

TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT GRADE RETENTION

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(ABSTRACT)

A multimethod approach was used to gain a better understanding of teachers' beliefs about retention in grades K-7. The participants in this study were the 135 classroom and specialty teachers in one school division (with six elementary schools, K-7). Two survey instruments were developed: (a) the Teacher Retention Belief Questionnaire designed to obtain teachers' explicit beliefs about retention, and (b) the Retention Decision Simulation designed to indicate the influence of academic performance, social maturity, ability, gender, size and age on the decision to retain students. Interviews were conducted with 36 classroom teachers representing a cross section of grade levels and retention practices to discover how teachers make retention decisions.

Findings suggest that teachers at all grade levels believe retention is an acceptable school practice and one they reserve the right to use. They believe retention prevents students from facing failure in the next higher grade. Teachers at all grade levels share common beliefs about the benefits for students retained in grades K-3, but are less certain about the positive effects of retaining students in grades 4-7.

Academic performance of the student is a key factor in determining whether a student will be promoted, but a number of other factors including maturity, ability, age, size, and effort, also influence

teachers' decisions. Findings suggest that immaturity is a more important factor for K-3 teachers and low motivation and effort are more important for 4-7 teachers. Interview data reveal that while factors such as ability may be important in determining whether a child is retained, teachers interpret such factors differently.

Essentially most teachers retain students because they believe they are doing what "is in the best interest of the child." For some teachers this means giving the child time to develop academically or socially. For other teachers this means teaching the child the work ethic, if the child does not put forth effort, the child is retained.

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DEDICATION

To the memory of my parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recent studies such as A Nation At Risk: Imperatives for Educational Reform (1983) and Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education (1986) have aroused public concern about the state of American education. Low standardized test scores and increasing numbers of high school graduates who lack basic skills have led to demands for stricter promotion standards in the public schools. For example, results of the 18th Annual Gallup Poll (1986) indicated that 72% of the respondents thought that requirements for promotion from grade to grade should be more stringent than they are now. Promotion based on merit, the demonstration of ability against a fixed standard, is reappearing. Those students who are unable to meet specified standards are being retained until they are able to demonstrate required skills.

The idea of merit promotion is not new. In the one room schoolhouse, students moved page by page through textbooks and their level of competence was measured by the number of books they had completed (Thompson, 1980). When schools with grades one through eight gained prominence in the 1840s, students who were unable to master the required work were retained until able to do so. Retention for slow students and double promotion for above average students were mechanisms for restricting the range of student achievement within a class. Under this system the less able students often left school.

During the depression of the 1930s, however, the scarcity of jobs made it important for the schools to hold students. At the same time progressive philosophy prompted schools to adapt to the needs of the

students. Merit promotion was replaced by social promotion, "the automatic advancement of all members of an age cohort from one grade to the next without regard to individual achievement" (Labaree, 1984, p. 69).

Social promotion flourished through the 1960s, but evidence of declining performance by American students began to surface. The 1970s brought a movement of accountability with demands that students demonstrate prescribed levels of competence to be promoted. The pendulum has swung back to merit promotion, and there is concern that the call for stricter standards will increase the number of students being retained in schools.

Thousands of students are retained each year although the number varies from state to state, district to district, school to school, and classroom to classroom (Rose, Medway, Cantrell & Marus, 1983; House, in press). A crude estimate derived from U.S. Census data indicates that between 15% and 19% of those in school have been retained at least once (Smith & Shepard, 1987). Heightened concern about the impact of retention has arisen as a result of research findings that show an association between retention in elementary school and dropping out of high school (Brady, 1985; Hammack, 1987; Mann, 1987). These findings were consistent with those reported earlier by Humphreys (1965). The renewed emphasis on merit promotion may play havoc with already alarmingly high drop-out rates, which is a major societal concern (Hammack, 1987; Palardy, 1984). Therefore the issues surrounding the decision to retain students have long-term as well as immediate effects.

In spite of the wide use of retention, research has shown that the potential negative effects of retention consistently outweigh the positive outcomes (Holmes & Matthews, 1984). For instance, Bocks (1977) concluded the following: (a) Retention was not effective as a device to ensure greater mastery of elementary school subject matter (b) There were harmful consequences to retention, (c) Retention did not reduce the wide range of student abilities that upper level teachers have in their classes, and (d) The threat of retention did not act as a motivating force for students. Holmes (1983) analyzed eight studies in which retained students had been matched with promoted counterparts. A comparison of achievement scores led Holmes to conclude, "It seems that retained pupils fall behind during the year that they are retained and spend the rest of their academic careers in a vain attempt to catch up," (p. 4). More recently, following an examination of the current retention research, House (in press) concluded:

It would be difficult to find a more pernicious practice. The research is absolutely one-sided in finding negative effects from flunking students. I know of no other practice in which the research is in such agreement. (p. 6)

Thus, although widely practiced, the effectiveness of retention is not demonstrated in research. Byrnes (in press) suggests that retention maintains its popularity because overt action is needed to satisfy public outcry against declining performance. Retention is easily implemented because it does not disrupt the organization of the school. It is also willingly implemented because it conforms to widely held beliefs about children and schooling. It is important to discover why this disparity

between traditional beliefs and research exists; this study focuses on the classroom teacher.

The classroom teacher is central to the retention decision. Teachers interpret the events in the classroom (Nisbett & Ross, 1980) and make judgments about student abilities, effort and progress. We know that what teachers believe underlies their judgments about students (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Richardson-Koehler, 1988; Shavelson & Stern, 1981) and how they implement school policies (Eisenhart, Cuthbert, Shrum, & Harding, 1988). However, teachers are often unaware of how they make decisions because of the implicit nature of the beliefs upon which they make these judgments. While the classroom teacher typically initiates the retention process, the bases on which teachers make retention judgments is not clearly described in the literature.

Patterns of teacher beliefs tied to retention practices in the primary grades have been identified (Claflin, 1984; Haack, 1984; Shepard & Smith, 1989). Some distinctions between the beliefs of primary grade teachers and upper elementary grade teachers have been noted by Byrnes and Yamamoto (1985), but we do not have a complete picture of how the teachers view retention or the extent of variation between grade levels.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' beliefs about retention in one school system, grades K-7. Almost one-third of the 278 eighth graders in the 1987-88 class had been retained at least once, which, according to the school principal, represented a typical class.

The goal was to build an understanding of why teachers retain students in grades K-7. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. When is retention considered an appropriate action?
2. How do teachers perceive the consequences of retention?
3. What factors do teachers consider when making retention decisions?

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are those inherent in case study research. The principal limitation is lack of generalizability. The primary objective was to gain an understanding of how teachers frame the issue of retention across grade levels in one school division governed by a uniform written policy, not to generalize across settings.

As this study focused on attitudes and beliefs, the findings are limited by the ability of the researcher to elicit the teachers' beliefs and the teachers' ability to express their beliefs. It is acknowledged that the interpretations of the findings will be affected by beliefs and values of the researcher. Multiple methods were employed to reduce subjectivity and increase the reliability of the study. Convergence of data sources was sought. The findings may be examined in comparison to findings of other studies.

This study was part of a larger investigation being conducted at the request of a public school division. Administrative concern about retention rates initiated this investigation, and a heightened interest

in retention within the division may or may not be reflected in the data from principals and teachers.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five chapters. This chapter includes an introduction to the study, statement of the purpose of the study, the limitations, and the organization of the study.

Chapter two provides the review of literature related to the purposes of the study. The topics discussed are: (a) background characteristics of retained students, (b) reasons given by teachers for retaining students, (c) incidence of retention in grades K-7, and (d) teacher beliefs.

Chapter three explains the methodology of the study. A description of the setting and the sample are provided. Data collection, the development and administration of the instruments used, and the types of analyses are explained.

Chapter four presents the results and discussion of the findings of the study. Chapter five provides a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Students who do not meet the standards or expectations of their grade level pose a problem for educators. Historically, remaining in a grade until work had been completed to satisfaction was commonplace (Bucko, 1986). In the one room schoolhouse, students moved page by page through textbooks until mastery was achieved. The 1930s gave rise to a period of social promotion in which students moved through school with their age cohorts, regardless of the level of achievement. Social promotion continued through the 1960s until evidence of declining performance by American students began to surface. Educators have come under fire as standardized test scores have declined, and there is evidence that schools are graduating students who lack basic skills. Critics have demanded that students meet predetermined standards to be promoted from grade to grade. Students are being retained until they are able to achieve minimum competencies (Niklason, 1984).

The educational value of retention has long been debated. While over 40 studies have investigated the effects of retention, the findings are inconsistent (Overman, 1986). Inherent flaws in research design severely limit the number of studies from which valid inferences may be drawn (Holmes & Matthews, 1984; Jackson, 1975). Jackson observed, after reviewing 44 cases, that studies comparing promoted and retained students were biased in favor of the promoted; studies comparing a student's performance before and after retention were biased in favor of retention. Ethical considerations prohibit researchers from randomly retaining one

student and promoting another with similar abilities, social characteristics, and performance record, making matched comparisons of subjects approximations at best. The three cited studies that used random assignment showed no benefits to retention; but the most of these was conducted in 1941, making generalizability to today's schools questionable. Jackson concluded:

those educators who retain pupils in a grade do so without valid research evidence to indicate that such treatment will provide greater benefits to students with academic or adjustment difficulties than will promotion to the next grade. (p. 627)

These findings were confirmed in a meta-analysis of 44 studies conducted by Holmes and Matthews (1984). The authors reaffirmed earlier conclusions stating:

Those who continue to retain pupils at grade level do so despite cumulative research evidence showing that the potential for negative effects consistently outweigh positive outcomes. Because this cumulative research points to negative effects of non-promotion, the burden of proof legitimately falls on the proponents of retention plans to show there is compelling logic indicating success of their plans when so many other plans have failed. (p. 232)

In the same vein, House (in press) went so far as to state:

. . . retaining students in a grade is absolutely contrary to the best research evidence. Few practices in education have such overwhelmingly negative research findings arrayed against it. (p. 3)

While research indicates that retention is not beneficial for all students, it does not indicate that it is bad for all students. Studies do report improved achievement after retention with special intervention programs for retainees (Owen & Ranick, 1977; Peterson, DeGracie, & Ayabe, 1987). Unfortunately, as House (in press) points out, there are no

studies that compare retained students who are given remediation with promoted students who are given remediation. If such studies existed, it would be possible to determine whether the remediation alone could have produced improved performance.

Positive effects of retention are also claimed by Ames (1980). She contends that retention can be beneficial in primary grades, and when properly explained to young children, can restore self confidence. While her article is frequently cited, Ames provides no empirical data to substantiate her claim.

In spite of the controversy over its effectiveness, retention continues to be practiced in schools. Approximately 15 to 19% of U.S. students have been retained (Smith & Shepard, 1987). This review of literature embellishes the stark percentages by focusing on the (a) background characteristics of retained students, (b) reasons given by teachers for recommending retention, (c) incidence of retention in grades K-7, and (d) beliefs of teachers that affect retention decisions.

Characteristics of Retained Students

There is no universal set of criteria that identifies a child who will be retained. In practice standards vary from state to state, district to district, school to school, and teacher to teacher. A student retained in one environment be promoted in a different classroom or school. Even though such discrepancies exist, the literature suggests that some children are more likely to be retained than others regardless of the environment.

Student Background

Using U.S. Census data, Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus (1983) concluded that student were more likely to be retained who were:

- (a) below the typical age for their grade level,
- (b) black or Spanish origin,
- (c) members of families whose incomes were below the poverty level,
- (d) lived in homes where the head of the household had less than twelve years of schooling,
- (e) lived in the southeastern region of the United States.

Similar characteristics, with the exception of geographic location, were identified by Pottorff (1978) in a study of first grade retainees in Michigan (in Thompson, 1980) and by Schuyler (1985) in a study of Texas elementary school retainees.

The linking of these characteristics to the likelihood of failure is consistent with the literature on the relationship of social class and race to achievement. Schools are middle class institutions and have not been as successful with children from different backgrounds (Winfield, 1987). The values and beliefs of teachers in terms of expectations for minority and lower SES students may contribute to higher retention rates among these populations.

While of interest, the previously listed background characteristics are not controlled by the school. An assumption is made that by better understanding the characteristics of retained students, educators may then be better able to develop policies and practices to assist those students. However, an emphasis on family, socioeconomic, and personal

characteristics does not suggest obvious implications for school practice. A concentration on these fixed variables may give schools an excuse for lack of success (Wehlage & Rutter, 1987). One background characteristic that is controlled to an extent by school policy, however, is the age of a student in comparison to classmates.

Age In Comparison to Classmates

The chronological age of the student in relationship to his or her classmates is associated with problems of academic and social adjustment. In this section the ramifications of being younger than classmates in elementary school, and being older than classmates in secondary school are discussed.

Age is a particularly salient issue in kindergarten and first grade because states and school districts control the minimum age at which a child can enter school. School policy thus determines whether children are closer to five or six years of age when they enter school and often alter the curriculum accordingly (Smith & Shepard, 1987).

Being the youngest in a grade has educational implications. Studies indicate that when younger children are compared with their older classmates, they do not perform as well on achievement measures (Langer, Kalk, & Searle, 1984; Shepard & Smith, 1985). Those children who are the youngest in their first grade class are more frequently referred for special psychological testing (DiPasquale, 1980) and are more likely to be labeled learning disabled (Maddux, 1980). Teachers in primary grades are also more likely to retain young students (Bocks, 1977; Niklason,

1984; Rose et al., 1983), but teachers' awareness of student age may bias teachers toward retention. Teachers may expect younger students to have more difficulty and retain a child who is 5.8 years at the end of kindergarten, while they may choose to promote a student with similar difficulties who is 6.6 years (Shepard & Smith, 1986).

Age also interacts with other characteristics such as ability, gender, and social maturity. In their study of Boulder Valley kindergarten retention, Shepard and Smith (1985) discovered that for first grade children performing in the upper half of the class on standardized tests, younger children performed as well as older children. For those students performing in the lowest quartile, an age effect was more pronounced; the younger children were performing below their older classmates. The authors concluded that the lower achievement of some young children may be a combination of their youngness and low ability.

The interaction of age and ability was further supported by the sharp decline in the achievement scores of overage children, specifically, children who had been retained in kindergarten, or were kept out of school for an extra year by their parents. Being older, in and of itself, does not predict high performance. Therefore, the evidence indicates that giving students an extra year either through parental choice or retention does not ensure high achievement.

When higher achievement was noted for older students the effects were small and temporary. Langer et al. (1983) found that what age effects do exist, diminish with the number of years a student is in school, although differences among blacks and whites were noted. Shepard and Smith

(1985) found that while younger children in a class were at a slight disadvantage in first grade, by third and fourth grade, the age effect had entirely disappeared. They also noted that the age effect existing in first grade is smaller than achievement and readiness distinctions attributed to differences in socioeconomic status.

Being older than classmates as a result of retention correlates with difficulties in secondary school. Mann (1987) listed being overage as one of the "flags" that a student is at risk of dropping out of school. Hammack (1987) reported that in Chicago schools, entering high school overage is a potent predictor for dropping out, particularly for males. House (in press) reported similar evidence from a study by Grissom and Shepard in which being retained was as strong a predictor of dropping out as achievement. Being retained increased the chances of a white female dropping out by 17% and a black male 38% after all other factors were controlled, including achievement. This updates similar findings of black males by Stroup and Robins (1972) in which the number of quarters retained in elementary school was the best predictor of whether student would drop out of high school.

The association between retention and dropping out should not be ignored; rather it can serve as an indicator that whatever academic or adjustment deficiency warranted retention at an earlier time may not have been remediated, or at worst was exacerbated by the retention process. Much of the research on retention has focused on short-term effects of retention at the primary grades. The impact of being older than classmates

in upper elementary and middle school due to early grade retentions is a topic that needs to be examined.

Reasons for Retention

Students are retained for reasons that are not fixed in the same way as race, socio economic class, or family background. It is also apparent that retention decisions are based on multiple criteria; teachers consider a number of factors before making a decision about a child. In a study of retention in South Carolina, Rose et al. (1983) found that written policies usually consider one or more of the following four basic factors:

- (a) student's current achievement level
- (b) personal and home factors such as chronological age, social maturity, physical development, and parental attitudes
- (c) "best interests of the child"
- (d) number of times previously retained

Light (1981) provides an objective scale consisting of 19 characteristics to be considered in the retention decision. Included in Light's Retention Scale are a combination of background, academic performance, adjustment and school variables, student age, gender, physical size, present grade placement, previous grade retention, sibling age/grade, parents' school participation, experiential background, transiency, school attendance, estimate of intelligence, history of learning disabilities, academic achievement, attitude about retention, immaturity, emotional stability, and history of delinquency. While there is an intuitive appeal to using all of these characteristics, existing

research only documents the use of some of them (Vasa, Wendel, & Allen, 1984). For example, of the 325 school personnel surveyed, respondents indicated they never used the following factors: gender of a student (84.5%), siblings (72%), and size (54.7%). The three factors utilized by over 50% of the respondents were: school attendance (56.2%), motivation (56.6%), and academic achievement (73.4%).

While Light's Retention Scale may not provide the solution for determining who should be retained, certain factors are used by teachers to make retention decisions. The factors teachers cite typically fall into two broad categories: (1) poor academic performance and, (2) poor social or emotional adjustment (Jackson, 1975). These classifications are interrelated, however, and the interactions between them are evident throughout the literature.

Academic Performance

Teachers most frequently list poor academic performance as the reason for recommending retention (Niklason, 1984; Sandoval, 1984). This is often a function of school philosophy and policy. In an analysis of retained and promoted primary grade students, Sandoval (1984) found that the retained lacked academic competence, specifically they had low levels of cognitive development and low visual motor skills, however, they were not different from their peers in IQ or social skills.

If students are retained because of poor academic performance, it is logical to ask whether retention improves their academic performance. Findings indicate that the retainees performing at the highest level make

the most progress after retention (Powell, 1982; Sandoval, 1984). If those retainees performing closest to grade level make more progress than students performing well below grade level, it is equally logical to ask how well those students would have done if they had not been retained. Through meta-analysis, Holmes (1983) analyzed data from four studies in which promoted and retained students had been matched on the basis of achievement measures. On the comparable outcome achievement measures, retained students scored lower in reading, language arts, and arithmetic measures. The retained students approached the promoted group in arithmetic after several years, but overall Holmes concluded that retained students never catch up. Similarly, Smith and Shepard (1987) concluded that in the early grades, the negative effects of retention on achievement were even greater than the negative effects on emotional adjustment or self-concept.

(In studies indicating a positive academic effect, improvements in class position diminish after the initial retention year. Rose et al. (1983) found that only 20% to 35% of the retained students received higher achievement test scores the second time in a grade than the first. The use of standardized achievement scores as a means of measuring improvement after retention raises other questions. Labaree (1984) cautions that when test scores are used to make retention decisions and to assess student progress, there is a possibility that teachers may teach to the test. This may cause artificially inflated achievement scores which are then interpreted as an improvement in achievement, rather than learning the test. If this is the case, a steady decline in test scores in succeeding

years may be anticipated unless the student receives special classroom interventions.

When retention is combined with an individualized plan of instruction for the student, positive long-term achievement effects may follow. Peterson, DeGracie and Ayabe (1987) found that second and third grade retainees with individualized plans experienced sustained benefits, although surprisingly, the same was not found for first grade students. In a different study of first graders, Schuyler (1985) examined the achievement scores of retainees on nationally standardized tests in math (n=414) and reading (n=396). Retained students made reading gains during the retention year, but this growth declined after students were promoted. In math, achievement decreased during the retention year, but increased after students were promoted. Thus, the inconsistent findings raise questions about the impact of academic performance.

In spite of the frequency with which poor academic performance is cited as a reason for retention, relatively few studies have described exactly which aspects of poor performance seem most critical to student success or failure. For example, reading ability is likely to be critical in primary grade retentions, but the impact at later grades is not discussed. Certain students may be performing below grade level and be promoted while other students may be performing at grade level and be retained because teachers believe they are acting in the best interests of the students. The reasons cited for those decisions are often social and emotional adjustment.

Social and Emotional Adjustment

A number of characteristics associated with retainees fall under the heading of social and emotional adjustment. The retained student has been characterized by teachers and principals as an immature child, not motivated to work, and having fairly low self-esteem (Byrnes, in press). Similarly, Humphreys (1965) reported that children were being retained for reasons which included lack of interest, lack of effort, and laziness. This section discusses the research on immaturity and low motivation.

Immaturity. Immaturity is a frequently cited reason for retention (Niklason, 1984; Smith & Shepard, 1987). Despite the variety of interpretations, immaturity is a major influence in the decision to retain in the early grades (Smith & Shepard, 1987), and cannot be totally separated from chronological age or gender. Young males are more likely to be retained for immaturity than females. It is widely believed that some children will fit in better with those in a lower grade and just need a year to grow (Ames, 1980; Bocks, 1977).

Chase (1968) followed 65 children who were retained because of their immaturity in first (n=44), second (n=15) and third (n=6) grades. These students did not have low IQs, emotional disturbances, specific academic problems, poor attendance, or brain damage. The students were administered developmental and visual-motor tests prior to retention and after retention. These tests were selected because they "measure abilities that reflect the internal structure of the child " and are "essentially unaffected by normal schooling," (p. 174). Results indicated that repeating first graders gained 5.5 months in performance

level over a six month period, making them below the level of their chronological peers, but within the expected range of their new classmates on visual motor tasks. The results showed less progress for those retained in second and third grades. Even after being held back, the students' scores indicated the students were less mature than their new classmates. Scores on the Gessell developmental tests were described as much lower, with second and third grade repeaters less prepared to compete with their peers than first grade repeaters. While the childrens' visual motor skills showed some improvement during the retention year, the students were still below average of their new grade level peers. After retention, students compared more favorably to their new cohort of classmates, but on average immature behavior was not remediated by retention.

Bocks (1977) found no evidence in the research of benefits for those retained for social immaturity. Similarly, Shepard and Smith (1985) concluded that existing research does not demonstrate an academic or social-emotional benefit for retained immature children. Further questioning the value of retaining immature students, Sandoval and Hughes (1984) in an extensive study of California students found that immaturity was not related to low academic gains or delayed emotional development. Thus, the usefulness of retention as a means of giving immature children time to catch up is questionable.

Making a case for benefits to students, Scott and Ames (1969) concluded that repeating a grade because of immaturity, "may be accompanied by no emotional or social difficulties and may result in improved grades" (p. 438). This statement was based on the findings of

a study of 27 students who had been retained in grades K-6 for immaturity. The success of the students was determined by comparing reported grades given by teachers before and after retention, and responses of teachers and parents to a questionnaire. Scott and Ames (1969) report improved grades and ratings by teachers and parents. The teachers' ratings should be interpreted carefully; the teachers who retained were also the teachers who rated.

In an earlier study, Chase stressed that no negative social or emotional effects on retainees were reported by retaining teachers or parents (in Chase, 1968). However, the absence of a control group of immature students who were promoted precludes knowing how students would have done if they had been promoted. Positive effects of retention are also reported by Ames (1980). She contends that retention can be beneficial in the primary grades, and when properly explained to young children, can restore self-confidence. While her work is frequently cited, Ames provides no empirical data to support her claim. It is also difficult for those individuals involved in making the decision to retain the individual children to judge adjustment objectively. In addition retainees themselves were not asked about the impact of retention. That may explain why the perceived effects by parents and teachers differ markedly from the perceptions of students in the study by Yamamoto (1980). Students in grades 4-6 reported that retention was stressful, ranking it third, behind losing a parent and going blind.

While the benefits of retaining immature students may not be clear, teachers continue to list immaturity as an important variable in the

decision to retain students. Byrnes and Yamamoto (1986) asked teachers and principals to check the three characteristics most frequently observed in children being considered for retention. For the entire group, developmental immaturity, low self-esteem, and low motivation were listed in that order. There was a difference between primary (1-3) and upper elementary (4-6) teachers' views, however. Not surprisingly, primary teachers cited developmental immaturity more frequently than upper elementary teachers, while the upper elementary teachers indicated they observed low motivation and low self-esteem more frequently than primary teachers.

Parents and teachers may view the importance of immaturity differently. Byrnes and Yamamoto (1986) found that only 18.6% of the parents (n=1063) felt that emotional immaturity was an appropriate reason for retention, while 53.1% of the teachers (n=145) did.

Low motivation. The precise role of motivation in the retention decision is not well described in the literature, but it seems to contribute to the retention decision (Claflin, 1984; Humphreys, 1965). Teachers believe that the threat of retention will motivate certain students to achieve. In addition some teachers believe low motivation is responsible for student failures. In the study by Byrnes and Yamamoto (1986), low motivation was the characteristic principals (n=35) most frequently observed in retained students. Teachers (n=145) ranked low motivation second, after developmental immaturity, in listing characteristics observed in retained students.

While strict promotion policies are enacted to motivate students and keep low achieving students working, Thompson (1980) concluded that research supports neither claim. It is sometimes assumed that the threat of retention will increase student motivation to achieve. If so, it follows that students are likely to view retention as punishment. This implies that lack of achievement is caused by a lack of incentive and ignores the potential impact of other factors such as ability, family background, and social class. To this reasoning Labaree (1984) argued:

To the extent that poor test scores are the result of such factors as class background, racial discrimination, family conditions and test invalidity the student's motivation is irrelevant, and retention will not spur the student to higher achievement. (p. 83)

As Labaree also indicates, validity issues are inherent when achievement test scores are the only measure used to determine student achievement.

Incidence of Retention in Grades K-7

At the elementary school level, retention occurs more frequently in first grade than in other grades (Byrnes, in press; Humphreys, 1965; Rose et al., 1983). Analysis of retention rates from 1978-1980 for the 13 states with available data indicated a declining number of retentions in elementary years with a sharp increase in the number of retentions in grade seven and again two to three years later. A similar pattern was reported in a study of a southwestern border state by Byrnes (in press). She reported the retention rate for first grade was 11.5%, second grade 6.6%, third grade 4.6%, fourth grade 4.4%, fifth grade 12.5%, and sixth grade 1.6%. As Byrnes notes, the cumulative effect of these rates,

assuming stability from year to year, and discounting double retentions, would mean that in a group of sixth graders, approximately one-third of them would have been retained at least once.

The declining trend in elementary grades abruptly ended with escalating rates of 19%, 20% and 21% retention rates in seventh, eighth, and ninth grades respectively in the Byrnes study. This is of particular interest, as teachers often have the unfounded belief that retaining students in early grades will give those children a good, solid base and therefore prevent retentions in upper grades. It is hypothesized that students are retained for different reasons at different grade levels, but no clear explanation about this was found in the literature. It is also acknowledged that increases in retention rates occur at grades in which students move to middle and high schools. While there is no research-based explanation, it is hypothesized that teachers impose stricter academic and social standards for those moving to upper grades.

Analysis of the retention data from the Commonwealth of Virginia indicates a comparable pattern to that found elsewhere. In elementary school there is a declining rate of retentions after first grade. The rate then increases at the eighth or ninth grade level and remains fairly constant throughout high school.

Teacher Beliefs

Each day teachers interpret "the rapid flow of continuing social events" of the classroom (Nisbett & Ross, 1980, p. 28). The ways they interpret actions are shaped by their beliefs, "propositions or

statements of relations among things considered true" (Eisenhart, Shrum, Harding, & Cuthbert, 1988). Beliefs are the basis for the decisions teachers make and determine when and how policy enters the classroom. Teachers make judgments about student abilities, effort, and progress. When teachers recommend retention, these judgments have a tremendous impact on the lives of individuals. The research on teacher judgments and teacher attributions provides a groundwork for understanding teacher beliefs concerning retention.

Shavelson and Stern (1981) contend that teachers make decisions and judgments about students based on heuristics, "implicit rules that people are unaware of and use in complex tasks in order to select information, classify objects or persons and revise knowledge," and their attributions (p. 469). Teachers then draw inferences about students and seem to make decisions based on the inferences rather than original information.

Teachers' attributions for successful and unsuccessful performance of students have been a focus of research. In particular, researchers have examined the extent to which teachers have assumed responsibility for successes and failures of their students. The underlying assumption is that teachers who take no responsibility for student performance will be less likely to work to improve student performance (Clark & Peterson, 1986, pp. 281-282).

The research on attributions provides mixed findings. Beckman (1976) found that teachers attributed student performance to child factors, never mentioning teaching or the teacher as factors in open-ended questions. Wiley and Eskilson (1978) reported that teachers assumed

ego-enhancing attribution patterns, rating themselves as more influential for student success than student failure. Clark and Peterson (1986) concluded, however, that teachers were more likely to make counterdefensive attributions, accepting responsibility for failure and giving credit to students for success in actual classroom settings.

The translation of beliefs into behaviors and classroom interactions is the critical concern. Borke, Eisenhart, Kello, and Vandett (1984) found that teachers who believed their role was to faithfully execute the curriculum were likely to take different actions with children having difficulty in reading than teachers who believed their task was to modify the curriculum. Clark and Peterson (1986) note that research on teachers' attributions has not been integrated into the literature on teachers' thought processes. They reason that the effects of attributions on behavior would likely be mediated through thought, yet, this link has not been examined.

Shepard and Smith (1985) examined teacher beliefs about children having difficulty in kindergarten. Teachers described as nativists at one extreme attribute student unpreparedness to developmental and chronological age and sex with little emphasis on environment. At the other extreme, environmentalists attribute lack of preparation to poor intellectual ability, inattentive or unskilled parents and prior educational experiences, the teacher or educational program. When asked what could be done for unprepared children in kindergarten, teachers' responses ranged from, "Provide the child with time," "lower expectations," "providing academic assistance is harmful," to "provide

additional help," "hold high expectations," "work hard and encourage the pupil to work hard."

Teachers' beliefs are also tied to teachers' sense of efficacy, and the power teachers believe they have in shaping the lives of the students in their classrooms (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Teachers' beliefs affect the types of interactions they have with students, which in turn can affect student behavior.

Summary

While retention standards vary, research indicates that children who are of lower socio economic status, of black or Spanish origin, live in a household headed by someone with less than 12 years of schooling, and are among the youngest in their grade are more likely to be retained than other children. The decision to retain is a complex process involving student characteristics, family background, school factors, and teacher values and beliefs.

Several specific reasons for retention are given by teachers and principals, but generally the reasons can be described as poor academic performance and poor social or emotional adjustment. Research suggests that retention alone does not eliminate the academic performance deficiencies that led to retention. Programs with individualized plans of instruction for the student, however, have resulted in sustained benefits. Similarly, while improvements in social and emotional adjustment are not clearly a result of retention, poor social and

emotional adjustment are reasons given by teachers and principals for retaining students.

This literature review depicts current trends on retention, the frequency of retention and retention patterns in elementary schools. High rates of retention occur in first grade, however, rates rise in the upper elementary grades. Much of the existing research on retention has been conducted at the early elementary grades; retention, however, is not exclusive to kindergarten or first grade, and there is a need for research on upper elementary grade retention practices.

This literature review gives an overview of which students are retained in certain school systems under certain conditions. The studies cited do not offer a complete picture of how retention decisions are made and can only begin to provide a framework for understanding the complexity of this issue. The studies do not consider how teachers interpret student characteristics and behavior to reach decisions about individual students.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

To build an understanding of the process of retention and teachers' beliefs associated with this practice, a case study approach was followed (Guba, 1978; House, 1980; MacDonald & Walker, 1977; Stake, 1978). The purpose of this inquiry was to add to existing knowledge rather than test theory or render evaluation, therefore, this study is best described by Stenhouse's (1988) model of the educational case study. A multimethod approach using document search and survey methodologies was used to answer the research questions. Two written instruments, the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire, and the Retention Decision Simulation were developed.

Setting

This study was conducted in a consolidated school division with a student membership of 3,319 students: 1,109 high school students, 278 eighth grade students (middle school), and 1,949 elementary students in schools grades K-7. There are six elementary schools (Grades K-7), one middle school (Grade 8), and one high school.

Population and Sample

The 135 teachers for grades K-7 constituted the population. For the purpose of this study, the teachers were classified as either (a) regular classroom teachers (n=96), (b) teachers of the learning disabled (n=8), who are involved in retention decisions, or (c) specialty teachers (n=31),

which included special education, Chapter I, reading skills, band, music, art, and physical education teachers and school librarians.

The Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire was administered to all 135 teachers listed in the school system directory. The Retention Decision Simulation was administered to the 96 regular classroom teachers and the 8 teachers of the learning disabled.

A sample of 36 teachers was selected to be interviewed. This sample was drawn to represent a cross-section of teachers according to grade levels taught and past history of retention. Selection of the sample is discussed more fully in the sections entitled March Interviews With Teachers and May Interviews With Teachers.

Instrument Development

Two instruments were developed to measure teachers' beliefs about retention. This section describes the development of the Teacher Questionnaire and the Retention Decision Simulation.

Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire

Information gleaned from permanent records, written policy, and teacher interviews was combined with past research findings and questionnaires (Byrnes & Yamamoto, 1986; Claflin, 1984; Haack, 1984) to develop items for the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire (see Appendix A). The Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire was designed to gather teachers' explicit beliefs about retention; when it is considered appropriate action, and its perceived consequences. Data were

collected from three sources to develop the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire: (a) student permanent records, (b) school district written retention policy, and (c) semi-structured interviews with teachers.

Student permanent records. Permanent school records of those members of the 1987-88 eighth grade class who had been retained at least once were examined. A list was compiled indicating the grade and teacher at the time of each retention. The information about teachers was used to identify a sample of "retaining" teachers to be interviewed in March and May.

School division written policy. The school division has a written policy that provides guidelines for teachers. Specific questionnaire items were drawn from the policy to determine the degree of teacher agreement with these guidelines. The policy for retention in grades K-7 is as follows:

RETENTION POLICY

Promotion and Retention

A. Kindergarten - Grade 7

1. A student who does not attain a passing grade in two of the three major areas of reading, communications, and mathematics, or any three academic areas shall be considered for retention.
2. A student who passes all subjects but is working below grade level shall be considered for retention.

3. Other factors that shall be considered in promotion or retention are ability, chronological age, physical and emotional maturity, and school attendance.
4. The primary responsibility for promotion or retention of a student rests with the classroom teacher in cooperation with the principal and other instructional staff members. The final decision on promotion and retention rests with the principal. (School System, 1983)

March interviews with teachers. Semi-structured interviews with teachers were conducted at two times, in March and in May. In March, classroom teachers from the two largest schools were interviewed to gather information for the development of the Teacher Beliefs Questionnaire. The sample was purposefully drawn; teachers were selected to represent extreme viewpoints on retention. Nine of these teachers had retained students in the past, according to the list derived from student records. The remaining four teachers were recommended by principals as teachers who tended not to retain students. During interviews, teachers were asked to describe students who were having difficulties in their classes, explain what causes these difficulties, and explain what can be done for these students. The retaining teachers were specifically asked to describe those 1987-88 eighth graders they had previously retained. (See Appendix B for Teacher Interview Protocol.) Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes.

These interviews and the interviews conducted in May with 23 other teachers were analyzed systematically (Spradley, 1979) to detect patterns

of teachers' beliefs about retention. (These procedures are explained more fully under Data Collection and Teacher Interviews.)

