



PREPARING MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

January 17, 2008

TODAY, WE WILL DISCUSS...

1. **Our goal:** Holding all of our schools and students to high expectations, helping students prepare to graduate from high school ready to succeed
2. **Why?** Academic success in middle school is the critical foundation for graduating successfully from high school
3. **Our proposal:** To implement a rigorous 8th grade promotion policy for the 2008-09 school year
4. **Impact:** How will this affect NYC students?
5. **Next Steps:** We want to hear public feedback before the Panel for Educational Policy votes this spring

OUR GOAL

We are committed to providing middle school students the foundation they need to graduate from high school and succeed in college and careers. We will help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to enter high school prepared to handle 9th grade work. With a solid base and the preparation they need, students will be able to take on the challenges of college and life.

- > **We will start early.** We will work with students and their families when they enter middle school, focusing on what is needed to be ready for high school success.
- > **We will give our students the instruction—and interventions—they need.** We owe it to our children and their families to prepare them every inch of the way, starting in kindergarten, for the challenges they'll face in high school and beyond.
- > **We will make this a partnership.** Parents, educators, students, and our entire community must work together to make student success a reality.

WHY PREPARING STUDENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL IS CRITICAL

Our most important goal is helping students graduate from our schools, prepared for the challenges of college, careers, and life. To accomplish our main goal, we **MUST** ensure students have the tools they need to perform when they start the ninth grade.

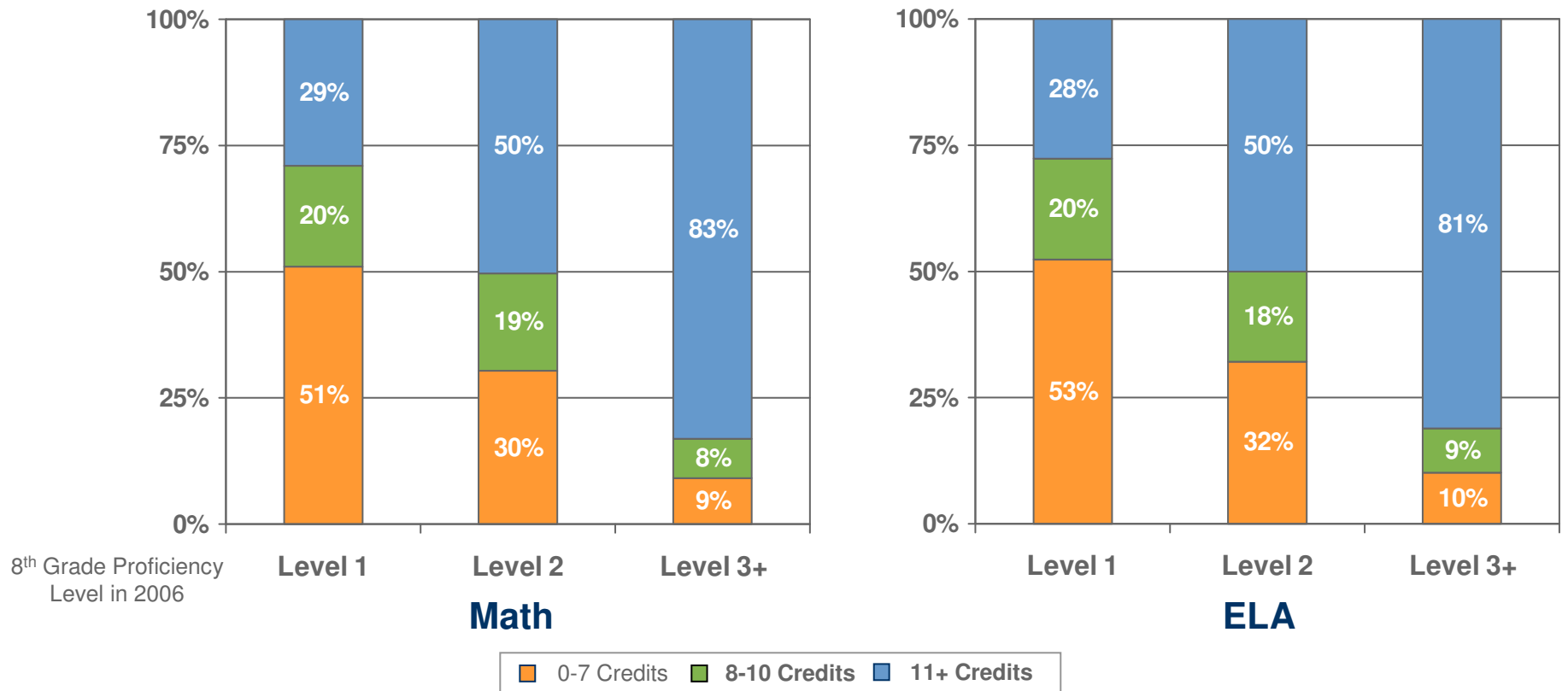
- > Students who are well prepared for high school (they pass their middle school courses and perform well on their State math and reading exams) are much more likely to graduate from high school.
 - Eighth graders who pass all their courses are more than two times as likely to graduate high school than those who fail one or more courses.

