

RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD
OF EDUCATION FOR KNOX COUNTY,
TENNESSEE: SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS AND
TEACHERS BY REQUESTING THE TENNESSEE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY AMEND T.C.A. § 49-6-3115
TO ALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO MAKE RETENTION
DECISIONS FOR THIRD AND FOURTH-GRADE STUDENTS**

**PREPARED BY: KATHERINE BIKE, BOARD
MEMBER, FOURTH
DISTRICT**

**APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL REFERENCE(S):**


DEPUTY LAW DIRECTOR

DATE: 10/31/2022

WHEREAS, the Knox County Board of Education is elected by the people of Knox County to govern the Knox County Schools; and

WHEREAS, the Knox County Board of Education is charged with governing the school district so that all students receive the best educational opportunities in order to graduate prepared to enter a postsecondary institution or the workforce; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee and local LEA's, such as the Knox County Board of Education, are to be held accountable according to the standards provided in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and

WHEREAS, the educational outcomes for the students who have been retained have been mixed, with one reported negative outcome being that retention laws can have adverse effects on students with disabilities (especially undiagnosed) and at-risk students' assessments (*See*, National Association of School Psychologists, "Guidance on the Use of Grade Retention and Special Education Eligibility to Address Instructional Loss" and references); and

WHEREAS, other than Tennessee, most of the states that have adopted legislation regarding the retention of third-grade students have included in that legislation a provision allowing school districts to promote students who were not proficient in ELA as measured by standardized state tests but yet showed progress based on school district data, demonstrating an understanding of ELA via alternative knowledge (*See*, National Conference of State Legislatures, "A Look at Third-Grade Reading Retention Policies"); and

WHEREAS, not affording school districts the discretion to make retention decisions based on all school district information on each student adversely and disproportionately affects students who, for many reasons, might not perform well on standardized tests but yet demonstrate an understanding of ELA via alternative knowledge assessments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knox County Board of Education urges the General Assembly to amend T.C.A. § 49-6-3115 to allow school districts to make retention decisions for third-grade and fourth-grade students based upon school district information on each student which could impact individual students, including but not limited to, special education and ELL issues.

Knox County Board of Education, Chair Date