Retention Decision Simulation: Rationale

The Retention Decision Simulation was designed to uncover teachers' implicit beliefs about retention. Research on decision making supports the notion that teachers often make judgments in planning or decisions about students based on their interpretation of a number of factors (Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Teachers may be unaware of these factors or the importance of each factor, and, therefore, be unable to articulate how they make decisions. Due to the implicit nature of this process, one technique for isolating the factors used in decision making is cue utilization (Slovick, 1966). A number of cues, in this case characteristics of students, are varied systematically in vignettes of hypothetical students. The retention decisions made about each student are analyzed to determine the importance of each cue or combination of cues presented in the series of vignettes using a policy capturing approach (Shavelson, Webb, & Burstein 1986; Shepard & Smith, 1985).

Retention Decision Simulation: Vignette Construction

A difficulty of this process is providing enough cues to make a decision, while limiting the number of vignettes so that decision-making is not too fatiguing or monotonous. A review of the literature and preliminary analysis of interview data indicated that academic performance, maturity, age, size, ability, gender, motivation, and

parental support were factors that influenced retention decisions. The decision was made to construct vignettes using the first six informational cues. Two levels of each cue were created. A vignette would describe a hypothetical student high or low in academic performance, ability, or maturity, and either large or small in size, younger or older than classmates, and male or female. Standardized test score results and report card grades were extracted from permanent records of 1987-88 eighth graders so that realistic parameters for the vignettes were established concerning ability level and academic performance.

While construction of two levels for each cue would derive 64 possible combinations, common sense considerations allowed reducing the number to 40 vignettes. For example, it would be unlikely that a teacher would consider retention for a high ability, high achieving, mature boy or girl just because of size or age in comparison to classmates. This reduction, while providing less data for statistical analysis, was deemed necessary so that teachers could complete the task in one after school session of approximately 30-45 minutes. Time was an important consideration because policy capturing is tiring and frustrating for teachers due to the limited amount of information given in the vignette and the seriousness of the decisions teachers are being asked to make. It is also difficult to read and carefully process a large number of similar cases.

Sentence shells were constructed modeled on past studies (Borko, 1978; Shepard & Smith, 1985). A graphic representation of the data about

each child was also included. (A sample vignette follows in Figure 1. The complete Retention Decision Simulation appears in Appendix C.)

Field Testing of Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire and Retention Decision Simulation

The Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire and Teacher Retention Simulation were field tested to verify (1) the appropriateness of the questionnaires for teachers of grade levels K-7, and (2) the amount of time it would take for a typical teacher to complete the instruments. Permission was obtained from a different school division to ask for volunteer teachers from one elementary school, grades K-5 (Site 1) and one middle school, grades 6 and 7 (Site 2). Fifteen teachers representing grades K, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 participated in the pilot administration. Seven teachers participated at Site 1 and eight teachers participated at Site 2.

Teachers indicated that the descriptions of all hypothetical students were plausible and behaviors described seemed reasonable. Teachers also indicated that the graphic representation presented with the written description was helpful. The type font of the questionnaire had been reduced so that the length of the instrument would not appear overbearing. The teachers participating in the field test had no problems reading the reduced type. The purpose of the field test was to have teachers' reactions to the items. The schools were not matched with the target schools on any criteria, nor were data from these schools analyzed.

A Sample Vignette

John is one of your students. He is a small child and about 6 months younger than the average child in your class. He is on the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work well independently. He forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. John is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate John's ability is at the 25th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st	99th	
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE	low	high	
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY	low	high	
SIZE	X	1	
	small	large	
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger	1 yr. older	

Figure 1. Teacher Retention Simulation

Data Collection

Data were collected from three sources to answer the research questions: (a) Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire, (b) Retention Decision Simulation, and (c) teacher interviews.

Administration of Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire

Each of the 135 elementary teachers received a copy of the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire in a sealed envelope placed in his or her school mailbox. Each teacher was asked to seal the completed questionnaire in a second enclosed envelope and place it in a specified box in the school. Teachers were assured that no one from the school would look at the questionnaire. Each teacher was assigned a five-digit code number that was affixed to the questionnaire and the return envelope. Questionnaires were picked up by one of the two university researchers conducting the study. The Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire was completed by 124 teachers.

Administration of Retention Decision Simulation

One of the two researchers was present for every administration of the Retention Decision Simulation. This ensured standardized conditions such as teachers working independently. Each principal scheduled an hour meeting at his school for the administration of the simulation. In each of the six administrations teachers were given the Retention Decision Simulations in envelopes addressed to them. The five-digit code number was affixed to the booklet and the return envelope. A standardized set

of instructions (Appendix D) was read to the teachers. A separate sheet that explained the definitions was passed out to supplement the definitions printed on the front of the booklet. (See Appendix E.)

May Interviews with Teachers

A sample of 23 teachers was selected to be interviewed in May. Sample selection was based on two criteria: (a) teachers' past history of retention and (b) teachers' grade level assignment. Seven teachers who had retained students in the past, according to the list derived from student records, were selected. The remaining 16 teachers were selected based on grade level taught, so that the grades were represented. Principal recommendations and scheduling availability contributed to the selection process.

The interviews of these teachers in addition to the 13 teachers who were interviewed in March provided interview data from 36 teachers for analysis. (See Table 1 for the breakdown of the number of teachers interviewed by grade level). The protocol was expanded to include issues that emerged from the March interviews, specifically the role of family and parental support. In May, teachers had already submitted lists of potential retainees to the principals, so during the interviews they were asked to comment on specific students being considered for retention and about students displaying similar behaviors who were not candidates for retention. Teachers' descriptions of how retention/promotion decisions were made and the actions of the teachers provided additional information to confirm or disconfirm interpretations of data from earlier interviews.

Table 1

Number of Teachers Interviewed

Grade Level	Number of Teachers
Kindergarten	4
1	8
2	4
3	3
4	3
5	5
6	5
7	4
	<hr/>
Total	36

The teacher interviews were conducted after school and during free periods. The lengths of the May interviews ranged from 22 to 85 minutes. All were arranged through the school principal.

Data Analysis

Teacher Beliefs Questionnaire

Frequencies were tallied for Items 1-20 which were four-choice Likert-scaled items ranging from agree (1) to disagree (4). Items 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 19 were recoded for analysis so that a high score (4) would indicate a favorable view of retention while a low score (1) an unfavorable view of retention for each item. A retention score was created by summing all but three items. Responses to Items 14, 15, and 16 did not indicate a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward retention. The Ret score was interpreted as an index of a teacher's explicit beliefs about retention.

Among Items 1-20, eight items (3, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18) were designed to test whether teachers believed retention affected K-3 students and 4-7 students differently. These items, contrasting retention in K-3 to 4-7, were subjected to further analysis. Four dependent t -tests were conducted to determine whether teachers perceived the effects of retention differently for students in grades K-3 than in grades 4-7. Alpha was set at .01 for each test using the Bonferroni adjustment to maintain the experiment-wise error rate of $p < .05$.

The second part of the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire sought information about the factors that influence teachers' retention decisions. Item 23 asked teachers to distribute 100 points to rate the importance they assign to each of ten factors including: academic performance, maturity, size, age, gender, home environment, effort, self-esteem, ability, and "other". The means and standard deviations for each of these factors were calculated for all teachers, and separate descriptive statistics were calculated for K-3 teachers and 4-7 teachers. The same procedures were followed for Item 24, which asked teachers to distribute 100 points to indicate the contribution seven factors makes to students' problems. A variable estimating the average number of retentions for each teacher was created by dividing the number of students the teacher estimated he or she had recommended for retention (Item 26) by the number of years he or she had taught (Item 25). Written comments for all items and written responses to Items 22, 30, 31, and 32 appear in Appendix F.

Retention Decision Simulation

For each vignette, teachers were asked, "What do you think would be best for the student?" Three options were provided: promote, socially promote, and retain. For the analysis, promote and socially promote were each coded 1 and retain was coded 0. The promote/retain decision for each vignette for each teacher was regressed on the student characteristics of academic performance, social maturity, ability, size, age, and gender.

Separate regressions for each teacher are appropriate so that homogeneity of variance violations do not confound results (Cadwell, 1979).

The percentages of K-3 and 4-7 teachers recommending retention for each vignette describing a hypothetical student were calculated. These data were used to compare overall differences between K-3 and 4-7 teachers.

Analysis of Interview Data

Interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed. Interview data were coded as categories emerged from the data following the constant comparison method outlined in Glaser and Strauss (1967). Some categories were natural responses to interview questions. For example the category "success" was a logical outgrowth of the question, "What does a student have to do to be successful in the grade you teach?" However, specific properties of the category such as "academics" and "work habits" emerged from the data. Rather than fit the data to theory, low inference categories were developed to prevent premature generalizations. The computer program, The Ethnograph (Seidel, Kjolseth, & Seymour, 1988), was used to facilitate data coding and analysis. With this program segments of interviews were assigned multiple codes and like codes were retrieved from all interviews easily. A sample page indicating the coding appears in Appendix G.

Two teachers did not want to be audiotaped, and one teacher was interviewed while she ran off materials for her class, and tape recording was not possible. Although notes were taken during these interviews, the

amount of detail was not comparable to transcribed interviews and, therefore, these three teachers' interview data were not analyzed, reducing the sample of usable interviews to 33 teachers.

After the initial analysis, the transcripts were reread in their entirety to obtain a holistic impression (Borko, Lalik & Tomchin, 1987). The holistic analysis entailed three steps: (a) Key categories and representative statements were summarized on one sheet for each interviewee, (b) Specific data were extracted from Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire, including teachers' distribution of points (Items 23 and 24) and Retscore, and (c) Factors which were significant predictors in the retention decision from Retention Decision Simulation were added to this summary.

Written Documents

To determine the incidence of retention at grades K-7 for the entire school division and within each school, retention data from previous years were collected. The principal of each of the six elementary schools provided the frequencies for students retained and promoted in each grade from 1976 through 1988. School retention rates and retention rates for the school division as a whole were calculated. (See Appendix H.)

Triangulation of Data

The reliability of information was provided by cross-checking or triangulating data sources (Denzin, 1978; Guba, 1977; House, 1980). Convergence of information was sought through documentation,

interview data, and responses to the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire and the Retention Decision Simulation. Survey data provided a summary of findings which made it possible to get a sense of school practices, and an indication of how widespread teachers' beliefs were. Interview methods allowed subjects to frame issues in their own terms, using actual instances. In addition in this study, quantitative data highlighted differences between teachers which contributed to building a deeper understanding of how teachers frame the issue of retention.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Three data sources were examined to describe teachers' beliefs about retention in grades K-7: (a) the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire, (b) the Retention Decision Simulation, and (c) teacher interviews. The findings are presented by data source. The discussion within each section focuses on one or more of the research questions that guided the study:

1. When is retention considered an appropriate action?
2. How do teachers perceive the consequences of retention?
3. What factors do teachers consider when making retention decisions?

Results of Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire

Appropriateness of Retention

The Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire provided insight into teachers' explicit or stated beliefs about retention. The results presented first correspond to Research Question One concerning the appropriateness of retention (the complete questionnaire is presented in Appendix A). This discussion distinguishes between (a) those items on which at least two-thirds of the teachers gave the same response, consensus items, and (b) those items on which less than two-thirds of the teachers gave the same response, non-consensus items.

Consensus Items

Teachers agreed with each other on two items related to the appropriateness of retention. Table 2 shows that teachers overwhelmingly were in agreement with the school division policy, which states that failure in two of three major subject areas of reading, communications, or mathematics warrants retention consideration. Teachers also agreed that retention is appropriate for learning disabled students, i. e., the student's classification should not exclude them from being retained.

Teachers expressed a consistent belief in retention as a school practice. Their strong negative response to Item 20, "Children should never be retained," (as shown in Table 3) suggests that most teachers believe retention is an acceptable teaching practice and one they reserve the right to use. Smith and Shepard (1989) reached similar conclusions, observing that a sentiment in favor of retention was shared by most teachers, even those who rarely retained students. Understanding what teachers believe to be the consequences, and how they perceive the impact of retention on students provides insight into their belief that retention is appropriate school practice.

Non-Concensus Items

Teachers did not hold a common belief about the grades in which retentions should occur (see Table 4). Teachers were not in agreement with each other about whether retentions should occur later than third grade. The grade at which retention takes place is a key issue which surfaces in analysis of each data source. Teachers responses to Item 14 suggest they were almost evenly split on this item. Likewise, teachers

Table 2

Appropriateness of Retention: Items on Which There Was
Consensus Among Teachers^a

Item	Teacher Response ^b	
	AGREE (N)	DISAGREE (N)
9. Students who do not make passing grades in two of the three major subject areas (reading, communications, or mathematics) should be retained. N = 123 \bar{M} = 1.7 SD = .65	91.9% (113)	8.1% (10)
13. Students receiving services of a learning disabilities teacher should not be retained. N = 118 \bar{M} = 2.8 SD = .86	30.5% (36)	69.5% (82)

^a More than 66.7% of the teachers indicated the same response

^b Teacher responses of "tend to agree" and "agree" were combined in the single category "agree." Teacher responses "tend to disagree" and "disagree" were combined in the single category "disagree."

Table 3

Should Children Be Retained? A Consensus Item^a

Item	Teacher Response ^b	
	AGREE (N)	DISAGREE (N)
20. Children should never be retained. N = 124 \bar{M} = 3.8 SD = .44	2.4% (3)	97.6% (121)

a

More than 66.7% of the teachers indicated the same response.

b

Teacher responses of "tend to agree" and "agree" were combined in the single category "agree." Teacher responses "tend to disagree" and "disagree" were combined in the single category "disagree."

Table 4

Appropriateness of Retention: Items on Which There Was
Not Consensus Among Teachers^a

Item	Teacher Response ^b	
	AGREE (N)	DISAGREE (N)
14. If students are to be retained they should be retained no later than third grade. N = 122 \bar{M} = 2.6 SD = .88	44.2% (54)	55.8% (68)
10. Students who make passing grades, but are working below grade level should be retained. N = 123 \bar{M} = 2.6 SD = .83	43.1% (53)	56.9% (70)
5. Students who do not apply themselves to their studies should be retained. N = 119 \bar{M} = 2.2 SD = .81	64.7% (77)	35.3% (42)
19. Children who have passing grades but excessive absences should be retained. N = 123 \bar{M} = 2.7 SD = .92	38.2% (47)	61.8% (76)

^a

Less than 66.7% of the teachers indicated the same response

^b

Teacher responses of "tend to agree" and "agree" were combined in the single category "agree." Teacher responses "tend to disagree" and "disagree" were combined in the single category "disagree."

disagreed among themselves whether retention is appropriate for students who do not apply themselves, students with passing grades working below grade level, or students with passing grades but excessive absences. If teachers act in accordance with these beliefs, retention could be seen as appropriate by one teacher but not the teacher next door. Teachers' responses to these items suggest the school division policy which lists working below grade level and excessive absences as acceptable reasons for retention, as not consistently interpreted by all teachers.

Consequences of Retention

The Retention Beliefs Questionnaire also provided insight into teachers' beliefs concerning the consequences of retention. This corresponds to Research Question Two.

Consensus Items

Teachers were in agreement with each other on 10 of the 13 items relating to the consequences of retention (see Table 5). The majority believe retention prevents students from facing daily failure in the next higher grade, and retention in grades K-3 gives an immature child a chance to catch up. Teachers also agree that retention motivates children to work harder and is necessary to maintain grade level standards. Teachers were also in agreement about what retention does not do. They believe retention does not limit the range in student achievement in classrooms, nor is it an effective means for providing school support for the child who does not get support at home. Teachers also believe that retaining a student

Table 5

Consequences of Retention: Items on Which There Was

Consensus Among Teachers^a

Item	Teacher Response ^b	
	AGREE (N)	DISAGREE (N)
11. Retention in grades K-3 is an effective means of giving an immature child a chance to catch up. N = 123 \bar{M} = 1.6 SD = .68	92.7% (114)	7.3% (9)
17. Retention in grades K-3 permanently labels a child. N = 123 \bar{M} = 3.5 SD = .76	8.2% (10)	91.8% (113)
1. Retention is an effective means of preventing students from facing daily failure in the next higher grade. N = 124 \bar{M} = 1.8 SD = .81	82.3% (102)	17.7% (22)
3. Retaining a child in grades K-3 harms the child's self concept. N = 124 \bar{M} = 3.2 SD = .80	17.7% (22)	82.3% (102)
18. Retention in grades 4-7 permanently labels a child. N = 124 \bar{M} = 3.1 SD = .86	21.8% (27)	78.2% (97)
4. Retention prevents classrooms from having wide ranges in student achievement. N = 124 \bar{M} = 3.1 SD = .83	27.4% (34)	72.6% (90)

a

More than 66.7% of the teachers indicated the same response

b

Teacher responses of "tend to agree" and "agree" were combined in the single category "agree." Teacher responses "tend to disagree" and "disagree" were combined in the single category "disagree."

Table 5 (Cont'd.)

Item	Teacher Response ^b	
	AGREE (N)	DISAGREE (N)
16. In grades 4-7 overage children (more than a year older than their classmates) cause more behavior problems than other children. N = 122 \bar{M} = 2.1 SD = .91	73.8% (90)	26.2% (32)
6. Knowing that retention is a possibility does motivate students to work harder. N = 122 \bar{M} = 2.2 SD = .73	69.7% (85)	30.3% (37)
8. Retention is an effective means of providing support in school for the child who does not get support at home. N = 123 \bar{M} = 2.9 SD = .86	31.7% (39)	68.3% (84)
2. Retention is necessary for maintaining grade level standards. N = 124 \bar{M} = 2.2 SD = .88	67.0% (83)	33.0% (41)

a

More than 66.7% of the teachers indicated the same response

b

Teacher responses of "tend to agree" and "agree" were combined in the single category "agree." Teacher responses "tend to disagree" and "disagree" were combined in the single category "disagree."

in grades K-3 does not harm the child's self-concept, nor does it permanently label a child retained at any grade K-7. Teachers also believe that in grades 4-7 children who are at least one year older than classmates cause more behavior problems than other children.

Non-Concensus Items

Teachers were less in agreement with each other on several aspects of retention, as Table 6 indicates. Teachers were split almost evenly on whether retentions in grades 4-7 give immature children a chance to catch up, or whether retention in grades 4-7 harms the child's self-concept. Teachers were also not in agreement about whether overage children in grades K-3 cause more behavior problems than other children.

These findings suggest that among teachers of all grade levels, retention in grades K-3 is seen as generally having positive consequences. Teachers are less certain about positive consequences of retention in grades 4-7. Dependent t -tests were used to test the differences between mean responses for items that dealt separately with the effects of retention at grades K-3 and 4-7. Items were recoded so that a high score indicated a positive effect of retention. Results of each t -test suggest that teachers believe retention in grades 4-7 produces more negative effects, specifically:

- (a) Comparison of Items 3 and 7: Teachers were more likely to agree that retention in grades 4-7 is more harmful to a child's self-concept than retention in K-3, $t(121) = 9.04$, $p < .001$.
- (b) Comparison of Items 11 and 12: Teachers were more likely to agree that retention in grades K-3 gives immature students a chance

Table 6

Consequences of Retention: Items on Which
There Was Not Consensus Among Teachers^a

Item	Teacher Response ^b	
	AGREE (N)	DISAGREE (N)
12. Retention in grades 4-7 is an effective means of giving an immature child a chance to catch up. N = 122 \bar{M} = 2.4 SD = .82	54.9% (67)	45.1% (55)
7. Retaining a child in grades 4-7 harms the child's self-concept. N = 120 \bar{M} = 2.4 SD = .82	60.0% (72)	40.0% (48)
15. In grades K-3 overage children (more than a year older than their classmates) cause more behavior problems than other children. N = 118 \bar{M} = 2.6 SD = .87	44.0% (52)	66.0% (66)

^a

Less than 66.7% of the teachers indicated the same response

^b

Teacher responses of "tend to agree" and "agree" were combined in the single category "agree." Teacher responses "tend to disagree" and "disagree" were combined in the single category "disagree."

to catch up than retention in grades 4-7, $t(120) = 9.67$, $p < .001$.

(c) Comparison of Items 17 and 18: Teachers agreed that retention in grades 4-7 is more likely to permanently label a child than retention in grades K-3, $t(123) = 5.12$, $p < .001$.

(d) Comparison of Items 15 and 16: Teachers believe overage children in grades 4-7 are likely to cause more behavior problems than overage children in grades K-3, $t(118) = -6.53$, $p < .001$.

Factors Considered

Items on the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire also examined the factors teachers consider when making retention decisions. The results presented here correspond to Research Question Three.

Teachers' explicit beliefs about which factors most influence their retention decisions were solicited in Item 23 of the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire. Teachers were asked to distribute 100 points across 10 factors to indicate the relative weight of each factor in their decisions (see Table 7). Responses indicated that both primary and upper elementary teachers gave the most weight to academic performance, assigning it approximately twice as much weight as the second most important factor. The K-3 teachers rated maturity as the second most important factor, followed by ability, and effort. The ordering of factors was different for 4-7 teachers, with ability as second most important followed by effort and maturity. Child's self-esteem was rated as the fifth most important factor by both groups of teachers. The differences

Table 7

Relative Weight Assigned to Retention Decision Factorsby K-3^a and 4-7^b Teachers: Item 23

Factor		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Range	Median	Frequency of Zero ^c
School Academic Performance	K-3	36.5	17.4	6-80	30.5	0
	4-7	32.3	14.9	10-80	30	0
Ability	K-3	12.7	7.8	0-30	10	3
	4-7	17.6	10.1	0-40	20	4
Maturity	K-3	13.8	8.3	0-30	10	3
	4-7	12.8	7.9	0-40	10	0
Effort Being Put Forth	K-3	10.8	6.5	0-25	10	3
	4-7	13.5	7.4	0-35	10	2
Child's Self- Esteem	K-3	8.6	6.6	0-25	10	8
	4-7	8.4	5.8	0-25	7.5	4
Home Environment	K-3	6.3	7.1	0-40	5	13
	4-7	5.0	4.7	0-20	5	14
Age In Relation To Others	K-3	5.6	3.7	0-15	5	6
	4-7	7.1	6.1	0-20	5	6
Size In Relation To Others	K-3	4.2	3.7	0-10	5	15
	4-7	3.2	3.8	0-10	1	19
Gender	K-3	.9	2.3	0-10	0	39
	4-7	.6	2.0	0-10	0	39
Other ^d	K-3	.6	2.5	0-10	10	44
	4-7	.6	2.6	0-15	0	37

Note. Possible ranges for each factor was 0-100.

^an=47

^bn=40

^cNumber of respondents assigning value of zero to factor.

^dIncludes the following: social development, special education, absences, attitude.

between K-3 and 4-7 teachers' ordering of factors is similar to the findings reported by Byrnes and Yamamoto (1986).

The factors of home environment, age, size, and gender were rated as making less of a contribution to the retention decision. It is important to note that while age received an average of 7.1 points from the 4-7 teachers and 5.6 points from the K-3 teachers, it was a factor considered by most teachers as the column "frequency of zero" in Table 7 indicates. Size, on the other hand, was assigned no points by almost one-third of the K-3 teachers and one half of the 4-7 teachers. Only five teachers gave any weight to gender of the student.

Teachers were also asked to distribute 100 points to indicate how much each of seven factors contributes to student problems. The results show that K-3 teachers assigned the most points to low academic ability, followed by and poor home environment, immaturity, lack of motivation, poor self-concept (see Table 8). The 4-7 teachers ordered the factors differently, with poor home environment as most important, followed by lack of motivation, low academic ability, poor self-concept, and immaturity. T-test results indicated significant differences in the means for the weights assigned by K-3 and 4-7 teachers to motivation $t(85) = 2.52, p < .05$, and to immaturity, $t(85) = 2.52, p < .05$. These findings suggest that immaturity may be more of an issue for K-3 teachers while motivation may be more critical for 4-7 teachers. These findings support those reported by Byrnes and Yamamoto (1986).

Table 8

Relative Weight Assigned to Factors Contributing to
Student Problems by K-3^a and 4-7^b Teachers: Item 24

Factor		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Range	Median	Frequency of Zero ^c
Poor Home Environment	K-3	20.8	13.8	0-80	20	1
	4-7	24.8	18.0	0-99	20	1
Low Academic Ability	K-3	24.1	12.1	0-50	20	1
	4-7	20.9	12.4	0-50	20	3
Lack of Motivation*	K-3	16.1	8.3	0-35	15	2
	4-7	21.1	9.7	0-40	20	1
Immaturity*	K-3	16.6	8.2	0-35	18	2
	4-7	12.6	6.2	0-25	10	2
Poor Self- Concept	K-3	12.0	7.4	0-40	10	3
	4-7	13.5	9.3	0-40	10	3
Curriculum That Is Too Demanding	K-3	7.3	7.3	0-30	5	16
	4-7	5.0	6.1	0-20	5	19
Other ^d		3.1	10.2	0-50	0	41
		2.3	6.8	0-30	0	38

Note: Possible range for each factor was 0-100.

^a_n=47

^b_n=40

^cNumber of respondents assigning value of zero to factor

^dIncludes the following: ineffective teaching strategies, administrative convenience, peer pressure, inavailability of testing, lack of parental control, absences, low verbal ability, starting school too young, no effort, no self-discipline, poor relationships with peers and teachers

*Difference between means statistically significant $p < .05$

Results of Retention Decision Simulation

Factors Considered

The Retention Decision Simulation provided another source of information about the factors teachers consider when making retention decisions. One hundred of the 104 classroom and learning disabilities teachers were present for the administration of the simulation. Two teachers turned in blank booklets, so data for 98 teachers were analyzed. Six factors of the factors included in the Retention Beliefs Questionnaire were varied in the vignettes. The relative importance of academic performance, maturity, ability, age, size, and gender was systematically measured by teachers' responses to the vignettes of hypothetical students.

A regression equation was developed for each teacher. The standardized regression coefficients for each teacher for each variable are shown in Table 9. Standardized regression coefficients were used so that the relative importance of each factor could be assessed for each teacher. Variations in the regression coefficients suggest the unique ordering of factors for each teacher.

The standardized regression coefficients for all teachers are summarized in Table 10. The number of teachers for whom there were significant regression coefficients for each factor is listed by grade. There was no systematic variation in the weighting of these factors by teachers of different grade levels.

The results confirm the explicitly stated importance of academic performance, ability and maturity, as well as the relative unimportance

Table 9

Factors That Predict Retention Decisions: Standardized Regression
Coefficients and R² For Each Teacher

Teacher	Grade Level	Student Characteristic Factors						R ²
		Performance	Maturity	Ability	Gender	Size	Age	
1	K	.65*	.57*	-.06	-.15	.26*	.26*	.76*
2	K	.92*	.00	.00	.07	.07	.07	.93*
3	K	.58*	.43*	.06	.10	.10	.30*	.67*
4	K	.42*	.44*	-.15	.06	.30*	.30*	.63*
5	K	.33	.11	.11	.09	.28	.28	.55*
6	K	1.00*	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	1.00*
7	K	.46*	.20	-.06	-.10	.22	.44*	.64*
8	K	.57*	.00	.00	.09	.28*	.09	.65*
9	K	.05	.13	.39*	.10	.52*	.21	.70*
10	K	.89*	.39*	-.13	.00	.10	.21*	.81*
11	K	.57*	.00	.00	.28*	.09	.09	.65*
12	K	.87*	.21*	.07	.17	.06	.17	.87*
13	K	.45*	.19	.00	.07	.23	.38*	.37*
14	K	-.03	-.32*	-.05	.01	.23	.52*	.35*
15	1	.73*	.68*	-.06	-.25*	.05	.25*	.84*
16	1	.59*	.19	.32*	.05	.15	.36*	.83*
17	1	.87*	.27*	.00	.00	.22*	.22*	.86*
18	1	.72*	.35*	.35*	.12	.23	.23	.72*
19	1	.87*	.85*	.07	-.05	.16	.16	.87*
20	1	.78*	.57*	.07	-.07	-.05	.17	.78*

Note. Teachers' responses on Retention Decision Simulation were coded so so that promote = 1, retain = 0.

Teacher decisions were regressed on Student Characteristic Factors

Table 9 (Cont'd.)

Factors That Predict Retention Decisions: Standardized Regression
Coefficients and R² For Each Teacher

Teacher	Grade Level	Student Characteristic Factors						R ²
		Performance	Maturity	Ability	Gender	Size	Age	
21	1	.57*	.09	.02	-.08	-.02	.43*	.71*
22	1	.99*	.07	-.07	.06	.06	.06	.94*
23	1	.59*	.19	.32*	.15	-.05	.05	.75*
24	1	.64*	.40*	-.27*	.09	.32*	.30*	.73*
25	1	.63*	-.06	-.31*	-.05	.05	.55*	.67*
26	1	.84*	.00	.00	.14	.00	.14	.86*
27	1	.72*	.20	.20	.05	.16	.27*	.68*
^a 28	1							
29	2	.64*	.28*	.14	.23	.12	.12	.70*
30	2	.58*	.13	.38*	.00	.10	.31*	.84*
31	2	.82*	.07	.07	-.02	.13	.11	.85*
32	2	.99*	.07	-.07	.06	.06	.06	.94*
33	2	.06	.31*	.18	.05	.45*	.55*	.78*
34	2	.66*	.38*	.25*	.00	.20	.20	.79*
35	2	.08	.07	.72*	.05	.26*	.26*	.84*
36	2	.68*	.00	.00	-.10	.21	.21	.75*
37	2	.64*	.13	.25	.00	.27*	.37*	.76*
38	2	.25	.12	.25	.00	.50*	.40	.75*
39	2	.66*	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.67*
40	2	.83*	.31*	.31*	-.05	.05	.15	.73*

Note. Teachers' responses on Retention Decision Simulation were coded so so that promote = 1, retain = 0.

Teacher decisions were regressed on Student Characteristic Factors

Table 9 (Cont'd.)

Factors That Predict Retention Decisions: Standardized RegressionCoefficients and R² For Each Teacher

Teacher	Grade Level	Student Characteristic Factors						R ²
		Performance	Maturity	Ability	Gender	Size	Age	
41	2	.84*	.14	-.27*	-.05	.28*	.06	.78*
42	2	.87*	.14	.14	.12	.00	.12	.90*
43	3	.45*	.33*	.33*	.16	.05	.05	.64*
44	3	.78*	.31*	-.43*	.05	.35*	.25*	.80*
45	3	.78*	.12	-.14	.05	-.06	.06	.70
46	3	.81*	.13	-.13	.11	.11	.22*	.83*
47	3	.05	.12	.12	.00	.80*	.20*	.85*
48	3	.45*	.37*	.12	.05	.15	.15	.54
49	3	.13	.29	.27	.01	.21	.24	.50
50	3	-.23	.36*	.11	.11	.34*	.20	.65*
51	3	.50*	.24	.24	.00	.10	.30*	.67*
52	3	.82*	.13	.00	.10	.22*	.22*	.84*
53	3	.75*	.19	-.06	.05	.26*	.36*	.81*
54	3	.67*	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.67*
^a 55	3							
56	4	.83*	.19	-.80*	-.05	.05	.05	.87*
57	4	-.13	.10	.31	.17	-.17	.00	.38
58	4	.42*	.46*	-.09	.08	.22	.38*	.65*
59	4	1.00*	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	1.00*
60	4	.68*	.08	.21	.07	.28*	.28*	.84*

Note. Teachers' responses on Retention Decision Simulation were coded so so that promote = 1, retain = 0.

Teacher decisions were regressed on Student Characteristic Factors

Table 9 (Cont'd.)

Factors That Predict Retention Decisions: Standardized Regression
Coefficients and R² For Each Teacher

Teacher	Grade Level	Student Characteristic Factors						R ²
		Performance	Maturity	Ability	Gender	Size	Age	
61	4	.43*	.18	.43*	.05	.15	.35*	.78*
62	4	.08	-.06	-.31*	.15	-.05	.75*	.82*
63	4	.83*	.06	-.93*	.05	.05	.05	.96*
64	4	.80*	.32*	-.70*	.05	.26*	.15	.85*
65	4	.79*	.39*	.13	.00	.10	.31*	.84*
66	4	.84*	.00	.00	.00	.14	.14	.75*
67	4	.16	.35*	-.35*	-.08	-.11	.13	.25
68	4	.42*	.21	.04	.07	.14	.49*	.43*
69	5	.90*	.19	-.44*	.05	.05	.15	.80*
70	5	.60*	.25	-.12	.10	.10	.50*	.74*
71	5	.68*	.26*	-.51*	.10	.31*	.31*	.79*
72	5	.45*	.12	-.12	.05	.15	.35*	.54
73	5	.63*	.29*	-.64*	.06	.26*	.16	.77*
74	5	.44*	.31	.15	-.25	.13	.13	.58*
75	5	.73*	.39*	.26*	-.10	.10	.10	.82*
76	6	.88*	.49*	-.39*	-.06	.06	.03	.78*
77	6	.39*	.18	-.44*	.15	.05	.46*	.67*
78	6	.84*	.97*	-.08	-.06	.05	-.03	.95*
79	6	.14	.35*	.35*	.09	.28	.09	.57*
80	6	.80*	.37*	-.49*	-.02	.32*	.22*	.81*

Note. Teachers' responses on Retention Decision Simulation were coded so so that promote = 1, retain = 0.

Teacher decisions were regressed on Student Characteristic Factors

Table 9 (Cont'd.)

Factors That Predict Retention Decisions: Standardized Regression
Coefficients and R² For Each Teacher

Teacher	Grade Level	Student Characteristic Factors						R ²
		Performance	Maturity	Ability	Gender	Size	Age	
81	6	.99*	.07	.06	.06	.06	.06	.94*
82	6	.53*	.04	-.69*	.13	.19	.33*	.79*
83	6	.56*	.30*	.14	.08	.12	.35*	.68
84	6	.99*	.07	-.07	.06	.06	.06	.88
85	6	1.00*	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	1.00*
a 86	6							
a 87	6							
a 88	6							
89	7	.08	.07	.72*	.05	.27*	.27*	.84*
90	7	.80*	.32*	-.06	-.15	.36*	.15	.83*
91	7	.67*	.88*	-.12	.05	.05	-.15	.76*
92	7	.33	.35	-.12	.09	.09	.09	.40
93	7	.17	.08	-.26	.14	.28	.42*	.58
94	7	.73*	.18	-.55*	.00	.00	-.10	.69*
95	7	.61*	.50*	.00	.00	.10	.30*	.69*
96	7	.70*	.00	-.37*	.00	-.10	.50*	.68*
97	7	.07	.17	.51*	.14	.00	.00	.38
98	7	.50*	.61*	.37*	-.05	.15	.05	.78*

Note. Teachers' responses on Retention Decision Simulation were coded so so that promote = 1, retain = 0.

Teacher decisions were regressed on Student Characteristic Factors

a

Teacher indicated promotion for all students.

*p < .05

Table 10

Number of Teachers For Whom Each Student Factor Was a SignificantPredictor^a of Retention Decision

Grade Level	N	Academic Performance	Student Characteristic Factors		Gender	Size	Age	
			Maturity	Ability				
				Low Ability Retained	High Ability Retained			
K	14	11	6	2	3	1	3	6
1	14	13	6	2	3	1	2	7
2	14	9	4	1	0	0	5	4
3	13	9	4	1	1	0	5	6
4	13	4	4	1	5	0	2	6
5	7	7	3	1	3	0	2	3
6	13	9	5	1	4	0	1	4
7	10	6	4	3	2	0	2	4
Total	98	74	36	12	21	2	22	40

Note. Teachers' responses were coded so that promotion = 1, retention = 0
Teacher decisions were regressed on Student Characteristic Factors

^ap < .05

of gender in retention decisions across grade levels. Size, assigned little relative weight in the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire, was a significant factor for almost one fourth of the responding teachers (22 teachers).

