

Wisconsin Grade Retention Policy Brief

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Presentation Outline



INTRODUCTION TO
GRADE RETENTION



LITERATURE REVIEW



WISCONSIN CONTEXT



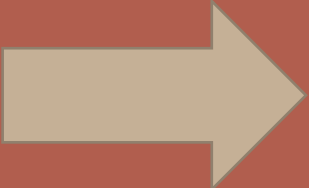
PROMISING
PRACTICES &
RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Grade Retention: the practice of holding students back from advancing to the next grade level

Grade Promotion: passing students to the next grade even if they have not satisfied academic requirements.

Why are we looking at grade retention?

- Criticism about achievement levels, dropout rates, and social/emotional impacts of retained students
 - Disproportionality of who is retained
 - Race
 - Sex/Gender
 - Disability Status
 - Income levels
- 
- Exacerbation of
achievement/opportunity gaps
- No long-term positive effects of grade retention

Literature Review



Grade Retention vs. Social Promotion

- Early research argues benefits of social promotion
- Educators, scholars, and parents call for end of social promotion
- Neither practice fosters academic achievement and long-term success



Teacher- Based Retention

- Teacher knowledge and attitudes towards retention
- Teachers feel pressure to meet testing expectations
- Influencing factors of teacher's decisions

Test- Based Retention

- Increasingly more common with high stakes testing
- Short term gains come at the expense of the most vulnerable students
- Teacher motivation and alignment, but increased scores due to grade inflation rather than gains in academic achievement

