



## **Acceleration and Retention Policy**

**Board Approved: May 11, 2021**

The Governing Board expects learners to progress through each grade level within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction should accommodate the variety of ways that learners learn and include strategies for addressing academic deficiencies when needed.

Learners shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade level standards of expected learner achievement.

Learners shall be identified for acceleration or retention based on the following data:

- CAASPP scores
- NWEA MAP assessments
- Other summative and formative assessments in ELA, writing, and mathematics
- Grades
- Facilitator observations/feedback
- Any other relevant data in the Student Study Team (SST) process

### **Acceleration**

Acceleration is possible when high academic achievement is evident. However, the learner's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration before placing them in a higher grade. The School Director or designee may recommend a learner for acceleration into a higher grade level upon review of the Student Study Team's (SST) findings.

#### **Acceleration - Kindergarten to First Grade**

A learner enrolled in kindergarten may be admitted to the first grade at the discretion of the School Director or designee and with the consent of the parent/guardian, upon determination by the SST that the child is ready for first grade.

This acceleration determination shall be subject to the following minimum criteria:

1. The learner is at least five years of age.
2. The learner has attended a public school kindergarten for a long enough time to enable school personnel to evaluate their ability.

3. The learner is in the upper five percent of their age group in terms of general cognitive ability.
4. The physical development and social maturity of the learner are consistent with their advanced cognitive ability.
5. A grade level adjustment document, signed by the team, shall be placed in the learner's cumulative file.

#### Acceleration Guidelines - Grades 1-12

The following guidelines for acceleration shall be implemented:

1. When a facilitator or parent/guardian feels a learner should be considered for acceleration, they shall review all available data and then discuss the case fully with the SST. If the learner has more than one regular classroom facilitator, the School Director or designee shall specify the facilitator(s) responsible for discussing the case with the SST.
2. The SST may consider the learner's grades, facilitator observations, assessment results, performance-based assessments, participation in available supplemental instruction programs, and any other relevant data or information available to the SST.
3. The learner should be performing several grades above their current grade level according to work produced and standardized test scores.
4. The SST's decision to accelerate a learner shall be based on what action best serves the child and shall include relevant social and emotional concerns.
5. The parent/guardian shall be involved in any decision regarding acceleration of a learner.
6. A grade level adjustment document, signed by the team, shall be placed in the learner's cumulative file.

#### **Retention**

The Governing Board recognizes that very few children benefit from being retained. When any learner is retained or recommended for retention, the School Director or designee shall offer programs of direct, systematic, and intensive supplemental instruction and social emotional support through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Learners shall be identified on the basis of academic achievement, social and emotional maturity, and the number of credits earned during the school year in accordance with law, Board Policy, and the following criteria.

#### Continuation in Kindergarten

Learners who have completed one year of kindergarten shall be admitted to first grade unless the parent/guardian and the School Director or designee agree that the learner shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. Whenever a learner continues in kindergarten for an additional year, the School Director or designee shall secure a kinder continuance form, signed by the parent/guardian, stating that the

learner shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. The kinder continuance form shall be placed in the learner's cumulative file.

#### Retention Guidelines - Grades 1-8

The following guidelines for retention shall be implemented:

1. When a facilitator or parent/guardian feels a learner should be considered for retention, they shall review all available data and then discuss the case fully with the Student Study Team (SST). If the learner has more than one regular classroom facilitator, the School Director or designee shall specify the facilitator(s) responsible for discussing the case with the SST.
2. The SST may consider the learner's grades, facilitator observations, assessment results, performance-based assessments, participation in available supplemental instruction programs, and any other relevant data or information available to the SST.
3. The SST's decision to retain shall be based on what action best serves the child and shall include relevant social and emotional concerns.
4. The parent/guardian shall be involved in any decision regarding retention of a learner.
5. A grade level adjustment document, signed by the team shall be placed in the learner's cumulative file.
6. A comprehensive supplemental intervention program, including monitoring for the following year, shall be developed for any learner that is retained.

#### Retention Guidelines - High School

Learners in grades 9-12 are not retained into lower grades but must meet graduation course and credit requirements based on school, State, and board policy for graduation from high school.