Results of the Retention Decision Simulation also provide insight about which students are most likely to be retained in grades K-3 and 4-7. An examination of the percentage of teachers who recommended retention for each of the hypothetical students indicates how strongly teachers share beliefs about which combination of factors warrant retention. (The percentages of teachers who recommended retention for each of the hypothetical boys are found in Table 11 and for each of the hypothetical girls are found in Table 12). For students performing above average in class work, no matter which combination of the five other factors was included in the description, the majority of teachers did not consider retention the appropriate action.

Grade Level Distinctions

In each of the hypothetical situations, more of the K-3 teachers favored retention. They recommended retention for all low performing students, with the exception of a high ability, mature, boy and girl who were older and larger than classmates (see Vignette 25 in Table 12, and Vignette 71 in Table 11). The K-3 teachers were also in agreement with each other (more than 66.7% made the same recommendation) on 37 of the 40 vignettes (exceptions were Vignette 71, Table 12, and Vignettes 55 and 33, Table 11). The results for the 4-7 teachers showed less agreement

Table 11

Percent and Number of Teachers Recommending Retention for
Hypothetical Male Students Based on Given Factors

Low Academic Performance								
Low Maturity					High Maturity			
	Vignette Number				Vignette Number			
		K-3 (N)	4-7 (N)	Total (N)		K-3 (N)	4-7 (N)	Total (N)
<u>Low Ability</u>								
Young								
Small	3	98.1 (53)	82.2 (45)	90.8 (98)	21	90.4 (52)	54.5 (44)	74.0 (96)
Big	59	92.5 (53)	47.7 (44)	72.2 (97)	27	79.2 (53)	42.2 (45)	62.2 (98)
Old								
Small	9	92.5 (53)	56.8 (44)	73.6 (97)	65	69.2 (52)	28.9 (45)	50.5 (98)
Big	29	75.5 (53)	43.2 (44)	60.8 (97)	19	52.8 (53)	15.6 (45)	35.7 (98)
<u>High Ability</u>								
Young								
Small	15	96.2 (53)	82.2 (45)	89.8 (98)	37	92.3 (52)	64.4 (45)	79.4 (97)
Big	51	92.5 (53)	73.3 (45)	83.7 (98)	45	79.2 (53)	48.9 (45)	65.3 (98)
Old								
Small	53	88.5 (53)	53.3 (45)	72.4 (98)	67	67.9 (53)	35.6 (45)	53.1 (98)
Big	41	73.6 (53)	53.3 (45)	64.3 (98)	71	37.7 (53)	33.3 (45)	35.7 (98)
High Academic Performance								
<u>High Ability</u>								
Young								
Small	47	22.6 (53)	15.6 (45)	19.4 (98)				
Big	31	18.9 (53)	8.9 (45)	14.3 (98)				
Old								
Small	35	28.3 (53)	2.2 (45)	16.3 (98)				
Big	79	9.8 (51)	2.3 (44)	6.3 (96)				

Table 12

Percent and Number of Teachers Recommending Retention for
Hypothetical Female Students Based on Given Factors

Low Academic Performance									
		Low Maturity			High Maturity				
		Vignette Number	K-3 (N)	4-7 (N)	Total (N)	Vignette Number	K-3 (N)	4-7 (N)	Total (N)
<u>Low Ability</u>									
Young									
Small	13	100 (53)	71.1 (45)	86.7 (98)	61	92.5 (53)	40.9 (44)	69.1 (97)	
Big	77	94.0 (51)	48.9 (45)	72.9 (96)	75	81.1 (53)	37.8 (45)	61.2 (98)	
Old									
Small	63	88.7 (53)	39.9 (43)	64.6 (96)	43	67.9 (53)	31.1 (45)	51.0 (98)	
Big	23	69.8 (53)	40.9 (44)	56.7 (97)	5	28.3 (53)	15.6 (45)	22.4 (98)	
<u>High Ability</u>									
Young									
Small	49	96.2 (53)	75.6 (45)	86.7 (98)	11	90.6 (53)	60.0 (45)	76.5 (98)	
Big	73	92.5 (53)	73.3 (45)	83.7 (98)	69	73.6 (53)	53.3 (45)	63.9 (98)	
Old									
Small	57	92.2 (52)	60.0 (45)	77.3 (97)	33	64.2 (53)	37.8 (45)	52.0 (98)	
Big	39	69.8 (53)	53.3 (45)	62.2 (98)	25	32.1 (53)	17.8 (45)	25.5 (98)	
High Academic Performance									
<u>High Ability</u>									
Young									
Small	55	39.6 (53)	13.3 (45)	27.6 (98)					
Big	17	11.3 (52)	9.1 (44)	10.3 (96)					
Old									
Small	7	17.3 (52)	4.5 (44)	11.5 (96)					
Big	1	11.3 (53)	9.1 (44)	10.3 (97)					

among teachers. For 21 of the 40 vignettes, fewer than 66.7% of the teachers made the same recommendations.

Grade was a significant factor in explaining the retention decision. The higher the grade level of the student, the greater the likelihood he or she would be promoted. Chi square (7, $N = 3498$) = 318.8, $p = < .001$ (see Table 13). This supports the findings noted earlier in this study that teachers at all grade levels are more uncertain of the benefits of retaining students in upper grades. We cannot know whether a 6th grade teacher would make the same decisions if she taught 1st grade, or vice versa. In other words, teachers who retain students in primary grades may or may not retain if they teach upper grades.

Convergence with Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire. Insight about grade level differences was gained by analysis of the retention scale derived from Items 1-20 (excluding Items 16, 17, and 18). This scale, Retscore, can be interpreted as an index of teachers' attitudes toward retention. A high score indicates a positive attitude, a low score indicates a negative attitude. The average for all teachers was 47.8. ($SD = 6.5$), alpha was .79. T-tests found no significant differences for K-3 ($M = 48.0$, $SD = 5.9$) and 4-7 teachers ($M = 47.8$, $SD = 7.1$), groups, as even a cursory look would suggest. Thus it appears that teachers at different levels do not differ systematically in their beliefs about retention. There are teachers at all grade levels who believe retention has fewer positive aspects in the upper grades. In spite of this, retention in upper grades occurred (see Appendix H for retention rates by grade).

Table 13

Crossbreak of Retention Decisions by Grade Level Taught^a

Decision	Grade Level Taught							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Promote	133	155	156	189	270	125	347	183
Retain	425	243	363	247	246	153	166	97

Chi square (7, N = 3498) = 318.8, p < .001

^aThe number of decisions recorded in each column is equal to the number of teachers in each grade times 40 (the number of vignettes evaluated). Some teachers did not respond to all vignettes.

An estimate of the average number of students each teacher retained each year of teaching was calculated from teachers responses to Items 25 and 26. The estimated average number of retentions per year for K-3 teachers was 1.06 (SD = .61), and for 4-7 teachers, the estimated average was 1.07 (SD = .96). The point of interest that resulted was that the variances in average numbers of retentions of the primary and upper level teachers was significantly different, $F(1,86)=2.43$, $p < .01$, although the means did not significantly differ. One interpretation is that while there is more disagreement among teachers about the positive outcomes of retaining students in upper grades, those teachers who believe in retaining students in upper grades tend to retain more students than the typical K-3 teacher.

Retention Decision Simulation findings represent paper and pencil decisions on fictitious students with limited information available to the teachers and should be interpreted cautiously. Given these limitations, teachers' responses to the vignettes should be interpreted as answers to, "What would you recommend if you had a child with the following characteristics?" Regression analyses results indicate that each teacher operates with his or her own ordering of factors.

Results of Teacher Interviews and Open-Ended Items

Factors Considered

Teacher interviews and teachers' responses to open-ended questionnaire items provided insight into how teachers weigh student characteristics when making retention real-life decisions. For example,

while academic performance is an important factor for the majority of teachers, the open-ended sources of data provided a more complete picture of what teachers define as academic performance that warrants retention, and how teachers consider performance in conjunction with other factors such as ability, effort, or size. This section weaves together interview and questionnaire data about each of the following factors: (a) academic performance, (b) ability, (c) effort, (d) home environment, (e) self-concept, (f) maturity, (g) age, (h) size, and (i) gender.

Academic Performance

The criteria for satisfactory academic performance are shaped by school division policy which states that students failing two of three major subjects, reading, communications, or math shall be considered for retention. Almost 92% of the teachers agreed with this policy. The following comments reflect the belief that promotion should be based on the ability to meet academic standards:

Based on guidelines set by the school division, if a child does not meet the necessary requirements for promotion, then they should be retained. (A 5th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Retention should only be considered if the child has not mastered the academics (A kindergarten teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Retention is necessary for children failing reading and math (A 3rd grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

If a student's average for the year is failing in two subjects, he should be retained. (A 7th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Unless a child is mentally handicapped or has been retained twice with no real improvement, then a child either meets state and school requirements or he is retained. (A 4th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

If a child cannot do the work they [sic] should be retained. (A 1st grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Teachers expressed two different views about the impact of retention on academic performance; some believe performance improves in the second year and others that it does not. The comments below suggest academic performance improves:

I have never seen a child do worse the second time. (A 3rd grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

He has done much better. Doesn't hand in those late papers to me any more. Has even had some 100s and its gotten so, he uses the wall back there to post his papers. He can post those 100s anywhere he wants. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

There have been a couple that I've let go on that have failed 1st, and I should have kept them back. By 1st and 2nd grade, failing does start to hurt the child. I think they recognize it more. I think now, I'd rather see a retention in kindergarten rather than anywhere else. (A kindergarten teacher - Interview)

Other teachers expressed the opposite view, stating that retention does not improve academic performance and often creates behavior and attitude problems:

I have seen few positive effects of retention in 17 years of teaching. (A 6th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

In grades 4-7 I have seen little improvement in most students' grades and attitudes. (A reading skills teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

I realize there are many, many factors that influence a child's performance. Therefore I am less likely now to view retention as the best solution. (A 3rd grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

I've seen too many instances where students retained in grades 6 and 7 received no benefit whatsoever. It caused behavior and attitude problems. The student has usually been a bad influence on ones who were good students, but followers. (A 6th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

The importance these experiences have in shaping teachers' beliefs about retention is critical. When describing a student under consideration for retention, some teachers would compare the child to one they had successfully retained in the past:

He was very similar to this child in that he was intelligent. We kept him back a year and now he is doing beautifully. (A kindergarten teacher - Interview)

It is noteworthy that many teacher comments refer to past retention experiences, some described students they had retained or students in their schools whom other teachers had retained. Others described personal experiences. It is not so much the event itself, but the person's interpretation of the event that influences beliefs about retention. The impact of experience is characterized by comments from three teachers, Ms. Hawkes, Ms. Lee, and Ms. Dickinson. Ms. Hawkes had retained at least two students per year in the past, and was recommending that several students be retained at the time of the interview. As her comments indicate, she did not believe retention is always successful, but feels a 50% chance of success makes retention worth the risk:

I feel at least 50% of the time when I retained a student, they actually made satisfactory work and deserved to be promoted the second time. In some cases you see a complete turnaround, especially if the reason that they were being retained was for immaturity. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

Even two teachers who have retained relatively few students in the past recalled different types of experiences. For Ms. Lee the retention of one student who did not make progress the second year was enough to make the teacher wary of ever retaining a child again as she explained:

I retained a child once in 2nd grade. He did really well in science because he liked it. But the other subjects he did not do well in

and I had to retain him, at that point I felt I had to retain him because he had not mastered other things as well. But, the next year I don't think he did any better. It became a vicious cycle. He still did well in science, I tried to use it to get him into other things, but it really didn't work. (A 4th grade teacher- Interview).

For Ms. Dickinson the successful retention of one student was recalled and hangs on as a reminder that retention can work well, although she had found alternatives to retention for two students in her present class:

I have retained a child before. He was younger and smaller than the other children. He did not have his academic skills or his social skills. He was borderline as far as academics here, probably higher on that grade level than this child I am promoting, but I thought he'd do best by being retained. And now he is a senior or graduated from high school. His parents still tell me this was the best thing we ever did. (A 1st grade teacher - Interview)

This study does not judge whether students in fact have or have not shown improvement after retention. The emphasis is that teachers retain students for failure to meet academic standards, some believe that retained students do achieve the next year, while others do not. This influences teachers' decisions as do other factors or characteristics of the child which are described below.

Ability

Teachers often assess students' academic performance in conjunction with the students' ability. However, teachers described two opposing interpretations of the performance-ability interaction. Some teachers will promote a low ability student while retaining a higher ability student performing at the same level. The following comments explain this rationale:

I've got a child with a very low IQ. He could sit in the 6th grade for 150 years and never do it. All right there is no sense for me

to retain that child. But if a child has the ability and doesn't do, he will be retained. (A 6th grade teacher - Interview)

You are doing a child an injustice to push him beyond his capability, but there comes a point that you realize that there is a child who is very slow, that will never reach the level you would like him to reach. These are probably what you would call social promotions. They are not slow enough to be mentally retarded, but they are slower than low average. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

The child with ability who does not measure up to the requirements of the grade, that would be the one considered for retention. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

Retention most often does not change the child's ability in any major way. We must be reminded that we are not all college bound with aspirations of a doctor, lawyer, teacher, etc. (A kindergarten teacher - Retention Decision Simulation)

Results of the Retention Decision Simulation indicated that for the majority of teachers for whom ability was a significant factor, the regression coefficient was negative. This means the low ability students were promoted and high ability students were retained.

For other teachers the opposite point of view is taken. They tend to promote those who are able, as one teacher concluded:

If the kid has the ability, what's the point of keeping him back. It just doesn't work. (A 7th grade teacher- Interview)

Another teacher explained:

You know they can get the material. Something is just bothering them or whatever, but holding them back will just add to their problems. (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

Still others believe that some low ability students are slower and need more time to master skills and therefore retention can be beneficial for them:

Some children just need longer to learn. We need to give them that time. (A 2nd grade teacher)

These teachers do not simply pass low ability students nor do they cease having expectations for low ability students. A third grade teacher explained her beliefs:

All students are able to produce and should be made to feel good about their efforts. I tell my students sometimes a D is earned by hard work. Certain students will have more difficulty getting through and we must teach them to work at their own personal best. (A 3rd grade teacher - Interview)

Taking responsibility for learning in the classroom was a thread that ran through this interview.

In summary, ability is an important consideration in making retention decisions, but teachers weigh ability in different ways. Some believe the child with low ability may need more time to master grade level skills and, therefore, retention will be appropriate for that child. Other teachers believe that low ability students will always have difficulty meeting standards and will not be best served by retention. More teachers believe the low ability students should be promoted.

Maturity

Teachers of all grade levels described some potential retainees as immature.

Her main problem was immaturity, acting out, speaking and laughing at inappropriate times, being on the floor when she should be in her seat. (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

He is silly, giggly, interrupts, loud, just immature (A 5th grade teacher - Interview)

He is just too immature to handle the work we have to do. (A kindergarten teacher - Interview)

Regardless of the grade level taught, teachers gave similar descriptions of immature behavior. The criteria listed in the explanation for the Retention Decision Simulation were derived from teachers' descriptions of specific behaviors, e.g. acts inappropriately and does not work well independently.

In summary, while teachers at all grade levels often described potential retainees as immature, teachers' distribution of points (Item 23) on the Retention Beliefs Questionnaire suggest that immaturity is a more important factor in K-3 retention decisions. All teachers indicated a belief that retention in K-3 gives immature students a chance to catch up, but the number agreeing with the same statement about 4-7 students was not as high. Likewise, teachers believe that immaturity is more responsible for problems of students in K-3 than in 4-7. Problems associated with immaturity are often difficult to distinguish from problems attributed to age and size.

Effort

Teachers' perceptions of student effort affect the way teachers view academic performance. The teacher's perception of student ability is a factor in the retention decision. For example, when teachers believe students are putting forth maximum effort and working to their ability, those students may be promoted in spite of poor performance.

She is working to capacity - doing all she can... (A 3rd grade teacher - Interview)

Looking at academics alone, she would be retained. I felt she would feel that she failed and possibly not work as hard next year. (A 1st grade teacher - Interview)

A child doing his best and shows a great effort should not fail. If the child does fail then the school has not met his needs. (A 5th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Shortcomings are not as likely to be overlooked, however, when teachers perceive that students are putting forth little or no effort.

Karl is a puzzle to me. I've never gotten enough work out of him to have an idea of what he can or cannot do. He never, in the 3 months since he has been here, never completed an assignment for me, never even worked on an assignment. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

She is just a child who won't do. I haven't seen enough out of her to know if she has the basic skills. (A 5th grade teacher - Interview)

In fact, effort may affect the way teachers think about students in general, and the way they interact with them in the classroom as one teacher suggested:

I know I just don't have the patience with this child or spend the time that I should - but she just doesn't put forth the effort. (A 5th grade teacher- Interview)

Student unwillingness to do work may be more of a problem in the upper grades than in the primary grades. One teacher concluded that in the following:

Few retentions are cut and dried. Once in a while you have one that is just the way it is. You have seen this all year and they know it is coming, a child that simply won't do. But you don't have that much in primary grades. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

However, not all upper grade teachers believe that retention is a necessary result of not doing work as the following exchange reveals:

Teacher: It [retention] doesn't help a whole heck of a lot. I will never retain to punish them. Never.

Interviewer: Punish?

Teacher: You don't do your work, so you have to fail. I think that is just a crock. I would only

retain a child if I knew he could not succeed in the next grade and if I had something to offer that child that would help that child mature and develop. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

Another teacher revealed her hierarchy for determining why the student is not performing:

If a child proves to me that he can't do, that's when we do testing and that's when we get him into an appropriate classroom, so maybe he can do. So, there is still hope for him. The child who simply won't do that's when our guidance counselors if we had them or some type of alternative to spelling words ought to be. And the child who will do, Glory Be, full speed ahead. (A 6th grade teacher)

Some teachers take responsibility for what happens in their classrooms, even when students do not do work. Teachers described a variety of techniques they used to involve students. Others explained that the students had to learn to be responsible, subscribing to a work ethic view of school.

Teachers also expressed a concern that if retentions were not a possibility, students would have no reason to put forth effort:

If children are never retained in the pass-fail system we have, then a message is sent. Achievement is not a means to an end. So, why the effort. It doesn't take an analytic thinker to solve this one. (A specialty teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

If students do no work and they fail subjects, or they do not understand and fail; the worst thing to do is send them on to the next grade. This will certainly lead to dropouts. (A 3rd grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

If students are not retained any time, all they will achieve is failure. This can affect the future of any child and produce an adult with no goals or motivation. (A 2nd grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Teachers' responses to Item 6 of the Teacher Retention Beliefs

Questionnaire confirm that the majority of teachers (69.7%) agreed that the possibility of retention motivates students to work harder. We do not

know how many students are motivated or if these are students who might actually be retained. The value of retention as a motivator is not supported by research (Bocks, 1977; Labaree, 1984), however, teachers discussed the motivational aspect of retention:

During the last 10 years I have seen an estimated 10 students retained. Unfortunately, I must admit, most of these students did not improve a significant amount and I question the decision (after the year of retention). However, I believe that maintaining the retention concept within the classroom is a motivating factor for other students who might not work up to their ability. (A 6th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Teachers believe that retention serves as a school motivator and a motivator for individual students.

In summary, teachers believe that knowing retention is a possibility motivates students. Lack of effort and motivation seem to be problems that have retention implications more often for students in grades 4-7 than students in K-3.

Home Environment

Teachers view the home environments of their students in two ways that affect retention decisions. First, teachers consider the amount of parental support for the retention decision. Second, teachers attribute students' difficulties in school to deprived home backgrounds and interact with students accordingly.

Support for retention decision. Teachers repeatedly indicated support from home was important when making the decision to retain a student. Teachers do not, however, share a common view of how parental support should be weighed. Some teachers believe that unless the parents

are supportive and work with the child emotionally, the retention will not produce the intended results. Those teachers will retain only if parents are supportive. To other teachers, the willingness of parents to work with the child may influence the teacher to promote the marginal child. As one teacher stated:

...you know they will take them to the library over the summer, and work with them. (A 1st grade teacher - Interview)

Teachers do not agree about the appropriate level of parent involvement in the decision making process. Some believe the parents should be consulted:

We should care what the parents think. These are their children. (A 6th grade teacher- Interview)

My decision is based on a student's apparent effort to do passing work. If the school has received no support from the home, then I do not press for retention even if there was no effort. (A 7th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Not all teachers share that view. Some teachers believe that teachers, as professionals, should judge what is best for the child and resent parental interference:

Now it is almost as if we have to ask the parents' permission to retain a student. (Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Teachers also expressed a different type of concern regarding parental support. Some try to determine how much trouble an unwilling parent will give a teacher who is determined to retain a student. Teachers seem to assess whether or not retention will be worth the administrative hassle in those cases. While this view was not expressed by all teachers, it was expressed with intensity in written comments and interview statements.

Contribution of home environment. While teachers attribute many of the problems students have to poor home environments, teachers reported that home environment was not a major consideration, when deciding whether to promote or retain students (see Table 6).

In preliminary interviews, teachers and administrators discussed the impact of poor home environments. One teacher even stated she thought the school could provide some stability and encouragement for students who do not get it at home. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a 7th grade teacher:

You could just go through and pick out the ones that we're really better off retaining in 6th or 7th grade, or just keeping them here until they are 17 years old and trying to educate them a bit. Because as long as they are in a community type school like this where there are people they know, who they are close to, then they go to school. but once they leave here and go to the middle school.. when they are 17 they stop. At least here somebody is standing behind them pushing... But once they leave here they don't do a thing. We have had whole families of them like that. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

Teachers attribute many of the problems their students have to poor home environments, and almost all interviewed teachers were aware of students in their classes from troubled homes. Teachers of grades 4-7 rated home environment as the most important contributor to students' problems, assigning an average of 24.8 points ($SD = 18.0$) to the factor. For K-3 teachers, home environment closely followed ability with an average of 20.8 points ($SD = 13.8$). (See Table 7.) One 7th grade teacher characterized the range of problems accompanying different home environments:

...kids come from backgrounds where they are experience-deprived. There is not a lot of motivation from the home... 'My daddy pulps wood and he makes good money, and so it [school] is not important and my

daddy said it wasn't.' Then there are others where the parents may be telling them education is important, yet they really are deprived of the experiences that most children in other areas come to school having had.

We also have kids who are dealing with such traumatic home circumstances that I don't blame them. I couldn't concentrate on school either. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

Teachers described a number of adverse home situations. Often children lived with grandparents or other relatives because of the instability of the natural parents. Many had single mothers who were not available because of work demands. Other teachers feared students suffered the effects of alcoholic parents, parental unemployment, psychological and physical neglect. Some home situations present mixed messages to children, in others teachers believe education is not valued:

Brian can probably read better than the stepfather ever dared. Brian thinks he is great because he's already better than his mom and dad. Where is the expectation? Yet, he can't do what 9 and 10 year olds can do (he is 12 yrs. old) so his self-esteem suffers that way. (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

In Jeff's family you go to school as long as someone makes you and then you leave. They get along and that's all he sees. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

I feel the number one thing that makes a kid successful is the home environment. By the time they get to 6th or 7th you can really tell. I just believe in the effect the family has. (A 5th grade teacher - Interview)

I guess what I am saying is that I think parents play such an important part with what their children are capable of doing. (A 1st grade teacher- Interview).

Some parents are simply unable to help their children. A first grade teacher talked about her frustration with one child who was academically behind. While the mother and child were cooperative, the mother could not read and, therefore, could not provide the necessary help for the

child. The problem of educating parents was addressed in interviews by several teachers.

While many teachers acknowledge that home problems exist, they are likely to view them differently and thus interpret the responsibilities of teachers in different ways. A comparison of the two quotes below reveals that while two teachers acknowledge the lack of supervision at home, one teacher describes the students as spoiled and the other as needing to be self-sufficient.

I think in a lot of cases they are spoiled from home. They are not expected to do things that are constructive, They are not given responsibilities and then the parents see them complete them satisfactorily. (A 7th grade teacher Interview)

The mothers most often work outside of the home and an awful lot of the time there is nobody there when they get home. No supper, no structure. Nobody there to do laundry. The kids have to be so darn independent to meet the basic needs of life. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

Another described how home responsibilities affected one child in her room who had been retained the previous year because she did not turn in her work. Completing homework was still a problem, but as this teacher indicated, the child will not be retained this year and should not have been retained the previous year.

She has a lot of responsibility at home. She has two smaller sisters she takes care of. She'll do her assignment and then the next day she won't. She's had to take care of the kids. She takes tests real well. She learns the material, its just the day to day work. (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

Views of teacher responsibilities. Teachers view their responsibilities and abilities to compensate for poor home environments differently. One teacher who gave a detailed description of home situations went on to state:

I think we have to teach them that regardless of what your background is, regardless of what you come from and what you have to work with, ultimately you are responsible for your life, although you did not choose your family. When you get to be a poor bum who cannot get a job, what good does it do to say it was my parents' fault. (A 7th grade teacher - Interview)

Another expressed concern, but was more doubtful about the impact teachers can have:

I think the home quality is most important. We can show that we care and sometimes change that and let them see that they are worthwhile, and they have something of value to society. Sometimes we are successful, but we're not always. (A 5th grade teacher - Interview)

Again it is not clear how much the teacher can compensate for home situations. When specifically asked, nevertheless, one teacher replied:

No matter what, we have them for six hours a day. I think you should be able to do something in that time. (A 3rd grade teacher)

The ways teachers talked about students' home situations were strikingly similar to descriptions provided by Richardson-Koehler (1988) and Casanova (1988) in their studies of at risk children. Since parents were not a part of this study and actual home situations or parent attitudes were not substantiated, these interpretations should be read as just that, teachers' perceptions of home environments. Ashton and Webb (1986) contend that teachers with a low sense of self-efficacy tend to view home as a major variable that impedes their progress. Often it is not that parents and teachers are in conflict over the value of education, they just misperceive one another. Interviews revealed that those teachers who believe they can take children where they are and make progress with them were retaining fewer students than those who focused

on the problems of getting no support from home. This warrants systematic examination.

In summary, teachers believe that home environment plays a major role in student problems. Some teachers believe they have the responsibility to try to compensate for home deficiencies, other do not believe this is possible. Teachers do consider parents' reactions to retention as they make their decisions. Teachers work toward gaining parent support, and if parents strongly oppose retention, the child may be promoted by some teachers who believe the parents are important in the decision, and by others who do not want the administrative hassle.

Self-concept

The majority of teachers see retention as a positive step for the retaineer. The majority of teachers believe retention is an effective means for preventing the student from facing daily failure in the next grade. They believe that promoting a child who is academically behind will harm the self-concept of the child. "If he can't do this work, how can I possibly send him on?" was stated by teachers regardless of their position on retention in general. In comments on Teacher Beliefs Questionnaire teachers wrote:

I have seen many children overwhelmed and frustrated by being in over their heads (A 7th grade teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

I hate to see students suffer the frustration of being unable to succeed in their school work. To socially promote them to more and more frustrating assignments is cruel and does not give them the help they need to learn the skills they are having trouble with... (A Chapter I teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

I feel that children need to achieve success in order to feel confident about themselves and their work. I've seen children that struggled one year and were retained. They were some of the best students the next year. This provided a positive foundation for their future achievements. (A kindergarten teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

I witness daily the frustrated students who should have been retained but were not, (A Chapter I teacher - Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

A lot of times they are well motivated [after retention] because they feel better about themselves. A child that feels good about himself is going to do better. He can be a repeater. Once he gets over the hump of having to repeat he can be an important person in the next class. Where in this class he was low man on the totem pole. I think it is a real confidence builder. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

Therefore, many teachers at all grade levels believe they are encouraging a child to build a stronger self-concept by retaining that child. One teacher who had not retained a child in many years had a slightly different view. She suggested that the teacher had to teach the child how to do his or her best and feel good about that. Only when the child was absolutely unable to do any of the work would retention be an option.

I think there are a lot of students who are going to struggle, we all struggle... If I know that a child is going to be completely lost in the next grade, I don't think he should be sent on, If he can't get any of the material at all, and I mean can't get it, like I wouldn't send a child who couldn't read... (A 3rd grade teacher - Interview)

In the interviews teachers talked about the students who have low self-esteem, but how this affects retention decisions is unclear as the following excerpt from an interview with a first grade teacher indicates:

This one little boy I have is going to repeat this year. He just comes out and says "I hate myself!" You know when he does that I say, "It's not that bad, you can study at home or I can help you." It bothers me because he pouts a lot. He keeps it in somewhat too. You can just look at him and see that he is unhappy with what he has done, It doesn't matter what art project I give him. He is going to be the one who says, "I can't do it," before he gets it on his paper...He

just has a poor attitude about himself and I guess you can understand it, He has failed kindergarten and now he is not doing that well in 1st. He is likely to fail... You work with a child for a year and if you see that they are not able to make it and if they see themselves as a failure you owe it to them to help them see that they are not. And I think repeating many times they can see success in themselves and I don't think its fair if they cannot handle first grade material. Overnight they are not going to be able to handle second. And I feel, my philosophy I guess is that if I feel inside that they are not able to handle the next grade academically, socially, emotionally, I feel they need to stay back for their own good. It's a very hard decision and I don't like the time of year when you put down on paper the names of those who you think won't make it and I think you always have a little hope, well, maybe but most of the time you are going to feel pretty good about the decision. After all, you are taking a year of the child's life and its up to you to decide if they can go on and its a hard decision. (A 1st Grade Teacher - Interview)

In summary, teachers do not believe that retention at K-3 or 4-7 permanently labels children. They also do not believe retention at K-3 harms the self-concept of children. Moreover, many teachers believe that retention allows children to view themselves as successful, the next year in a grade. This is consistent with research that shows parents and teachers believe self-concept of retained children is improved during the non-promotion year (Ames, 1980; Finlayson, 1977). Teachers are less certain of the effects on children in grades 4-7.

Age

Teachers frequently mentioned age when stating why a particular student was being considered for retention or was going to be promoted.

Below are some examples in which being older leads to promotion:

Both are being placed in 1st grade. They were in pre-kindergarten last year and if we went ahead and kept them another year they would be so much older. (A kindergarten teacher - Interview)

This child was retained in kindergarten and first grade. He will be 10 yrs. old. There is no way a 10 yr. old can be in 2nd grade and not stand out. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

He is too old. He needs to be with 3rd graders. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

Just as being older may lead to promotion, being younger may lead to retention. Teachers at all grade levels made reference to the fact that particular children were young for the grade; this was one more factor in favor of retention:

He is just too young for 6th grade, positively too young. The first two 6 weeks he never got the right books to any class. He wasn't ready for 6th grade. (A 6th grade teacher - Interview)

It's been my experience that younger children do seem to have more trouble. That doesn't hold true 100% of the time... (A kindergarten teacher - Interview)

He would have benefitted from another year in 1st grade. He is young. He is going to be all right in a couple of years. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

However, teachers have different interpretations of what constitutes an age difference worthy of special consideration as the following indicate:

I think age does matter if they have repeated before. (A 1st grade teacher - Interview)

However to another teacher one previous retention does not make a child too old, but two seems to be critical for some:

A lot of times we look at age, but because he has only been retained once that hasn't been a factor - his size, he is not physically a lot bigger than the others. (A 5th grade teacher - Interview)

Effects of being overage. Retention results in some students being older than their grade level peers. In preliminary interviews, teachers mentioned that overage students tend to be behavior problems in the upper grades. In contrast, several primary level teachers commented that the

second time in a grade a particular student became a leader or helper as the following indicate:

They become the heroes of the group. They are the big kids. There is no stigma or anything like that for a retention in 1st or 2nd grade. (A 2nd grade teacher- Interview)

They want to be leader. They know what is expected of a 3rd grader. They want to help. (A 3rd grade teacher - Interview)

He would talk to you. He went from being an introvert to an extrovert. This year he knocked on my door and asked me if I would like to see [his report card], and he had straight A's. Now see, he was young enough to hold back. Now when you get into those who are older, big ones, you cannot retain. (A 2nd grade teacher - Interview)

These perceptions were confirmed in teachers' responses to questionnaire items. Only a few teachers (34%) believed that overage children in grades K-3 cause more behavior problems than other children. However, 73.8% of those responding agreed that overage children cause more behavior problems in grades 4-7.

Age when retention occurs. Teachers' responses suggested that teachers adhere to the popularly espoused notion, the earlier you retain a student the better. The following statements supporting this notion were written on Retention Decision Simulation, as general comments:

The younger the better for retaining children! After 4th it is more of a hindrance. (A 2nd grade teacher - Retention Decision Simulation)

Retention is best in K-3 even for those with low ability. (A 3rd grade teacher - Retention Decision Simulation)

It does absolutely no good in grades 6 and 7 - We've tried it and more problems, behavior and attitude have resulted than would have had these students been sent on. (A 6th grade teacher - Retention Decision Simulation)

However, the majority of teachers (55.8%) disagreed with the statement that if students are to be retained, they should be retained no later than 3rd grade.

Age is often discussed in conjunction with physical and social maturity. The differences in ages are particularly noticeable at the onset of puberty, which has a strong influence for some teachers. In reference to two older girls she was recommending for promotion, a teacher commented:

And it is not fair to leave young ladies in with a bunch of little girls. (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

However the onset of puberty is not a green light for promotion for all teachers. One 4th grade teacher talked about the successful retention of a boy:

He was maturing physically. I knew he was a bright, bright student, just depressed. The next year [after retention] he was all A's and B's and since then on the honor roll. He is in 6th grade now, and doing well (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

It is often difficult to separate the age factor from the social maturity factor as the following statement indicates, since age and maturity often overlap.

They [three potential retainees] are young for 6th grade and I am not sure they are ready to do the types of things we expect them to do. I think they need to grow up a little. The older child is more likely to accept the responsibilities that come with having four different teachers. (A 6th grade teacher - Interview)

In summary, age in combination with other factors may determine whether a child will be retained or promoted. While teachers believe retentions should take place as early as possible, the majority do not believe retention should be limited to primary grades. Teachers do believe

that overage children pose more problems than other children in grades 4-7, but not in grades K-3.

Size

Teachers did not rate size as an important factor in their decision to retain. However, size can influence decisions:

The boy is big. I don't think it would be good for the upcoming 3rd graders to be in a room with him (A 3rd grade teacher - Interview)

Based on size, the 3rd graders coming up will be overwhelmed and intimidated by him. (A 4th grade teacher - Interview)

If a child is borderline, but he is an awfully big student, I would consider sending him on for that reason. A large child is an outcast at times. (A 3rd grade teacher - Interview)

These comments described how size interacts with other factors. Only when a child is already borderline does size become an issue. This could explain why teachers believe it plays such a small role as their assignment of points indicates.

However, not all teachers believe that size should change the decision for a child not making academic progress:

She is a big child now, but she needs to be retained because she doesn't have the basic skills. (A 4th grade teacher)

In summary, size operates in conjunction with other factors and may influence a borderline decision.

