



## **STUDENT PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND PROGRAM DESIGN**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to professional staff, parents, and students regarding student promotion, retention, and program design.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The school board expects all students to achieve at an acceptable level of proficiency. Parental assistance, tutorial and remedial programs, counseling, and other appropriate services shall be coordinated and utilized to the greatest extent possible to help students succeed in school.

#### **A. Promotion**

Students who achieve at levels deemed acceptable by local and state standards shall be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of each school year.

#### **B. Retention**

Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents feel that it is in the best interest of the student. Physical development, maturity, and emotional factors shall be considered, as well as scholastic achievement. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

#### **C. Program Design**

1. The superintendent, with participation of the professional staff and parents, shall develop and implement programs to challenge students that are consistent with the needs of students at every level. A process to assess and evaluate students for program assignment shall be developed in coordination with such programs. Opportunities for special programs and placement outside of the school district shall also be developed as additional options. All programs will be aligned with creating comprehensive achievement and civic readiness.
2. The school district may identify students, locally develop programs and services addressing instructional and affective needs, provide staff development, and evaluate programs to provide gifted and talented students with challenging and appropriate educational programs and services.
3. The school district must adopt guidelines for assessing and identifying students for participation in gifted and talented programs and services consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11. The guidelines should include the use of:
  - a. multiple objective criteria; and
  - b. assessments and procedures that are valid and reliable, fair, and based on current theory and research. Assessments and procedures should be sensitive to under-represented groups, including, but not limited to, low-income, minority, twice-exceptional, and English learners.
4. The school district must adopt procedures for the academic acceleration of gifted and talented students. These procedures will include how the school district will:

- a. assess a student's readiness and motivation for acceleration; as deemed appropriate by the building principal and superintendent; and
- b. match the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to a student to achieve the best type of academic acceleration for that student.

**5. Early Entrance Procedures for Kindergarten**

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 124D.02, no child shall be admitted as a kindergarten student unless he/she is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which he/she seeks admission commences. The statute provides that exceptions may be approved by the Board of Education as criteria for early admittance. Accordingly, the following procedures are established.

**Criteria for Early Entrance:**

- a. Children will only be considered whose 5<sup>th</sup> birthday falls after September 1<sup>st</sup> and on or before October 31<sup>st</sup> of the year in which admission is requested.
- b. Parents/Guardians indicate interest by April 15<sup>th</sup> of the school year previous to anticipated entrance
- c. The parent/guardian will schedule an evaluation for the child with a licensed school psychologist to be paid by parents/guardians. (Scholarships are available for parents/ guardians who qualify based on federal standards for free and reduced priced meal guidelines).
- d. Children must score 130 or higher on an individually administered, comprehensive cognitive ability test.
- e. Children must demonstrate high academic skills, social and emotional maturity, and persistence as determined by Big Lake Schools.
- f. Results of testing must be submitted to the building principal no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Early Admittance will be Completed in Accordance with the Following Procedures:**

- a. Parents/Guardians that feel it is in the best interest of their child to gain early admissions into kindergarten shall complete an application and submit to the Principal at Liberty Elementary School. The application deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup> for Early Admission for the following school year.
- b. If the Principal of Liberty Elementary school determines that the circumstances are worthy of consideration, he/she will recommend that (1) the child be referred for further evaluation; or (2) the application for early entrance does not warrant further consideration.
- c. If the recommendation is for further evaluation, the school will approve a licensed school psychologist to administer an individual comprehensive cognitive ability test. The parents/guardians shall pay the expense of this testing.
- d. If the child meets the required cognitive ability score, the school district will designate a teacher to meet with the child and assess the child's academic skills, and observe the child's social and emotional development.
- e. A conference will be held with the principal, parents/legal guardians, child applicant, and/or other appropriate staff such as kindergarten

teacher, representative from early childhood, school psychologist, gifted and talented teacher and social worker to consider each early entrance candidate.

- f. Based on the results of the cognitive ability testing, academic testing, and social and emotional screening, the Liberty Elementary School Principal will make the decision for or against early admission.
- g. Parents/guardians will be notified of the decision.
- h. All early entrants will be considered as trial placements and as such will be continually evaluated to determine if the child has been appropriately placed.

**6. Other Grades and Transfers:**

- a. Admissions of students to all other grades shall be contingent upon completion of all previous grades. An exception to this rule may apply in the case of a child who is six years of age on or before September 1, but the child has not completed kindergarten. If a child has not completed Kindergarten and parents/guardians are requesting early admission to first grade, the procedures outlined in this policy will apply.
- b. Children transferring from another school shall be placed in the grade indicated by their chronological age and/or grade placement in the previous school, pending observation by the school personnel. After these observations have been completed, the elementary principal will determine final grade placement.

***Legal References:*** Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement Goals; Striving for Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness)  
*M.S. § 120B.15 – Gifted and Talented Students Programs*  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1 (Superintendent)  
Minn. Stat. § 124D.02 (School Board Powers; Enrollment)

***Cross References:*** MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 618 (Assessment of Student Achievement)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 620 (Credit for Learning)