 7.6 | 21.7 | 5.9 |
| May Retesting | 15.6 | 3.8 | 13.5 | 1.7 |
| Summer School | 9.9 | 1.9 | 7.4 | 0.5 |

Mathematics

| | Black Male | White Male | Black Female | White Female |
|---------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Official EOG | 26.7 | 7.6 | 21.5 | 5.03 |
| May Retesting | 11.5 | 2.4 | 10 | 2.2 |
| Summer School | 6.6 | 1.03 | 5.1 | 0.23 |

Nash/Rocky Mount Schools Percent of Students Retained after Summer School in Grades 3 and 8

Reading and Mathematics Grade 3 - % Not Proficient

| | Black Male | White Male | Black Female | White Female |
|-----------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Official EOG | 27.3 | 5.6 | 22.9 | 5.1 |
| May Retesting * | 72.4 | 44.9 | 61.8 | 59.6 |
| Summer School * | 43.3 | 50 | 42.9 | 52.6 |

Reading and Mathematics Grade 8 - % Not Proficient

| | Black Male | White Male | Black Female | White Female |
|-----------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Official EOG | 22.4 | 3 | 15.1 | 2.3 |
| May Retesting * | 64.8 | 53.1 | 57.3 | 54.5 |
| Summer School * | 22.1 | 9.1 | 13.6 | 30 |

^{*} From the percent of students not proficient after the first administration of the EOG

Successful Interventions

In the survey concerning the Student Accountability Standards, LEAs were asked to state what they considered to be the most successful intervention used to help students meet the local student accountability standards. Five of the nine identified LEAs responded to that questions. Their comments are as follows:

- 1. "Consistent attention to students' needs throughout the year. Remediation provided by tutors during the school day and in after-school programs. We now pay attention to the needs of every child."
- 2. "We have implemented a variety of interventions. The most successful ones in our opinion have been additional testing opportunities and six-weeks assessments based on the *Standard Course of Study.*"
- 3. "Early, early remediation for all students involved."
- 4. "School Year Plus, a 20-day summer focused intervention program, has been most successful in helping students meet local student accountability standards. As part of that program, a contractual arrangement with parents of all 'conditionally' promoted students involves parents with their child's educational program. Students also sign signatories to these contracts. Continued intervention is provided at each school for students who are conditionally promoted following the summer interviews."
- 5. "The most successful intervention is a combination of the following: curriculum alignment; goal-setting; nine-weeks tests; and individual intervention plans for students scoring at Levels I and II on end-of-grade (EOG) tests."

Based on the total of 86 surveys returned, LEAs reported that tutoring and/or one-on-one assistance was reported as the most successful intervention for improving student achievement. Small group tutoring is also a frequently used intervention. The assistance can be provided throughout the year or until the student has mastered the areas in which s/he needs improvement. Assistance/remediation occurs during, before, and after school and is provided by teacher assistants, teachers, retired teachers, and/or volunteers. Some LEAs require training for their volunteer tutors.

The second most frequently reported successful intervention was summer school or Summer Academy, some of which are devoted to writing. Others are available to students at the gateway years while still others focus on non-gateway years to prepare students for the State's gateways.

Increased assessment is a successful intervention used to diagnosis individual student needs. It is not, however, assessment in and of itself that makes the difference in student achievement. The results of the assessment are used to provide immediate feedback to students and reteaching of the skills/competencies not mastered.

Personalized Education Plans (PEPs) are also frequently cited as a successful intervention. The development of PEPs allows for specific individual plans to be developed, implemented and monitored.

Several LEAs reported parental involvement as a successful intervention. Specifically, increased communication, sharing curriculum guides, and parent contracts/Student Accountability Agreements are also used. Student/teacher/parent conferences provide opportunities to discuss student gains, collaborative intervention strategies and areas where focus is needed.

Other successful interventions listed include, but are not limited to

- 1. increased focus and instruction in the Standard Course of Study;
- 2. Saturday Academies;
- 3. integration and use of technology to increase skills and provide immediate feedback to teachers, students, and parents;
- 4. professional development for teachers on working with students performing at Levels I and II; and
- 5. alternative learning programs.

One school has identified strategies that have resulted in higher levels of student achievement. Konnoak Elementary School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, identified the following areas that contributed to improved student achievement over a three-year period.