Gender

Teachers rated gender the least important factor they consider when making a retention decision. It averaged less than a point from K-3 teachers and 4-7 teachers. Gender did not appear alone and was a

significant factor in conjunction with performance for one kindergarten teacher, and in conjunction with performance, maturity and age for one first grade teacher. While research suggests that boys are more likely to be retained than girls (Rose et al., 1983), in the majority of vignettes, teachers showed random variations between males and females with the same characteristics. There were seven instances in which the percentage indicating retention for male and female students differed by more than 10 points. In six of those cases, the males were more likely to be retained.

Summary of Teachers' Beliefs About Factors in Real-Life Decisions

In summary, retention is a complex decision in which a number of factors are weighed. Results presented thus far suggest that academic performance, ability, maturity, effort, and the child's self-esteem are important considerations when making retention decisions. Teachers' written comments and interview statements add to the complexity of retention because teachers interpret factors differently. For example, teachers often evaluate student academic performance in conjunction with ability and effort. While ability was rated an important factor, some teachers retain low ability students while others retain high ability students. Effort, though on average was not given as much weight as ability or performance or maturity, was considered by almost all teachers. However, some believe students' efforts increase after retention, while others hold the opposite view. Teachers believe home environment plays a major role in contributing to students' problems, but they do not share

a common view of appropriate teacher response. Teachers consider parent support for retention decisions, but when this is not achieved some will promote because they believe the parents have an important voice in the decision, while others choose to avoid an administrative hassle. Thus, these findings illustrate the wide range of interpretations teachers have about the factors they consider in making retention decisions.

It is also important to look at sets of beliefs that influence the behaviors of individual teachers. Profiles of six teachers are provided to expand understanding of how sets of beliefs operate for individuals.

Teacher Profiles

The discussion of each pair of teachers focuses on a different aspect of the retention issue. Fictitious names are used throughout to protect the identities of the teachers. The exact grade levels they teach will not be given, but each pair teaches students at the same grade level. The descriptions of Ms. Stevens and Ms. Grey, primary teachers, demonstrate how teachers weigh characteristics of a student to determine whether promotion or retention is warranted.

Descriptions of the upper elementary teachers present the different ways teachers at grades 4-7 view retention. Ms. Keats and Ms. Green, who teach the same grade, exemplify teachers who hold very different beliefs about retention; Ms. Green believes academic performance is the central consideration, Ms. Keats believes the social and emotional development are the major concern. The other upper elementary teachers, Ms. Nelson and Ms. White, who teach the same grade, reveal the different

ways teachers interpret their responsibilities for learning in the classroom. The subscript _r appears after Ms. Green_r and Ms. White_r to indicate that they are teachers who tend to retain students, whereas the subscript _p appears after Ms. Keats_p and Ms. Nelson_p to indicate they are teachers who tend to promote students.

Two Primary Teachers: Ms. Stevens and Ms. Grey

To be successful in her classroom Ms. Stevens stated "students must master the curriculum to be ready for [the next] grade." At the time of the interview, she had a student who had not mastered the curriculum, yet she has devised a plan to have him promoted:

Academically he cannot be promoted, but I've talked with the principal and I think he should be socially promoted. The child is [a full year older than the other children]. He came out of another school system and he was a non-reader..[He had] home problems, tremendous problems for this age child to handle. He's a good math student, has a good mind. He's not going to be an A student, but I think he could be a B or C student if given a chance. He really needs to be in [this grade again], but he is too big and he is too old. So my suggestion is that he goes [on to the next grade] and that he comes back to [my room] for reading. (Interview)

She was trying to make the same arrangement for another boy who was also behind in reading, but would be two years older than classmates if he were retained.

I know that academically they would be better off in [this grade again], but I think emotionally, as far as their discipline is concerned, their size, their age, they need to play and have gym with older children. Both of these need to feel better about themselves and even though they would be coming [back here] for reading they can say they are [___] graders. (Interview)

Two other children in the same reading group will be retained however:

The two of them will be retained because they are very small, very young... The two little ones we are retaining this year are bright children, but they just can't handle it. If they had been held out a year longer or if they were a year older, those children would not be retained... I don't care how much kindergarten and nursery school you give a child, he cannot learn to read until he is ready. It seems a shame to me to put in on a child's record that he has been retained... (Interview)

Ms. Stevens was asked to describe some of the behaviors they demonstrate as a result of being young.

Their attention span is very short. You teach them until you have lost their attention span and then I don't care what you do, they will not take it in or retain it... When a child is immature abstract things such as vowel sounds mean nothing to them. I have tried every way there is and they cannot hear the vowel sounds for themselves. (Interview)

In general, Ms. Stevens is not opposed to retention

Some children learn at a slower pace than others and may need two years to master skills. (Interview)

but she commented on the written questionnaire:

A child should be retained only when absolutely necessary. There should be more than one reason. (Retention Beliefs Questionnaire)

Ms. Stevens' depictions of students are not very different from those of

Ms. Grey, who teaches the same grade level students. Ms. Grey describes two boys who are potential retainees:

I think the children this year started school earlier. I think that has a big part in it. I think part of it is the immaturity and part, well, I'm not sure it isn't all immaturity. It isn't learning disabilities. One has been specifically tested because I was so worried about him. I think the problem is a rigid classroom, although I have a lot of freedom in there. But the amount of work this year for this grade you have to keep them on task. They do have the ability. I think it is the pressure, this much work to do today. I have to do it now. They just maybe daydream, maybe that's a good word. I can't say they don't pay attention because they pick up so many things and I find out from them orally during class time and I know they've been listening. Maybe it just overwhelms them.

Adam is definitely immature and probably just going to be an average student anyway, if he will just work at it. Self-discipline is what he needs. He is the baby in his family and his mother is very loving. She spends a lot of time with him. He is a very sensitive boy, loves to give hugs, tries to please you and he is just very sweet, spoiled and immature. I believe he'll grow out of that but he is going to have to push himself into the responsibility of doing his work.
(Interview)

Adam may be promoted however, since he has some of the necessary skills.

Ms. Grey stated:

If he can show that he has those facts somewhere in his head. He doesn't need the emotional trauma [of retention]. You have to think that at this early an age how much do you want to put them through?
(Interview)

She is sensitive to the long-term effects of retention and describes the dilemma of deciding whether to promote or retain:

How old will they be when they hit maybe 6th grade? Will he have the skills necessary to do the work, or will he be too old for that grade so that he is so embarrassed and becomes a problem child for the classroom. I think these are scary things to think about because you are thinking about somebody's life. But then again you have to look at him [now] and say can he do the necessary work [next year] or will one more year here help him grow enough to develop?
(Interview)

For the other boy, Brian, the likelihood of retention is more certain.

Brian has missed so much work [due to inattentiveness, not absences]. He still doesn't have the necessary skills for [the next grade]. He does not have his phonics skills. He is getting better this semester with his reading but his writing is still back on the [beginning] level. His social skills are a little behind the majority of the class. He really should not be put in the position of competing with [students in the next grade]. He needs to be here another year and then hopefully he can progress without any of these problems.

For Ms. Stevens and Ms. Grey, mastering the basic skills plays an important role, and this was a common theme that ran through interviews of most primary teachers. Both teachers also believe that there are able children who are too immature to keep pace with the curriculum. Ms.

Stevens specifically talked about changes that resulted in more academic demands on students. She tends to attribute the students' difficulties to not being ready, sounding similar to the nativist depiction in the work of Smith & Shepard (1989). Ms. Grey, likewise, attributed problems to having started school too early. The teachers believe the children have the ability, but they simply are not ready. The children affected in both of their rooms were boys, and when asked about the role of gender, both indicated that girls tend to mature more quickly and do not demonstrate these characteristics as often.

Both teachers also seem to be aware of the long-term effects retention may have. For Ms. Grey, the fact that both boys are young and small will count in favor of retention, but she was one of the only teachers to mention that you must think of students three or four years down the line. Ms. Stevens was faced with a different problem. In addition to the two likely retainees, she had two students who were already big and old. Her plans to move these students back to her for reading may suggest a strong sense of teacher responsibility, and a belief that she can make a difference for these students. The ways teachers view the responsibility for learning in the classroom is a characteristic that seems to distinguish those teachers who tend to retain many student from those who do not.

Two Upper Elementary Teachers: Ms. Green_r and Ms. Keats_r

The four data sources consistently indicated that Ms. Keats_r is a teacher who does not believe in retention. She regards retention as

"traumatic experience which lowers the self-concept [of a child] and should be avoided if at all possible." Specifically, she believes that retention harms the self-concepts of all children, K-3 and 4-7, and permanently labels them. She does not see retention as a means of preventing students from facing daily failure in a higher grade. In fact she describes the impact of retention as follows:

The self-concept is lowered and the situation becomes a vicious circle for the child. Low self-concept [leads to] lowered achievement. (Interview)

Her beliefs were consistently expressed in all sources of data; she had the lowest score (28) among all teachers on the retention scale derived from items on Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire (see Methods). She only retained 5 of the 40 hypothetical students in Retention Decision Simulation.

Ms. Keats_p explained her teaching philosophy as follows:

My philosophy is first love the child and they will work better for you. We don't humiliate students in here. (Interview)

She then went on to describe how she interacts with students.

If they do a paper that is not good they have to do it over again. I told them I am not putting a lot of failing grades in the grade book. You can do it until you get it right and usually they come through the second time. They appreciate not making a U in the grade book and they know you are pulling for them.

While she talked about specific competencies, the theme that carried through the interview was her focus on the emotional development of her students, building up their confidence as competent learners.

It's an interaction between teacher and student and I think they know pretty well how you feel towards them and that makes a difference. (Interview)

in her retention simulation process, academic performance, maturity, age, and size contributed significantly to her decisions. She stated that she could justify retaining two students at the time of the interview, but thought that it would do neither one any good, so she was planning to promote both students.

Her grade level counterpart, Ms. Green_r expressed her beliefs in retention strongly and consistently. Ms. Green_r believes that retention does not harm self-concept or label children, and believes it does keep them from facing daily failure in the next higher grade. While she considers the self-concept of the child, she views this issue very differently than Ms. Keats_p. Below she describes how she explains retention to parents:

...we need to do it again [repeat the grade] because I love your child and I don't want him or her to feel bad about himself or herself academically or socially or any way. To me that is the ultimate gift of love. If he or she isn't repeated this year I can almost be he or she will not pass later on. (Interview).

Ms. Green_r's explicit beliefs about retention as measured by the retention scale indicated her support for retention. Her score of 64 was highest among all participating teachers. Ms. Green_r's willingness to retain was confirmed by policy capturing in which she decided to retain 32 of the 40 students. Ms. Green_r only indicated promotion for hypothetical students who were performing above average. Regression analysis further indicated that Ms. Green_r based decisions solely on academic performance, which was the only significant predictor, accounting for 100% of the variance in her decisions. In her classroom, mastery of the state mandated standards (SOLs) was what determined success.

I want all those SOLs mastered, 80% of the curriculum should be mastered, 70% if the standardized scores are good. (Interview)

Factors such as age, size, and maturity did not influence her decisions and in her descriptions of actual students she clearly indicates that these are not critical issues. She described one of her students as a big girl, physically mature,

... last years' teacher did not hold her back on that basis. I disagree with that. (Interview)

She also described others whom she had retained in spite of their physical maturity, who were now doing well in school. It is important to keep in mind that she wholeheartedly believes that retention is not harmful, and in fact is a positive step for students. Ms. Green_r does have limits, however, and she described one child who will be promoted:

He has already been retained twice before and so far we haven't seen that retention has helped him meet the objectives. He is big and his size will overwhelm and intimidate the upcoming class. (Interview)

The emphasis on meeting academic objectives is still an important consideration.

While Ms. Green_r uses tests and classroom performance to determine whether standards are met, she deviated from the curriculum to try to reach her students. She described how two students had worked hard during the year, putting forth considerable effort. They still did not master the required skills, however, so retention was recommended. Nonetheless, Ms. Green said she was eager to work with them the following year to make them into strong students. She saw their hard work as a sign that they could become strong students the following year.

Ms. Green_r acknowledged the role of self-esteem, but believes she has limited ability to do anything about it,

I know self-esteem plays an extremely important part, but I can't do home and tell Mom and Dad they need to raise the level of self-esteem in their children. Most of them don't have it either... I want to tell the parents, I can't be everything to your child, teacher, mother, nurse, guidance counselor. You play a very important role very early on and then I'll try to do all I can until they get home to you. (Interview)

This was consistent with the distribution of Item 23, Retention Beliefs Questionnaire. Ms. Green_r assigned only two of the 100 points to child's self-esteem, indicating little relative importance for her in retention decisions.

For Ms. Green_r and Ms. Keats_p, the distinction is clear. Success in Ms. Green_r's class is measured in completion of the prescribed curriculum standards. She will use a variety of strategies to help a child reach those goals, but if they are not attained, the child will be retained. Ms. Keats_p believes that the prescribed curriculum is only part of her responsibility. Physical and social maturity and age influence her decisions about students and she is unlikely to retain students because she believes retention is more detrimental than academic deficiencies at this grade level.

Two Upper Elementary Grade Teachers: Ms. Nelson_p and Ms. White_r

Interviews with Ms. Nelson_p and Ms. White_r revealed that Ms. White_r was a teacher who believed in retaining students and did so while Ms. Nelson was more opposed to retention and did not retain many students.

The teachers held different expectations for students in their classes.

Ms. White stated the keys to success in her room:

To follow directions. Be organized. Be able to read with comprehension. Follow directions. To think. If I ask a question that doesn't have a simple answer, be able to think and figure it out. I'm hard. I'm a hard teacher. (Interview)

An emphasis on organization skills occurred again as she described what differentiated students who were having problems from those who were successful.

The good students are the ones that get to this grade and are organized. At least they know how to go about doing something and they can concentrate.. even if it is hard for them and you give them help, at least they will go ahead and complete it. The ones who are poor students lack concentration and the ability to get things completed... And I don't think any one teacher teaches that. I am not sure any teacher teaches that. I think it is the child themselves. (Interview)

Ms. White_r was clearly disappointed and frustrated by what she called lack of organization. She went on to state:

I don't think we are turning out as good students as we did 15 years ago. I don't think you can blame the teacher when the teacher is there to teach and the students won't do... If it's true that the more you expect, the better you get some teachers really get disappointed. (Interview)

Ms. Nelson_p's perspective was different:

I guess my philosophy is to take the kid where he is and get him interested in something. If you start to show interest in what they do, they will start to look for things [outside materials] and I have to think they are learning. (Interview)

She focused on the responsibility of the teacher to get the students involved, " ... it's the teacher, not the material, that is going to get the child interested." Like other teachers who expressed a similar view, Ms. Nelson described strategies she uses to involve all students, and she believes they are successful.

In the interviews Ms. Nelson_p and Ms. White_r both stated that you must look at the whole child when considering retention, which means looking at a number of factors. When asked to rank order the factors, Ms. White_r replied:

I think I really like organization, social maturity, ability, those things. I don't think you can put more emphasis on one than the other. I think you ought to look at the total child. (Interview)

As she scanned the list of her potential retainees, she reflected on the characteristics of some of the students:

Does not follow directions. Does not complete assignments. He could do it if he would just concentrate. A couple of these have very poor attitudes about school. They don't want to come. They don't want to do. They don't want to do anything. (Interview)

Ms. Nelson_p expressed her emphasis differently:

I consider the emotional and social thing. That has top priority with me... Even the toughest ones care. I do journals with the kids and these things come out. What they are most afraid of is being humiliated by a teacher. (Interview)

She described her criteria for retention:

I would only retain if I knew that a child could not succeed in the next grade and if I had something to offer that child that would help that child mature and develop so that he (I keep saying he, but I mean she as well) would succeed in the next grade. (Interview)

While there were no students failing her subject at the time of the interview, she described some who were failing other subjects as weak students and in two cases she indicated she would support grade level colleagues' decisions to retain them. For several other students, however, she strongly disagreed with colleagues.

Ms. Nelson_p has been influenced by the lack of positive effect from children who have been retained, and she concluded that 50% of the time they become discipline problems. Ms. White_r, on the other hand, is not

convinced that retention always helps, but believes she is obligated to retain students:

I would say that you cannot pass a child for doing absolutely nothing. (Interview)

This was a belief expressed frequently by upper level teachers who retained students.

Ms. White_r indicated that her views on retention have remained the same since she began teaching.

I've seen some success stories with retention and some bad. My views are just about the same. I let one slip by. I still begrudge myself about that because it really put a hardship on him later on. (Interview)

Ms. Nelson_p indicated that she was less likely to retain a student because she has observed that in the upper grades:

From my experience, retention doesn't help a whole heck of a lot... More than 50% of the time they become discipline problems... I think we are bound professionally to do what is best for the child and if the child is not going to get anything out of it, then don't do it. (Interview)

Both Ms. White_r and Ms. Nelson_p acknowledge that students have an array of home problems. Ms. White_r sees home environment as an obstacle to her effectiveness as a teacher. Below she provides an explanation for students' unwillingness to work:

I think it comes from parental attitudes. I think it comes from just total disregard for anything, whether its school or anything. (Interview)

In contrast, Ms. Nelson_r is determined to motivate students in spite of poor home environment, but is aware of the impact of home problems. She considers home situations when making retention decisions, looking at unusual circumstances such as death and divorce as factors in her

evaluations of students' progress. While teaching in a very similar setting to Ms. White_r, Ms. Nelson_p believes she has support from parents as the comment below indicates:

I think I have good parent support... I think it is because I support the kids and they know it. If I say the kid is not doing anything, the parents tend to believe me. (Interview)

The differences in the ways these teachers frame the issues of home support and responsibility for learning in the classroom are striking, suggesting some of the differences between teachers based on efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986). These remain speculative connections since classroom observation, parent, and student perspectives were not parts of the original study.

Summary of profiles

The profiles of Ms. Stevens and Ms. Grey suggest the ways primary teachers consider factors of ability, maturity, age, and size when making retention decisions. The distinctions among the profiles of Ms. Nelson_r, Ms. Keats_p, Ms. White_r, and Ms. Green_r offer some insight as to the different ways teachers view the appropriateness and consequences of retention, and how they define their roles and responsibilities as teachers. We can come closer to understanding why some teachers in these grades retain certain students and others do not.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of K-7 teachers' beliefs about retention in a medium size school division in Virginia. Results suggest teachers at all grade levels believe retention is an option that should be available to them. Almost 98% of the teachers surveyed disagreed with the statement "Children should never be retained." These results are consistent with research that finds teachers and the public widely endorse the practice of retention (House, in press; Smith & Shepard, 1987). The findings related to the research questions that guided this study provide insight into why teachers retain students. The findings are listed following each research question.

Research Question One

When is retention considered an appropriate action?

Teachers agreed that retention is warranted when:

1. Students are failing two of three subject areas of reading, communications, or math.
2. Students have learning disabilities, and are otherwise candidates for retention, i. e., their disabilities do not exempt them.

Teachers did not reach consensus on the appropriateness of retention when:

1. Students with passing grades are working below grade level;
2. Students with passing grades have excessive absences;
3. Students are in upper elementary grades (higher than third grade);
4. Students do not apply themselves.

The majority of teachers believe retention is appropriate for students who fail two of three subjects, reading, communications, or mathematics. Teachers differ in their beliefs about the appropriateness of retention in other instances, which according to school division policy, are left to the discretion of the teacher.

Research Question Two

How do teachers perceive the consequences of retention?

Teachers were in agreement with each other that:

1. Retention prevents students from facing daily failure in the next higher grade.
2. Retention in grades K-3 gives immature students a chance to catch up.
3. Retention in grades K-3 does not harm the child's self-concept.
4. Retention in K-3 and 4-7 does not permanently label students.
5. Retention does not prevent teachers from having wide ranges of achievement in their classrooms.

Teachers were split almost evenly in their beliefs about whether:

1. Retention in grades 4-7 gives the immature child a chance to catch up.
2. Retention in grades 4-7 harms the child's self-concept.

The majority of teachers view retention as a standard practice that does not harm the self-concept of the child who is retained in grades K-3. More teachers tend to see negative consequences when retentions take place in grades 4-7.

Research Question Three

What factors do teachers consider when making retention decisions?

To make the decision to retain or promote a student, teachers consider a number of factors. Teachers explicitly stated certain factors are given more weight in their decisions. Sometimes a factor, such as age, is given relatively little weight, but is considered by almost all teachers. Teachers' interview statements suggested that a number of factors are weighed to make decisions about individual students. In addition, teachers do not tend to view the same student characteristics such as ability in the same way. This summary provides highlights of each of the factors discussed in Chapter 4.

Academic Performance

Results of the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire and the Retention Decision Simulation indicated that academic performance was an important consideration for all teachers. This is consistent with research that finds poor academic performance as the most frequently cited reason for retentions (Niklason, 1984; Sandoval, 1984). Academic performance was a significant predictor in the Retention Decision Simulation for most teachers, but only two teachers based their retention decisions solely on academic performance.

Other factors such as ability, effort, and age affect teachers' interpretations of student performance. Interview data also revealed that even though teachers retain students for poor academic performance, not

all teachers are convinced that academic performance improves after retention, particularly in the upper grades.

Ability

Teachers take the ability of the student into account when making retention decisions, however, teachers view ability in two distinct ways relating to retention. Other things being equal, some teachers tend to retain low ability students, believing a slower child may need more time to master skills. Other things being equal, some teachers tend to promote low ability students, believing those students may never meet grade level expectations so retention is pointless.

Teachers who retain high ability students believe there is a good likelihood of success for these children after retention. Research suggesting the highest performing students make the most progress after retention may support this notion (Powell, 1982; Sandoval, 1984). Other teachers tend not to retain high ability students who are performing poorly because they believe retention will only lead to more problems, particularly in the upper grades.

Maturity

Interview data suggest that teachers at all grade levels described some potential retainees as immature. Results of the "distribution of points" item on the Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire suggest more emphasis is placed on immaturity in grades K-3. Teachers consider retention in grades K-3 an effective means of allowing students to

develop, while they are not as likely to believe retention in 4-7 is effective for immature students. This is consistent with research which suggests immaturity is a major force behind retention in early grades (Smith & Shepard, 1987) and of less concern at the upper grades (Byrnes & Yamamoto, 1986).

Effort

Teachers believe that knowing retention is a possibility motivates students. Research does not support this notion (Bocks, 1977; Labaree, 1984). Students are retained for lack of effort and motivation, but these problems seem to be greater concerns for teachers of grades 4-7 more often than students in K-3.

Home Environment

Teachers believe poor home environment contributes to students' difficulties in school. Some teachers believe they have a responsibility to compensate for home deficiencies, others do not believe this is their responsibility, nor that it is possible. Parental support affects teachers' decisions to retain students; without support many teachers will not retain. Teachers expressed different reasons for this opinion, some believing that retention cannot be successful without support from parents. Others believe that parents' judgment should be part of the decision. Still other teachers will not retain without parent support to avoid the possible administrative hassle of retaining a child against parent wishes.

Self-Concept

The majority of teachers believe retention is a positive step for students, preventing them from the frustration and failure of doing work that is too difficult. Teachers also cited examples of students who became more confident after retention. These beliefs are consistent with research that indicates parents and teachers believe retention improves self-concepts (Ames, 1980; Finlayson, 1977). In the present study, no data were collected to indicate how students themselves feel. Yamamoto (1980) found that students ranked being retained as almost as stressful as going blind or losing a parent.

Some teachers, like Ms. Keats and Ms. Nelson described in the Teacher Profiles, believe that social and emotional development are part of their responsibility. Other teachers recognize some problems associated with low self-concept, but are uncertain how to deal with them. One teacher described the low self-esteem of a boy who had already failed kindergarten, yet she believed she had to fail him again in first grade.

Age

Age in combination with other factors may determine whether a child will be retained or promoted. Children at risk of being retained for poor performance, who are older, are likely to be promoted, while children demonstrating the same behaviors who are younger are likely to be retained. If the older children are large, and the younger children are small the pattern is enhanced.

Research suggests the youngest child in a class is more likely to be retained than an older classmate (Bocks, 1977; Niklason, 1984; and Rose, et al., 1983). Results of the present study indicated that some students are more likely to be promoted because they are too old to remain in the same grade another year.

Teachers also believe overage children in grades 4-7 cause more behavior problems than overage children in K-3. This poses an interesting question: Will the overage child, who is a helper in second grade, become a behavior problem in fifth grade?

Size

In general, size is a consideration, but not a major factor in retention decisions. Size is often considered in conjunction with other factors. If a student much larger than classmates he or she may be perceived as an intimidating force for others, and the child may be promoted. Teachers likewise are more likely to retain small children.

Gender

Explicitly, gender was rated by teachers as an unimportant factor in their decisions to retain and teachers are not conscious of making distinctions according to gender. The Retention Decision Simulation revealed instances in which males and females with identical characteristics were treated differently by some teachers, suggesting that implicitly gender may be a factor for some teachers. The differences

between teachers' decisions based on grade level of the student were greater and more frequent than those based on gender.

Use of Factors In Decision-Making

Teachers confronted with poor academic performance interpret student characteristics to determine what they think is an appropriate action. This is based on their perceptions of the outcomes of retention. As the teacher profiles illustrated, two teachers may tend to retain students, but for very different reasons. Ms. Green focused solely on academic performance, whereas Ms. White focused on work habits as well as academic performance and effort. Teachers also promote students for different reasons, as teacher comments addressing each of the factors indicated.

Conclusions

Teachers retain students for many reasons that appear logical to the teacher based on her beliefs. This is the starting point for effecting positive changes for those teachers and their students. It is also valuable to know that sometimes teachers promote students because they have abandoned expectations for those students.

The larger issue is not whether a particular teacher retains students or whether certain types of students are more likely to be retained. Perhaps an overriding issue is how to address the problems of slow academic progress, immaturity, and low motivation in the classroom. Successful intervention could prevent students from spending an extra year in school and could assist the teacher during the year that problems

are apparent. Retention at the end of the year does not offer teachers the support or assistance they need to remedy the challenges at risk students pose. Moreover, retention without any special intervention, may do little to remedy student needs.

It may also be necessary to evaluate grade level expectations, particularly at the primary grades. Teachers feel compelled to retain students with ability who cannot handle the structure or pace of the classroom. Teachers frequently worried aloud that a particular student would not be independent enough to handle the responsibilities of the next grade. The appropriateness of curricular demands and the accuracy of teachers' perceptions of them may be fruitful areas of inquiry. For example, questions must be raised about children who need two years in kindergarten and another two years in first grade.

In the upper grades, where motivation is more of a problem, creative alternatives to school structure and access to vocational programs may provide the necessary spark for some students. Some teachers seem to be able to get through to their students, and we can benefit from their knowledge and their instructional strategies.

Finally most teachers believe retention is not harmful and may help certain children. More importantly, most teachers who retain students are doing so because they believe that retention is "in the best interests of the child." From this perspective we can begin to understand why retention is accepted as a school practice.

Future Research

The present study has provided insight about teachers' beliefs concerning retention. The differences between teachers' beliefs and retention practices in grades K-3 and 4-7 warrant further investigation. Replication would add the weight of evidence to the findings reported in this study. Suggested areas of research are listed below:

- (1) Do teachers of grades K-3 have different retaining practices than teachers of grades 4-7?
- (2) Are different factors associated with retention in grades K-3 than in grades 4-7?

While it is clear that teachers retain students for different reasons, interview data suggested that there were differences between teachers who tended to retain students and those who tended to promote, in particular, dealing with teacher responsibility for learning. A better understanding of the kinds of interactions "retaining" and "promoting" teachers have with students might reveal strategies that could benefit all students. Specifically research is suggested to answer the following question:

- (3) What kinds of classroom behaviors distinguish teachers who tend to retain students from those who do not?

Many student problems were attributed to home environment. As research has suggested, parents and teachers often misunderstand each other, and each other's values, forming an obstacle to productive cooperation between home and school (Casanova, 1988). Future research investigating the relationship between home and school could provide

insight to teachers and parents, ultimately resulting in benefits to students. Specifically two questions are suggested:

- (4) What is the impact of teacher perception of home environment on retention?
- (5) How does teacher perception of home environment affect teacher-student interactions?

The present study adds to the evidence that teachers believe in retention in spite of research suggesting negative outcomes. Teacher involvement in future studies could prove enlightening for teachers and researchers. Teachers often see only the short-term effects of retention and may be unaware of how retention affects students over the long-term. Researchers often do not deal with the daily problems posed by students having difficulties. Two different lines of inquiry are possible from collaborative research:

- (6) How does teacher involvement in research on retention change teachers' beliefs and behavior?
- (7) How does teacher involvement in research on retention affect researchers' beliefs?

Ultimately, the research question that could be addressed by collaborative efforts of researchers and teachers is:

- (8) How can the school provide alternatives to retention?

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Appendix A

Teacher Retention Beliefs Questionnaire

RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A

MAY, 1988

This questionnaire is part of a study of retention in grades K-7. Please answer all of the questions. If you wish to comment on any questions, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

Thank you for your help.

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E. Tomich

J. Impara

For each of the following, please CIRCLE the number of the response choice that best reflects how you feel about each of the following statements, using the scale:

- AGREE (1)
- TEND TO AGREE (2)
- TEND TO DISAGRE (3)
- DISAGREE (4)

Item	Response			
	AGREE		DISAGREE	
	1	2	3	4
1. Retention is an effective means of preventing students from facing daily failure in the next higher grade. N = 124 \bar{x} = 1.8 s.d. = .81	37.1 (46)	45.2 (56)	13.7 (17)	4.0 (5)
2. Retention is necessary for maintaining grade level standards. N = 124 \bar{x} = 2.2 s.d. = .88	22.6 (28)	44.4 (55)	25.0 (31)	8.1 (10)
3. Retaining a child in grades K-3 harms the child's self concept. N = 124 \bar{x} = 3.2 s.d. = .80	3.2 (4)	14.5 (18)	44.4 (55)	37.9 (47)
4. Retention prevents classrooms from having wide ranges in student achievement. N = 124 \bar{x} = 3.1 s.d. = .83	1.6 (2)	25.8 (32)	35.5 (44)	37.1 (47)
5. Students who do not apply themselves to their studies should be retained. N = 119 \bar{x} = 2.2 s.d. = .81	22.7 (27)	42.0 (50)	31.9 (38)	3.4 (4)
6. Knowing that retention is a possibility does motivate students to work harder. N = 122 \bar{x} = 2.2 s.d. = .73	13.9 (17)	55.7 (68)	26.2 (32)	4.1 (5)
7. Retaining a child in grades 4-7 harms the child's self-concept. N = 120 \bar{x} = 2.4 s.d. = .82	9.2 (11)	50.8 (61)	28.3 (34)	11.7 (14)

8. Retention is an effective means of providing support in school for the child who does not get support at home. N = 123 \bar{x} = 2.9 s.d. = .86	4.1 (5)	27.6 (34)	38.2 (47)	30.1 (37)
9. Students who do not make passing grades in two of the three major subject areas (reading, communications, or mathematics) should be retained. N = 123 \bar{x} = 1.7 s.d. = .65	35.8 (44)	56.1 (69)	6.5 (34)	1.6 (2)
10. Students who make passing grades, but are working below grade level should be retained. N = 123 \bar{x} = 2.6 s.d. = .83	8.9 (11)	34.1 (42)	43.9 (54)	13.0 (16)
11. Retention in grades K-3 is an effective means of giving an immature child a chance to catch up. N = 123 \bar{x} = 1.6 s.d. = .68	52.8 (65)	39.8 (49)	5.7 (7)	1.6 (2)
12. Retention in grades 4-7 is an effective means of giving an immature child a chance to catch up. N = 122 \bar{x} = 2.4 s.d. = .82	15.6 (19)	39.3 (48)	38.5 (47)	6.6 (8)
13. Students receiving services of a learning disabilities teacher should not be retained. N = 118 \bar{x} = 2.8 s.d. = .86	8.5 (10)	22.0 (26)	48.3 (57)	21.2 (25)
14. If students are to be retained they should be retained no later third grade. N = 122 \bar{x} = 2.6 s.d. = .88	11.5 (14)	32.8 (40)	41.0 (50)	14.8 (18)
15. In grades k-3 overage children (more than a year older than their classmates) cause more behavior problems than other children. N = 118 \bar{x} = 2.6 s.d. = .87	10.2 (12)	33.9 (40)	40.7 (48)	15.3 (18)

For questions 23-24 please respond by distributing a TOTAL OF 100 POINTS over the available choices. For example if you were asked to distribute 100 POINTS to weight the factors you consider when buying a new car, you might respond as follows:

FACTOR	POINTS
ORIGINAL COST	35
COMFORT	20
SAFETY	25
GAS MILEAGE	5
STYLE	15
COLOR	0

TOTAL	100

23. Listed below are some of the factors that teachers consider when deciding whether a student should be promoted or retained. Please distribute a TOTAL OF 100 POINTS across these factors to reflect the importance each would play as you make this decision. This is not a complete list, so please feel free to add OTHER factors that you consider in the space provided, adding point values for them.

FACTOR	POINTS \bar{x}	s.d.	range	med
SCHOOL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	36.4	18.6	0-99	30
EMOTIONAL MATURITY	12.5	7.6	0-40	10
SIZE IN RELATION TO OTHERS	3.6	3.7	0-10	5
AGE IN RELATION TO OTHERS	5.6	4.0	0-20	5
GENDER	.5	1.7	0-10	0
HOME ENVIRONMENT	6.0	7.4	0-50	5
EFFORT BEING PUT FORTH	11.5	7.1	0-35	10
CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM	8.9	7.1	0-50	10
ABILITY	14.2	8.9	0-40	10
OTHER	.8	3.6	0-30	0

(Please describe any other factors you consider. Be as specific as possible)

100

24. Listed below are some of the factors that contribute to the problems students have in school. Please distribute a TOTAL OF 100 POINTS to reflect the amount that you think each factor contributes to student difficulties. We realize that each child is different, but please make the distribution based on your overall experience. Please feel free to add OTHER factors in the space provided, adding point values for them.

FACTOR	POINTS	\bar{x}	s.d.	range	med
LOW ACADEMIC ABILITY		20.6	12.2	0-50	20
IMMATURITY		12.5	6.2	0-25	10
POOR HOME ENVIRONMENT		25.3	18.0	0-99	20
LACK OF MOTIVATION		21.3	9.6	0-99	20
POOR SELF-CONCEPT		13.5	9.3	0-40	10
CURRICULUM THAT IS TOO DEMANDING		4.9	6.0	0-20	5
OTHER		1.9	6.2	0-30	0

100

Your code number is :

25. In total how many years have you taught?
 $x = 13.2$ s.d. = 8.2 range 0-32yrs. med = 12.5yrs.

Attention Patron:

Page 132 repeated in numbering

26 a. In the blank spaces provided please indicate the number of years you have taught students in each of the grades listed below. Some teachers may teach more than one grade level each year. If you taught 6th and 7th grade science for 3 years, you would write 3 yrs. after each:

6 3yrs.
7 3yrs.

