

Georgia Cyber Academy Governing Board

Promotion and Retention Policy

Adopted On: 4/18/2018 Last Reviewed On: 3/12/2019 Last Updated On: ___4/24.2019___

The Board of GCA adopts the following policy, effective on the date of adoption by the Board.

Georgia Cyber Academy (“GCA”) is a charter school that is provided under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 a waiver of certain requirements of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia, including but not limited to the requirements of O.C.G.A. Sections 20-2-282 through 285 regarding the retention and promotion of students. Consistent with the flexibility provided to GCA under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065, GCA desires to establish an appropriate policy regarding the procedures for promotion, placement and retention of its students.

The placement or promotion of a student at GCA into a grade, class, or program shall be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the student and a determination of the education setting in which the student is most likely to receive the instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement, in a manner consistent with the policy set forth below.

I. DEFINITIONS

Accelerated Instruction – challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, to meet grade-level standards in a compacted period of time.

Additional Instruction – academic instruction, beyond regularly scheduled academic classes, that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before or after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer or other inter-session instruction.

Differentiated Instruction – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

Grade Level Achievement – standard of performance, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, on the state adopted assessment(s).

Placement – the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

Promotion – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student’s achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

Retention – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

State Adopted Assessment – an assessment in any subject required by the state of Georgia to be administered to students.

II. PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES KINDERGARTEN through GRADE 8

1. Students shall be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
2. The school principal or designee shall annually notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that promotion, placement, or retention of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the student’s performance on the state adopted assessments, the academic achievement of the student, and the GCA promotion, placement and retention criteria set forth in this policy.
3. Placement decisions will be made on an individual basis by the student’s principal based upon the criteria set forth in this policy. If a student is retained, written documentation of evidence supporting the decision will be on file in the student’s permanent record.
4. The student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the promotion, placement or retention decision within 10 days after the decision has been made.
5. Students who spend more than one year in any grade will be provided accelerated instruction, additional instruction, or differentiated instruction.

III. GCA PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION CRITERIA

Kindergarten:

1. Readiness level as established by the results of the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS).
2. Readiness level as established by the results of the approved district reading assessment(s) and approved district mathematics assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
3. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

Grades 1 - 2:

1. Readiness level as established by the results of the approved district reading assessment(s) and approved district mathematics assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.

2. Readiness level as established on the student report card.
3. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

Grades 3 - 5:

1. Readiness level as established by the results of the appropriate state adopted assessment(s) in the areas of reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
2. Readiness level as indicated on the student report card.
3. Readiness level as established by the results of any approved district reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
4. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

Grades 6 - 8:

1. Grade level achievement as established by the results of the appropriate state adopted assessment(s) in the areas of reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
2. Passing 3 of 4 academic classes and 66% or more of all connections classes taken during the school year.
3. Readiness level as established by the results of any approved district reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
4. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

IV. APPEALS OF PLACEMENT, PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISIONS GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 8

In the event a parent of a student in Kindergarten through Grade 8 disagrees with a placement, promotion or retention decision by the student's principal (the "Placement Decision") and wishes to appeal such decision, the parent must notify the student's principal in writing of their appeal of the Placement Decision within 10 days of receiving written notice of the Placement Decision or all rights of appeal of the Placement Decision shall be waived and the Placement Decision shall be final.

In the event a timely appeal of a Placement Decision is made by a parent of a student, a Placement Review Team consisting of the parent(s) of the student, a counselor or the family support liaison for the student, and the school principal or designee shall be convened to reconsider the Placement Decision of the student. The Placement Review Team shall consider all

the retention, placement and promotion criteria as set forth in this policy and such other relevant information as the parents and other members of the Placement Review Team wish to share with the Placement Review Team. The initial Placement Decision (regardless of whether the initial decision was a decision of placement, retention or promotion) shall not be changed by the Placement Review Team unless the Placement Review Team unanimously agrees to the change in placement, retention or promotion of the student. The decision of the Placement Review Team shall be given to the parents in writing within 10 days of the date of the decision of the Placement Review Team.