- reviewed and restructured teaching methodologies to ensure Standard Course of Study delivery;
- integrated reading and writing in all subject areas, K-5;
- emphasized higher order thinking skills, K-5;
- analyzed test per class and student, especially in reading, math, and writing at least quarterly (STAR tests, testlets);
- analyzed and studied of released End-of-Grade test questions and used these types of questions on a daily basis;
- used individualized computer tutorial in reading and math, K-5, aligned with the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and test strategies;
- provided small group at-risk reading instruction through Title I and Early Success/Soar to Success, tutorials in regular classroom (Houghton Mifflin reading);
- aligned school improvement plan with best practices and available student assessment data;
- evaluated of teachers to discern areas of need and provided appropriate training;
- placed strong emphasis on K-2 subjects and higher order thinking (WINGS kindergarten program);
- provided a balanced approach to reading (basal, phonics, and whole language);
- implemented multi-age groupings and looping classes to meet student developmental needs;
- provided intercession remediation programs at year round school;
- used testlets and test sophistication materials;
- sent individual student packets to parents to review areas of need in reading, writing, and math;

- integrated basic skills in specialist courses (art, music, and PE);
- used a strong team effort, K-5;
- maintained a caring and confident attitude that all children can achieve and a deep sense of humor.

Key Strategies

LEAs who have experience with student accountability standards have willingly provided information to the Department of Public Education and have shared with other LEAs. From this information, key strategies for success have been identified.

From Transylvania County

- The policy/state mandates change nothing. Teamwork changes everything.
- The LEA will need input from all players involved.
- Decisions should be reached through consensus.
- Communication is the priority issue: at the system, school, and classroom levels. There shouldn't be any surprises for students, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, or other stakeholders.
- The local board of education must make a long-term commitment to the standards.
- Greater acceptance of the standards will occur over time.
- The superintendent must
 - a) support student accountability,
 - b) discuss issues frequently with staff,
 - c) keep abreast of issues in the schools,
 - d) offer assistance where needed, and
 - e) include performance in staff evaluations.
- Schools will need to make decisions related to changes that are needed; schedules for remediation; safety nets for students; communication within the school and with the students and parents; and stuff input on how to improve focused interventions and the process for serving students.
- There are several things LEAs/schools can expect as the standards are implemented:
 - a) During the first year, grade inflation and communication problems may occur.
 - b) During the second year, fatigue may set in and decrease focus.
 - c) Fatigue may continue into the third year, and educators can become complacent.
 - d) Complacency can continue into the fourth year, and remediation efforts may be insufficient.

From Lenoir County

It is very important to begin and maintain a comprehensive communications program with staff, students, parents, and community, emphasizing the level of proficiency required and why it is so important to all students to achieve at or above grade level. The impact of the policy needs to be communicated to each individual student and parent showing the student's achievement level, how it compares to the state standard, and the growth that must occur if the current achievement level is below state standard.

An instructional management system needs to be implemented, including curriculum alignment, disaggregation of test data, development of individual education plans for each student, student/teacher/parent contracts, and frequent assessment and reporting with instruments aligned with the *Standard Course of Study*. Continuous involvement of parents is very critical.

The instructional program must include a variety of options that will enable the local school staff, with site-based management, to meet the individual needs of students through small group instruction, computer technology, tutorial programs, after school programs, Saturday academies, summer school, etc. Many students will not only need a different mode of instruction, but will also require additional instructional time to be successful.

Schools must provide the necessary technology to keep the increased teacher workload to a minimum. Appropriate hardware and software is needed to evaluate test data; develop assessment instruments; scan tests and report data for each student, class, and grade; and provide a variety of computerized learning activities.

Extensive staff development in instructional leadership and management, effective use of technology, curriculum review and alignment, test development, teaching strategies, and parental involvement is needed to effectively implement the above intervention strategies. All staff development must be based on the principle that every child can master the competencies required to meet the standards if they are provided appropriate instruction and given adequate time, unless they have severe handicapping conditions that would preclude such.

Fiscal commitment must be made to provide for staffing, materials, technology, after school and summer school programs, testing, staff development, and appropriate marketing.

Celebrate success. Each teacher, each school, and the school system must place heavy emphasis on affirming student academic achievement through a variety of methods and techniques.

From Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools

The danger of the ABCs is to only focus at the school and classroom level. For the first time in the history of education in North Carolina, educators are being held accountable for a continuous,

standardized result, the academic growth of every child. To reach this goal the district, not the school or the classroom, must

- provide the stable vision,
- maintain a consistent direction and focus,
- build the professional capacity of its employees and
- ensure that the district and each of its schools are focused organizations, not just places where individual contractors show up each day to work.

Standardized results are not achievable by groups of individuals who work alone.

From Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

In the spring of 1998, a year before the State Board of Education adopted new promotion standards, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education adopted a policy that required students who were not proficient in reading and math in grades 4 and 7 to receive 80 hours of instruction outside of the classroom during the next 12 months. If the teachers of these students recommended promotion to grades 5 and 8 respectively, then students were promoted. If these students were not proficient after 12 months, they were retained, if they had not completed the 80 hours.

Each school received funds to provide a customized program. Some schools had summer school, Saturday school, before- and/or after-school sessions, or a combination of these programs.

A more promising and systemic approach to achieving grade-level performance for all children was to engage families early on in the education of their children. Forsyth implemented the *Victory in Partnership* program that encouraged parents to access the school. The program highlighted weekly communication between parents and teachers and regular parent training sessions on Saturdays.

It was also critical that disadvantaged youth received assistance before they come to school. The Smart Start program in Forsyth County was funding a "Jump Start" program to target identified prekindergarten students in readiness skills. The system was also committed to supporting a preschool class in any school that had more than 75% of its students on free and/or reduced lunch.

The bottom line, however, was that educators and parents must constantly assess and monitor the achievement of every child. The way to achieve grade-level performance for all students is to identify individual student weaknesses early, and then provide the appropriate instructional intervention until grade-level performance is achieved.

From E. B. Frink Middle School, Lenoir County Schools

A number of things were implemented at Frink when the county's standards were first implemented. One of the first was to make sure that what was being taught in the classroom aligned with the state's *Standard Course of Study* (SCS). Teachers from other schools who had been successful in areas where we needed to improve were invited to Frink. For instance, two

teachers from Duplin County where writing scores were high came in to discuss what they were doing. Teachers also had access to staff development opportunities, including workshops in mathematics manipulatives, the seventh grade writing test, SRA (a corrective reading program), and a hands-on mathematics program that taught strategies to integrate social studies and science into the curriculum. Guidance counselors visited the classrooms to discuss test-taking strategies.

Social studies class was broken into two periods. During the last half of the period, approximately 40 minutes, Level I and II students attended "Something Really Awesome" program which was the SRA reading remediation program. The students received one-on-one assistance from direct studies teachers in areas where they were weak. Direct studies teachers included those who teach music, art, home economics, Spanish, physical education, or technical programs. Involving these teachers who do not usually teach academics gave them ownership into the program.

Redirection of low-wealth dollars enabled the school to offer twice-weekly tutorial sessions to struggling students. The school facilitated student transportation and local businesses donated snacks. Summer school and retesting were options for students who still did not meet the proficiency standards.

From Walkertown Elementary School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

Schools and parents encouraged student accountability and helped students assume more responsibility for their learning in a number of ways.

First and foremost, the child needed to be involved in his/her assessment throughout the school year. The child was aware of the school's expectations for him and understood how much improvement he needed to make. Parents received a list of objectives to be taught each quarter. At the beginning of the grading period, a meeting was held to discuss these with parents. Some children or parents were unaware of progress or lack of progress until the end of the quarter. A weekly folder was sent home with graded work and a progress note. This provided both the child and parents with input on his weekly progress. Throughout each quarter, teachers met with each student on an individual basis and discussed grades, behavior, improvement, and any skills not yet accomplished. This information was communicated to parents.

This, in turn, led to student-led conferences at the end of the grading quarter. With the use of a work portfolio and recorded discussions between child and teacher, the student discussed his achievements and shortcomings with his/her parents. This encouraged parent support, and the student was responsible for his end-of-grade test scores or any other state test scores.

Schools helped children take responsibility for these test scores by providing similar models of the test for practice. Teachers provided test strategies to help reduce test anxiety and provided a tool for test taking. Teachers had class discussions on the importance of these tests and possible consequences of low test scores. Teachers provided tutoring from 7:30 to 8:30 each morning for students who need help.

Behind every child were the parents. Parents help in many ways.