Number of teachers who have taught the grade for at least 1 year

pre-k	10		
k	29		
1	40	5	44
2	41	6	41
3	36	7	37
4	38	8	11
special education	20	high school	12
elementary music	7	elementary art	6
other	17	elementary physical education	5

26. In the blank spaces provided please estimate the TOTAL number of students you have recommended for retention in each of the grade levels during your teaching career. Place a zero (0) in the space if you never recommended a retention in a grade you have taught. (N = 122)

	\bar{x}	s.d.	Tot		\bar{x}	s.d.	Tot
k	1.0	2.7	122				
1	2.3	7.4	277	5	1.3	4.0	153
2	1.2	3.5	148	6	1.8	6.4	220
3	1.4	5.7	167	7	1.3	4.2	155
4	1.0	2.9	118	8	.3	2.0	
special education	.4	2.6		high school	.1	.6	
elementary music	.0	.4		elementary art	.0	.0	
other	.1	.8		elementary physical education	.0	.0	

27. What grade level (or subjects and grade levels) are you

teaching this year?
GRADE

SUBJECTS

28. What is your gender? (Circle the number)

(N = 119)

1 FEMALE
103

2 MALE
16

29. Which is the highest level of education that you have completed? (Circle the number)

N

46 1 BACHELOR'S DEGREE

26 2 BACHELOR'S DEGREE + 15 SEMESTER HRS. OR 21 QUARTER HRS.

37 3 MASTER'S DEGREE

11 4 MASTER'S DEGREE + 15 SEMESTER HRS. OR 21 QUARTER HRS.

3 5 OTHER (Please specify)

30. Please explain your views on retention. (Use back if more space is needed)

31. What has MOST influenced your beliefs on retention? Please use specific examples.

32. What means other than retention can the school use to educate children who do not meet the requirements of their grade?

Appendix B
Teacher Interview Protocol

I am working with Jim Impara from Virginia Tech as part of the dropout intervention project. We are trying to find out about those students who have been retained in elementary school. There are several general questions that I will be asking you. However, we think that teachers have a unique perspective into the situation and we welcome your opinions and your observations. Please do not feel limited by the questions.

As you may already note, I have assigned you a code number. No one associated with the school division will know what you say in this interview, unless you would like to be identified. We will be interviewing a number of teachers, and if comments are quoted in our report it will be something like, one teacher said, "...," Nothing will be identified with you personally.

We have already interviewed principals and done the same thing. I would like to tape record the interview, just so I can concentrate on what we say now and not take detailed notes. If at any time you would like me to turn off the tape recorder, well, you may work the button. Is there anything you'd like to ask before we begin? Let's begin

1. You are teacher _____.
2. You are now teaching _____ grade.
3. How long have you been at this school? _____
4. _____ this grade?
5. What are the most important things that a student must master in this grade?

Anything else?

6. I'd like you to think of specific students who are having trouble this year.

How many are there?

Can we assign a number or first name to each?

What are their specific problems each is having?

Anything else?

7. To what do you attribute these problems? Why do you think the kids are this way?
8. What else contributes to their difficulties?
9. Are any of these kids in danger of being retained?

How many?

Who else is aware of the problem?

10. What would have to happen for each of these kids to be promoted?
- 10-A. PLEASE DESCRIBE OTHER STUDENTS WITH SIMILAR PROBLEMS WHO WILL BE PROMOTED. WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THE CHILDREN YOU HAVE JUST NAMED?
11. What factors do you consider when thinking about retaining a student?
You have mentioned..... can you rank order them, which is most important?
12. How do you feel about retention in general?
13. What has led you to conclude that these factors are important?

14. How has this changed over time? Have any specific events or experiences influenced you?

workshops? consolidation? principal?

15. You've taught for _____ yrs., about when in the school year can you tell that a student is a candidate for retention?

16. Have there been any exceptions?

You have had students who have been retained in your class. Please think of individual students and describe them.

Do you have any now?

How do they seem to progress in the year after they have been retained?))

17. We have been going through the records of 8th grade students who have been retained, I know its been a while, but can you tell me about: _____?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you. I may ask to talk to you again. I appreciate your time.

Appendix C

Retention Decision Simulation

Retention Decision Simulation

John is one of your students. He is a small child and about 6 months younger than the average child in your class. He is on the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work well independently. He forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. John is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate John's ability is at the 25th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

3. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for John? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

4. Do you think it is likely that John would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

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Barbara is one of your students. She is a small child and about 8 months younger than the average child in your class. She is on the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not work well alone or follow directions. She forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Barbara is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Barbara's ability is at the 17th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1
	1st	99th
ACADEMIC	X	1
PERFORMANCE	low	high
SOCIAL	X	1
MATURITY	low	high
SIZE	X	1
	small	large
AGE	X	1
	1 yr. younger	1 yr. older

13. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Barbara ? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

14. Do you think it is likely that Barbara would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Jeff is one of your students. He is a big child and about 7 months younger than the average child in your class. He is on the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work well independently. He forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Jeff is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Jeff's ability is at the 15th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

59. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Jeff? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

60. Do you think it is likely that Jeff would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Tammy is one of your students. She is a large child and about 6 months younger than the average child in your class. She is on the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not follow directions or work independently very well. She forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Tammy is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Tammy's ability is at the 18th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

77. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Tammy? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

78. Do you think it is likely that Tammy would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Kenny is one of your students. He is a small child and about 11 months older than the average child in your class. He is on the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work well independently. He forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Kenny is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Kenny's ability is at the 16th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

9. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Kenny? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

10. Do you think it is likely that Kenny would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Karen is one of your students. She is a small child and about 11 months older than the average child in your class. She is on the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not pay attention to directions or work alone well. She forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Karen is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Karen's ability is at the 23rd percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

63. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Karen? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

64. Do you think it is likely that Karen would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Clark is one of your students. He is a big child and about 9 months older than the average child in your class. He is on the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not pay attention to directions or work well alone. He forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Clark is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Clark's ability is at the 21st percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

29. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Clark? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

30. Do you think it is likely that Clark would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Margot is one of your students. She is a large child and about 11 months older than the average child in your class. She is on the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not follow directions or work independently. She forgets assignments and exhibits inappropriate behavior. Margot is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Margot's ability is at the 24th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

23. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Margot? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

24. Do you think it is likely that Margot would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Henry is one of your students. He is a small child and about 7 months younger than the average child in your class. He is on the high end of the social maturity scale. He works well independently and follows directions. He always turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Henry is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Henry's ability is at the 25th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	X	1	
	low		high
SOCIAL MATURITY		1	X
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

21. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Henry? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

22. Do you think it is likely that Henry would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Jane is one of your students. She is a small child and about 8 months younger than the average child in your class. She is on the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works well alone. She always turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Jane is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Jane's ability is at the 23rd percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

61. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Jane? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

62. Do you think it is likely that Jane would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Jay is one of your students. He is a large child and about 7 months younger than the average child in your class. He is on the high end of the social maturity scale. He works well independently and follows directions. He turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Jay is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Jay's ability is at the 18th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

27. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Jay? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

28. Do you think it is likely that Jay would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Kay is one of your students. She is a large child and about 8 months younger than the average child in your class. She is on the high end of the social maturity scale. She works well independently and follows directions. She turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Kay is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Kay's ability is at the 25th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

75. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Kay? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

76. Do you think it is likely that Kay would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Scott is one of your students. He is a small child and about 11 months older than the average child in your class. He is on the high end of the social maturity scale. He follows directions and works well independently. He turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Scott is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Scott's ability is at the 16th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

65. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Scott? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

66. Do you think it is likely that Scott would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Gail is one of your students. She is a small child and about 11 months older than the average child in your class. She is on the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works alone well. She turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Gail is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Gail's ability is at the 25th percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

43. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Gail? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

44. Do you think it is likely that Gail would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Bill is one of your students. He is a large child and about 9 months older than the average child in your class. He is on the high end of the social maturity scale. He follows directions and works independently. He turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Bill is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Bill's ability is at the 21st percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

19. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Bill? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

20. Do you think it is likely that Bill would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Betty is one of your students. She is a large child and about 11 months older than the average child in your class. She is on the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works independently. She turns in assignments and exhibits appropriate behavior. Betty is below average in academic performance, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Results of a recently administered standardized test estimate Betty's ability is at the 21st percentile.

ABILITY	X	1	
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	X	1	
	low		high
SOCIAL MATURITY		1	X
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

5. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Betty? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

6. Do you think it is likely that Betty would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Doug is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Doug is at the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work alone. Doug doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. He is a small child and is about 8 months younger than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Doug's estimated ability is at the 60th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

15. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Doug? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

16. Do you think it is likely that Doug would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Cara is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Cara is at the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not follow directions or work alone. Cara doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. She is a small child and is about 8 months younger than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently, Cara's estimated ability is at the 63rd percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

49. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Cara? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

50. Do you think it is likely that Cara would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Ed is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Ed is at the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work alone. Ed doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. He is a big child and is about 6 months younger than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Ed's estimated ability is at the 61st percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		X	1
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

51. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Ed? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

52. Do you think it is likely that Ed would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Sara is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Sara is at the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not follow directions or work alone. Sara doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. She is a large child and is about 7 months younger than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Sara's estimated ability is at the 55th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

73. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Sara? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

74. Do you think it is likely that Sara would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Joe is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Joe is at the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work alone. Joe doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. He is a small child and is about 9 months older than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Joe's estimated ability is at the 65th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

53. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Joe? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

54. Do you think it is likely that Joe would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Sue is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Sue is at the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not follow directions or work alone. Sue doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. She is a small child and is about 9 months older than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Sue's estimated ability is at the 62nd percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

57. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Sue? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

58. Do you think it is likely that Sue would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Chris is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Chris is at the low end of the social maturity scale. He does not follow directions or work alone. Chris doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. He is a large child and is about 11 months older than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Chris's estimated ability is at the 57th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

41. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Chris? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

42. Do you think it is likely that Chris would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Judy is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Judy is at the low end of the social maturity scale. She does not follow directions or work alone. Judy doesn't turn in assignments and overall exhibits inappropriate behavior. She is a big child and is about 11 months older than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Judy's estimated ability is at the 62nd percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

39. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Judy? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

40. Do you think it is likely that Judy would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Adam is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Adam is at the high end of the social maturity scale. He follows directions and works independently. Adam turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. He is a small child and is about 7 months younger than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Adam's estimated ability is at the 57th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

37. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Adam? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

38. Do you think it is likely that Adam would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Carol is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Carol is at the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works alone. Carol turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. She is a small child and is about 8 months younger than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Carol's estimated ability is at the 64th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

11. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Carol? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

12. Do you think it is likely that Carol would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Larry is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Larry is at the high end of the social maturity scale. He follows directions and works independently. Larry turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. He is a big child and is about 6 months younger than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Larry's estimated ability is at the 63rd percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

45. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Larry? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

46. Do you think it is likely that Larry would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Mary is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Mary is at the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works well alone. Mary turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. She is a big child and is about 8 months younger than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Mary's estimated ability is at the 61st percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

69. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Mary? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

70. Do you think it is likely that Mary would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Bob is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Bob is at the high end of the social maturity scale. He works independently and follows directions. Bob turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. He is a small child and is about 9 months older than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Bob's estimated ability is at the 59th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

67. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Bob? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

68. Do you think it is likely that Bob would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Alice is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Alice is at the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works well alone. Alice turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. She is a small child and is about 9 months older than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Alice's estimated ability is at the 60th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

33. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Alice? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

34. Do you think it is likely that Alice would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Fred is one of your students. He is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Fred is at the high end of the social maturity scale. He follows directions and works independently. Fred turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. He is a big child and is about 10 months older than his classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Fred's estimated ability is at the 60th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

71. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Fred? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

72. Do you think it is likely that Fred would be retained in your school? (Circle one)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Lynn is one of your students. She is performing below average in classwork, is failing math, and is reading below grade level. Lynn is at the high end of the social maturity scale. She follows directions and works independently. Lynn turns in assignments and overall exhibits appropriate behavior. She is a large child and is about 10 months older than her classmates. According to a standardized test taken recently Lynn's estimated ability is at the 60th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC	X	1	
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL		1	X
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

25. Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for Lynn? (Circle the number)
- 1 PROMOTION
 - 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
 - 3 RETENTION
26. Do you think it is likely that Lynn would be retained in your school? (Circle one)
- 1 NO
 - 2 YES

Dan is one of your students. He is smaller in size than most of your other students. He is approximately 8 months younger than average. He is performing above average in classroom work; however Dan is at the low end of the scale of maturity. He frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Dan's estimated ability is at the 65th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC		1	X
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

47. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Dan? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

48. Do you think Dan would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Fran is one of your students. She is smaller in size than most of your other students. She is approximately 7 months younger than average. She is performing above average in classroom work; however Fran is at the low end of the scale of maturity. She frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Fran's estimated ability is at the 55th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC		1	X
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

55. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Fran? (Circle the number)
- 1 PROMOTION
 - 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
 - 3 RETENTION
56. Do you think Fran would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)
- 1 NO
 - 2 YES

Stan is one of your students. He is larger in size than most of your other students. He is approximately 8 months younger than average. He is performing above average in classroom work; however Stan is at the low end of the scale of maturity. He frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Stan's estimated ability is at the 62nd percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC		1	X
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE	X	1	
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

31. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Stan? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

32. Do you think Stan would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Pam is one of your students. She is bigger in size than most of your other students. She is approximately 6 months younger than average. She is performing above average in classroom work; however Pam is at the low end of the scale of maturity. She frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Pam's estimated ability is at the 61st percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC		1	X
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE		1	X
	small		large
AGE		X	1
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

17. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Pam? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

18. Do you think Pam would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Phil is one of your students. He is smaller in size than most of your other students. He is approximately 11 months older than average. He is performing above average in classroom work; however Phil is at the low end of the scale of maturity. He frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Phil's estimated ability is at the 56th percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC		1	X
PERFORMANCE	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
MATURITY	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

35. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Phil? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

36. Do you think Phil would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Jill is one of your students. She is smaller in size than most of your other students. She is approximately 11 months older than average. She is performing above average in classroom work; however Jill is at the low end of the scale of maturity. She frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Jill's estimated ability is at the 62nd percentile.

ABILITY		1	X
	<hr/>		
	1st		99th
ACADEMIC		1	X
	<hr/>		
PERFORMANCE			
	low		high
SOCIAL	X	1	
	<hr/>		
MATURITY			
	low		high
SIZE	X	1	
	<hr/>		
	small		large
AGE		1	X
	<hr/>		
	1 yr. younger		1 yr. older

7. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Jill? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

8. Do you think Jill would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Barry is one of your students. He is bigger in size than most of your other students. He is approximately 9 months older than average. He is performing above average in classroom work; however Barry is at the low end of the scale of maturity. He frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Barry's estimated ability is at the 61st percentile.

ABILITY		1	X	
	1st			99th
ACADEMIC		1	X	
PERFORMANCE	low			high
SOCIAL	X	1		
MATURITY	low			high
SIZE		1	X	
	small			large
AGE		1	X	
	1 yr. younger			1 yr. older

79. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Barry? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

80. Do you think Barry would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Sherri is one of your students. She is larger in size than most of your other students. She is approximately 10 months older than average. She is performing above average in classroom work; however Sherri is at the low end of the scale of maturity. She frequently displays inappropriate behavior, does not work well independently, does not follow directions, and often does not do the assigned work. Scores on a recent standardized test indicate that Sherri's estimated ability is at the 55th percentile.

ABILITY	1	X
	1st	99th
ACADEMIC	1	X
PERFORMANCE	low	high
SOCIAL	X	1
MATURITY	low	high
SIZE	1	X
	small	large
AGE	1	X
	1 yr. younger	1 yr. older

1. Considering the characteristics described, what do you think would be best for Sherri? (Circle the number)

- 1 PROMOTION
- 2 SOCIAL PROMOTION
- 3 RETENTION

2. Do you think Sherri would be retained in your school? (Circle the number)

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

Appendix D

Oral Instructions for Retention Decision Simulation

DIRECTIONS FOR RETENTION DECISION SIMULATION

Oral directions to be read at administration of the Retention Decision Simulation, labeled Part B on the questionnaire booklet. This is Part B of the questionnaire on retention. Please take a minute to familiarize yourself with the questionnaire and begin reading the instructions.

Just to briefly review, you are being asked to respond to descriptions of hypothetical students. In these descriptions the students will differ in their academic performance, maturity, ability, sex, size, and age in relation to their classmates. Based on the information provided you are to decide what you - "in your heart of hearts" - think would be best for the child. You are also asked whether you think the child would be retained in your school. The answers to the questions about each student may be the same or they may differ. There are no predetermined "correct" answers, just state what you think.

Accompanying each written description is a graphic representation of the same student information. (Turn to Sherrri) It is there to summarize the information, you may choose to look at it or you may prefer to read the written description or use some combination of both. Do whatever is most comfortable for you.

You are to assume that you teach each child, therefore it is necessary for you to tell us what grade your Sherrri, John, Betty etc. are in. Please fill the blank at the bottom of the cover that asks you to state what grade level the students are in (quote the exact wording).

I am here to answer any questions you may have while completing this questionnaire. Please be sure to place your completed questionnaire on this table before you leave. Again, you obviously would know more about each student if he or she was in your class, but go with your feelings based on your experience and the facts given. REMEMBER THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG RESPONSES. YOU ARE EACH MAKING A DECISION FOR A SHERRI OR JOHN WHO IS A DIFFERENT AGE AND IN A DIFFERENT GRADE.

Thank you for your help. We only had a chance to interview some of the teachers here, so please use this as an opportunity to make comments on the back of the questionnaire.

Appendix E

Written Instructions for Retention Decision Simulation

Definition of Terms Used in Retention Decision Simulation

The characteristics in the following descriptions can be interpreted as follows:

Social Maturity Scale - This is a measure of how well the child gets along with others, follows directions, and works independently. A child at the high end of this scale follows directions, works independently, and acts appropriately for his or her grade. A child at the low end of the scale does not follow directions or work independently. A primary aged child at the low end of the scale may act inappropriately by hitting, crying or playing when other children are involved in specific tasks. An older child who acts inappropriately may shout out, or cause disturbances while others are working.

Ability (estimate) - This measure is based on scores from a standardized test in which an estimate of general ability or aptitude is given. These are indicated in percentile scores, which as you know indicate the percentage of students in that grade who score below the child.

Academic Performance - This is a composite rating of the child's school performance. Assume the child was ranked in comparison to classmates to determine whether the child was high or low on the list. This includes all subjects. In some cases reading level and math performance are specifically mentioned. Teachers of kindergarteners should interpret these as reading readiness and number concepts assessments.

Age - This states whether the child is older or younger than classmates.

Size - This is a composite of height and weight which compares the child to his or her classmates.

Following each description you will be asked:

(A.) Considering the characteristics described, what do you believe would be best for the child?

1 PROMOTION - passing to the next grade

2 SOCIAL PROMOTION - moving to the next grade, but acknowledging that the child has not successfully completed the requirements of the current grade.

3 RETENTION- remaining in the same grade for a second year

(B.) Do you think it is likely that the child would be retained in your school?

1 NO

2 YES

Please respond to each question based on your interpretation of the information. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. No one associated with the school division will know what you say as an individual. You have been assigned a code number so we can be certain that all booklets are returned.

Your code number is:

Is there anything you would like to say about promoting and retaining students? Please use this space to write your comments and observations.

Thank you.

Appendix F

Teachers' Written Responses to Teacher Retention
Beliefs Questionnaire Items

All responses are repeated exactly as written by the teacher. Spelling or grammatical errors were not corrected and are noted by the comment (SIC). Any errors not so noted are typographical. Responses are given in sequence, by item. The teacher's identifying number is shown following the comment unless the comment would permit certain identification of the teacher. Items are in bold type, upper and lower case; responses in all upper case.

- Item 2. Retention is necessary for maintaining grade level standards. (AGREE/DISAGREE)
- THIS IS NOT THE REASON FOR RETENTION (51090)
- Item 3. Retaining a child in grades k-3 harms the child's self concept. (AGREE/DISAGREE)
- DEPENDS ON OTHER THINGS (20740)
- CONFER WITH PUPILS (20931)
- Item 5. Students who do not apply themselves to their studies should be retained. (AGREE/DISAGREE)
- I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION. I MEAN THOSE THAT DON'T DO THE WORK. (20740) (RESPONSE CHOICE WAS A 1 - AGREEING WITH THE STATEMENT)
- CONSIDER PHYSICAL, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOME CASES. (20931)
- USUALLY (21121)
- IF THEY RECEIVE FAILING GRADES (22140)
- MUST LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE INDIVIDUAL AND PROBLEMS CAUSING THIS ATTITUDE. (23090)
- THIS DEPENDS A LOT ON THE CHILD. (33330)
- IT DEPENDS ON OTHER FACTORS. (51090)
- Item 6. Knowing that retention is a possibility does motivate students to work harder. (AGREE/DISAGREE)
- SOME STUDENTS (10950)
- MOTIVATES THE PARENTS TO PUSH THEIR CHILDREN HARDER. (11491)
- NOT UNTIL IT IS USUALLY TO (SIC) LATE. (20590)
- DEPENDS ON THE INDIVIDUAL (22140)

MAYBE IN 2 - 7TH. (40600)

IN SOME CASES, BUT IN SOME CASES NOTHING WOULD MOTIVATE
(41190)

SOME FEEL THAT THEY WILL NOT BE RETAINED BECAUSE THEY
HAVE NEVER BEEN RETAINED BEFORE. (50230)

IN SOME CASES (51090)

Item 7. Retaining a child in grades 4-7 harms the child's self-
concept. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

DEPENDS ON CIRCUMSTANCES (20740)

CONFER WITH PUPILS (20931)

CONSTANTLY RECEIVING FAILURES GRADES (SIC) WOULD HARM A
CHILD'S SELF-CONCEPT AS MUCH IF NOT MORE. (51090)

*SINCE I AM A K-3 TEACHER I DON'T FEEL I CAN HONESTLY
ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT 4 - 7. (51420)

Item 8. Retention is an effective means of providing support in
school for the child who does not get support at home.
(AGREE/DISAGREE)

IN LOWER GRADES (21121)

IF HANDLED CORRECT WAY (30210)

Item 9. Students who do not make passing grades in two of the
three major subject areas (reading, communications, or
mathematics) should be retained. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

IN GRADES K - 3. (33330)

AGE, TIMES OF RETENTION, TEACHERS HOME SHOULD ALL BE
CONSIDERED (50161)

I FEEL RETENTION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR FAILING
GRADES IN ANY 1 OF THESE AREAS - ESP. READING. (51420)

DEPENDS ON ABILITY, AND MATURITY GROWTH (61510)

Item 10. Students who make passing grades, but are working below
grade level should be retained. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

CHAPTER 1 (20290)

SOME SHOULD (20931)

IF ONLY 1/2 LEVEL BELOW (21121) (ANSWERED RESPONSE 3 -

TENDED TO DISAGREE)

SOMEWHERE THE REPORT SHOULD INDICATE THAT THESE GRADES ARE EQUAL TO "U" FOR GRADE LEVEL WORK. (22690)

MUST KNOW CHILD TO DETERMINE ANSWER. (23090)

IT DEPENDS ON LEVEL, SITUATION, HOME & ABILITY (40600)

DEPENDING ON INDIVIDUAL (41190)

Item 12. Retention in grades 4-7 is an effective means of giving an immature child a chance to catch up. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

DO IT EARLIER (21121)

TO (SIC) LATE. (31210)

MAYBE - BUT VERY SELECTIVELY (40600)

SHOULD BE DONE EARLIER (51121)

Item 13. Students receiving services of a learning disabilities teacher should not be retained. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

DEPENDING ON CHILD (21121)

DEPENDS ON THE PROBLEM AND THE STUDENTS (SIC) ATTITUDE. (22140)

DEPENDS ON CIRCUMSTANCES (23090)

ALL SERVICES (OR) SELECT ONES? (40250)

DEPENDS ON WHAT THE L.D. PROBLEM IS. (51420)

IT DEPENDS ON THE EXTENT OF THE L.D. SERVICE (51590)

Item 16. In grades 4 - 7 overage children (more than a year older than their classmates) cause more behavior problems than other children. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

SOMETIMES (40600)

I DO NOT BELIEVE THE AGE OF THE CHILD AFFECTS THE BEHAVIOR NEGATIVELY, BUT THAT THE SAME FACTORS THAT EFFECTED THE CHILD'S ACADEMIC DEVELOP (SIC) ARE EFFECTING HIS BEHAVIOR. (51090)

Item 17. Retention in grades K-3 permanently labels a child. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

UNLESS SOMEONE BRINGS IT UP IT IS OFTEN FORGOTTEN AFTER

THE YEAR OF RETENTION. (11090)

Item 19. Children who have passing grades but excessive absences should be retained. (AGREE/DISAGREE)

NOT IF DUE TO ILLNESS (11100)

DEPENDS UPON THE CIRCUMSTANCES. (REASON FOR ABSENCES)
(11491)

UNLESS MEDICAL (21121)

MORE THAN A SIX WEEKS (22690)

DEPENDS ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE AMOUNT OF TUTORING
(23090)

DEPENDS ON INDIVIDUAL & THE CIRCUMSTANCES. (41190)

REASONS FOR ABSENCES WOULD NEED TO BE CONSIDERED
(50230)

DEPENDS ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES (51121)

DEPENDS ON THE CHILD'S ABILITY (61510)

Item 22. What accounts for the answer you gave above (question 20)?

IF A CHILD DOES NOT HAVE THE BASIC INFORMATION LEARNED AT ONE GRADE LEVEL, HOW CAN HE BE EXPECTED TO BUILD ON THIS INFORMATION BY PERFORMING HIGHER GRADE LEVEL WORK. HE WILL EXPERIENCE DEFEAT, FAILURE - WHICH IN TURN WILL AFFECT HIS SELF-CONCEPT IN A FAR MORE DAMAGING WAY THAN RETENTION. (10190)

SOME CHILDREN NEED TO BE RETAINED. THEY WILL BE TOO FAR BEHIND & NOT BENEFIT FROM BEING PROMOTED BEFORE THEY ARE READY. (10341)

THIS IS MY 2ND YEAR OF TEACHING. LAST YEAR I DID NOT RETAIN ANY STUDENTS. ALL MY STUDENTS WERE WORKING ON GRADE LEVEL, WITH PASSING GRADES. THIS YEAR I AM RETAINING 4 STUDENTS ALL OF WHOM ARE WORKING BELOW GRADE LEVEL IN READING AND ONE WITH PASSING GRADES IN THE OTHER SUBJECTS. (REVEAL)

SOME CHILDREN HAVE NOT MASTERED SKILLS AND SHOULD WORK TOWARD THAT MASTERY. REPEATING PROVIDES A WAY OF REPEATING SKILLS AND POSSIBLE MASTERY OF THEM. (10551)

A CHILD SHOULD NEVER BE PUT UP UNTIL HE/SHE HAS MASTERED THE CONCEPTS IN THE PRIOR GRADE - OTHERWISE WE ENCOURAGE ILLITERACY. (10620)

PAST EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT RETENTION DOES SOME STUDENTS VERY LITTLE GOOD. (10720)

THE PERIOD WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH WHERE PARENT'S HAD MORE SAY THAN THE TEACHER. (10800)

STRONG PARENTAL FEELINGS - RUNNING INTO MANY NASTY BATTLES WITH PARENTS REGARDING RETENTION - OBSERVING CHILDREN WHO WERE RETAINED OVER THE YEARS. (10950)

AS A CHAP I TEACHER I AM IN A POSITION TO SEE THE MANY SUCCESS STORIES OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE REPEATED A GRADE - ESPECIALLY FIRST GRADE REPEATERS. I ALSO WITNESS DAILY THE FRUSTRATED STUDENTS WHO SHOULD HAVE BEEN RETAINED BUT WERE NOT.

EVEN THOUGH I FEEL IT DOES MAKE A CHILD HAVE A LOWER SELF IMAGE IT IS SOMETIME (SIC) NECESSARY FOR THEM TO REPEAT AND BUILD A STRONGER FOUNDATION. (11100)

I HAVE NEVER SEEN A STUDENT DO WORSE THE SECOND YEAR. I HAVE SEEN MANY STUDENTS OVERWHELMED AND FRUSTRATED BY BEING IN "OVER THEIR HEADS." (11271)

IF CHILDREN ARE NEVER RETAINED IN THE PASS-FAIL SYSTEM WE HAVE, THEN A MESSAGE IS SENT. ACHIEVEMENT IS NOT A MEANS TO AN END, SO WHY THE EFFORT. IT DOESN'T TAKE AN ANALYTICAL THINKER TO SOLVE THIS ONE. (11391)

IF A CHILD IS PASSED ON TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL BEFORE HE IS READY ACADEMICALLY, HE WILL BECOME MORE & MORE INSECURE AND FRUSTRATED. (11690)

THERE ARE SITUATIONS WHERE A STUDENT NEEDS TO BE RETAINED FOR VARIOUS REASONS. (11730)

PARENTS LESS AGREEABLE. (11861)

COMPARING STUDENTS WHO WERE RETAINED - MOST, THAT I KNOW, DO MUCH BETTER THE SECOND YEAR - WITH THOSE THAT WERE POSSIBLE RETENTIONS BUT PASSED ON. THESE STUDENTS THAT WERE QUESTIONABLE OFTEN HAVE A SECOND YEAR OF FRUSTRATION AND FAILURE AND MANY DID NOT PASS THE NEXT YEAR. (SIC) (11911)

SOME CHILDREN LEARN AT A SLOWER PACE THAN OTHERS - MAY NEED TWO YEARS TO MASTER. (20121)

NOW I SEE THE PROBLEMS AND I TRY TO REMEDIATE THEM AND NOW (SIC). (20390)

THE LEVEL OF SUCCESS ACHIEVED BY THOSE I HAVE RETAINED. (20411)

I DON'T RETAIN STUDENTS, I TEACH P.E.
THERE ARE ALWAYS EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES. (20590)

ALL CHILDREN SHOULD BE LOOKED AT INDIVIDUALLY. FOR
SOME, RETENTION MAY BE THE ANSWER OR THE MEANS TO GIVE
THEM A YEAR OF SUCCESS AND NOT FAILURE. (20601)

I DON'T THINK ONE CAN SAY 'NEVER' ABOUT ANYTHING.
THERE ARE SOME CASES I HAVE SEEN THAT RETENTION HAS
BEEN A BIG HELP TO CHILDREN. (20740)

DURING MY EXPERIENCE I HAVE SEEN MORE POSITIVE THAN
NEGATIVE RESULTS FROM CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN RETAINED.
(20931)

MY EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH CHILDREN. (21000)

AS OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM IS NOW, (GRADES) WE CAN NOT TEACH
A CHILD 2ND GRADE SKILLS IN THE 7TH GRADE. AN
"IMMATURE" CHILD DOES IMPROVE WHEN RETAINED. (21121)

THERE ARE SOME INSTANCES (6,1) AND LACK OF EFFORT -
WHERE RETENTION IS A WORTHWHILE CHOICE. (21270) (6,1
SEEM TO REFER TO ITEMS 6 AND 1 ABOVE - ITEM 1 RELATES
TO PREVENTING DAILY FAILURE IN THE NEXT GRADE; ITEM 6
REFERS TO RETENTION AS A MOTIVATOR)

I'VE SEEN IT WORK TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE CHILD (21360)

FIRST YEAR TEACHER (21490)

IF A STUDENT DOES NOT DO SATISFACTORY WORK OR COMPLETE
THE REQUIRED OBJECTIVES HE SHOULD BE RETAINED. I HAVE
SEEN CASES WHERE RETENTION HAS GREATLY HELPED A CHILD.
(21550)

BEHAVIOR LINKED TO POOR STUDY HABITS. (21690)

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS OF NEXT GRADE LEVEL (1) (21700)

SOME STUDENTS ARE NOT READY FOR THE NEXT GRADE (21870)

MANY CHILDREN DO BETTER AFTER RETENTION. (21990)

IF STUDENTS ARE NOT RETAINED AT ANY TIME, ALL THEY WILL
ACHIEVE IS FAILURE. THIS CAN AFFECT THE FUTURE OF ANY
CHILD, AND PRODUCE AN ADULT WITH NO GOALS OR MOTIVATION
(SIC) (22020)

DO YOU MEAN 20 OR 21?

20. MANY OF MY STUDENTS DO NOT KNOW RESPONSIBILITY.
IF THEY CAN SIT AROUND AND DO NOTHING, RECEIVE U'S AND
PASS THEN WHERE AND WHEN WILL THEY LEARN

RESPONSIBILITY?