In the event any member of the Placement Review Team disagrees with the decision of the Placement Review Team and wishes to appeal such decision, the person desiring to appeal the decision of the Placement Review Team must notify the Head of School in writing of their appeal of the decision of the Placement Review Team within 10 days of receiving written notice of the decision of the Placement Review Team or all rights of appeal of the decision of the Placement Review Team shall be waived and the decision of the Placement Review Team shall be final. The person submitting the appeal must submit a statement of all reasons and supporting documentation as to why they disagree with the decision of the Placement Review Team at the time of submitting their appeal of the decision of the Placement Review Team. The Head of School (or designee appointed by the Head of School) shall review the written documentation that is timely submitted by the person making the appeal along with records of the District relating to the decision of placement, promotion or retention without the requirement of any additional hearing or meeting. The Head of School (or designee) shall issue a written decision either affirming or modifying the placement, promotion or retention based upon their review of the record. The decision of the Head of School (or designee) shall be final.

V. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 9 —12

Students in high school progress toward graduation on a course by course basis. Students shall take courses based upon academic performance, academic needs, graduation requirements and previous credits earned.

Students shall stay intact with their entering class for courses related to their freshman year. Assignments beyond the freshman year will be determined by the number of credits earned by the student. That is, a student will remain a freshman until such time that he/she earns 5 credits to be considered a Sophomore, 11 credits to be considered a Junior and 17 credits to be considered a Senior.

UNITS OF CREDIT

All state-supported high schools shall make available to all students the required areas of study. A course shall count only once for satisfying any unit of credit requirement for graduation. **A total of 23 units are required to meet graduation requirements.** See the following chart:

AREAS OF STUDY

Units Required

(I)	English/Language Arts	4
(II)	Mathematics	4
(III)	Science	4
	The 4 th science unit may be used to meet both the science and an elective requirement	
(IV)	Social Studies	3
(V)	CTAE and/or	3
	Modern Language/Latin and/or	
	Fine Arts	
(VI)	Health and Physical Education	1
(VII)	Electives	4
TOTAL UNITS (MINIMUM)		23

VI. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND OTHER APPLICABLE LAWS AND RULES

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in policy, in compliance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), and its implementing rules and regulations, all decisions regarding the provision of a free, appropriate, public education to students served under IDEA, including but not limited to decisions regarding placement, promotion and retention shall be made by the child’s IEP team in accordance with the provisions of IDEA, and the decision of the IEP team shall be final. Also notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in policy, in the event a child is served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) and its implementing rules and regulations, if a parent disagrees with a promotion, placement or retention decision, the child’s Section 504 team shall convene to determine whether the District will be providing a free appropriate public education to the child as required by Section 504 if the promotion, placement or retention decision is implemented, and the Section 504 team may make such modifications to the promotion, placement or retention decision to the extent the Section 504 team determines that such changes to the promotion, placement or retention of the child are required in order to provide a free appropriate public education to the child pursuant to the requirements of Section 504. For purposes of this policy, the Section 504 team shall be the Placement Review Team for students served under Section 504, all decisions made by the Section 504 team shall be made in a manner consistent with Section 504, and the decision of the Section 504 team shall be final.

GCA chooses to exercise the flexibility given to it under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 with respect to promotion, retention and placement of its students to the greatest extent permitted by law and in accordance with the terms of this policy; however, to the extent that any laws, rules or regulations cannot be waived or are otherwise required by law to apply to GCA notwithstanding the flexibility give under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 or are applicable under GCA’s Charter, Bylaws or other governing documents (collectively “Non-Waivable Laws and Rules”), all such Non-Waivable Laws and Rules shall be fully complied with by GCA, notwithstanding any other terms of this policy to the contrary.

Legal citations:

O.C.G.A. 20-02-282 Academic Placement and Promotion Policy

O.C.G.A. 20-02-2065 Applicability of title, etc. to charter schools; waiver; requirements with respect to operation, control, and management

29 U.S.C. Section 794 Nondiscrimination under Federal grants and programs

34 C.F.R. 104.33 Free appropriate public education

20 U.S.C. Section 1412 State Eligibility

34 C.F.R. 300.101 Free appropriate public education (FAPE)