



Dear Parents and Guardians,

We want to share some important information about recent changes to Kentucky law that affect how schools make decisions about promotion and retention for students in kindergarten and first grade. These changes come from House Bill 240 (HB 240) and will begin with the 2025–2026 school year.

Reading Screener for K–1 Students

All kindergarten and first-grade students will take a universal reading screener during the last fourteen (14) instructional days of the school year. The screener will be one approved by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) as reliable and valid. A list of approved screeners can be found on the KDE's *Early Literacy Screening Assessments* webpage.

Promotion and Retention Decisions

Kentucky law already allows schools to move students forward when it is in their best educational interest. HB 240 gives schools additional options to consider when deciding whether a student should stay in kindergarten or first grade for another year.

Starting in the 2025–2026 school year:

Kindergarten

A kindergarten student who had a reading improvement plan during the school year *may* stay in kindergarten for an additional year if the school determines the student:

- Did not meet grade-level reading benchmarks based on the end-of-year screener; or
- Did not master the Kentucky Academic Standards for Reading and Writing for kindergarten; or
- Is not ready to be successful in first grade.

First Grade

A first-grade student who had a reading improvement plan during the school year *will* stay in first grade for an additional year if the school determines the student:

- Did not meet grade-level reading benchmarks based on the screener; or
- Did not master the Kentucky Academic Standards for Reading for first grade; or
- Is not ready to be successful in second grade.

Students Receiving Special Education Services

For students who receive special education and related services, placement decisions will be made by the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC).

How Decisions Are Made

Promotion and retention decisions are made using multiple pieces of data, along with ongoing instruction, interventions, and supports. Our goal is always to make the decision that best supports each child's learning and long-term success.

If you have questions or would like to talk more about how this may affect your child, please reach out to your child's school. We appreciate your partnership and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brett W. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Harlan County Public Schools