21. I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT IN MY PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT THAN WHEN I BEGAN TEACHING. THIS YEAR I HAVE HAD SO MANY PROBLEMS TRYING TO TEACH 4TH GRADE OBJECTIVES TO STUDENTS WHO CANNOT (AND SOME JUST WILL NOT) HANDLE IT. IF FEEL THAT I WILL BE HURTING THEM MORE IF I DO NOT RETAIN THEM. (22140)

I HAVE MOVED FROM A LOWER GRADE K TO HIGHER GRADE 1ST. KNOWING WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A 1ST GRADER MADE ME MORE AWARE THAT I SHOULD MORE CAREFULLY SCREEN SLOWER CHILDREN. I ALSO HAVE A SON IN 4TH GRADE. SEEING HOW MUCH INDEPENDENCE AND MATURITY NEEDED (SIC) TO BE SUCCESSFUL HAS ALSO CAUSED ME TO CHANGE MY FEELINGS. (22311)

I FEEL IT IS A RIDICULOUS QUESTION. IF STUDENTS DO NO WORK AND THEY FAIL SUBJECTS, OR THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND AND FAIL; THE WORST THING TO DO IS SEND THEM TO THE NEXT GRADE. THIS WILL CERTAINLY LEAD TO DROP OUTS. (24430)

1. EVERY CHILD & SITUATION IS UNIQUE.
2. I HAVE SEEN LITTLE POSITIVE (SIC) EFFECTS THROUGH RETENSION (SIC) IN 17 YRS. TEACHING.
3. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IS EFFECTED (22561)

TEACHING IN LOWER GRADES (22690)

I FEEL THAT THERE ARE CHILDREN WHO BENEFIT FROM BEING RETAINED, SUCH AS ANOTHER YEAR TO MATURE, CATCH UP OR SIMPLY TO IMPROVE THEIR SELF-ESTEEM. (22751)

MY VIEWS REMAIN THE SAME. I WOULD BE MORE APT TO CONSIDER RETENTION IN THE PRIMARY GRADES RATHER THAN AN ALTERNATIVE FOR 5-7 GRADES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SPECIAL CASES. (22890)

PRESSURE FOR ACADEMIC STANDARDS TO BE MET BY ALL CHILDREN. I DO NOT RETAIN/PROMOTE BECAUSE I AM A SPEECH THERAPIST (REVEAL)

IN GRADES 4 - 7, I HAVE SEEN LITTLE IMPROVEMENT IN MOST STUDENTS' GRADES AND ATTITUDES. (23090)

SOME STUDENTS, BECAUSE THEY MAKE NO EFFORT TO DO THEIR WORK OR CORPORATE (SIC) WITH THE TEACHER, COULD BE RETAINED. (30170)

I TEACH IN LOWER GRADES AND I FEEL RETENTION IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF IMMATURITY IN SOME PLUS THOSE WHO ARE SLOW LEARNERS WILL MEET NOTHING BUT FRUSTRATION IF PUSHED ON. I'VE SEEN THIS HAPPEN. I HAVE SEEN RETENTION DO A WORLD OF GOOD. (30210)

IT DEPENDS ON THE GROUP OF STUDENTS YOU ARE WORKING WITH IN YOUR SCHOOL. THERE ARE OTHER FACTORS LIKE 1) SPEC. ED. CHILDREN (LD/ED, ETC.), 2) HOME SITUATION, 3) ATTITUDES, ETC. (30490)

I FEEL YOU MUST CONSIDER EACH CHILD, INDIVIDUALLY, AND SEE WHY THEY ARE FAILING. THEN YOU CAN DECIDE HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT RETENTION FOR THAT CHILD. (30521)

THIS IS MY FIRST YEAR TEACHING. THERE ARE BOUND TO BE TIMES WHEN THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO RETAIN A CHILD. THESE INSTANCES MAY OCCUR BECAUSE OF EXTREMELY LOW ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, SOCIAL OR EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY, OR POOR HOME ENVIRONMENT (SUCH AS A KINDERGARTENER (SIC) WHO HAS HAD NO SUPPORT OR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AT HOME). A CHILD SHOULD NEVER BE PROMOTED IF THE GAP BETWEEN HIM & ALL THE OTHER STUDENTS IS SO WELL DEFINED THAT IT'S OBVIOUS TO THE TEACHER, THE CHILD IN QUESTION, AND THE REST OF THE CLASS. (30700)

I HAVE SEEN TOO MANY PROBLEMS ARISE AND TOO FEW PROBLEMS SOLVED BY RETENTION. (30841)

MORE SERVICES PROVIDED TO HELP STUDENT CONTINUE IN PRESENT GRADE LEVEL (31290)

DOES NOT APPLY TO ME. IF CHILDREN ARE FAILING AND THERE IS NO APPARENT LEARNING DISABILITY, THEY SHOULD BE RETAINED. (31390)

I FEEL THE SAME ABOUT RETENTION AS I DID THEN. (21490)

IT WOULD HAVE TO DEPEND UPON THE CHILD'S PERFORMANCE IN THE CLASSROOM. (31600)

THERE ARE SOME INSTANCES WHEN RETENTION IS BENEFICIAL. I HAVE SEEN CHILDREN WHOSE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IMPROVED DRASTICALLY AFTER BEING RETAINED. (31871)

PARTICULAR STUDENT POPULATION AND ABILITY LEVELS ON INDIVIDUAL BASIS HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED. (31960)

MORE TEACHING EXPERIENCE, LIFE EXPERIENCE ALSO THE CHANGES IN KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM. (32100)

I WAS MORE LIKELY TO WORRY ABOUT THE CHILD'S SELF CONCEPT PREVIOUS TO THIS YEAR, BUT I CAN NOW SEE THE BENEFITS OF RETENTION MORE CLEARLY. (32210)

MANY FOUR YEAR OLDS HAVE NOT DEVELOPED THE PSYCHOMOTOR, COMMUNICATION OR SOCIAL SKILLS EXPECTED OF A KINDERGARTEN CHILD. THESE CHILDREN CAN BENEFIT FROM A

TWO-YEAR KINDERGARTEN WHEN EMPHASIS CAN BE PLACED ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, MANIPULATIVES, LISTENING ACTIVITIES, AND INTERACTION WITH OTHER CHILDREN. THESE YOUNG AS WELL AS SLOWER-MATURING CHILDREN CAN BENEFIT FROM THIS TYPE OF EARLY RETENTION (IF INDEED THIS CAN BE CONSIDERED A RETENTION).

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES CAN ALSO MAKE RETENTION BENEFICIAL FOR SOME YOUNGSTERS. EACH CHILD IS UNIQUE AND BOTH HE/SHE AND THE PARENTS SHOULD HAVE INPUT INTO RETENTION DISCUSSIONS. AT NO TIME SHOULD RETENTION BE DEEMED PUNISHMENT OR FAILURE ON THE PART OF THE CHILD. APPROACHED PROPERLY, RETENTION CAN EVEN ENHANCE A CHILD'S SELF-CONCEPT.

RETENTION OF OLDER CHILDREN IS OFTEN SELF-DEFEATING. REMEDIAL HELP, HIGHLY MOTIVATING ACTIVITIES, EMPHASIS ON SUCCESSES, UNDERSTANDING TEACHERS, AND GUIDANCE (DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS APPROACH) CAN SOMETIMES DO FAR MORE THAN RETENTION TO HELP A CHILD ACHIEVE AND FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF. EVERY CHILD IS AN IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCE! (32390)

WHAT WORKS FOR ONE CHILD DOES NOT NECESSARILY WORK FOR ALL. I HAVE SEEN CASES WERE (SIC) A CHILD WAS RETAINED IN THE LOWER GRADES AND IT GAVE THEM A CHANCE TO MATURE AND GROW SOCIALLY AND ACADEMICALLY. THEY WERE NO LONGER FRUSTRATED AND STRUGGLING AND WERE ABLE TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN THE REGULAR CLASS. (32490)

I'VE SEEN TOO MANY INSTANCES WHERE STUDENTS RETAINED IN GRADES 6 AND 7 RECEIVED NO BENEFIT WHATSOEVER. IT CAUSED BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE PROBLEMS. THE STUDENT HAS USUALLY BEEN A BAD INFLUENCE ON ONES WHO WERE GOOD STUDENTS, BUT "FOLLOWERS". (32560)

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND KNOWLEDGE. (32620)

RETENTION CAN BE HELPFULL (SIC) TO SOME STUDENTS (33090)

WHY ARE WE HERE TO TEACH IF WE ARE GOING TO PASS ALL STUDENTS WHETHER THEY FAIL OR PASS THEIR SUBJECTS? THEY HAVEN'T LEARNED ANYTHING IF THEY MAKE FAILING GRADES AND WE ARE WASTING OUR TIME. (33150)

WHEN I FIRST STARTED TEACHING, I VIEWED RETENTION AS THE ANSWER FOR STUDENTS WHO DID NOT PERFORM ON GRADE LEVEL. THROUGH EXPERIENCE WITH VARIOUS CHILDREN AND PARENTS (AND HOME SITUATIONS), I NOW REALIZE THAT THERE ARE MANY, MANY FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE A CHILD'S PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL. THEREFORE, I AM LESS LIKELY TO VIEW RETENTION AS THE BEST SOLUTION. (33330)

RETENTION HAS WORKED IN THE PAST. IT SHOULD NOT BE THE ONLY ANSWER STUDIED TO SOLVE AN ACADEMIC PROBLEM.

OTHERS SHOULD BE EXPLORED, TOO. BUT IT CAN BE A SOLUTION IN SOME CASES. (40190)

I HAVE FOUND THAT FOR RETENTION TO BE SUCCESSFUL, PARENTS AND STUDENT MUST UNDERSTAND REASON FOR RETENTION AND BE SUPPORTIVE OF TEACHER AND THE DECISION. (40250)

SELF-CONCEPT IS LOWERED AND THE SITUATION BECOMES A VICIOUS CIRCLE FOR THE CHILD. LOW SELF-CONCEPT, LOWERED ACHIEVEMENT. (40440)

CHILDREN WHO HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE - (NO HELP AT HOME, NO TUTOR, NO LD PROGRAM - ETC. - MUST RECEIVE THE HELP THEY NEED SOMEWHERE - A DAILY PLACEMENT IN A LOWER LEVEL OF FRUSTRATION IS HARMFUL TO ANYONE.) CHILDREN OFTEN NEED THE "GIFT OF TIME". IT WORKS WONDERS FOR MANY. (40560)

I FEEL THAT MOST STUDENTS WILL WORK HARDER WHEN NOT RETAINED - IF RETAINED WILL FEEL THEY HAVE FAILED AND MAY NOT TRY AS HARD. (40810)

STILL HAVE THE SAME VIEWS. (41010)

THERE ARE MANY TIMES WHEN CHILDREN BENEFIT BY BEING GIVEN AN EXTRA YEAR TO MATURE OR BY REPEATING MATERIAL THAT WAS TOO DIFFICULT FOR HIS/HER ABILITY. ALSO, FOR STUDENTS WHO WON'T WORK & TRY TO LEARN, THEY LEARN THAT THEY MUST SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AND THEY WON'T BE GIVEN SOMETHING FOR NOTHING. (41190)

WHEN I BEGAN TEACHING IT WAS HARD FOR ME TO RETAIN OR PUNISH A CHILD. HOWEVER, I RETAINED AS QUICKLY AS I WOULD NOW BECAUSE I FOLLOWED SCHOOL POLICY. (41240)

I HAVE CHANGED MY OPINION FROM 1 TO 3 BECAUSE I HAVE SEEN TOO MANY RETAINEES NOT BENEFIT FROM RETENTION AND BECOME DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS. (50161)

I HAVE NOT CHANGED MY PHILOSOPHY - THERE ARE CERTAIN MINIMUM STANDARDS WHICH ONE MUST MEET TO BE PASSED TO THE NEXT GRADE - ACADEMIC SKILLS WHICH WILL MAKE POSSIBLE SATISFACTORY ACHIEVEMENT IN THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL. (50230)

QUESTION 20 - RETENTION IS AN EXCELLENT TOOL USED CORRECTLY.

QUESTION 21 - I FEEL THROUGH HAVING CHILDREN OF MY OWN THAT I AM MORE KEENLY AWARE THAT A YEAR OF RETENTION DOES NOT PERMANENTLY HURT A CHILD, BUT CAN HAVE MANY ADVANTAGES. (50331)

I HAVE SEEN CHILDREN OTHERS (AND I) HAVE TAUGHT THAT

WERE SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE THEY RECEIVED NEEDED HELP DURING SECOND YEAR IN GRADE (IN GRADES RANGING FROM 1 - 5). (50550)

BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF WHY STUDENTS SHOULD AND SHOULD NOT BE RETAINED. I FEEL ONE GAINS A BETTER PERSPECTIVE AFTER A FEW YEARS OF TEACHING (50660)

I'VE LEARNED FROM THE MISTAKES I'VE MADE. (50711)

SOME STUDENTS CAN BENEFIT FROM SPENDING MORE THAN ONE YEAR IN THE SAME GRADE. THIS IS DUE TO IMMATURITY, ILLNESS, MOVING SCHOOLS, ETC. (50840)

WITH MORE EXPERIENCE, I AM MORE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT AN ACADEMICALLY WEAK STUDENT BASICALLY NEVER CATCHES UP. BUT IF THE RETENTION OCCURS DURING THE YEAR HE 1ST MEETS DIFFICULTY THERE IS A CHANCE. (51090)

CHILDREN MATURE AT DIFFERENT RATES AND OFTEN "CATCH UP" TIME. (51121)

RETENTION, IN MY OPINION, DOES HELP MANY STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS. I LOOK AT IT AS A CHANCE FOR THE CHILD TO "CATCH UP". (51420)

IF STUDENTS ARE UNABLE TO MEET SUCCESS IN SCHOOL, AND CONTINUALLY FEEL FRUSTRATED AT THEIR OWN FAILURE,, RETENTION CAN GIVE THEM A SECOND CHANCE AT SUCCESS. TO PROMOTE A CHILD BEYOND HIS ABILITIES WILL ONLY HURT HIM LATER. (51590)

I TEACH DEVELOPMENTALLY. I FIND THAT THIS METHOD OF TEACHING ENABLES THE CHILD TO CATCH UP ON CONCEPTS MISSED IN KINDERGARTEN AND PUTS THEM ON GRADE LEVEL. (51610)

I FEEL THAT IN SOME CASES THAT MOST STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM JUSTIFIED RETENTIONS. (51701)

TOO MUCH INTERFERENCE FROM PARENTS AND OTHER OUTSIDE INDIVIDUALS. IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH YOU HAVE TO ASK THE PARENT'S PERMISSION. ALSO, OUR POLICY MANUAL DOESN'T INCLUDE ENOUGH SUPPORT FOR RETENTION IN UPPER GRADES. I FEEL THAT IF WE ARE DEPARTMENTALIZED IN THE UPPER GRADES, THEN ALL SUBJECTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. NOW, IF STUDENTS PASSES (SIC) MATH OR READING, HE COULD FAIL SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES, SPELLING , HEALTH, ETC. (52071)

SOMETIMES RETENTION OF STUDENTS (ESPECIALLY IN GRADES K - 7) SEEMS TO HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. SOMEONE WHO IS A POOR STUDENT ONE YEAR MAY BE A MUCH BETTER STUDENT AFTER RETENTION. (52490)

ALWAYS SEEMS TO BE SOME CHILDREN THAT NEED TO BE RETAINED. (52330)

ORIGINALLY, I FELT THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF RETENTION TO THE CHILD'S SELF-IMAGE WAS OF GREATER HARM THAN OF MOVING AHEAD AND WORKING ON A LOWER LEVEL. I NOW FEEL THAT IT IS AS NEGATIVE, IF NOT MORE SO, TO THE SELF IMAGE TO BE PASSED ON IN THE SAME CLASS AND WORKING AT BELOW GRADE LEVEL. THESE CHILDREN ARE RAPIDLY LABELED BY THEIR PEERS AS "THE SLOW KIDS", A LABEL THEY MAY WEAR THROUGHOUT THEIR SCHOOL YEARS. (60190)

WE "NEVER SAY NEVER". WE MUST MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON INDIVIDUAL NEEDS. (60240)

OTHER ALTERNATIVES ARE MORE PRODUCTIVE - (REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION, TUTORING, ELEM. COUNSELING). (60390)

EXPERIENCE! (60440)

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF REASONS I THINK SOME STUDENTS SHOULD BE RETAINED - SOME ALREADY STATED - IMMATURITY, POOR FOUNDATION, QUESTION #1. (60530)

TOO MANY FACTORS ARE CONSIDERED IN THE DECISION TO RETAIN A STUDENT. RETENTION SHOULD BE A LAST RESORT. (61100)

I THINK EACH CHILD MUST BE LOOKED AT AND I NEED TO TAKE EVERY POSSIBLE FACTOR IN ACCOUNT (61350)

1. STANDARDS SOL AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF STUDENTS TO MEET REQUIREMENTS MANDATED BY STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL DIVISION.
2. (TOO MUCH) EMPHASIS PLACED ON TEST SCORES.
3. TEACHERS FEEL THEIR JUDGMENT IS DISREGARD (SIC) - IT IS WHAT THE CHILD SCORES ON TEST THAT COUNTS. YEARS AGO - CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO ALL AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD. NOT NOW - IF HE/SHE DOESN'T DO WELL ON A SKILLS TEST, ACHIEVEMENT TEST - YOU COVER YOURSELF - RETAIN THE CHILD!!! (61510)

MORE OBJECTIVE RELATED CURRICULUM NOW AND IT IS BETTER STRUCTURED TO SEE WHAT A CHILD CAN DO, DID AND NEEDS TO DO ETC. (61660)

- Item 23. Listed below are some of the factors that teachers consider when deciding whether a student should be promoted or retained. Please distribute a TOTAL OF 100 POINTS across these factors to reflect the importance each would play as you make this decision. This is not a complete list, so please feel free to add OTHER

factors that you consider in the space provided, adding point values for them.

COMMENTS DIRECTED TO THE RESPONSE CHOICE "AGE IN RELATION TO OTHERS"

(-MATURITY/SIZE MORE RELEVANT THAN AGE) (51090)

COMMENTS DIRECTED TO THE RESPONSE CHOICE "HOME ENVIRONMENT"

WILLINGNESS OF PARENT TO WORK WITH CHILD (32390)

COMMENT DIRECTED TO THE RESPONSE CHOICE "SELF ESTEEM"

THIS CAN BE TAKEN CARE OF BY ATTITUDE OF PARENT & CHILD. (20740)

COMMENT DIRECTED TO THE RESPONSE CHOICE "ABILITY"

THERE ARE SPECIAL CLASSES TO HANDLE THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE THE ABILITY (20740)

COMMENTS DIRECTED TO THE RESPONSE CHOICE "OTHER":

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (BOY/GIRL RELATIONSHIP) 10 (20931)

IN SP. ED. (31490)

TESTING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SCORES (32620)

ARE THEY LD? PHYSICAL HANDICAPS? (40600)

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES (30+) (61350)

ATTITUDE TOWARD LEARNING (61660)

GENERAL COMMENTS AT THE END OF THE PAGE

THE VALUE OF THESE MIGHT CHANGE DEPENDING ON THE INDIVIDUAL. (30521)

MUST CONSIDER TOTAL ENVIRONMENT OF CHILD AS WELL AS COGNITIVE ABILITIES. (31290)

HARD TO DO IN A GENERAL CASE - EACH CHILD IS SO INDIVIDUAL SOME FACTORS OUTWEIGH OTHERS IN EACH CASE. (50161)

- Item 24. Listed below are some of the factors that contribute to the problems students have in school. Please distribute a TOTAL OF 100 POINTS to reflect the amount that you think each factor contributes to student difficulties.

COMMENT DIRECTED TO RESPONSE CHOICE "LOW ACADEMIC ABILITY":

SOMETIMES A CHILD WILL BE STRONGER IF GIVEN AN ADDITIONAL YEAR (20931)

COMMENT DIRECTED TO RESPONSE CHOICE "IMMATURITY"

(EARLY GRADES) (32390)

COMMENT DIRECTED TO RESPONSE CHOICE "POOR HOME ENVIRONMENT"

LACK OF PARENT SUPPORT AND HELP IN SUBJECT AREAS WHERE CHILD NEEDS HELP. (10190)

COMMENT DIRECTED TO RESPONSE CHOICE "LACK OF MOTIVATION":

SELF MOTIVATION (10800)

THIS SHOULD BE 90%. POOR HOME ENVIRONMENT IS GREATLY RESPONSIBLE FOR LACK OF MOTIVATION AS IS IMMATURITY. (20740)

LACK OF PUPIL EFFORT (20931)

DO YOU MEAN SELF MOTIVATION OR TEACHER MOTIVATION? (22140)

COMMENTS DIRECTED TO THE RESPONSE CHOICE "OTHER".

*LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES COMBINED WITH TOO MUCH TIME INVOLVED IN NONTEACHING ACTIVITIES.

ONE POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGY: IT MAY HELP TO REARRANGE THE CLASS TIME TO PROVIDE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF INTENSE TEACHING TIMES INTERSPERSED WITH SHORT BREAK TIMES (KIDS PUT HEADS DOWN ON DESK FOR 5 MINUTES, OR JUMP UP & DOWN (EXERCISE) FOR 5 MINUTES THEN RETURN TO TEACHING. MANY KIDS MAINTAIN ATTENTION FOR ONLY A MAXIMUM OF 10 - 20 MINUTES AT A TIME.

*LACK OF TEACHER MOTIVATION TO USE A MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF THE AVAILABLE TIME EACH DAY TO TEACH (ABOUT 70% OF WHICH IS DUE TO LOW TEACHER SALARIES). I BELIEVE MANY TEACHERS FEEL DEPRESSED MUCH OF THE TIME WITH THOUGHTS SUCH AS "I'M AN EDUCATED PROFESSIONAL WHO MAKES THE SAME AS A PAPER MILL JANITOR." I HAVE HEARD MANY SUCH COMMENTS FROM REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS. TEACHER INCENTIVES MAY INCREASE TEACHER MOTIVATION, SUCH AS: INCREASED PAY INCENTIVES, INCREASE IN THE # OF LEAVE DAYS PER YEAR, ETC. (10190)

STARTING SCHOOL TOO YOUNG. (10341)
ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENIENCE (11090)
PEER PRESSURE (32560)
SP.ED. TESTING NOT TIMELY (COMPLETED) (32620)
DOESN'T TRY TO LEARN (33150)
NOT REQUIRING STUDENTS TO BE RESPONSIBLE (BY PARENTS)
EXPECTATION AND SUPERVISION OF WORK HABITS DURING EARLY
YEARS BY PARENTS (50550)
LOW VERBAL ABILITY (51610)
POOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS & TEACHERS (CONTRIBUTES,
EVEN CAUSES OTHER FACTORS) (60390)
NO PARENTAL CONTROL
LACK OF SELF DISCIPLINE (60530)
EXCESSIVE ABSENCES (61350)
GENERAL COMMENTS AT END OF PAGE:
THESE CAN CONTRIBUTE EQUALLY (31720)
CHILDREN OFTEN SUFFER PRIMARILY FROM 1 OR 2 OF THE
ABOVE (40600)
(I TAUGHT TITLE I FOR 6 YEARS - THUS THE WIDE VARIETY)
(50161)
CHAPTER I ACCOUNTS FOR 3 YRS. (50331)
I BELIEVE THAT THE HOME ENVIRONMENT IS THE KEY FACTOR
THAT DETERMINES THE OTHER FACTORS EXCEPT FOR
CURRICULUM, AND IN SOME CASES LOW ACADEMIC ABILITY
(I.E. MENTAL RETARDATION) (51121)

Item 26. ...estimate the TOTAL number of students you have
recommended for retention"

ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER.
NEVER FORMALLY RECOMMENDED ANY STUDENT FOR RETENTION.
I HAVE RECOMMENDED TO CLASSROOM TEACHERS ABOUT A CHILD
BEING RETAINED WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE EMOTIONAL &
PHYSICAL MATURITY OF THE STUDENT (11491)

SPECIAL ED. TEACHER
WE HAVE IED'S FOR EACH CHILD - RETENTION IS NOT A PART
OF THE SPEC. ED PROCESS FOR MULTI-HANDICAPPED OR

MODERATELY RETARDED STUDENTS. (20290)

1 THE FIRST YEAR I TAUGHT _____ GRADE,
8 THIS YEAR. I KNOW, IT'S HARD FOR ME TO BELIEVE TOO!
I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A MIXED BAG OF STUDENTS. IT'S
BEEN A VERY DIFFICULT YEAR. (REVEAL)

0 - NEVER RECOMMENDED BUT HAVE SUPPORTED 2 STUDENTS
BEING SO. (22890)

(BESIDE K-3) THESE WERE "SUPPORT" VOTES FOR A CLASSROOM
TEACHER. (BESIDE 5-8) THIS IS JUST A WILD GUESS
(50161)

RECOMMENDATION FOR RETENTION DOES NOT APPLY IN CH. I.
(50331)

I CANNOT ANSWER THIS QUESTION, USUALLY AROUND 2 PER
YEAR. (50961)

*THIS IS VERY DIFFICULT TO REMEMBER. (51420)

I CAN NOT REMEMBER THIS ONE - THE AVERAGE IS 1-2 PER
YEAR! (40250)

ITS (SIC) HARD TO REMEMBER HOW MANY! (40440)

I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO RECOMMEND RETENTION. (41190)

7 OUT OF 12 WERE RETENTIONS IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 1986-87
(61510)

Item 30. Please explain your views on retention. (Use back if
more space is needed)

RETENTION IS ONE ALTERNATIVE TO PROVIDE MORE
INSTRUCTION TO DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVES, BEFORE PROMOTION TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL.
USE OF RETENTION AS AN ALTERNATIVE, MIGHT BE MINIMIZED
BY DEALING WITH THE FACTORS LISTED IN #24. (10190)

UNLESS A CHILD IS MENTALLY HANDICAPPED OR HAS BEEN
RETAINED TWICE WITH NO REAL IMPROVEMENT, THEN A CHILD
EITHER MEETS STATE AND SCHOOL SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS, OR
HE IS RETAINED. (10241)

IF A CHILD SHOULD BE RETAINED, DO IT. THEY SPEND A
YEAR BEING FRUSTRATED & UNSUCCESSFUL IF PUSHED AHEAD.
THE EARLIER THE BETTER - TIME TO MASTER THE BASICS
BEFORE MOVING ON. (10341)

I FEEL THAT A CHILD SHOULD: BE ON GRADE LEVEL; BE
EMOTIONALLY MATURE; AND ATTEND REGULARLY IN ORDER NOT

TO BE RETAINED. (10421)

NECESSARY UNTIL ANOTHER SYSTEM IS DEvised. (10620)

A STUDENT SHOULD BE RETAINED IF YOU FEEL IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR HIM NEXT YEAR OR IF HE LACKS THE SKILLS NECESSARY FOR NEXT GRADE. (10720)

SHOULD BE THE TEACHER'S DECISION AND USED MORE IN THE LOWER GRADES. (10800)

FOR SOME CHILDREN RETENTION IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO ALLOW TIME FOR MATURITY AND ALSO TO SET THE GROUNDWORK NECESSARY FOR SUCCESSFULLY HANDLING THE NEXT GRADE. FOR OTHER CHILDREN IT IS A WASTED YEAR AND IMPROVEMENT IS NOT OBSERVED. AN ALTERNATIVE TO RETENTION IS DEFINITELY NEEDED. (10950)

I BELIEVE RETENTION IS NECESSARY IN MANY QUESTIONABLE INSTANCES. I'M SATISFIED THAT MOST RETAINED STUDENTS BENEFIT, ESP. IN PRIMARY GRADES. I THINK STUDENTS SHOULD BE RETAINED IN PRIMARY RATHER THAN PUTTING IT OFF IN HOPE OF A MIRACLE. (11090)

I FEEL THAT RETENTIONS SHOULD BE BEFORE GRADE FOUR. (11100)

IF A STUDENT'S AVERAGE FOR THE YEAR IS FAILING IN 2 ACADEMIC SUBJECTS, HE/SHE SHOULD BE RETAINED. (11271)

OUR SOCIETY IS BASED ON ACHIEVEMENT AND GOALS TO REACH. IF I'M NOT DOING MY PART SHOULD I BE REWARDED. IF WE DON'T RETAIN, WE SHOULD CHANGE THE SYSTEM. (11391)

IF A STUDENT IS NOT WORKING ON GRADE LEVEL & IS FAILING HE/SHE SHOULD BE RETAINED. A STUDENT ON GRADE LEVEL & FAILING SHOULD BE RETAINED. AN EMOTIONALLY & PHYSICALLY IMMATURE STUDENT THAT IS FAILING SHOULD BE RETAINED. (11491)

USE IT AS A LAST RESORT. (11561)

RETENTION IS NECESSARY IN OUR AMERICAN SOCIETY. UNTIL WE CHANGE OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM COMPLETELY, WE WILL HAVE TO SEPARATE THOSE WHO ACHIEVE AND THOSE WHO FAIL TO ACHIEVE TO THEIR CAPACITY OR THE LEVEL SET FORTH BY OUR SOCIETY. (11690)

RETENTION IS A NECESSARY FACTOR IN SCHOOLS. SOME CHILDREN FOR VARIOUS REASONS TAKE MORE TIME TO ACQUIRE THE SUBJECT MATERIALS THAN OTHERS. (11730)

I THINK STUDENTS NEED TO BE RETAINED IF THEY CANNOT PERFORM ON GRADE LEVEL. I BELIEVE THAT RETENTION IS

MOST EFFECTIVE IN EARLY GRADES K - 3. (11861)

I HAVE SEEN RETENTION HELP SEVERAL STUDENTS. IT GIVES THEM ANOTHER YEAR TO MATURE AND THE NEXT YEAR INSTEAD OF BEING FRUSTRATED THEY CAN PERFORM NEAR TOP OF THEIR CLASS. (11911)

A CHILD SHOULD BE RETAINED ONLY WHEN ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. THERE SHOULD BE MORE THAN ONE REASON FOR THE RETENTION. (20121)

YOU CANNOT SEND A CHILD TO THE NEXT GRADE IF THE CHILD DOES NOT HAVE THE SKILLS. HE OR SHE WILL ONE MEET WITH FAILURE. (21290)

I FEEL AS IF RETENTION SHOULD BE DONE IN K - 3. IT IS A GOOD IDEA IF THE CHILD IS IMMATURE. (21390)

- THE EARLIER THE BETTER (PREFERABLY K - 3)
- BENEFICIAL WHEN IT CAN BE USED TO HELP A CHILD GAIN A MORE SOLID BASE OF CONCEPTS/KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS.
- BENEFICIAL WHEN SUPPORTED BY PARENTS AND CHILD AS A CHANCE FOR IMPROVEMENT RATHER THAN PUNISHMENT. (20411)

TEACHING P.E. - I HAVE NO EXPERIENCE WITH RETENTION. (20590)

I FEEL THAT RETENTION IS NECESSARY AND IF HANDLED WELL BY TEACHERS & PARENTS TOGETHER, CAN BE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE. (20601)

IF A CHILD CANNOT DO THE WORK THEY SHOULD BE RETAINED. (20811)

RETENTION IS OFTEN HELPFUL FOR THE IMMATURE CHILD TO REACH HIS POTENTIAL. RETENTION IS HELPFUL IF A CHILD HAS A POSTIVE (SIC) ATTITUDE. RETENTION OFTEN DOES NOT WORK IF THE CHILD HAS A POOR CONCEPT OR SEES THE RETENTION AS PUNISHMENT. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND PROMOTING THAT CHILD DOESN'T HELP EITHER. (20740)

THE REASON FOR RETENTION IS TO HELP THE CHILD. I ASK WILL THE CHILD BE BETTER HERE OR HIGHER. I CONSIDER ALL ASPECTS - SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, FAMILY, AGE, SIZE AND CHILDS (SIC) UNDERSTANDING OF MATURITY. (20931)

CHILDREN NEED TO BE RETAINED EARLY SO THAT IF THERE ARE SERIOUS PROBLEMS THEY CAN BE DETECTED. (21000)

THE EARLIER THE BETTER. WE NEED MORE TESTING IN K & 1 TO IDENTIFY THE CHILD WITH L.D./IMMATURITY PROBLEMS/AND LACK OF READINESS IN SKILL AREAS. DO CHILDREN BEGIN

SCHOOL TOO EARLY? (21121)

MY DECISION IS BASED ON THE STUDENT'S APPARENT EFFORT TO DO PASSING WORK. IF THE SCHOOL HAS RECEIVED NO SUPPORT FROM THE HOME, I DO NOT STRONGLY PRESS FOR RETENTION EVEN IF THERE WAS NO EFFORT. FREQUENT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR AND BELLIGERENCE MAY ALSO INFLUENCE FOR "PLACEMENT" INSTEAD. (21270)

IT IS NECESSARY (21360)

RETENTION IS NECESSARY IF THE STUDENT HAS NOT PERFORMED AT AN ACCEPTABLE ACCADEMIC (SIC) MINIMUM BASED ON CLASS STANDARDS - MATURITY MAY BE A CAUSE FOR NONCOMPLETION, BUT IS NOT A GOOD REASON FOR RETENTION ITSELF. (21490)

BASED ON GUIDELINES SET BY THE SCHOOL DIVISION IF A CHILD DOES NOT MEET THE NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION THEN HE SHOULD BE RETAINED. RETENTION AT AN EARLY AGE IS HELPFUL. THE EARLIER PROBLEMS ARE CAUGHT AND CORRECTED THE BETTER THE STUDENT WILL BE. (21550)

IT'S GOOD AND NECESSARY (21690)

I DON'T LIKE RETENTION - PARTICULARLY IN K.; HOWEVER, WITH INCREASED ACADEMICS IT HAS MADE IT NECESSARY. (21700)

EACH CHILD'S SITUATION, IN MOST CASES, HAS TO BE DEALT WITH INDIVIDUALLY (21870)

RETENTION IN GRADES K-3 IS MOST BENEFICIAL (WHEN IT IS NECESSARY (21990)

RETENTION IS BEST IN THE PRIMARY GRADES. THIS GIVES THE CHILD A CHANCE TO CATCH UP AND FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT HIMSELF. (22020)

THE WAY OUR SYSTEM IS SET UP, I AM FOR RETENTION. I PERSONALLY WOULD LIKE TO TRY A NONGRADED SYSTEM, WHERE STUDENTS AREN'T LABELED AS BEING IN A CERTAIN GRADE OR AS "PASSING" OR "FAILING". I THINK STUDENTS SEE RETENTION AS "FAILING" NO MATTER WHAT WE TRY TO MAKE IT OUT AS. A CHILD WHO HAS A LOW SELF-CONCEPT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TEACH. (22140)

TEACHING ON THE 1ST GRADE LEVEL, I FEEL IF A CHILD IS FRUSTRATED AT THIS TIME HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO HANDLE A HIGHER GRADE. ALTHOUGH RETAINING A CHILD IS TAKING A YEAR OF THEIR LIFE, I FEEL THAT KNOWING ONE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL IS VERY IMPORTANT. I FEEL RETENTION CAN BE VERY BENEFICIAL IN MOST CASES. (22311)

I BELIEVE RETENTION IS NECESSARY IF STUDENTS ARE

FAILING MATH AND READING. (22430)

TO ME THIS QUESTION HAS BEEN COVERED IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE - THE ISSUE OF RETENTION DIFFERS WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL CHILD - TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION ABILITY, HOME ENVIRONMENT, AGE, ETC. (22561)

NECESSARY TO GIVE FOUNDATION FOR NEXT GRADE. (22690)

I FEEL THAT RETENTION CAN BE GOOD OR BAD. YOU TAKE A CHANCE ANYTIME YOU MAKE THAT DECISION. I HAVE HAD GOOD RESULTS WHERE THE CHILD HAS MATURED, LEARNED WHAT THEY SHOULD HAVE AND WENT ON TO BE GOOD STUDENTS THE NEXT YEAR. ALSO I HAVE HAD BAD RESULTS WHERE A STUDENT BECAME A BEHAVIOR PROBLEM AND REFUSED TO DO WORK. (22751)

ON OCCASION RETENTION IS NECESSARY ESPECIALLY IN GRADES K-4. BUT ONLY WHEN A PLAN IS MADE INDICATING WHAT WE CAN CHANGE TO HELP THIS STUDENT LEARN AND SUCCEED. (22890)

MY PERSPECTIVE IS LIMITED BECAUSE I DO NOT TEACH A CLASSROOM (22990)

YOU MUST LOOK AT THE WHOLE CHILD. AFTER CONSIDERING ALL FACTORS, I WILL MAKE MY DECISION. (23090)

I FEEL THAT IF RETENTION IS TO BE EFFECTIVE MEANS (SIC) OF PREVENTING STUDENT FAILURE IN HIGHER GRADES, IT SHOULD BE DONE IN GRADES K - 3. (30170)

SEE ANSWER 22 (30210)

IN LOWER GRADES K-3, RETENTION IS NECESSARY OR NEEDED. THE CHILDREN ARE ABLE TO COPE BETTER THAN THE OLDER CHILDREN. I DON'T THINK THEY ARE AFFECTED GREATLY AT AN EARLY AGE. (30490)

IF IMMATURITY AFFECTS THE PERFORMANCE, RETENTION MUST BE CONSIDERED. IF THE STUDENT CAN'T RETAIN THE MATERIAL, HE MUST BE RETAINED. (30521)

I FEEL STUDENTS SHOW (SIC) BE RETAINED IF ENOUGH FACTORS POINTS (SIC) IN THIS DIRECTION. (30630)

RETENTION CAN BE A VERY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR A CHILD WHO HAS BEEN FRUSTRATED ACADEMICALLY, SOCIALLY, AND /OR EMOTIONALLY FOR A YEAR. THIS EXTRA YEAR TO GROW CAN CHANGE AN UNHAPPY CHILD TO A CONFIDENT, SECURE LEADER THE FOLLOWING YEAR. (30700)

I BELIEVE RETENTION SHOULD BE DONE IN LOWER ELEMENTARY IF IT NEEDS TO BE DONE. (30841)

