

Students

Student Promotion, Acceleration, Retention and Early Kindergarten Admission

I. Purpose

This policy provides guidance to employees, families and students regarding student promotion, acceleration, retention and early kindergarten admission.

II. General Statement of Policy

The school district is dedicated to the total and continuous development of each student. Students will be placed in the instructional level best suited to their academic, social and emotional needs. Teachers or parent/guardians are welcome to initiate the process for student promotion, acceleration, retention or early kindergarten admission.

Students will usually progress from level to level on an annual basis. Exceptions may be made, however, when they are in the best educational interest of the student. Any exceptions will be made only after consultation with the student's family.

A student's readiness and motivation for promotion, acceleration, retention, and early kindergarten admission will be considered. In order to achieve the best academic outcomes for all students, it is important to match the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum for students.

III. Student Promotion, Acceleration and Retention

A. Elementary (Grades K-5)

1. Promotion

Students who achieve levels deemed acceptable by local and state standards will be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of each school year. Promotion will occur unless parents are made aware that promotion may not occur during the school year.

2. Acceleration

a. Course/subject acceleration

Course or subject acceleration will first be done through differentiated classroom work. If full subject acceleration is implemented in a sequential content area, a plan must be created that accommodates the potential for continued sequential implementation beyond the year it is instituted.

Requests must be submitted to the principal by March 15 of the preceding school year.

b. Full Grade Level Acceleration

In order to design the most appropriate educational program for students, the school district recognizes that some students demonstrate a need for grade level acceleration. Grade level acceleration may be considered for students who exhibit superior levels of aptitude and have demonstrated high levels of competency in multiple academic areas. In these cases, the degree to which the regular grade level material requires modification may become difficult for the educators to both facilitate and manage.

3. Retention

Retention is defined as students remaining in the same grade based on unsatisfactory performance or lack of readiness for the material/standards in the grade or level of rigor. This may be considered if it is in the best interest of the student.

B. Middle School (Grades 6-8)

1. Promotion

Students who achieve at levels deemed acceptable by local and state standards will be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of each school year. Promotion will occur unless parents are made aware during the school year.

2. Acceleration

a. Course or Subject Acceleration

Course or subject acceleration is the act of moving a student at least one grade level above his/her general grade level placement. Course or subject acceleration may be considered for students who exhibit superior levels of aptitude and have demonstrated high levels of competency in an academic area.

b. Full Grade Level Acceleration

Grade level acceleration may be considered for students who exhibit superior levels of aptitude and have demonstrated high levels of competency in multiple academic areas. In these cases, grade level acceleration may be considered.

3. Retention

Retention is defined as students remaining in the same grade based on unsatisfactory performance or lack of readiness for the material/standards in the grade or level of rigor. This may be considered if it is in the best interest of the student.

C. High School (Grades 9-12)

1. Promotion

Promotion is based on the student completing courses and standards. Students do not necessarily advance grade by grade. Rather, course credits and graduation standards are accumulated until graduation requirements have been met.

2. Course or Subject Acceleration

Please see Policy 620 for details and procedures for either Credit by Assessment or Credit for Prior Learning.

3. Retention

Students in high school are not retained by grade level; rather, students must accumulate course credits and demonstrate they have learned a prescribed set of standards.

IV. Early Kindergarten Admission Procedure

- A. Children who are five years of age on or before September 1 of the calendar school year may enroll in kindergarten. The district will begin the registration process for kindergarten in November of the prior school year. The registration process will define school enrollment options and kindergarten programming options available to kindergarten families.
- B. Children who are five years of age on September 2 through October 15 of the calendar school year may enroll in kindergarten, however, they are not guaranteed enrollment at their attendance area school. The student must meet the district's early admission to kindergarten assessment requirements outlined below. The elementary choice programs are not available to early admission children.
 1. The district will, upon request, provide information to families considering early admission into kindergarten that explains the early admission requirements.
 2. Families seeking early admission into kindergarten must submit a letter of request for admission to the school district by May 15 of the year prior to admission.

3. The expenses related to the required assessments for early entrance consideration are the responsibility of the families.
4. The assessment requirements must include an assessment of:
 - a. cognitive functioning and readiness skills for academics
 - b. social and emotional characteristics
 - c. motor skills

The assessment will be completed by a licensed psychologist. A suggested list of psychologists will be provided by the district.

5. A written summary of the assessment will be submitted to the district by August 15 of the year prior to admission.
6. The district will have an early admission kindergarten team review the assessment. The team will include a kindergarten educator, a building principal, a school psychologist, and the Director of Student Support Services.
7. The team will decide if the child is approved for early admission. The decision of the team is final and will be placed in writing for the family.
8. The family will register for kindergarten at the Student Enrollment Center, 5701 Normandale Road, Edina, Minnesota.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120B.15 (Gifted and Talented Program)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1 (Superintendents)

Cross References:

Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan)
Policy 618 (Assessment, Grading and Reporting of Student Progress)
Policy 620 (Course Credit for Learning)

Policy
adopted: 04/14/08
amended: 10/22/12
revised: 05/16/16

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 273
Edina, Minnesota

Appendix I

Timeline and Procedure for Retention (K-9) or Acceleration (Grades K-5)

Staff and parents who recommend students for acceleration, promotion or retention will generally proceed according to the following timeline procedures:

Timeline	Procedure
By 2/1	Teacher or parent(s)/guardian considering recommending retention or acceleration (and parent if initiated by a teacher) should fill out Appendix III and give to building principal.
By 2/15	A building team (consisting of the principal, psychologist, teacher and other members as appropriate) convene to discuss the request, including information gathered using Appendix IV. The Gifted/Talented Coordinator should be consulted in an acceleration situation.
By 4/15	<p>The same building team expands to include the parent(s)/guardian. The team reviews the data and develops a recommendation to the principal. Appropriate action will be determined. A decision will be made on:</p> <p>Retention</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retain the student in the present grade/course, or 2. Develop an educational program plan for the student <p>Acceleration</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an education plan for the student that may include course/subject acceleration, or 2. Fully accelerate the student to the next grade level and create a transition plan.
By 4/30	<p>If consensus between parent(s)/guardian and school team members is not reached, a report will be submitted to the principal for review and decision.</p> <p>If the parent(s)/guardian do not agree with the principal's decision, the parents may appeal in writing to the director of teaching and learning.</p>
	Exceptions may be made to this timeline.

