

Grade Retention for Students with Special Needs

Early Intervention is essential for students with special needs.

- Early intervention helps infants and toddlers with disabilities learn important skills and helps them catch up in their development
- Early identification can help set up individualized attention
- Research shows that children's experiences prior to kindergarten greatly influence cognitive development and school readiness in children

Current research shows that...

- Repeating another year does not necessarily include new strategies to help the student learn
 - The materials and teaching method may stay the same and not benefit the student
- Any positive gains with retention are usually only short term
 - Research studies has shown retained students do not reach their promoted peers and only show growth for 2 or 3 years after being retained
- Children who are retained can have negative experiences.
 - They are no longer with their same age peers, further reducing their social interactions with their neurotypical peers.
 - There is also evidence of students who are retained developing behavioral problems later on

It is important to recognize between extra instructional help, and learning difficulties that are a result of a disability.

What to do if your student is falling behind instead of retaining them for another year:

- Consider the impact the disability has on the student's ability to access the curriculum
- Become more involved in your student's school. Contact teachers frequently about your student's academic progress
- Keep track of progress reports and instructional strategies that work well for your student
- Work with the school team to find and asses specific learning and behavioral issues
- Consider tutoring and outside therapy for your student
- If on an IEP, the IEP should reflect the student's academic, linguistic, social, emotional and behavioral needs.
- The student's IEP should have appropriate services, accommodations and/or modifications that are followed with fidelity

Keep in Mind!

Academic tests given by schools may not properly show the student's true abilities, especially if they have learning disabilities. Here are some other factors to consider as you make your decision:

- What are your student's individual needs?
- What interventions have been tried? What supports are still available?
- What is your student's potential for academic growth?
- What are the social and emotional outcomes your student may experience as a result of retention?

Helpful Resources:

<https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/retain.index.htm>

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/generalinfo-parents>

<https://beehively->

[websites.s3.amazonaws.com/sites/52381b4f1defc52c29000002/content_entry523c6f5f1defc589bf0000d6/56b379223e5ac14730007498/files/12.7_RETENTION_OF_STUDENTS_WITH_DISABILITIES.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/sites/52381b4f1defc52c29000002/content_entry523c6f5f1defc589bf0000d6/56b379223e5ac14730007498/files/12.7_RETENTION_OF_STUDENTS_WITH_DISABILITIES.pdf)

<https://www.understood.org/en/articles/repeating-a-grade-pros-and-cons>

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/repeating-a-grade-2/>