TO BE EFFECTIVE I FEEL RETENTION IN K - 3 TO BE THE GRADES WHERE CHILDREN NEED TO REPEAT. (30930)

A CHILD DOING HIS BEST AND SHOWS A GREAT EFFECT (SIC) SHOULD NOT FAIL. IF HE DOES FAIL THEN THE SCHOOL HAS NOT MEET (SIC) HIS NEEDS. (31150)

RETENTION SHOULD NOT BE ABOLISHED. HOWEVER, ALL FACTORS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS BEFORE DECIDING TO RETAIN A CHILD. IT SHOULD NOT BE BASED SOLELY ON GRADES RECEIVED BUT THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE CHILD BEING CONSIDERED. WEIGHING ALL FACTORS, IF IT SEEMS LIKE IT WILL HELP THE CHILD MORE THAN HARM HIM/HER, THEN RETAIN. (31290)

AT THIS TIME I REALLY DON'T HAVE CONCRETE OPINIONS (31390)

I RETAIN ONLY IF ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. (31490)

RETENTION SHOULD BE ONLY CONSIDERED IF THE CHILD HAS NOT MASTERED THE ACADEMICS (32600)

THIS CAN NOT BE ANSWERED IN GENERAL TERMS. EACH CHILD HAS TO BE CONSIDERED INDIVIDUALLY USING ITEMS LISTED ON #23 AND #24 - PROBABLY PLUS OTHERS. (31720)

I FEEL A CHILD SHOULD BE RETAINED IF AND ONLY IF IT IS GOING TO BENEFIT THAT CHILD. IF IT IS GOING TO BE A POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT - SUCH AS STRENGTHEN WEAK SKILL AND ENHANCE ACADEMIC ABILITIES - A CHILD THAT HAS THE ABILITY BUT SIMPLY WON'T DO THE WORK SHOULD NOT BE RETAINED. (31871)

I HAVE TO BE CONVINCED THAT AT THE TIME A STUDENT WILL BENEFIT - WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A FULL YEAR OF LIFE. (31960)

RETENTION MUST BE DECIDED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. THERE CAN NOT BE ANY HARD AND FAST RULES TO APPLY. I AM BEGINNING TO SEE THAT A CHILD'S SELF-CONCEPT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. I DON'T FEEL QUALIFIED TO MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT RETENTION IN LOWER ELEMENTARY. HOWEVER, IN UPPER ELEMENTARY I DON'T FEEL THAT RETENTION HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE TOOL. THE CHILDREN IN UPPER ELEMENTARY, FOR THE MOST PART, ALREADY ARE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY WITH SELF-ESTEEM. IN UPPER ELEMENTARY I THINK RETENTION DOES MORE HARM THAN GOOD IN MOST CASES. (32060)

AT THE KINDERGARTEN LEVEL, I FEEL A CHILD'S OVERALL MATURITY IS AS IMPORTANT AS HIS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, IF NOT MORE SO. (32100)

RETENTION CAN BE NECESSARY FOR THOSE CHILDREN WHO HAVE MISSED BASIC CONCEPTS INTRODUCED THAT YEAR. (32210)

RETENTION IS MOST EFFECTIVE IN KINDERGARTEN OR THE EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES (1 - 4) FOR SEVERAL REASONS. THE CHILD HAS NOT SO WIDENED THE GAP BETWEEN (SIC) EXPECTATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT THAT HE CANNOT "CATCH UP". HE IS LESS VULNERABLE TO PEER PRESSURE AND FEELS LITTLE STIGMA. SINCE SUCCESS IS AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL SELF-CONCEPT MAY BE ENHANCED. CHILDREN IN THE UPPER GRADES FREQUENTLY PERFORM POORER THAN BEFORE RETENTION. RETENTION SHOULD NEVER BE USED AS PUNISHMENT FOR A CHILD'S POOR PERFORMANCE. (32390)

RETENTION IN THE LOWER GRADES HAS APPEARED TO BE BENEFICIAL TO SOME STUDENTS DEPENDING ON THE WAY IT IS HANDLED. THE CHILD MUST NOT BE MADE TO FEEL LIKE HE IS A FAILURE AND SHOULD BE TOLD THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF ANOTHER YEAR IN THE SAME CLASS. (32490)

IF A CHILD IS BELOW FIFTH GRADE, IMMATURE, FAILING SUBJECTS AND WOULD TRUELY (SIC) BENEFIT, I FAVOR RETENTION. IF THE CHILD IS PHYSICALLY AND/OR EMOTIONALLY MATURE BEYOND HIS/HER YEARS, I FEEL RETENTION DOES MORE HARM THAN GOOD. I'VE SEEN TOO MANY PROBLEMS CREATED AND NOT ENOUGHED (SIC) SOLVED BY RETAINING A STUDENT JUST TO SHOW HIM/HER THAT "YOU HAVE TO MAKE THE GRADE TO PASS". THEY BECOME REBELLIOUS AND/OR SIMPLY FORM THE IDEA "I DON'T CARE, I'M GOING TO QUIT SCHOOL ANYWAY". MANY TIMES THIS ATTITUDE RUBS OFF ON WEAKER STUDENTS WHO WOULD'VE APPLIED THEMSELVES IF (SIC) (32560)

NEEDS OF STUDENT (32620)

RETENTION IS NECESSARY AT TIMES, ESPECIALLY IN THE PRIMARY GRADES. I THINK IT SHOULD BE USED MORE IN THOSE YEARS BECAUSE THAT IS THE TIME WHEN THEY SHOULD AQUIRE (SIC) THEIR BASIC SKILLS AND IF THEY DO NOT, THEY WILL HAVE PROBLEMS THROUGHOUT THEIR SCHOOL YEARS. (32840)

RETENTION IS IMPORTANT TO CLASSROOM TEACHERS DUE TO THE NEEDS OF THE VARIED STUDENTS THEY TEACH. (33090)

IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT COMPLETE REQUIRED SUBJECTS WITH PASSING GRADES OR HAS THE CABILITY (SIC) TO SUCCEED SUCCESSFULLY WITHOUT FRUSTRATION BY REPEATING, THEN THIS WOULD IMPROVE HIS/HER ABILITY. I DO NOT AGREE WITH PROMOTING A CHILD JUST TO SATISFY PARENTS OR

PROMOTE A CHILD WHO MAKES ONLY FAILING GRADES. THE CHILD'S BEST INTERESTS AS FAR AS LEARNING SHOULD TAKE TOP PRIORITY. (33150)

I FEEL THAT RETENTION CAN BE USED SUCCESSFULLY IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS. IN THE VERY EARLY GRADES IN (SIC) CAN BE VERY HELPFUL IN ALLOWING A STUDENT TO CATCH UP ACEDMICALLY (SIC) AND TO MATURE. I BELIEVE THAT IT IS MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE IF USED IN GRADES K - 3 RATHER THAN IN THE HIGHER GRADES. EACH CHILD MUST BE CONSIDERED INDIVIDUALLY. THE EFFECTS ON THE CHILD AND HOW THESE WILL BE HANDLED SHOULD ALSO BE LOOKED AT CAREFULLY. I THINK THAT PARENTS MUST ALSO PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN HELPING THE CHILD TO UNDERSTAND AND ADJUST TO THE RETENTION AS A POSITIVE SITUATION. (33330)

RETENTION CAN BE USEFUL IF HANDLED WELL BY ALL ADULTS CONCERNED. THE ADULTS INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDE THE CHILD TAKES. (40190)

RETENTION IS NECESSARY SOMETIMES. IT IS NOT ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL. WE MUST TRY ACCORDING TO OUR FEELINGS ABOUT EACH INDIVIDUAL CHILD. NO FORMULA WORKS FOR ALL. (40250)

IT SHOULD BE AVOIDED IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. (40440)

I FEEL THAT RETENTION IS A NECESSITY IN THE SCHOOLS. PASSING A CHILD THAT IS NOT PREPARED FOR THE NEXT GRADE WILL HARM AS MUCH IF NOT MORE, THAN IF THAT CHILD IS NOT READY. BY NOT HAVING THE SKILLS REQUIRED, HE WILL EXPERIENCE EVEN MORE FAILURE & FRUSTRATION BY NOT BEING ABLE TO PERFORM. ALSO, I HAVE SEEN CHILDREN THAT HAVE ADOPTED AN ATTITUDE THAT THEY'LL BE PASSED ON, SO WHY WORK. OR THAT THEY'LL BE SUCH A PROBLEM IN CLASS THAT THE TEACHER WILL PASS THEM JUST TO GET RID OF THEM. (40560)

I ONLY RETAIN IF I FEEL IT WILL BENEFIT THE STUDENT BY DOING SO. I CONSIDER ALL THE AREAS YOU LISTED AND WEIGH ALL PROS & CONS. I FEEL IT IS A VERY SERIOUS DECISION TO BE MADE ONLY IN SEVERE CASES AND ONLY WHEN A CHILD STANDS TO GAIN. CHILDREN DO BENEFIT FROM A "GIFT OF TIME" IN MANY CASES. (40600)

IF CHILDREN ARE NOT WORKING ON GRADE LEVEL AND SEEM IMMATURE, I FEEL RETENTION CAN HELP THESE STUDENTS BY GIVING A YEAR TO CATCH UP ON ACADEMICS AND TO MATURE. (40810)

IF THE CHILD IS NOT MEETING THE SCHOOLS (SIC) STANDARDS THEY SHOULD BE RETAINED. (41010)

I FEEL THAT IT IS NECESSARY & BENEFICIAL IN MANY CASES.

(41190)

I BELIEVE IN RETENTION ONLY IN EXTREME CASES WHERE A MULTITUDE OF FACTORS (GRADES, MATURITY, ABILITY - HOME SUPPORT, TEACHER SUPPORT) POINT TO A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE RETAINED CHILD. (50161)

I BELIEVE IN RETENTION. SENDING A CHILD WHO IS ACADEMICALLY UNPREPARED TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL DOES NOT BENEFIT THE CHILD. FRUSTRATION RESULTS WHEN UNABLE TO PERFORM SATISFACTORILY, AND HENCE LOWER SELF-WORTH. (50230)

RETENTION CAN BE A VERY USEFUL TOOL IN AIDING THE STUDENT TO ACHIEVE TO HIS/HER POTENTIAL. IF AN IMMATURE STUDENT IS ALLOWED TO PROCEED TO THE NEXT GRADE, HE/SHE WILL MEET TO OBSTACLES (SIC) TOO GREAT FOR THEM & FUTURE FAILURE IS QUITE POSSIBLE. I THINK THE EARLIER THE RETENTION OF THESE STUDENTS, THE BETTER. (50331)

NECESSARY IF TEACHER IS SUPPORTED BY ADMINISTRATION (50451)

RETENTION IS NEEDED WHEN CHILD HAS NOT WORKED TO MASTER BASIC SKILLS NEEDED FOR NEXT GRADE. ABILITY TO LEARN MUST BE PRESENT. (50550)

RETENTION IS MORE IMPORTANT IN GRADES K-3 BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE BASIC LEARNING TAKES PLACE. WHEN THIS HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED EDUCATION IN THE UPPER GRADES BECOMES A MORE POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS AND CAN CONTINUE (SIC) THRU HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND. (50660)

I REALLY BELIEVE THAT RETENTION SHOULD BE AVOIDED IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, IF IT IS NECESSARY, IT SHOULD BE HANDLED IN SUCH A MANNER THAT THE STUDENT AND HIS/HER PARENTS REALIZE THAT IT IS FOR THE BEST. (50840)

MY VIEW OF RETENTION IS IF THE CHILD IS WEAK AND WILL BENEFIT (SIC) FROM ANOTHER YEAR IN THE GRADE - POOR ABILITY - WORK HABITS - IMMATURITY (50961)

(1) SOME CHILDREN ARE NOT ACADEMICALLY READY TO BE PROMOTED. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THE LOWER THE GRADE LEVEL OF THE RETENTION THE BETTER THE RESULT. THE GAP BETWEEN THE CHILD'S GRADE PLACEMENT LEVEL AND ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL SHOULD NOT BE SO EXTREME THAT EVEN A RETENTION WILL NOT EQUALIZE G.P. AND ACHIE. (51090)

RETENTION, IF NECESSARY, SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. IT SHOULD BE DONE ONLY IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD - NOT TO SATISFY THE PARENTS OR

ACCOMMODATE CLASS SIZE ETC. (51121)

RETENTION, IF USED PROPERLY, IS BENEFICIAL (SIC). A LOT DEPENDS ON HOW THE PARENTS VIEW THE RETENTION. IF THE PARENTS LOOK AT IT AS BENEFICIAL (SIC), CHANCES ARE THE CHILD WILL ALSO. (51420)

RETENTION CAN BE HARD ON A CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM, BUT IT IS NOT NEARLY AS HARD AS BEING UNABLE TO SUCCEED YEAR AFTER YEAR. IF CHILDREN ARE SOCIALLY PROMOTED THEY WILL COME TO EXPECT A "FREE RIDE" AND WILL NOT BECOME RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN LEARNING. THEY THEN GRADUATE AND BLAME THE SCHOOLS FOR NOT TEACHING THEM! (51590)

UNLESS THE CHILD IS L.D., I FEEL THE TEACHER HAS FAILED IF RETENTION IS NEEDED AT THE END OF THE YEAR. IT INDICATES TO ME THAT I HAVE FAILED TO PRECISELY DESCRIBE THE ATTRIBUTES INVOLVED IN CONCEPTS BEING TAUGHT. IF THE CHILD DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE USED IN TEACHING, HE WILL FAIL. (51610)

I HAVE NO CLEAR VIEWS ON RETENTION. I BASE MY DECISION ON EACH INDIVIDUAL CHILD. (51701)

EACH CASE NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED INDIVIDUALLY. AS A TEACHER, I NEED TO CONSIDER WHAT IS TO BE GAINED FOR THE STUDENT AS A RESULT OF THIS RETENTION. (52071)

SINCE I TEACH KINDERGARTEN, I FEEL THAT IT IS MUCH BETTER TO RETAIN A CHILD NOW INSTEAD OF HAVING HIM MEET FAILURE LATER. LET HIM FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF AND MEET SUCCESS IN FIRST GRADE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. (52100)

SOME CHILDREN NEED TO BE RETAINED IF THEY HAVE POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, POOR EFFORT AND IMMATURITY. (52330)

I FEEL THE BEST TIME FOR RETENTION, IF IT IS NECESSARY, IS AT THE KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE LEVEL. THE SOCIAL STIGMA OF HAVING "FAILED" DOES NOT SEEM SO SEVERE AT THIS AGE LEVEL, AND, ACADEMICALLY, IT GIVES THE STUDENT A SECOND CHANCE TO MASTER BASIC SKILLS. (60190)

RETENTION, I FEEL, IS EFFECTIVE IN ONLY A LOW PERCENTAGE OF CASES. WE TEND TO PUT RETAINÉES BACK THROUGH A PROGRAM THAT DOES NOT ALLOW FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND NEEDS. THE FUTURE DOCTOR OR ENGINEER DOES NOT NEED THE SAME PROGRAM IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THAT THE FUTURE JANITOR OR PULP-WOOD CUTTER NEEDS, BUT BOTH NEED TO HAVE THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS MET. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION NEEDS TO BEGIN VERY EARLY! (60240)

OVERUSED - SHOULD BE A LAST RESORT ALTERNATIVE. (60390)

GET TO KNOW YOUR CHILDREN. (60440)

SOME STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM RETENTION SOME DO NOT. UNFORTUNATELY, IN SOME CASES THE TEACHER CANNOT PREDICT WHO WILL OR WON'T. SO IN RETROSPECT THE STUDENT MIGHT AS WELL HAVE BEEN PROMOTED OR MOVED ON TO THE NEXT CLASS. HOWEVER, I WOULD NEVER RETAIN A STUDENT IF I FELT HE HAD A CHANCE OR ENOUGH BACKGROUND TO "KEEP PACE" OR SHOW SOME PROGRESS IN THE NEXT GRADE. (60530)

AS STATED BEFORE, IT IS A LAST RESORT. (61100)

I BELIEVE I MUST VIEW THE TOTAL CHILD. THIS INCLUDES TOTAL FACTORS FROM SCHOOL, HOME, ETC. THEN I ASK MYSELF, IF RETAINING THEM WILL IMPROVE THEIR SITUATION OR NOT. IF I FEEL VERY STRONGLY ONE WAY OR THE OTHER I ACT ACCORDINGLY. (61350)

STUDENTS MUST BE SUCCESSFUL AT BASIC MASTERY SKILLS BEFORE MOVING. STUDENTS THAT WILL NOT COMPLETE THEIR WORK AND HAVE EXCESSIVE ABSENCES SHOULD NOT BE REWARDED BY BEING PASSED ON. (61470)

IT IS MY OPINION THE TOTAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. I FEEL GRADES - (ABCU) ARE FACTORS THAT DAMAGE SELF-ESTEEM IN THE EARLY YEARS. MOST IMPORTANT THINGS LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE CAN NOT BE MEASURED ON A TEST. I OPPOSE SO MUCH TESTING OF STUDENTS IN K - AND 1ST. WE ARE USING THE TEST TO MEASURE WHETHER THE CHILD HAS LEARNED ENOUGH TO BE PROMOTED OR HELD BACK. RETENTION DESTROYS SELF ESTEEM THE ONE INGREDIENT ESSENTIAL FOR SUCESSFULNESS (SIC). OUR CURRICULUM IS VERY DEMANDING. WE NEED TO RETURN TO A LESS DEMANDING AND STRESSFUL CURRICULUM APPROPRIATE TO THE AGE GROUP. I FEEL MOST STUDENTS NEED NOT BE RETAINED. (61510)

RETENTION IS LIKE A TWO-HEADED COIN. THROUGH ADVANCED EDUCATION AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, I CAN TAKE BOTH SIDES IN MOST ARGUEMENTS (SIC) ABOUT RETENTION. THIS OFTEN TIES ME IN A PROVERBIAL "KNOT". ALSO, IT APPEARS THAT IN OUR SYSTEM THE PRINCIPAL IS THE FINAL WORD. IT IS ALSO DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHAT THE OUTCOME OF THE RETENTION WILL BE ON THE STUDENTS OVERALL PERFORMANCE THE FOLLOWING YEAR. (61660)

Item 31. What has MOST influenced your beliefs on retention? Please use specific examples.

GIVEN REPEATED INSTRUCTION THROUGH RETENTION INCREASES:

1. COMPLETION OF STUDENT'S OBJECTIVES.
2. SELF-CONCEPT THROUGH ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS.
3. MINIMIZES EXPERIENCES OF FAILURE WHICH MAY

HAVE OCCURRED IF STUDENT HAD BEEN PROMOTED TO NEXT GRADE UNPREPARED.

4. ALERTS PARENTS IN A SIGNIFICANT WAY THAT THEIR CHILD NEEDS MORE SUPPORT & HELP. (10190)

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES AND TREMENDOUSLY IMPROVED PERFORMANCE THE FOLLOWING YEAR OF STUDENTS WHO WERE RETAINED. (10241)

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. 3/4 OF STUDENTS I HAVE RETAINED HAD BEEN PUSHED AHEAD AFTER DOING POORLY THE PREVIOUS YEAR. A BOY WAS NOT READY FOR 1ST GRADE WAS GIVEN THE K COMPETENCY TEST (AT PARENTS REQUEST) IN SEPT. HE DID NOT PASS IN JUNE, BUT DID IN SEPT. SO WAS PROMOTED TO 1ST. HE WAS BEHIND ALL YEAR, & ENDED UP REPEATING 1ST. (10341)

HAVING WORKED WITH CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ON GRADE LEVEL; OR ARE IMMATURE; OR HAVE NOT ATTENDED REGULARLY, I'VE SEEN THE FRUSTRATION AND THE LOWERING OF SELF ESTEEM THAT CAN DEVELOP. IT THEY ARE SENT ON, THESE FEELINGS WILL ONLY BE AMPLIFIED. I FEEL IT'S IN THEIR BEST INTEREST TO BE RETAINED & HAVE THE CHANCE OF HAVING A SUCCESSFUL YEAR. (10421)

A RECOGNITION THAT THE WHOLE CHILD IS PLACED AND THE TEACHER IS ACCOUNTABLE. IF THE CHILD DOESN'T MASTER SKILLS AT GRADE LEVEL, HE/SHE IS NOT READY TO MOVE ON. (10551)

EXPERIENCE (10620)

IMMATURITY - SOME STUDENTS JUST NEED MORE TIME.
LACK OF SKILLS (10720)

MY OWN CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL. (10800)

OBSERVATION OF RETAINED CHILDREN. (10950)

WORKING AS A REMEDIAL TEACHER I HAVE A FEW STUDENTS EACH YEAR WHO ARE UNABLE TO HANDLE THE DEMANDS OF THEIR GRADE PLACEMENT. (11090)

MY SON HAD A VERY BAD SELF IMAGE. HE DID NOT FAIL SECOND GRADE BUT I HAD HIM REPEAT. THIS SEEMED TO HELP A LITTLE. HE HAS AN LD PROBLEM HE DID NOT LIKE IT NOR WAS HE SHOWING IMPROVEMENT. SO I REMOVED HIM FROM THE LD PROGRAM. HE IS AN ORAL LEARNER BUT HAS LITTLE OPPORTUNITY TO DO HIS WORK IN THIS MANNER. HE STILL HAS A LITTLE IMAGE PROBLEM. I HAVE FOUND THAT RETENTION HAS HELPED MAYBE 1/2 OF THE STUDENTS I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH THE SECOND YEAR. (11100)

MY SON REPEATING 8TH GRADE. A STUDENT WHO WAS IN 7TH

GRADE 3 YEARS. (11271)

THE SYSTEM DICTATED THIS. (11391)

PARENTS HAVE FORCED THEIR CHILDREN ON THE NEXT GRADE WHEN THAT CHILD SHOULD HAVE BEEN RETAINED. THOSE STUDENTS ARE NOW EVEN MORE BELOW GRADE LEVEL THAN BEFORE AND THEY A (SIC) TOO IMMATURE & ARE THE MAIN CAUSE OF BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS. (11491)

NO ONE PARTICULAR THING (11561)

THE ONE THING THAT HAS MOST INFLUENCED MY BELIEF ON RETENTION IS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CHILD'S SELF IMAGE OR SELF ESTEEM. BEING ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH ONE'S PEERS. (11690)

IN KINDERGARTEN I HAVE SEEN CHILDREN WHO WERE RETAINED A YEAR, MATURE AND PERFORM BETTER IN SCHOOL. THESE SAME CHILDREN FELT BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES. (11730)

RETEACHING STUDENTS THAT I HAVE RETAINED, HAS SHOWN ME BETTER ATTITUDES, MORE EFFORT AND AVERAGE STUDENTS IN MOST CASES. (11861)

SEEING HOW IT HAS HELPED THE KIDS THAT REPEATED A GRADE AND SEEING HOW OTHERS, THAT WERE BORDERLINE AND PASSED ON, STRUGGLED ANOTHER YEAR AND WERE RETAINED THE NEXT YEAR. (11911)

EXPERIENCE. (20121)

OTHER TEACHER'S EXPLANATION OF THEIR (SIC) RETENTIONS & PROBLEMS WITH IT. (20290)

LOW MATURITY LEVEL. (20390)

THE IMPROVED SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN I HAVE RETAINED - OFTEN THESE CHILDREN ARE VIEWED AS LEADERS PARTICULARLY EARLY IN THE YEAR BECAUSE THEY HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHAT IS TO COME - BECAUSE WE USE PARALLEL SCHEDULING AND SEVERAL OTHER MEANS OF GROUPING AND THE FACT THAT CHILDREN FREQUENTLY TRANSFER WITHIN OUR SYSTEM, OFTEN THE MAJORITY OF THE CLASS IS UNAWARE THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN RETAINED UNLESS HE/SHE BRINGS THE SUBJECT UP. (20411)

SEEING THE LOOKS OF FRUSTRATION ON THE FACES OF SOME STUDENTS WHO HAVE GONE ON AND SEEING STUDENTS WHO ARE HAVING A GOOD YEAR BECAUSE THEY WERE RETAINED. (20601)

EXPERIENCE. I HAVE SEEN SEVERAL CASES OF IMMATURE CHILDREN GREATLY IMPROVING. MY OWN SON WAS "HELD BACK"

IN 7TH GRADE TO ALLOW (SIC) TO MATURE. IT REALLY WORKED! I HAVE ALSO SEEN UNMOTIVATED CHILDREN WHO HANDED IN NO WORK THE FIRST YEAR DO THE SAME THING THE SECOND YEAR. (20740)

SEEING CHILDREN FAIL LATER WHEN RETENTION AT AN EARLIER GRADE MAY HAVE PREVENTED THAT. (20811)

PUPILS WHO WERE MAKING PASSING GRADES, BUT SEEM TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO MUCH BETTER. PUPILS WHO SEEM TO HAVE THE "DON'T CARE" ATTITUDE. PUPILS WHO WERE OVERAGE OVER SIZE, APPEARED TO BE IMMATURE. (20931)

EXPERIENCE - WHEN A CHILD IS TOTALLY LOST 1 YEAR AND IS AT THE TOP OF HIS/HER CLASS THE NEXT YEAR (AFTER RETENTION) (21000)

-IMMATURITY - TWO STUDENTS THIS YEAR WHO HAVE ABILITY BUT CANNOT FOLLOW DIRECTIONS, WORK INDEPENDENTLY, ETC. DO THEY START SCHOOL TOO EARLY?
-ACADEMICS (21121)

THE FACT THAT SEVERAL RETENTIONS HAVE DONE WELL THE NEXT YEAR AND IN SUCCEEDING YEARS.
*PRINCIPAL MAY OVERRULE TEACHER'S DECISION REGARDLESS OF REASON GIVEN - TEACHER IS LESS LIKELY TO PRESS, KNOWING THAT. (21270)

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (21360)

N/A (21490)

I HAVE HAD STUDENTS THAT WERE RETAINED EXCEL THEIR SECOND TIME IN A GRADE. TO SEE A CHILD MEET SUCCESS AND KNOW THAT HE CAN DO THE WORK IS VERY REWARDING. HOWEVER, I HAVE ALSO HAD STUDENTS THAT I FELT NEEDED TO BE RETAINED, BUT BECAUSE THEY DID NOT "FAIL ENOUGH" SUBJECTS THEY HAD TO BE PROMOTED BASED ON POLICY. SUPPORT FROM THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND PRINCIPAL ARE NECESSARY. (21550)

MATURITY AND ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS OF INDIVIDUAL VS. EXPECTATIONS OF FOLLOWING GRADE LEVEL TEACHERS (21700)

IN MOST CASES CHILDREN (SIC) WHO HAVE BEEN RETAINED HAVE DONE BETTER THE FOLLOWING YEAR. (21870)

YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE. (21990)

THE VIEWS OF MY PEERS AND ADMINISTRATION (22020)

MY HUSBAND WAS RETAINED IN GRADE SCHOOL. IT DID NOT HURT HIS SELF-CONCEPT AND MADE A DIFFERENCE BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FOR THE REST OF HIS SCHOOL

CAREER. I THINK IN THE LONG RUN IT WAS A GOOD DECISION ON THE PART OF HIS TEACHER. (22140)

TEACHING THE SAME STUDENT I RETAINED THE SECOND YEAR HAS HELPED INFLUENCE ME. SEEING THE GOOD POSITIVE FEELING OF SELF INSTEAD OF THE FRUSTRATED, DOUBTING FEELINGS. (22311)

CHILDREN WHO ARE 15 - 17 YRS. OLD SITTING IN A 7TH GRADE CLASS STILL BEHIND EDUCATIONALLY - NOT ONLY OUT OF PLACE EDUCATIONALLY TO BEGIN WITH, BUT NOW SOCIALLY. (22561)

PROGRESS OF CHILDREN THE NEXT YEAR. (22690)

THE ADDITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND L.D. TEACHERS (22751)

RESEARCH - AS PART OF A GRADUATE CLASS I CHOSE TOPIC TO WRITE A PAPER. (22890)

I HAVE SEEN MORE IMPROVEMENTS IN CHILDREN THAT ARE IN GRADES K - 3. I HAVE SEEN VERY LITTLE IMPROVEMENTS IN CHILDREN 4 - 7. (23090)

STUDENTS RETAINED DURING GRADES 4 - 7 DEMONSTRATE LITTLE CHANGE IN SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY. (30170)

CHILD'S ABILITY
GRADES
ATTENDANCE (30490)

KEEPING TABS ON CHILDREN THE FOLLOWING YEAR HAS HELPED ME TO DECIDE WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK FOR - MATURITY, AGE, BEHAVIOR. (30521)

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCES (SIC) (30630)

BEING A FIRST YEAR TEACHER, MY BELIEFS HAVE MOSTLY BEEN INFLUENCED BY WHAT EXPERIENCED TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS HAVE TOLD ME ABOUT INCIDENTS THAT THEY HAVE WITNESSED. (30700)

SEEING DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS CREATED BY OVERAGE CHILDREN. (30841)

OBSERVATION (30930)

I HAS (SIC) A SLOW STUDENT. I HAS (SIC) KEPT BACK IN THE 2ND GRADE. MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE HAS A LOT OF INFLUENCE ON THIS. (31150)

NOT TO RETAIN -> 1) TOO MANY OLDER KIDS IN YOUNGER

CLASSROOMS.

TO RETAIN -> 2) TO FACILITATE EMOTIONAL MATURITY.
NOT TO RETAIN -> 3) HOME ENVIRONMENT BAD, STUDENT
DOESN'T DO BETTER THE SECOND YEAR.
(31290)

SAME AS ABOVE (31390)

CATCH UP YEAR. STUDENT REFUSES TO DO ANY WORK. (31490)

IF THE CHILD IS VERY IMMATURE, HIS ADJUSTMENTS
(EMOTIONALLY, SOCIALLY & ACADEMICALLY) TO SCHOOL
SUFFER. (31600)

A CHILD THAT MADE D AND F'S - THE FOLLOWING YEAR MAKES
HONOR ROLL. THERE ARE A LOT OF FACTORS THAT HAVE TO BE
TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. WHAT WORKS FOR ONE CHILD MAY
NOT WORK FOR ANOTHER. (31871)

I LOOK FOR POSITIVE THINGS IN CHILDREN TO REINFORCE.
(31960)

LAST YEAR MOST OF THE KIDS IN ONE OF MY CLASSES HAD
BEEN RETAINED ONE OR MORE TIMES. THEIR SELF-ESTEEM HAD
REACHED ROCK BOTTOM BECAUSE THEY FELT LIKE FAILURES.
WHEN THEY FELT A LITTLE BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES, THEIR
GRADES WENT UP. (32060)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

RAISING A FAMILY - EXTRA COURSE WORK (32100)

OBSERVATION OF THOSE RETAINED AND THOSE NOT RETAINED
BUT CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION. (32210)

FOLLOWING THE PROGRESS OF CHILDREN I HAVE TAUGHT WHO
HAVE BEEN RETAINED - THEIR SUCCESSES AND/OR FAILURES
BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT. (32390)

TEACHER OBSERVATION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. RETENTION
IS NOT ALL BAD OR ALL GOOD. (32490)

SEE #30. (32560)

NEEDS OF STUDENT (32620)

WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO DO NOT HAVE ALL THE BASIC
SKILLS THEY NEED BY FOURTH GRADE HAS INFLUENCED MY
BELIEFS ON RETENTION. (32840)

PAST CONFERENCES CONCERNING RETENTION OF STUDENTS.
(33090)

EXPERIENCE. SEVERAL STUDENTS I WANTED TO RETAINED
(SIC) WERE SENT ON ANYWAY. THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO DO

POORLY AND A COUPLE PARENTS (SIC) HAVE STATED THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE LISTENED WHEN RETENTION WAS SUGGESTED. (33150)

EXPERIENCES WITH INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN AND HOME SITUATIONS. (33330)

I WAS RETAINED IN 2ND GRADE AND I CAN STILL REMEMBER THE RELIEF I FELT WHEN I REALIZED I WASN'T DUMB. I WAS TOO YOUNG FOR THE 1ST TIME IN 2ND GRADE. I HAVE SEEN IT WORK WELL WITH RETENTIONS I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH. (40190)

I USED TO THINK LACK OF PASSING GRADES WAS THE KEY FACTORS (SIC), BUT NOW I THINK IMMATURITY, ABILITY, AND MOTIVATION, AND PARENTAL BACKING ARE VERY IMPORTANT NOW. (SIC) (40250)

FINAL RESULTS OF STUDENT'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS. SELF-ESTEEM OF STUDENTS EVEN IN ADULthood. (40440)

TEACHING IN THE SCHOOLS FOR TEN YEARS. (40560)

CHILDREN ARE COMING TO SCHOOL WITH WIDE LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE. SOME CHILDREN CAN NOT COMPETE OR HAVE SUCH HOME SITUATIONS THAT THEY ARE "NON-COMPETERS". TIME CAN HELP THEM HOWEVER... A RETENTION OFTEN PUTS A FAMILY IN STRESS. I THINK YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE CHILD'S SITUATION FULLY IN ORDER TO DETERMINE IF A RETENTION WILL BE BENEFICIAL OR NOT. (40600)

I RETAINED A BOY IN 3RD GRADE, HE WAS SMALLER THAN CLASSMATES, DID NOT DO WELL IN SUBJECTS AND WAS LEFT OUT A LOT BY OTHER BOYS. DURING HIS 2ND YEAR WITH ME - PARENTS REQUESTED HE BE WITH ME, AGAIN. I SAW THIS BOY SHOW PROGRESS IN HIS CLASSWORK AND HE WAS POPULAR WITH THE STUDENTS. HE HAS COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL NOW AND HIS PARENTS SAY WE DID THEIR SON A FAVOR BY RETAINING HIM IN 3RD GRADE. PARENTS FELT HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN RETAINED IN 1ST OR 2ND GRADE. (40810)

HAVING A LOW ACHIEVER IN CLASS (41010)

THE CHILDREN THAT HAVE BEEN RETAINED HAVE NOT BENEFITED (SIC) FROM THE ACTION. THEIR GRADES DID NOT IMPROVE, THEIR ATTITUDES GOT WORSE - MORE NEGATIVE RESULTS THAN POSITIVE OCCURED (SIC). (50161)

I DON'T REALLY KNOW. I HAVE FELT THIS WAY SINCE MY FIRST DAY. (50230)

SINCE THIS IS MY FIRST YR. BACK IN TEACHING AFTER 10 YRS. OUT, AND BEING IN A HIGHER GRADE I CAN SEE THAT IF THE STUDENTS THAT I AM RETAINING NOW HAD BEEN RETAINED

LAST YEAR THESE STUDENTS WOULD BE GOOD AVERAGE ACHIEVERS IN 3RD GRADE. THE RETENTION OF THESE 3 STUDENTS WAS CONSIDERED IN PREVIOUS YEARS, BUT WAS NEVER FOLLOWED THROUGH WITH. MY VIEWS ARE VERY MUCH INFLUENCED BY MY LOVE OF CHILDREN AND BY MY FATHER, AN EDUCATOR HIMSELF. (50331)

PARENTS RESPONSE (THREATENING TO TAKE TEACHER TO SCHOOL BOARD) AND OFTEN TIMES STUDENT PUTS FORTH LITTLE EFFORT SECOND TIME AROUND (50451)

(1) LACK OF ABILITY AND CERTAIN LEVEL OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS CANNOT BE REACHED - SHOULD NOT BE RETAINED.