- > Students who are **NOT** well prepared for high school (they fail middle school courses and score at Level 1 on the State exams) are very unlikely to graduate, especially as graduation standards are rising.
 - Eighth graders who scored a Level 1 in ELA or Math are nearly four times more likely to drop out of high school than those who received a Level 2 or higher.
 - Students who fail one or more core courses in eighth grade are three times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who pass all core courses in eighth grade.

We can't afford to make excuses about failure in the middle grades. Ignoring failure doesn't make it go away. It only makes it worse. We owe it to our children to prepare them to take on the challenges they'll encounter in high school and beyond.

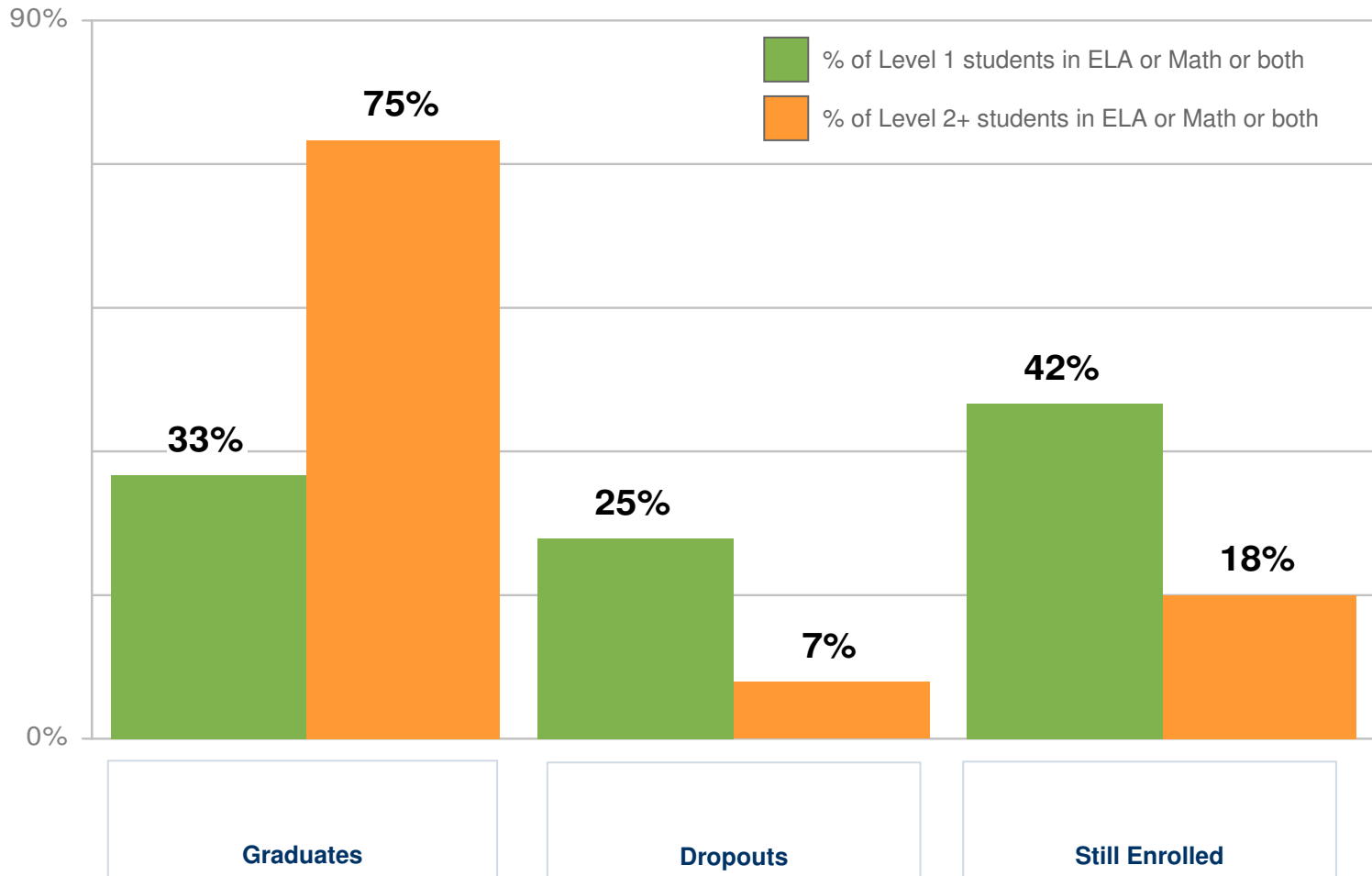
STUDENTS PREPARED FOR HIGH SCHOOL PERFORM BETTER ONCE THERE

Students who are approaching or at proficiency on 8th grade exams are more likely to earn high school credits once they're in the 9th grade.



EIGHTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT AFFECTS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Students who succeed in 8th grade are likely to graduate from high school.