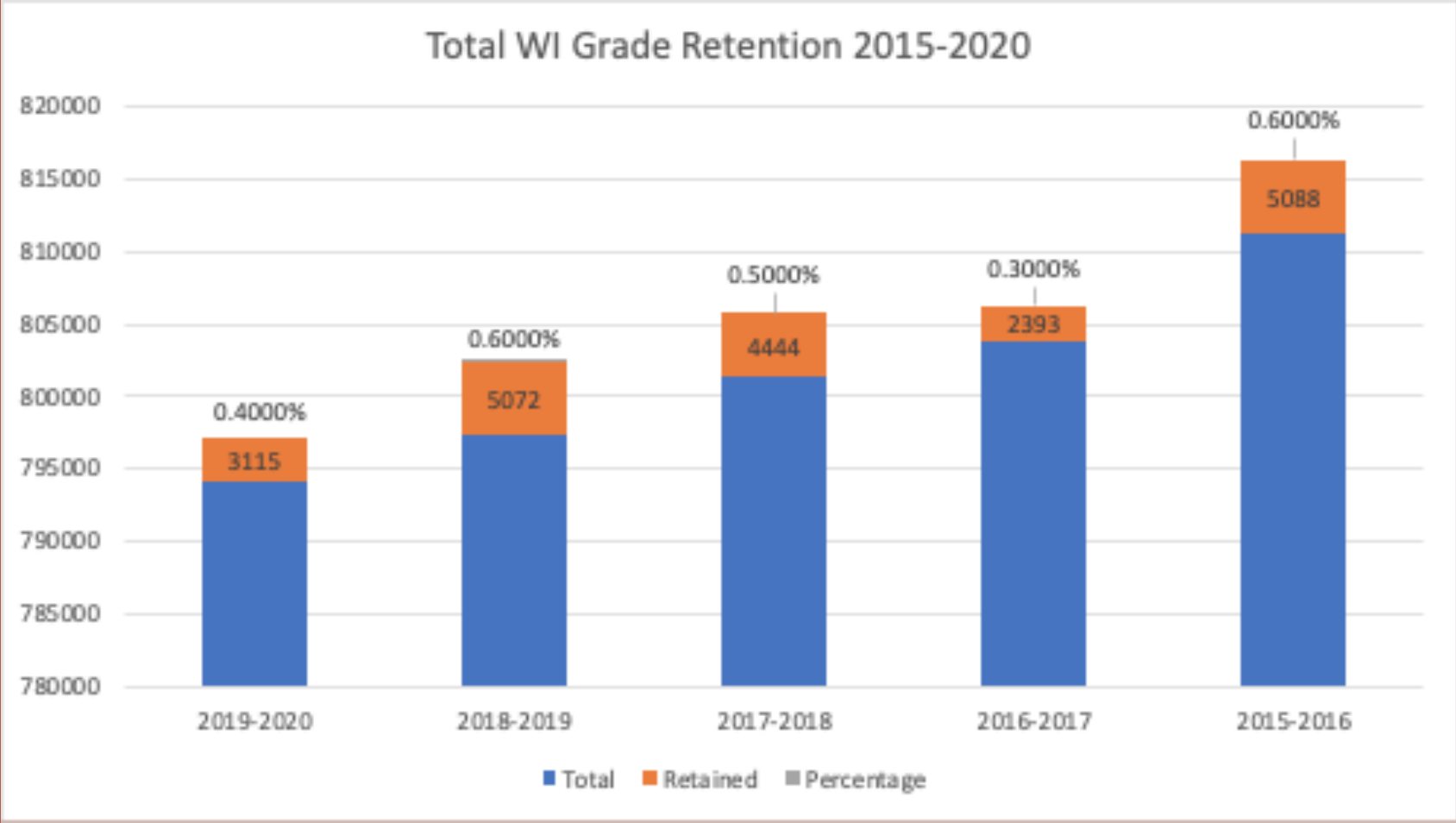


Short-term vs. Long-term impacts

- Academic outcomes fade over time
- Graduation and dropout rates
- Impacts down the road
 - Employment and earning
 - Health
- Methodological limitations?



