513 STUDENT PROMOTION, RETENTION, ACCELERATION, AND PROGRAM DESIGN

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to professional staff, parent/guardian(s) and students regarding student promotion, retention, acceleration and program design.

Adopted with changes from MSBA/MASA Model Policy 513 Orig. 1995, Rev. 2007-2010, 2020, 8/8/23, 11/1/25

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II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The School Board expects all students to achieve at an acceptable level of proficiency. Proper grade placement will be based on multiple criteria including below items. The District's decision on grade placement shall be final.

- Chronological age
- Appropriate social/emotional maturity
- Academic attainment appropriate to ability level

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 parent/guardian(s) feel that it is in the best interest of the student. Physical development and social/emotional maturity shall be considered as well as scholastic achievement.

C. Acceleration

Acceleration is the practice of a student bypassing a grade based on exceptional school performance. Acceleration of a student, who achieves at exceptional levels including district acceleration assessments, may only be considered when professional staff and family agree it is in the best interest of the student. Academic achievement, emotional development, maturity and educational best practices shall all be a part of this decision-making process.

D. Program Design

1. The district shall develop and implement programs to challenge students that are consistent with the needs of students at every level. A procedure for screening and identifying students for program assignment shall be developed in coordination with such programs.

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; 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. The school district must adopt procedures consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.02 for early admission to kindergarten or first grade of gifted or talented learners consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, subdivision 2, clause (2). In the case of early entrance to kindergarten, a district committee will determine the student's readiness for this intervention based on district procedures.

E. Process for determining appropriate Grade Placement

1. Evaluation

   Recommendation for appropriate grade placement will be considered with documentation from the following measures:

   a. Teacher Records
   b. Grade Level Assessments/Observation
   c. Record of student interventions and results implemented by the teacher (s)

2. Protocol

   When considering retention the district will implement and document the following process:

a. Teacher contacts the parent/guardian(s) as early in the school year as practical appropriate assessment measures are complete
b. Teachers conferences with the building principal
c. Interventions and results are documented
d. Teacher implements Teachers Assisting Teachers (TAT) support
e. Teacher conferences with the parent/guardian(s) and presents documentation support the proper grade placement
f. The building principal will facilitate any additional requested conferences between parent/guardian(s) and teacher
g. Parent/guardian(s) may request a meeting with the principal, teacher, and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction at which time documentation will be reviewed and appropriate grade placement will be determined.
h. Final grade placement recommendations will be made no later than the last day of school.

3. Parent/Guardian(s) Requests

A parent/guardian request to retain a student for academic reasons will follow a review process of the student's academic and social history to determine the proper grade placement. At no time will the district consider retention without documentation to support that decision. The documentation will include multiple measures ensuring an informed decision.

Grade Placement will not be used:

a. As a punishment
b. To motivate a student
c. In place of Special Ed services
d. To "red shirt" a student for academic or athletic purposes
e. To address transiency related issues
f. To supplant remedial instruction
g. In place of ESL services
h. To. Compensate for excessive absenteeism

4. Kindergarten Entrance

All Day Every Day Kindergarten, a rigorous educational program, requires the students to be appropriately prepared and ready for kindergarten. All pertinent information will be reviewed with the parent/guardian(s) to determine readiness for kindergarten.

a. Early Childhood Program Assessment Data
b. Invest Early Risk Factor Rating Scale (Pre and K students)

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5. Acceleration Protocol

When considering acceleration, the district will implement and document the following process:

1. Acceleration decisions must involve a comprehensive team which must include student, parent/guardian(s), gifted and talented contact, classroom teacher/s, building principal, and counselor.

2. The Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) coordinator and the principal will maintain communication with the team during the evaluation period and throughout programming.

3. The assignment of students is the legal prerogative of the school district.

4. The Iowa Acceleration Scale must be completed by the gifted and talented contact/principal.

5. The Acceleration evaluation process will involve the analysis of several assessments; as determined by the Gifted and Talented Education committee.

6. Upon determination of acceleration, the team is responsible for writing an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for the student.

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

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