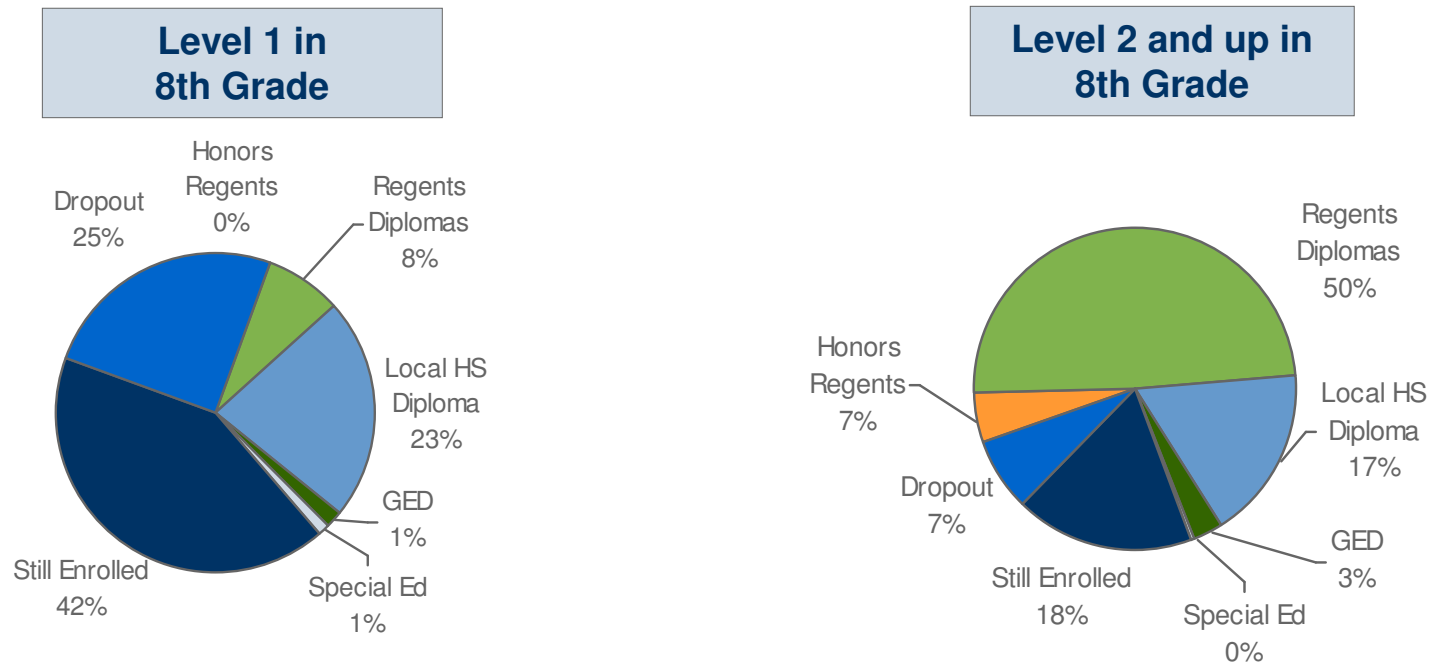


*Results for students in the Class of 2006 cohort with an 8th Grade Level 1 score in either ELA or Math or both in 2001-02.

SUCCESSFUL EIGHTH GRADERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE WITH REGENTS DIPLOMAS

Preparation matters:

- > Students in the Class of 2006 who entered high school behind stayed behind, even if they beat the odds to graduate
- > Students in the Class of 2006 who entered high school on track graduated with more advanced diplomas than their less prepared peers
- > Beginning in the 2008-09 school year, all students must earn a Regents Diploma to graduate. A Local Diploma is no longer an option.



*Results for students in the Class of 2006 cohort with an 8th Grade Level 1 score in either ELA or Math or both in 2001-02.

OUR PROPOSAL: IMPLEMENT A RIGOROUS EIGHTH GRADE PROMOTION POLICY