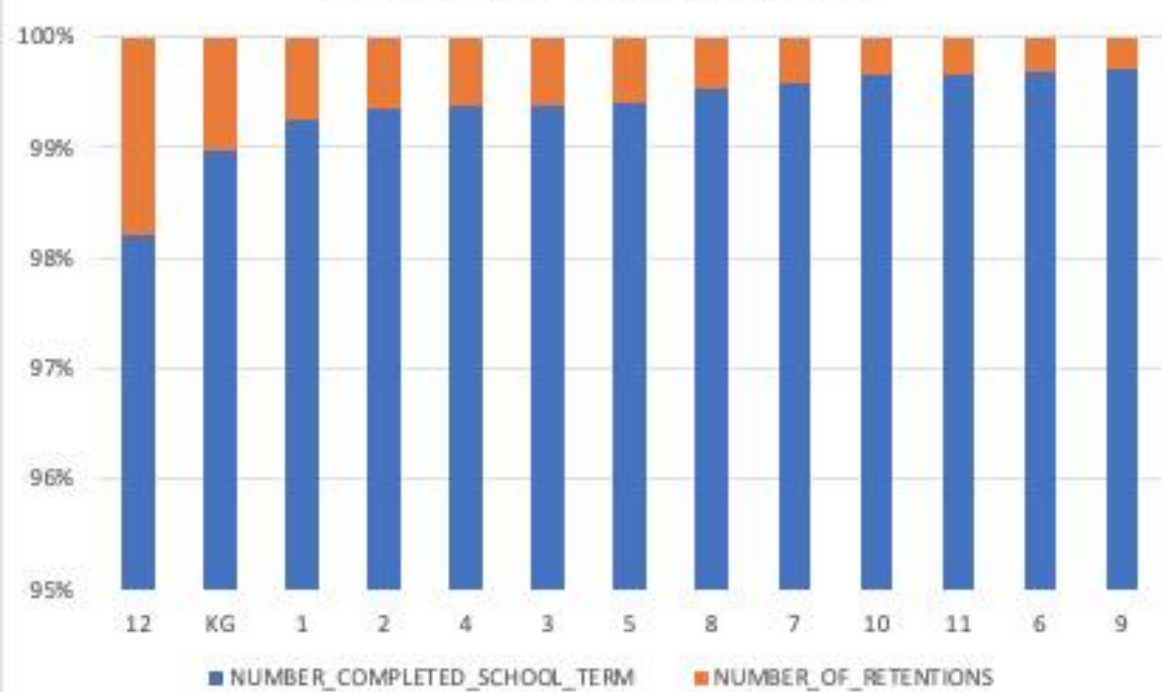
Wisconsin Context



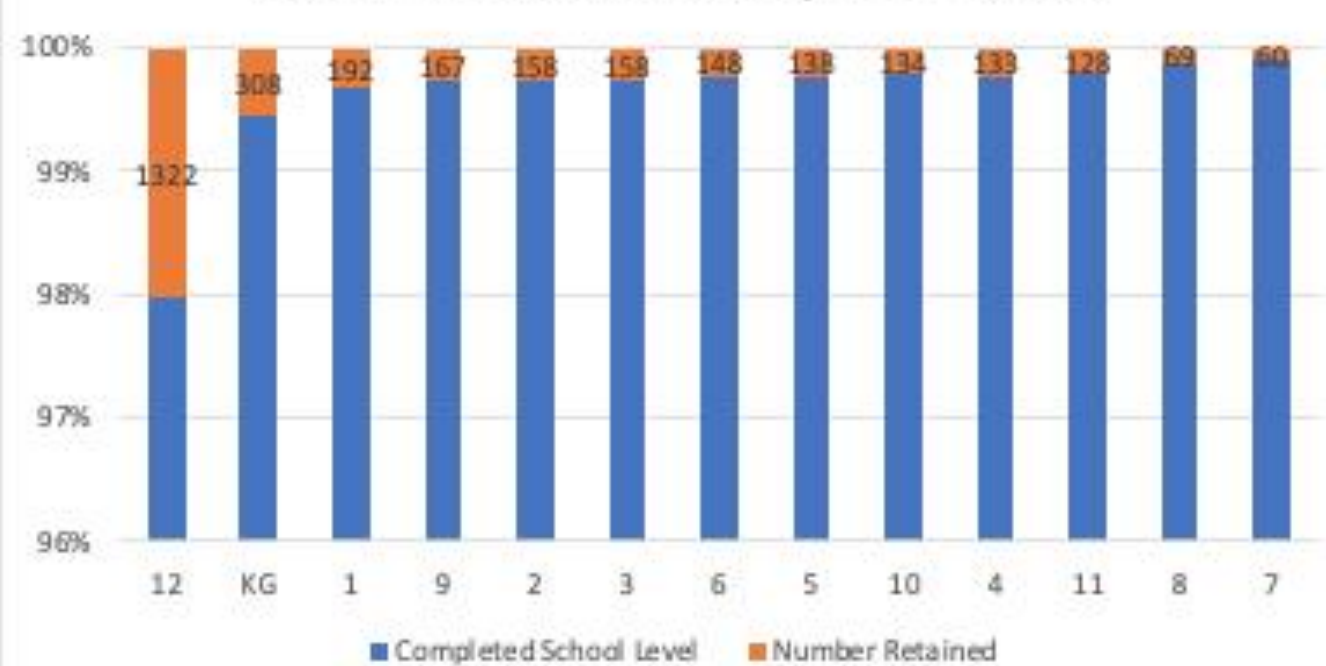
Source: WISEdash

When Retention Happens

18-19 WI Retention by Grade Year

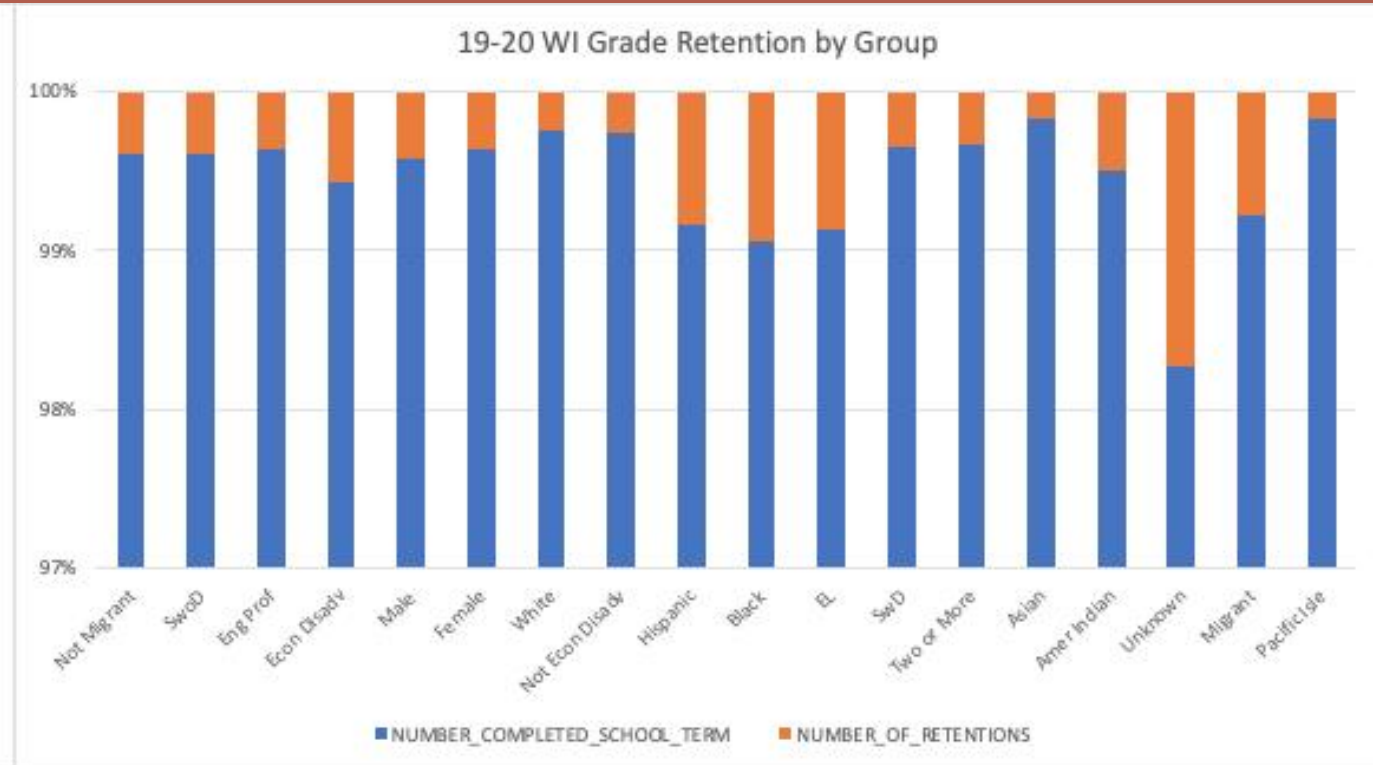
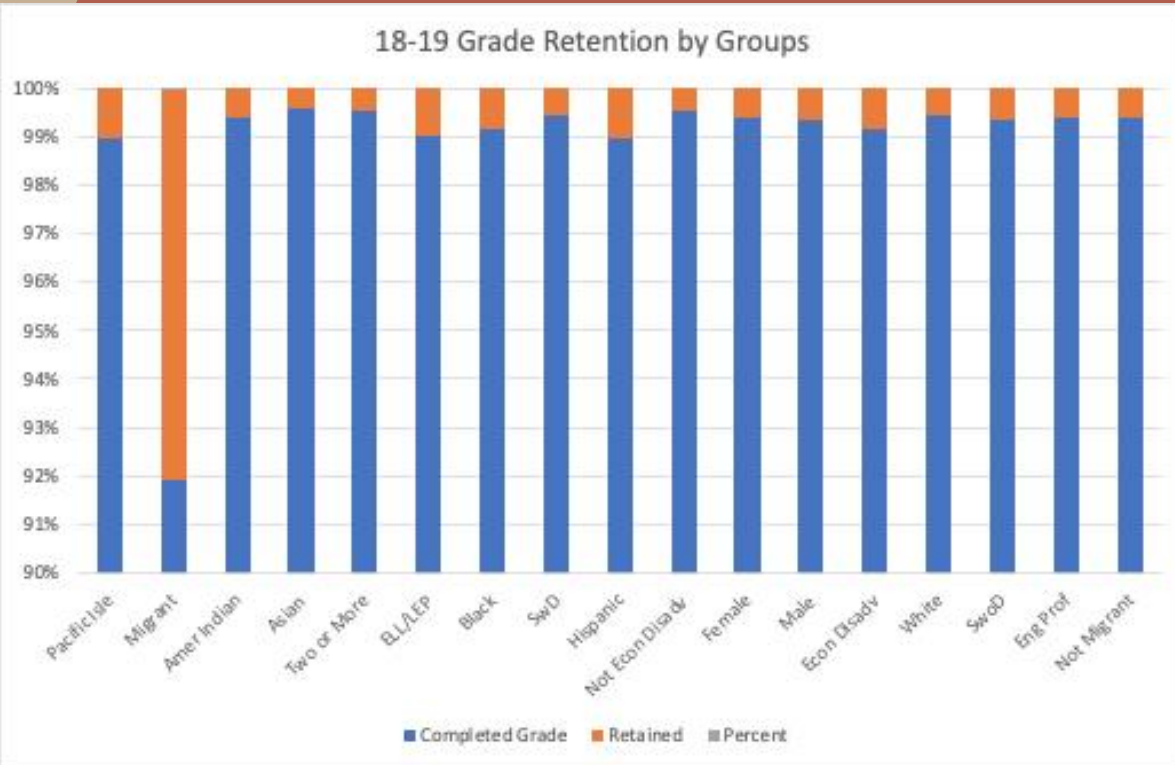


19-20 WI Grade Retention by Year in School



Source: WISEdash

Who Is Being Retained



Source: WISEdash

Wisconsin Overview

Wisconsin early adopter of no social promotion policy

Grade retention seen as a means for accountability

WI state states give each school district control/flexibility with setting parameters

Mix of teacher based and test-based retention

No required *written policy* for the elementary level (WI 118.33)

Alternatives to Grade Retention

- Parent/ family Involvement
- Age appropriate & culturally sensitive instruction
- Multi-age classrooms/learning
- Early identification of struggling students
- Designing (and assessing) evidence-based interventions
- Increasing instructional time
- Tutoring programs
- Wrap around services
- Looping

Promising Practices & Recommendations

- I would like to introduce the excellent international example from South Korea influenced by the grade retention, called leveled intense and supplementary learning.
- In Korea, people's perception of age is very important, especially from an early age. Policy makers considered the student's uncomfortable anxiety for learning a year with young peers.
- Korean policymakers had to consider this social atmosphere, so they subdivided grades to provide more frequent assessment points
- In other words, the case was transformed into horizontal movement within the school year rather than vertical movement during the school year, and it continues to be improved by considering policy complementary points.





Thank you!

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