(2) STUDENTS NOT USING ABILITY - HAVE SEEN SEVERAL ON HONOR ROLL WHEN HELD BACK (IN FUTURE YEARS) (50550)

ACTUALLY WATCHING THE PROGRESS THAT A CHILD CAN DEVELOPE (SIC) OVER A SECOND TERM. HE HAS A BETTER CONCEPT OF HIMSELF PLUS HIS ABILITY TO SUCCEED CAN TAKE HIM MANY PLACES IN HIS FUTURE. (50660)

THE ONE CASE THAT STRENGTHENED MY BELIEF IN RETENTION WAS A 4TH GRADE GIRL WHO WAS A BORDERLINE CASE FOR PROMOTION. AFTER DISCUSSING IT WITH MY PRINCIPAL AND HER MOTHER AND HAVING THE DECISION LEFT TO ME, I RETAINED HER. SHE "BLOSSOMED" THAT NEXT YEAR INTO AN HONOR ROLL STUDENT. (50840)

CHILD CAN BECOME A BETTER STUDENT BY BEING IN THE SAME GRADE AGAIN. (50961)

AS AN L.D. TEACHER, IT IS VERY APPARENT THAT SOME CHILDREN CANNOT FUNCTION AT A CERTAIN GRADE LEVEL. IN REALITY A RETENTION MAY BE LESS OF A STIGMA THAN A SP. ED. PLACEMENT. (51090)

EXPERIENCE! I HAVE WATCHED CHILDREN MATURE AND GAIN SELF CONFIDENCE MANY TIMES. (51121)

THE MAJORITY OF THE STUDENTS I HAVE RETAINED HAVE DONE BETTER AFTER THE RETENTION. (51420)

I HATE TO SEE STUDENTS SUFFER THE FRUSTRATION OF BEING UNABLE TO SUCCEED IN THEIR SCHOOL WORK. TO SOCIALLY PROMOTE THEM TO MORE AND MORE FRUSTRATING ASSIGNMENTS IS CRUEL AND DOES NOT GIVE THEM THE HELP THEY NEED TO LEARN THE SKILLS THEY ARE HAVING TROUBLE WITH. I HAVE SEEN STUDENTS "BLOSSOM" DURING THEIR SECOND YEAR IN A GRADE LEVEL, SHOWING THAT A LITTLE EXTRA TIME MAY BE ALL THAT SOME STUDENTS NEED. (51590)

MY INVOLVEMENT WITH DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING HAS GREATLY INFLUENCED MY BELIEFS ON RETENTION. (51610)

I FEEL CHILDREN NEED TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN ORDER TO FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT THEMSELVES AND THEIR WORK. I'VE SEEN CHILDREN THAT STRUGGLED ONE YEAR AND WERE RETAINED. THEY WERE SOME OF THE BEST STUDENTS THE NEXT YEAR. THIS PROVIDED A POSITIVE FOUNDATION FOR THEIR FUTURE ACHIEVEMENTS. (51701)

CAN I CONVINCED THE STUDENT AND HIS PARENTS THAT THERE ARE POSITIVE REASONS FOR THIS RETENTION. I HAVE SEEN GREAT SUCCESS WHEN THIS IS DONE. (52071)

I HAVE SEEN CHILDREN REALLY MATURE AND MEET SUCCESS IN THE YEAR THAT THEY WERE RETAINED. (52100)

LOW ACADEMIC ABILITY (52330)

IT IS MOST DIFFICULT TO SEE AN OLDER OR INTERMEDIATE LEVEL CHILD STRUGGLING WITH SKILLS AND CONCEPTS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN MASTERED AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL. THE FRUSTRATION EXHIBITED BY THE CHILDREN I HAVE OBSERVED OFTEN PRESENTS ITSELF IN A "DEFEATIST" ATTITUDE. (60190)

MY EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH A RATHER HIGH PERCENTAGE OF RETAINEES WHO SHOW LITTLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE REPETITION OF THE WORK HAS INFLUENCED MY BELIEF. (60240)

RETENTION ISN'T EFFECTIVE, IF EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT LEARNING IS THE GOAL. (60390)

EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN. (60440)

STUDENTS WHO HAVE REPEATED AND IN THEIR SECOND YEAR DID REMARKABLY WELL - EVEN EXCELLED. (60530)

MUCH IMPROVEMENT HAS BEEN SEEN IN RETAINEES AS LONG AS SELF-CONCEPT IS INTACT. (I NOW HAVE A K STUDENT APPROACHING 8 YEARS OLD.) (61100)

I HAD A VERY GOOD SUPPORTING TEACHER WHEN I DID MY STUDENT TEACHING. SHE WHEN (SIC) OVER MANY WORTHWHILE REASONS PRO & CON OF RETENTION. I HAVE ALSO HAD PRINCIPALS THAT HELPED WITH IDEAS OR PHILOSOPHIES, BUT LEFT FINAL DECISION UP TO ME. (61350)

STUDENTS THAT BARELY GET BY USUALLY HAVE PROBLEMS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND EVENTUALLY DROP OUT OF SCHOOL. IF LIMITS WERE SET SOME OF THESE CHILDREN MIGHT LEARN THE SKILLS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE. (61470)

WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE SUCCEEDED AND ALSO WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN OVERLY

SUCCESSFUL AFTER RETENTION, HAVE INFLUENCED MY BELIEFS ON RETENTION. (61660)

Item 32. What means other than retention can the school use to educate children who do not meet the requirements of their grade?

1. SUPPORT SERVICES (L.D., RESOURCE, SPEECH THERAPY, PARENT VOLUNTEER, AIDE, CHAPTER 1 SERVICES, ETC) AS NEEDED.

2. INVOLVEMENT BY THE PARENT IN HIS CHILD'S LEARNING PROCESS (SUPPORT & INDIVIDUALIZED ASSISTANCE AT HOME) ON A REGULAR BASIS AND MORE FREQUENT PARENT-TEACHER CONTACTS TO CHECK PROGRESS.

3. GIVE STUDENT MORE PRACTICE-TYPE HOMEWORK ON REGULAR BASIS WITH SOME BUILT-IN REWARD SYSTEM FOR ACHIEVEMENT.

4. MORE VARIED, EFFECTIVE, AND INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING STRATEGIES AND MORE TIME DEVOTED TO TEACHING THOSE STUDENTS NEEDING MORE INSTRUCTION. PERHAPS IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR A TEAM OF TEACHERS AT ONE SCHOOL TO TAKE TURNS AT LEAST ONE TIME EACH WEEK (WHEN THEY WOULD BE OTHERWISE ENGAGED IN A NON-TEACHING ACTIVITY SUCH AS WATCHING THE KIDS AT RECESS OR LUNCH) TO TEACH A FEW BELOW-GRADE LEVEL STUDENTS BY BEING THERE TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED ASSISTANCE ON SPECIFIC GOALS FOR A 30 TO 45 MINUTE PERIOD. (10190)

REMEDIAL SERVICES, COUNSELING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS. PARENTS MUST SUPPORT EDUCATION IN ORDER FOR US TO BREAK THE RETENTION CYCLE. (10241)

1. DO NOT START SO EARLY! OUR SYSTEM LETS 4 YEAR OLDS START IN K.

2. SUMMER SCHOOL.

3. SMALLER CLASSES - MORE INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION. (10341)

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE A TUTORIAL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED FOR THOSE STUDENTS WORKING BELOW GRADE LEVEL IN READING, MATH, & SPELLING. I FEEL WE NEED STRICTER ENFORCEMENT OF TRUANCY LAWS. (10421)

ALTERNATIVE COURSES WITH MORE HANDS ON, REALISTIC APPROACH. IN-SCHOOL TUTORING. (10551)

CLASSROOMS BY LEVELS OTHER THAN GRADES. (10620)

CHAPTER I
REMEDIAL PROGRAMS (10720)

SMALLER CLASS SIZE
USE OF AIDES
SPECIAL CLASSES
SUMMER SCHOOL (10800)

Teachers' Written Responses to Retention Decision Simulation

Teachers' Comments For Part B Retention
Decision Simulation

1ST

THE ONE YEAR VARIABLE AT THE 1ST GRADE LEVEL DOES NOT NECESSARILY INDICATE A PREVIOUS RETENTION. IF THE CHILD WAS HELD OUT A YEAR OR PLACED IN A PRE-K THIS COULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE EXCLUDED AS A FACTOR. SIZE IS GENERALLY NOT A PROBLEM AT THIS AGE.

K

BY THE LOOKS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IT WOULD APPEAR THAT I'D "FAIL" EVERYONE, BUT THE QUESTIONS OF THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS THESE CHILDREN MAY HAVE AREN'T COVERED. THERE MAY BE A NEED TO REFER THESE CHILDREN FOR TESTING. ALSO, THE AGE OF THE CHILD HAS A LOT TO DO WITH THE DECISION OR RATHER THE GRADE LEVEL. IT'S MUCH EASIER ON THE CHILD TO RETAIN IN LOWER GRADES SUCH AS KINDERGARTEN THAN IN UPPER GRADES.

4TH

ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE STUDENT AND PARENTS IS TO ME THE LARGEST SINGLE FACTOR FOR A SUCCESSFUL RETENTION.

2ND

I HAD TO MARK MOST RETENTIONS BECAUSE OF FAILING MATH AND BELLOW LEVEL IN READING.

7TH

IF A STUDENT DOES NOT TURN IN ASSIGNMENTS, HIS AVERAGE WOULD NOT INDICATE THAT HE "DID WELL". I WOULD NOT SEPARATE TEST SCORES FROM OVERALL AVERAGE FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING THIS DECISION.

MY MAIN CONSIDERATIONS ARE AVERAGE GRADES, EFFORT(AS EVIDENCED BY WORK DONE), ATTITUDE AND PARENTAL SUPPORT. MANY STUDENTS DO NOT DO POORLY IN BOTH MATH AND READING.

4TH RESOURCE

I PERSONALLY DON'T BELIEVE IN RETENTION-THEREFORE, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE RETENTION TO BE THE BEST FOR ANY STUDENT, NOR DO I THINK IT LIKELY THAT ANY OF THESE STUDENTS WOULD BE RETAINED. PERHAPS ALL STUDENT WITH ESTIMATED ABILITY BETWEEN 10-50% SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR SPECIAL REFERRAL.

4TH

I DON'T THINK THESE QUESTIONS ARE VALID. NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION IS GIVEN ON EACH CHILD. YOU(THE TEACHER) MUST KNOW YOUR CHILDREN.

2ND

IF A STUDENT IS TO BE RETAINED IT SHOULD BE DONE NO LATER THAN THE 3RD GRADE. A CHILD SHOULD NOT BE RETAINED MORE THAN TWICE IN HIS SCHOOL LIFE.

1ST

SCORES ON ACHIEVEMENT TEST (EX. SRA) PERFORMANCE BASIC SKILLS TEST (SCHOOL SYSTEM TEST) DETERMINE YOUR DECISION FOR RETENTION. IT IS MY OPINION MANY OTHER FACTORS ARE NOT CONSIDERED TODAY BUT WERE CONSIDERED SOME YEARS AGO. SOCIETY AND STATE SEEM TO DICTATE OUR DECISIONS. WHAT WAS ONCE MY THEORY ON RETENTION IS NO LONGER MY- I FEEL WE CONSIDER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FAR TOO MUCH LEAVING OUT OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT. TOTALLY GROWTH OF CHILD.

2ND

THE YOUNGER THE BETTER FOR RETAINING CHILDREN! AFTER 4TH IT IS MORE OF A HINDRANCE.

K

RETENTION MOST OFTEN DOES NOT CHANGE THE CHILD'S ABILITY IN ANY MAJOR WAY. WE MUST BE REMINDED THAT WE ARE NOT ALL COLLEGE-BOUND WITH ASPIRATIONS OF DOCTOR, LAWYER, TEACHER, ETC.

PARENTS MUST ASSUME A LARGE PART IN THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS FOR LEARNING.

6TH

AS STATED IN THE PREVIOUS FORM, PROMOTING/RETAINING STUDENTS IS LIKE A TWO-EDGED SWORD, AND IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO PREDICT STUDENT OUTCOMES IF PROMOTION OR RETENTION IS PUT INTO EFFECT.

IT SEEMS THAT FOR EVERY ONE THIS IT HAS HELPED- I CAN THINK OF AT LEAST ONE OR MORE THAT IT HASN'T HELPED AND THEIR PRESENCE IN THE CLASS HAS HAD NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF THE OTHERS. IT'S A TOUGH CALL!

6TH

THERE ARE A LOT MORE FACTORS TO CONSIDER THAN (SIC) JUST THOSE MENTIONED IN THIS SURVEY. IT IS VERY HARD TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT RETENTION. BUT I DO THINK THAT PARENTS NEED TO BE INVOLVED IN THE DECISION OF RETENTION AS WELL AS TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS.

7TH

INDIVIDUAL CASE (SIC) HAVE A VARIETY OF FACTORS THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE CHILD TO ACHIEVE IF THE SCHOOL IS NOT STRESSED AT HOME.

4TH
MARKED "CHECK FOR L.D" FOR ITEMS 33, 37, 39, 41, 45.

7TH
ABOUT THIS SURVEY. I BELIEVE YOU WOULD GET BETTER ANSWERS IF THERE HAD BEEN LESS CASES EVALUATED. 40 STUDENTS IN THIS IS TOO CONFUSING AND REPETITIOUS.

4TH
SINCE OUR SCHOOL GROUPS READING AND MATH BY ABILITY, A CHILD'S NEED CAN BE MET WITHOUT RETAINING THEM FOR THE MOST PART.

K
RECOMMENDS TESTING FOR 5, 19, 25, 29, 33, 37, 43, IN K MATURITY MUST BE AT A LEVEL WHICH ALLOWS THEM TO FUNCTION AND WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY SEVERE IN ORDER TO BE THE PRIMARILY (SIC) CAUSE FOR RETENTION. THEY VARY GREATLY.

4TH
I DON'T FEEL THAT I CAN ANSWER ACCURATELY WITHOUT KNOWING THE CHILDREN.

K
STUDENTS WHO DO NOT MEET ABILITY EXPECTATIONS OR WHO HAVE LOW ABILITY EXPECTATIONS SHOULD BE CHECKED FOR OTHER PROBLEMS - L. D. , HOME ENVIRONMENT AND SHOULD POSSIBLY BE REFERRED FOR SPECIAL HELP.

2ND
I DO NOT BELIEVE IN SOCIAL PROMOTION IN SECOND GRADE. THE CHILD WOULD HAVE TO BE RECEIVING L. D. OR E. D. SERVICES TO BE "SOCIAALLY PROMOTED."

7TH
WHEN PROMOTING OR RETAINING NOTHING HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT THE CHILD'S MOTIVATIONAL ASPECTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT RETENTION, MOST CHILDREN DO WANT TO STAY WITH THEIR PEER GROUP BUT NOT ALWAYS WILL THAT BE BEST FOR THEM IN THE LONG RUN.

6TH
RETENTION DOES NOT WORK.

1ST
SOCIAL PROMOTION WITH SPECIAL ED NOTED ON 9,19,21,39,41,57. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THESE SURVEYS WERE COMPLETED BY TIRED TEACHERS. IN REALITY WE LOOK AT EACH CASE VERY CLOSELY AND EXAMINE MANY MORE DETAILS THAN WERE GIVEN TO US IN THESE SHORT PARAGRAPHS.

6TH

IT'S NOT AN EASY DECISION. IT DOES NOT ALWAYS HELP, ESPECIALLY THE OLDER THEY ARE.

6TH

IT DOES ABSOLUTELY NO GOOD IN GRADES 6&7- WE'VE TRIED IT, AND MORE PROBLEMS BEHAVIOR V ATTITUDE RESULTED THAN WOULD'VE HAD IT THESE STUDENTS HAD BEEN SENT ON.

K

MUCH DEPENDS ON THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD. ACADEMIC PROGRESS, MATURITY, LISTENING SKILLS AND SOCIAL SKILLS ALL HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE A DECISION CAN BE MADE.

7TH

NOTHING WAS EVER SAID ABOUT FAMILY SUPPORT IN THESE CONSIDERATIONS. IF THE SCHOOL KNOWS THE PARENTS DO/NOT SUPPORT A DECISION THAT WILL DETERMINE MY DECISION ALMOST ENTIRELY.

3RD

RETENTION BEST IN K-3 EVEN FOR THOSE WITH LOW ABILITY.

1ST

THIS WAS RANKED BASED UPON 1ST GRADE - THIS I WAS NOT AS CONCERNED ABOUT SIZE. RATHER AGE, ABILITY AND MATURITY WERE IMPORTANT FACTORS, AT OTHER GRADE LEVELS OTHER FACTORS WOULD BE IMPORTANT. YOUNG AGE AND HIGH ABILITY MEANS THE CHILD IS NOT DEVELOPMENTALLY READY FOR ACADEMICS OF THE MATURITY AND ACADEMICS ARE LOW ETC.

2ND

IN MY CLASSROOM THESE STUDENTS WHO DO NOT HAND IN ASSIGNED WORK WOULD NOT BE PERFORMING "ABOVE AVERAGE." IF THEY WERE NOT FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS THEY ALSO WOULD NOT BE PERFORMING "ABOVE AVERAGE."

IF THE STUDENT'S ABILITY IS HIGH AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IS LOW AND THEY ARE NOT EXHIBITING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR I WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO RETAIN THEM.

4TH IF A STUDENT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS HE PASSES. IF HE DOESN'T MEET THE REQUIREMENTS HE IS RETAINED. EXCEPTIONS WOULD BE A MENTAL HANDICAP, OR A CHILD WHO HAS BEEN RETAINED REPEATEDLY WITH NO OBVIOUS GAINS MADE DURING RETENTION.

4TH

THE PRINCIPAL DOES NOT SEEM TO QUESTION THE TEACHER'S JUDGEMENT (SIC) REGARDING RETENTION AT OUR SCHOOL.

2ND

IN THE PRIMARY GRADES I THINK A CHILD NEEDS A STRONG FOUNDATION IN MATH AND READING IN ORDER TO EXPERIENCE SUCCESS IN THE UPPER GRADES. IF HE/SHE STILL EXPERIENCES DIFFICULTY AFTER RETENTION AND ALL POSSIBILITIES OF A LEARNING DISORDER ARE RULED OUT, THERE SHOULD BE SOME KIND OF TUTORIAL PROGRAM AVAILABLE, I FEEL THAT A LOT OF STUDENTS DO NOT GET "PROPER" ENCOURAGEMENT TO DEVELOP THEIR ACADEMIC AND THEIR SOCIAL SKILLS AT HOME. IF THEY AREN'T ENCOURAGED TO PRACTICE THESE SKILLS AT HOME, THEY DON'T RETAIN THEM. THEREFORE PROMOTION BECOMES A CONSTANT HASSLE WITH THEM.

2ND

I FEEL THAT MATH IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS READING. THE STUDENT SHOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN BOTH BEFORE I CONSIDER PROMOTION.

THE FEW I DID SOCIALLY PROMOTE WERE DONE SO BECAUSE OF ABILITY LEVEL AND AGE. IN THIS SITUATION REMEDIAL HELP SHOULD SOLVE THE PROBLEM. IF NOT RETENTION FOR THE NEXT YEAR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED, I WOULD SPEAK WITH THE PARENTS ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHILD IS NOT DOING "ALRIGHT" BECAUSE HE WAS PROMOTED.

K

A CHILD SHOULD HAVE A STRONG FOUNDATION BEFORE MOVING TO THE NEXT LEVEL, IN KINDERGARTEN IF A CHILD HAS NOT REACHED THE STAGE TO BE ABLE TO READ OR UNDERSTAND NUMBERS HE CANNOT BE SUCCESSFUL IN 1ST GRADE.

K

ONE MUST KNOW THE CHILD TO TRY AND MAKE A DECISION ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT PROMOTION OR RETENTION WILL BE THE MOST BENEFICIAL TO THE CHILD.

3RD

IF A CHILD'S ABILITY, SOCIAL MATURITY, SIZE AND AGE RANK HIGH ON THE SCALE BUT ACADEMIC IS LOW, ONE BEGINS TO THINK THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE STUDENT THAT NEEDS ATTENTION. USUALLY RETENTION IS NOT THE ANSWER.

1ST

THERE NEEDS TO BE ANOTHER CHOICE SOMETIMES. IF THE STUDENTS HAVE ABILITY BUT ARE NOT WORKING UP TO IT - SHOULD THEY BE PASSED. WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS THAT ARE WORKING UP TO THEIR ABILITY BUT AREN'T KEEPING UP WITH THE CLASS. WHAT DO WE DO WITH THEM. IF THEY END UP WITH THE SAME TEACHER IN THE SAME GRADE WHAT CHANGES ARE MADE TO HELP THEM PASS?

K

WHERE DOES REFERRAL FOR TESTING ENTER THE PICTURE?

2ND

THE SITUATIONS ARE TOO SIMILAR TO EACH OTHER.

1ST

BASED ON 1ST GRADE CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE MADE ACCORDING TO WHETHER (SIC) THE ONE YEAR OLDER CHILD REPEATED "K" OR SIMPLY STARTED SCHOOL LATE. I WOULD NOT RETAIN A CHILD WHO HAS REPEATED K, I WOULD CONSIDER EVALUATION 1ST THE SOCIAL PROMOTION WITH CHAPTER 1 RESOURCE HELP I WOULD RETAIN A CHILD WHO STARTED SCHOOL LATER AND IS 1 YR. OLDER BUT HASN'T BEEN RETAINED PREVIOUSLY.

5TH

MOST STUDENTS DO NOT FAIL MATH AND ALSO READ BELOW GRADE LEVEL. A STUDENT WHO DOES NOT DO HOMEWORK USUALLY DO NOT PERFORM WELL ACADEMICALLY.

6TH

REFER FOR TESTING INDICATED ON 43, 59, 65. FOR NUMBER 31 "THIS IS CRAZY-MAYBE HE IS BORED!" PREVIOUS SCHOOL TESTING AND PERFORMANCE IS A FACTOR. THIS HAS BEEN SO CUT AND DRIED!!! THERE ARE OTHER FACTORS - L. D. CHILDREN, CHAPTER II, PARENTS ENVIRONMENT, ETC.!! WHAT WAS THE TESTING SITUATION? THESE WERE NOT CASE STUDIES. WOULD YOU WANT A TEACHER TO MAKE A JUDGEMENT ON YOUR CHILD, GIVEN ONLY THIS INFO? I TALKED TO THE YOUNG LADY WHEN SHE WAS HERE AT CENTRAL - I THOUGHT THE PROGRAM AND STUDY WAS GOOD. NOT ANYMORE! I HOPE YOUR GROUP IS NEVER PUT INTO A SITUATION OF MAKING IMPORTANT DECISIONS. IN MY OPINION THEY WOULD BE RASH AND UNFOUNDED.

Appendix G

Sample of Coded Interview

T509 T

SC: HOME

#-HOME #-QUOTE
: T: I DON'T UNDERSTAND. 354 -#
: WHEN MY MOTHER WOULD SEND ME TO 355 #
: SCHOOL, SHE WOULD SAY WHEN YOU GO 356 #
: DOWN THERE YOU LEARN SOMETHING. 357 #
: TODAY, I'M NOT SURE PARENTS DO THAT. 358 -#

T509 T

SC: HOME

#-HOME #-QUOTE
: DISINTEGRATION. I THINK WHEN THE 368 -#
: FAMILY UNIT DISINTEGRATED IN AMERICA. 369 #
: THAT THAT DID MORE THAN THE SOVIET 370 #
: UNION COULD EVER DO. 371 -#

T509 T

SC: HOME

#-REBEHIND #-HOME
: SAYING WELL. THIS CHILD HAS HAD A 379 -#
: ROUGH YEAR BECAUSE THE PARENTS AR 380 #
: BEING DIVORCED OR EVEN WORSE STORIES. 381 #
: AND THAT CERTAINLY PLAYS IN THE LIFE 382 #
: OF THESE KIDS. 383 #
: I'LL GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE. 384 #
\$-QUOTE
: I THINK CHILDREN REALLY NEED A 385 # -#
: SECURITY BLANKET. 386 # |
: I MEAN YOU KNOW. 387 # |
: WHEN I WENT HOME I KNEW I WAS GOING TO 388 # |
: HAVE A PLACE, I WAS GOING TO HAVE A 389 # |
: MEAL, I WAS GOING TO HAVE CLEAN 390 # |
: CLOTHES, AND I WAS GOING TO HAVE SOME 391 # |
: TO TAKE CARE OF ME. 392 # |
: AND I'M NOT SURE THAT THESE KIDS GO 393 # |
: HOME TO THAT. 394 # |
: THAT REALLY WORRIES ME. 395 # |
: I MEAN, I SAID TO SOME OF THE TEACHERS 396 # |
: THAT MY DUG WAS BETTER THAN SOME OF 397 # |
: THE KIDS IN MY CLASS. 398 # |
: I HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT. 399 # |
: THAT'S WHAT I AM SAYING TO YOU. 400 -# -#

T509 T

SC: HOME

#-HOME

: EMPHASIS. BUT IF THE PARENTS DON'T 438 -#
: THEN THE TEACHER IS LOST. 439 #
: I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU COULD PAY US. YOU 440 #
: CAN PAY US THIS MANDATE. YOU CAN PAY 441 #
: US THAT MANDATE. UNLESS THIS CHILD 442 #
: COULD GO HOME WITH SOME PLACE TO STUDY 443 #
: AND SOME PLACE TO LEARN. 444 -#

T509 T

SC: HOME

#-HOME

#-QUOTE

: A TEACHER CAN NOT DO IT ALL. 450 -#
: A CHILD CAN NOT DO IT ALL. 451 #
: IT IS A PARTNERSHIP. 452 #
: AND I ALMOST THINK THAT THE MORE YOU 453 #
: PUT ON EDUCATION, THE LESS THE PARENTS 454 #
: ARE WILLING TO DO. 455 -#

T509 T

SC: HOME

#-POTRET

#-HOME

#-BABIED

#-QUOTE

: T: WITH ONE OF MY CHILDREN, HE'S PARENTS 458 -#
: ARE JUST AS SWEET AS THEY CAN BE. 459 #
: HE IS THE BABY OF THE FAMILY, AND HE 460 #
: IS JUST BABIED TOO MUCH TO BE 461 #
: PERFECTLY HONEST. 462 #
: HE IS JUST PASSED TWO YEARS BEFORE. 463 #
: HE JUST SLIPPED BY THE FOURTH GRADE 464 #
: AND HE JUST SLIPPED BY THE FIFTH GRADE 465 #
: AND HE IS NOT GOING TO SLIP BY ON THE 466 #
: SIXTH. 467 -#

Appendix H

Retention Rates for School Division

Percentage of Students Retained 1979-1987 by Grade

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	4.2	12.7	7.0	5.9	3.3	4.8	6.0	4.3
n	225	275	345	319	319	318	329	333
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	6.2	10.5	6.7	5.2	3.7	6.2	4.8	3.0
n	244	255	264	345	311	317	338	355
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	12.1	6.6	8.8	5.0	4.5	4.8	3.1	3.7
n	225	242	249	266	343	319	312	342
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	11.2	6.9	4.6	3.2	4.5	10.4	3.6	3.7
n	245	216	250	240	264	333	319	308
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	5.0	10.0	9.5	5.7	4.0	10.4	3.5	3.4
n	279	231	221	246	249	278	338	322
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	9.9	8.2	5.4	4.9	6.2	6.0	7.5	6.0
n	262	280	222	206	242	265	267	332
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	15.7	10.0	7.7	6.0	6.4	5.1	5.2	2.5
n	242	270	265	232	220	235	271	277
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	7.3	8.7	5.7	6.8	7.2	5.8	5.4	4.0
n	275	242	262	252	221	223	240	253
<u>1986-87</u>								
% Retained		7.0	5.3	6.1	3.1	3.2	5.5	1.7
n		272	244	262	256	247	237	239

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

^a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

Percentage of Students Retained at School 1 1979-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	0	8.2	12.3	4.8	5.5	6.3	5.7	13.0
n	46	49	57	63	55	48	53	47
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	2.1	1.9	2.1	0	1.7	7.7	9.8	9.1
n	47	53	48	51	60	52	59	55
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	4.0	6.8	0	0	5.7	10.6	3.6	10.5
n	25	44	50	50	53	66	56	57
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	17.4	0	5.0	2.1	2.3	2.0	6.5	0
n	46	25	40	48	43	50	62	57
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	6.4	2.6	6.7	13.6	4.0	0	7.1	9.7
n	47	38	30	44	50	44	56	62
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	10.9	0	7.7	5.9	10.5	12.5	15.2	12.1
n	46	42	39	34	38	48	46	58
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	16.7	2.6	12.5	7.1	20.0	14.7	16.7	8.5
n	54	39	48	42	35	34	42	47
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	11.9	4.4	11.1	4.4	7.5	3.2	21.2	18.4
n	42	46	45	45	40	31	33	38
<u>1986-87</u> ^a								
% Retained		5.0	4.2	21.9	2.3	2.3	22.9	3.3
n		40	48	32	44	43	31	30

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

Percentage of Students Retained at School 2 1979-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	4.3	31.9	11.4	7.3	8.2	13.8	5.8	6.5
n	47	47	70	69	66	58	69	77
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	14.0	25.5	15.0	5.6	4.6	2.8	5.4	2.8
n	50	53	40	72	66	71	56	71
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	24.0	12.0	14.0	5.0	15.2	6.3	3.0	0
n	50	50	50	40	66	64	68	57
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	20.75	8.2	7.8	4.7	13.5	5.1	9.1	4.6
n	53	49	51	43	52	59	66	65
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	6.5	17.5	17.8	1.8	0	8.0	2.8	3.1
n	77	57	45	56	50	50	71	65
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	11.3	8.6	10.7	0	5.3	14.0	12.3	1.5
n	62	81	56	41	57	57	57	66
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	24.2	19.4	8.5	10.6	0	6.5	5.4	0
n	62	62	71	47	42	62	56	44
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	6.25	10.0	5.3	2.9	0	3.7	5.1	1.9
n	64	60	57	69	43	54	59	52
<u>1986-87</u> ^a								
% Retained		1.6	3.3	0	0	0	0	0
n		62	60	50	63	49	56	62

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

^a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

Percentage of Students Retained at School 3 1979-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	0	5.9	8.5	10.5	0	7.5	5.9	0
n	25	34	59	38	38	40	34	39
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	0	7.1	3.0	16.4	7.1	21.9	0	0
n	29	28	33	55	28	32	36	30
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	2.8	0	11.1	5.1	0	0	9.4	0
n	36	26	27	39	47	34	32	37
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	12.5	12.9	10.3	10.7	2.6	4.3	2.9	0
n	32	31	29	28	38	47	35	30
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	0	10.3	22.6	0	3.9	15.0	2.8	0
n	27	29	31	26	26	40	48	34
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	0	9.7	3.1	18.2	14.3	3.1	5.6	8.2
n	30	31	32	22	28	32	36	49
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	3.9	12.1	12.5	11.1	4.6	0	0	0
n	26	33	32	36	22	26	32	38
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	0	6.9	17.7	26.7	9.4	4.8	0	0
n	30	29	34	30	32	21	24	31
^a								
<u>1986-87</u>								
% Retained		19.5	19.4	11.1	4.2	2.9	22.7	0
n		41	36	36	24	35	22	23

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

^a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

Percentage of Students Retained at School 4 1979-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	7.4	14.3	0	0	5.0	7.1	0	0
n	27	35	35	35	40	28	31	31
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	3.9	3.7	3.3	2.9	2.7	11.9	0	0
n	26	27	30	35	37	42	28	55
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	13.0	4.6	0	3.5	0	4.8	0	0
n	23	22	28	29	37	42	33	36
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	4.4	0	0	0	0	9.3	7.5	0
n	23	25	22	33	33	43	40	32
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	6.9	4.8	0	0	0	3.1	0	0
n	29	21	27	22	32	32	41	38
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	12.1	7.4	0	7.4	9.1	0	0	0
n	33	27	22	27	22	35	31	40
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	7.7	6.7	0	4.0	3.2	0	2.9	0
n	26	30	22	25	31	19	35	36
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	11.5	11.5	0	4.6	0	0	4.1	0
n	26	26	30	22	25	28	24	38
<u>1986-87</u> ^a								
% Retained		0	0	0	5.0	7.1	3.1	0
n		24	24	34	20	28	32	21

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

^a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

Percentage of Students Retained at School 5 1979-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	9.3	13.0	6.7	6.5	1.5	0	10.1	3.7
n	54	69	90	62	67	87	99	81
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	8.8	17.2	10.8	5.6	7.6	1.4	8.9	4.5
n	57	64	74	90	66	71	101	89
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	5.6	8.5	18.5	8.5	3.1	5.0	2.7	5.4
n	54	71	65	71	97	60	73	93
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	5.0	5.7	2.6	1.7	3.2	18.0	16.4	16.4
n	60	53	77	58	62	89	61	73
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	4.9	13.7	5.5	10.5	10.3	25.0	6.9	3.1
n	61	51	55	67	58	72	72	64
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	10.0	12.9	0	2.0	3.1	1.7	7.4	5.7
n	60	62	38	51	65	60	54	70
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	7.7	10.1	3.8	2.1	0	3.2	4.4	3.3
n	52	69	53	47	62	62	69	60
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	9.2	10.3	1.7	8.2	20.9	15.3	3.0	3.4
n	65	58	60	49	43	59	66	59
<u>1986-87</u> ^a								
% Retained	3.9	6.5	4.0	3.2	3.5	8.3	0	1.5
n	51	62	50	63	57	48	52	68

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

^a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

Percentage of Students Retained at School 6 1979-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>							
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>1978-79</u>								
% Retained	3.7	10.9	0	7.1	0	0	3.6	0
n	26	41	34	52	53	57	53	51
<u>1979-80</u>								
% Retained	5.4	6.3	4.9	0	0	3.9	0	0
n	35	30	39	42	54	49	58	55
<u>1980-81</u>								
% Retained	9.8	3.2	6.5	7.5	0	0	2.0	3.1
n	37	30	29	37	43	53	50	62
<u>1981-82</u>								
% Retained	11.4	13.2	3.1	3.2	2.7	0	1.8	0
n	31	33	31	30	36	45	55	54
<u>1982-83</u>								
% Retained	2.6	2.8	2.9	0	2.9	0	0	1.7
n	38	35	33	31	33	40	50	59
<u>1983-84</u>								
% Retained	11.4	7.5	5.4	3.1	0	0	0	7.6
n	31	37	35	31	32	33	43	49
<u>1984-85</u>								
% Retained	24.1	2.6	4.9	0	15.2	3.0	0	1.9
n	22	37	39	35	28	32	37	52
<u>1985-86</u>								
% Retained	4.0	8.0	0	0	5.0	0	0	0
n	48	23	36	37	38	30	34	35
^a								
<u>1986-87</u>								
% Retained	0	8.5	0	8.8	6.8	0	0	5.3
n	24	43	26	31	41	36	31	36

Note: n = Total number of students enrolled in grade

^a

Percentage is no longer comparable due to inclusion of prekindergarten classes.

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