Because far too many students, nearly 25%, are entering high school today well below the level of skills and knowledge they need to prosper...

Because we owe it to our children—and NYC families—to help students graduate from high school...

Because all of our students deserve a fair chance at success...

We propose stopping the pattern of moving eighth-graders ahead to the ninth grade unprepared to succeed in high school.

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

Starting in the 2008-09 school year, eighth-graders will be promoted to high school by

- > Scoring at Level 2 (basic) or above on both the Math and ELA assessments AND passing all core academic subjects (ELA, math, social studies, science)

If a student does not meet the requirements during the school year, the student may

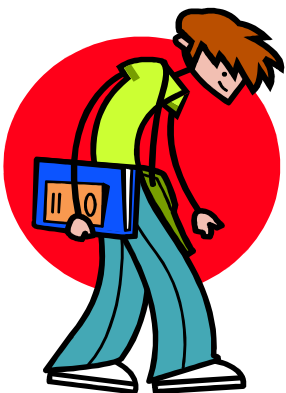
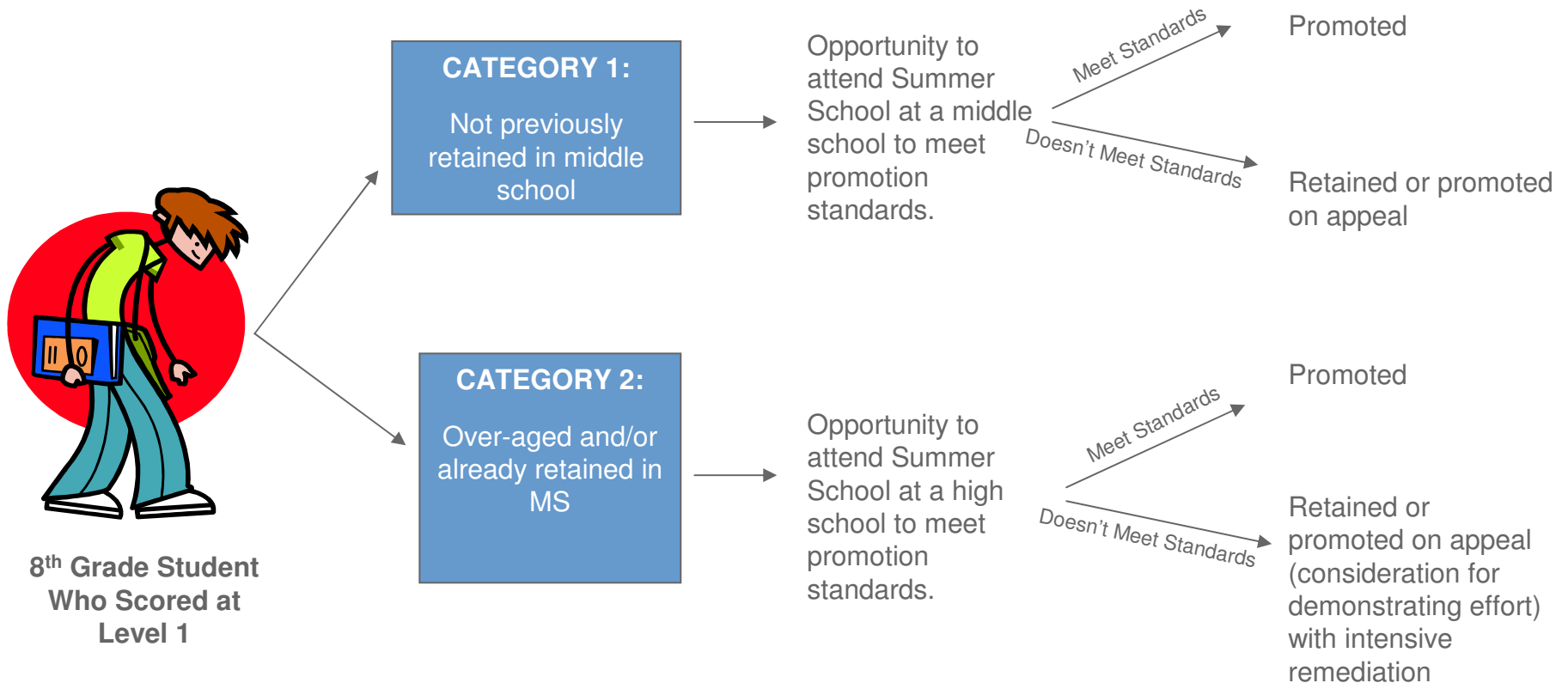
- > Appeal a promotion decision based on a standardized rubric
- > Attend summer school and retake tests or failed courses