Established: 5/16/16

Appendix II

Timeline and Procedure for Course or Subject Acceleration Request (Grs. 6-9)

Timeline	Application/Request
By 3/15	New requests will be made in writing and submitted to the student's counselor by March 15 of the preceding school year for first semester courses.
By 11/1	Application for second semester courses must be made by November 1 of the school year.
<p>Decision Making Team</p> <p>A building team consisting of the principal, psychologist, teacher and other members as appropriate, convene to discuss the request, including information gathered. The Gifted/Talented Coordinator should be consulted in an acceleration situation. The acceleration process is a collaborative effort utilizing members of the decision making team in tandem with parent(s)/guardian(s).</p> <p>Course/subject acceleration will be limited to two of four core-area subjects (math, language arts, science, and social studies). At the point where three of four core-area courses are recommended by the building team, the student will be full grade accelerated.</p> <p>The building administrator/program administrator makes the final decision on all accelerations requests. If the parent(s)/guardian do not agree with the principal's decision, the parents may appeal in writing to the director of teaching and learning.</p>	

Procedure

	Spring	Fall
Middle School	Course or subject acceleration for middle school students wishing to participate at the high school level is intended for students who are implementing an educational plan, inclusive of sequential courses that are unavailable at the middle schools, to ensure continuous placement occurs.	As necessary, fall placement in a traditionally overloaded high school course for middle school students will be considered as soon as possible, but no later than the second week of school.
High School	A spring placement request for a course at the high school campus will be honored when the high school historical scheduling	Fall placement and individual schedules for all students is the counselors' first priority. A

	<p>and staffing patterns ensure that such placement will not overload a high school section of a class or displace a fully-enrolled high school student.</p>	<p>class is considered “full” according to school board class size guidelines.</p>
<p>Considerations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course or subject acceleration requests by middle school students may be accommodated by high school or middle school counselors in the fall if the need has been demonstrated and that fulfilling such a request does not overload a high school course (using enrollment guidelines followed by the high school), such a change meets the middle school student’s schedule requirements and the appropriate timelines have been followed. The dates of the original written requests will determine order of placement when the number of requests exceeds available space. The total number of courses a student may enroll in across the two campuses may not exceed seven. 2. A student may need to drop an elective in order to accomplish acceleration. Course or subject acceleration may be accomplished and accommodated by scheduling the student into next level courses as available. The school district will offer online learning or other alternative options for a student if school sites are unable to accommodate further sequential acceleration. 		
<p>Exceptions may be made to this timeline or process.</p>		

Established: 5/16/16

Appendix III

Parent Request/Student Input Form

Parents/Guardians who are requesting or are involved with the possible retention or acceleration of a student should fill out the form below and give it to the student's building principal following the timelines laid out in Appendices I and II.

Parent/Guardian name(s) _____

Student name _____ Date _____

Who is filling out the form? (select one):

_____ Parent/Guardian _____ Teacher

Request for (select one):

_____ Retention _____ Course/credit acceleration _____ Full grade acceleration

1. For what reasons would retention or acceleration be a good fit for your student?

In addition, please fill out Appendix IV to the best of your ability. By signing this for you are giving permission for a general intellectual abilities screener to be given to your child, if necessary.

Parent/Guardian *Signature* _____ *Date* _____

Contact Information: *Email* _____ *Phone* _____

Appendix IV

Retention or Acceleration Student Information Form

The school district expects all students to achieve at an acceptable level of proficiency. All stakeholders will coordinate and collaborate to the greatest extent possible to help students succeed in school. Multiple factors will be considered as part of the procedure for retention or acceleration.

Student Name _____ Date _____

School _____ Building Team Members _____

Social/Emotional Considerations

This document is meant to serve as a guide for discussion as part of the data collected about a student in order to ascertain the best placement/programming.

Factor	Definition	Low degree		High degree
Self-Awareness	Accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations			
	Possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism			
Self-Management	The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations			
	Managing stress			
	Motivating oneself			
	Controlling impulses			
	Setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals			
Social Awareness	The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures			
	To understand social and ethical norms of behavior			
Relationship Skills	The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups			
	Communicating clearly			
	Listening actively			
	Cooperating			

	Seeking and offering help when needed				
Responsible Decision-Making	The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions				
	Realistically evaluating consequences of various actions				
	Considering well-being of self and others				
Overall interpretation of students' strengths and weaknesses:					

Adapted from Conklin, Tom. Social and Emotional Learning: Essential Lessons for Student Success. Scholastic: New York, New York, 2014.

Scholastic Achievement

Knowledge and skill depth on grade level standards

Assessment information

Intelligence information* (if available and/or applicable)

*if a general intellectual abilities screener is used, students should be at least 2.5 standard deviations or greater above the mean to be considered for full grade level acceleration

Additional Factors

Attendance as it affects achievement

DECISION:

___ Promote ___ Retain ___ Accelerate

Recommendations/Plan (attach extra documentation as necessary):

Parent(s)/Guardian: _____

Signature(s): _____ Date _____

Principal Signature: _____ Date _____

Established: 5/16/16