- On a daily basis, parents should find time to talk about good and bad things that happened that day. Parents wanted to hear about school topics. The child talked about lunch, recess, and friends. Then, parents can ask questions about other things.
- Every week, a parent should look over the work with the child. Many times parents wanted to criticize immediately. It is better for the parent to share in the discussion and avoid criticism. Let the child led the discussion.
- Parents can visit the school more often. This will let the child know that parents care and will cause him/her to take more responsibility for his actions/work.
- If, at any time, the parent or child is confused about a skill, grade, or incident, the parent should call the teacher or write a note. Some teachers have voice mail. Teachers can leave weekly messages with assignments and even words of praise and encouragement so students. Parents can call daily and leave messages for the teacher, too. This is wonderful way to keep up with information.

Lastly, the school should

- be clear in its expectations,
- show respect for students and their concerns, and
- provide plans to help the student assume responsibility for his successes and failures.

Summer Intervention

LEAs have chosen to use a variety of models for summer intervention. For example, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County uses the program primarily as intervention. Students may attend 40 hours of reading instruction and/or 40 hours of mathematics instruction, depending on individual needs. After successful completion of the summer intervention, students are promoted to the next grade.

The Johnston County Summer Academy provides ten days of instruction in reading and mathematics. Students may choose the session they attend, based on their individual needs.

Wilson County Schools provides the School Year Plus program which provides additional instructional time for students in grades three through eight who did not sufficiently improve their academic performance during the school year. Each school in Wilson County has a School Year Plus Committee that consists of the principal, guidance counselor, two teachers, and other staff the school may decide to include. The committee reviews the work of students who fail to meet any of the required proficiency standards. Each student's teacher(s) presents representative samples of the student's classwork, EOG results from the current and previous year, and the writing test (when appropriate). The committee reviews all of the data and determines whether the student should be promoted to the next level of schooling or if the students must attend the School Year Plus program.

School Year Plus

- uses the North Carolina end-of-grade (EOG) tests to assess each student's performance. The results are analyzed to determine instructional group placements based on the performance and needs of each student. At the end of the instructional period, each student is assessed by using previously released EOGs to determine whether the student has mastered the curriculum and qualifies for promotion;
- emphasizes an integrated, needs-based instructional program in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics; and
- has all class sizes smaller than those in the regular school year to maximize the educational opportunities provided to these students.

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Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion: A Guide for Educators and State and Local Leaders

On July 1, the United States Department of Education released a 72-page guidebook designed to help schools find ways to end social promotion. Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion: A Guide for Educators and State and Local Leaders answers several key questions: What is social promotion? How widespread is it? What are the costs to students and society?

In addition to answering these questions, the majority of the document is devoted to strategies schools and communities may want to consider when ending social promotion. The document also includes an inventory of resources for ending social promotion. A copy of the full text of the document can be found online at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/socialpromotion/. The key strategies are outlined below.

I. Improve Classroom Instruction

- A. Reduce class size to allow for more individualized attention and instruction
- B. Set clear objectives for students to meet performance standards at key grades
- C. Identify student needs early and apply appropriate instructional strategies
- D. Focus on early childhood and readiness strategies
- E. Provide professional development that deepens teachers' content knowledge and improves their teaching
- F. Communicate expectations for all concerned, especially families and communities
- G. Offer summer school for students who fail to meet high academic standards
- H. Extend learning time through before- and after-school programs, homework centers, and year-round schooling
- I. Keep students and teachers together for more than one year and use other effective student grouping practices

II. Take Responsibility

- A. Set high standards of learning for all students
- B. Create reliable measures of achievement against standards
- C. Concentrate on providing high-quality curriculum and instruction for all students
- D. Include families
- E. Involve community stakeholders

III. Start Early

- A. Provide opportunities for preschool
- B. Emphasize early childhood and literacy programs

IV. Strengthen Learning Opportunities in the Classroom

- A. Identify and intervene early with students at risk of falling behind
- B. Ensure that there is a well-prepared teacher in every classroom

- C. Use research-based practices
- D. Reduce class size
- E. Accommodate students with special needs

V. Extend Learning Time

- A. Establish after-school programs
- B. Provide summer school for students not meeting standards
- C. Move toward year-round schooling

VI. Help Students Who Still Do Not Meet Standards

- A. Develop effective transition programs for students unprepared for promotion
- B. Prevent dropouts and help students realize postsecondary opportunities

VII. Hold Schools Accountable for Performance and Help Them Improve

- A. Require public reporting of school performance
- B. Intervene in low-performing schools
- C. Reward school improvement