This builds on what we learned by ending social promotion in NYC elementary and middle schools over the past four years.



IMPACT: WHAT HAPPENS TO STUDENTS WHO DON'T MEET NEW STANDARDS?

The new policy will apply to all eighth grade students who don't meet promotion standards in the 2008-09 school year.

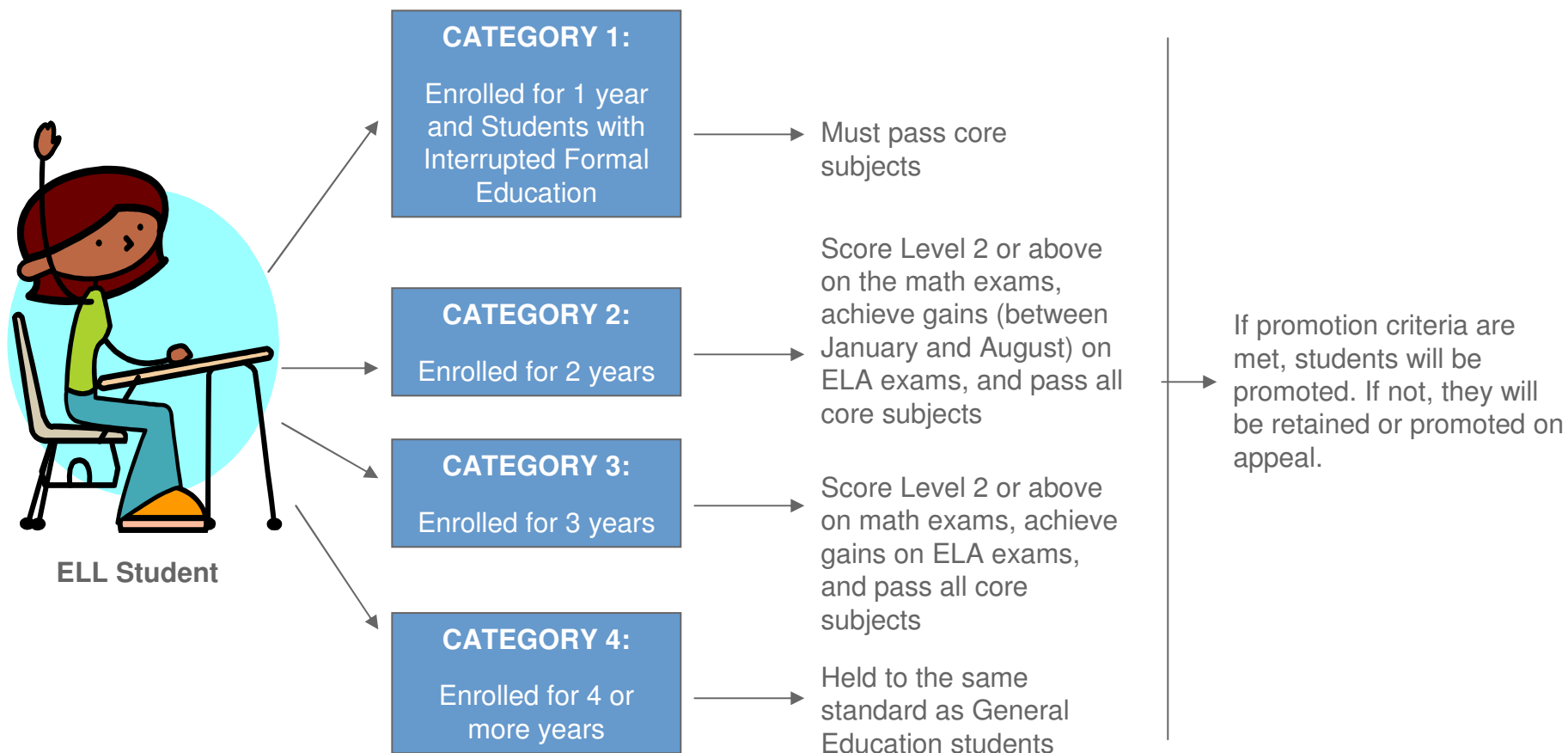


8th Grade Student Who Scored at Level 1

* Students are considered over-age if they turn 16 before December 31.

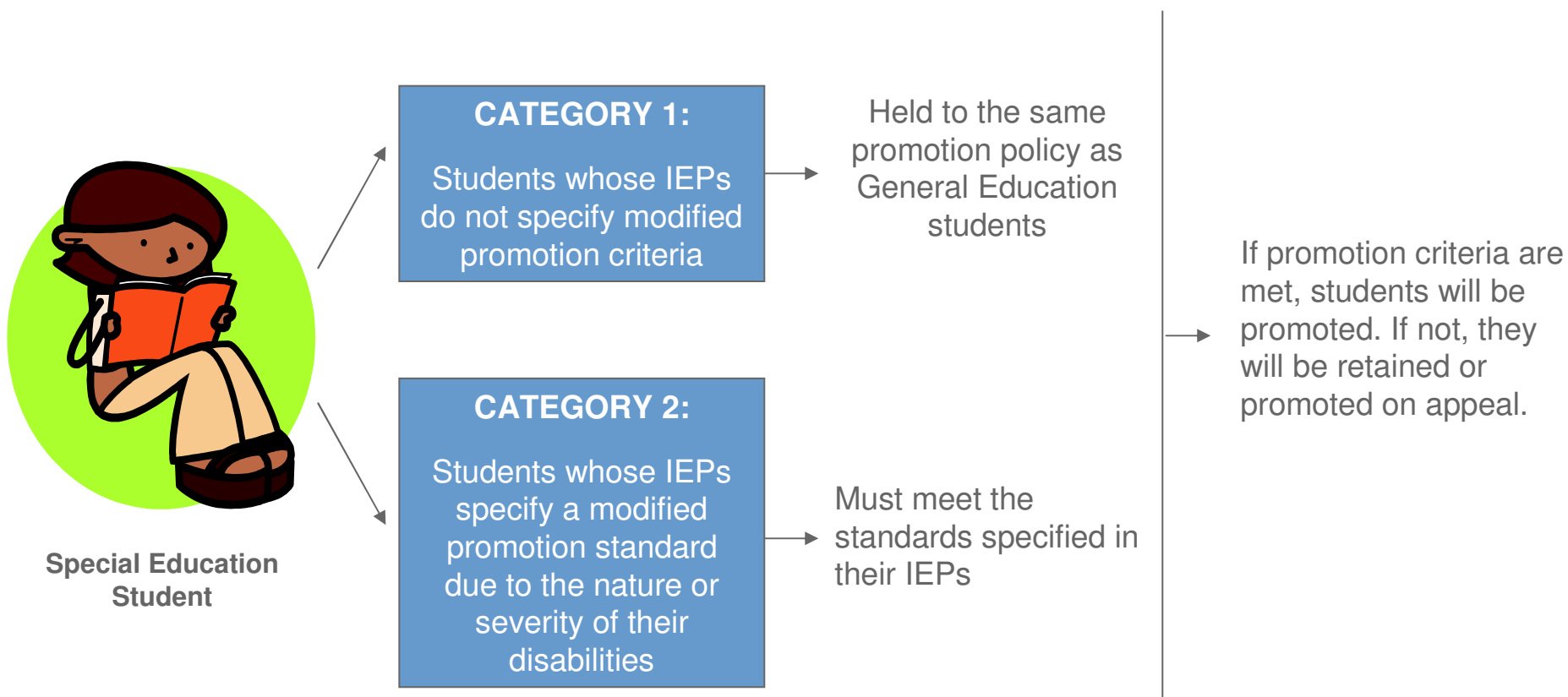
IMPACT: HOW WILL THIS AFFECT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS?

English Language Learners would be held to promotion standards starting in the 2008-09 school year based on their number of years in NYC public schools.



IMPACT: HOW WILL THIS AFFECT SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS?

Starting in the 2008-09 school year, special education students would be held to promotion standards based on achievement.



WE WILL PROVIDE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WITH EARLY NOTICE

We will work with families beginning with the students' entry into middle school in the fall of sixth grade to identify those students whose performance indicates they are not on the path to establish the foundation needed to succeed in high school.

Early in the fall of the eighth grade, we will notify students and their families who are at risk of not meeting the promotion criteria. Guidance counselors, teachers, and principals will work with students who are struggling to get back on course so they are ready for high school.

HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED

We will help ensure that struggling students get what they need to succeed, including:

- > *Academic Interventions.* The DOE will identify best practices schools can choose to use to support low performing students.
- > *Summer School.* On-age struggling students can attend summer school at a middle school, while students who are over-aged can attend at a high school.
- > *Remediation.* High schools will offer over-aged, promoted students intensive, school-based remediation programs tailored to their particular needs.
- > *ELL Support.* Differentiated help for SIFE and long-term ELLs in literacy and math.
- > *Special Education Support.* In addition to the supports they receive through their IEPs, special education students will be able to attend remediation programs with the accommodations they need.

TOOLS TO HELP ALL STUDENTS SUCCEED:

Through our Children First school reforms, we are giving educators and families the tools and incentives they need to help all students, especially those who are struggling, achieve academically.

- **Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS)** – This first-of-its-kind system provides detailed information about student performance and progress. It helps teachers and principals identify and address students' strengths and weaknesses and create tailored game plans to help students.
- **Fair Student Funding** – Schools are now funded at unprecedented levels, with more dollars going to high-needs students, including English Language Learners and students who perform at the lowest levels on State tests. This gives schools the resources they need to help these high-needs students.
- **Progress Reports** – All schools now receive letter grades based on academic achievement and progress of students and survey results from parents, students, and teachers. Schools earn extra credit for helping the lowest performing students make gains.

PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

The Panel for Education Policy will vote on this proposal in the spring. Before then, we invite families, district leadership teams, and other New Yorkers to tell us what they think. You can e-mail us at promotion@schools.nyc.gov. You can also participate in one of our five town hall meetings:

Manhattan

When: Feb. 26

Where: The High School of Fashion Industries (225 W 24th St.)

Staten Island

When: Feb. 28

Where: The Michael J. Petrides High School (715 Ocean Terrace)

Brooklyn

When: March 4

Where: Brooklyn Technical High School (29 Fort Greene Pl.)

Queens

When: March 6

Where: Hillcrest High School (160-05 Highland Ave.)

Bronx

When: March 11

Where: Evander Childs High School (800 E. Gun Hill Rd.)