

Ensuring All Students Meet Standards (Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students)

The Board believes that early identification of students who are not making adequate progress toward achieving standards and effective intervention are crucial. In accordance with the Board's policy on grading and assessment systems, teachers shall assess the teaching and learning process on a continual basis.

As determined by the principal and in accordance with applicable law, students not meeting applicable district academic standards may not be promoted to the next grade level or allowed to graduate. The procedure to retain a student in kindergarten, first, second or third grade due to the student's significant reading deficiency shall be in accordance with the regulation on early literacy and reading comprehension and applicable law.

When students are retained in the same grade level, the teacher shall evaluate the previous teaching and learning experiences of the student, including whether specific aspects of the individual learning plan were appropriate and effective. Based on this evaluation, the teacher shall modify the plan to ensure that the student's needs will be met and that the student's educational experience from the previous year is not merely repeated.

Retention due to social, emotional or physical immaturity shall be used on a very limited basis. After consulting with the student's parents/guardians, teacher(s) and other professional staff and in accordance with applicable law, the principal shall determine whether it is in the best interests of the student to be retained for such reasons.

Acceleration, or advancing a student more than one grade level shall be used sparingly when special circumstances warrant.

The district administration shall develop guidelines to implement this policy, which shall include an appeals process concerning a decision to accelerate a student.

Adopted: April 27, 2016

Revised and recoded by the superintendent: July 17, 2019

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 22-7-1013 (2.5) (*recommended considerations for academic acceleration procedure*)
C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(hh) (*Board duty to provide opportunity for an academic remediation plan upon request by student's parent/guardian*)

CROSS REFS.:

Board policies:

EL-5, Commitment to Accomplishment and Accountability
EL-6, Educational Program

Administrative policies:

AE, Accountability/Commitment to Accomplishment
AEA, Standards Based Education
IK, Academic Achievement

File: I-22 (IKE)

IKA, Grading/Assessment Systems
ILBC and ILBC-R, Early Literacy and Reading Comprehension

Weld County School District Re-3J, Hudson, Colorado

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Retention

A recommendation for possible retention shall be made by the teacher to the building principal through a body of evidence that includes:

1. The inability of a student to successfully progress, despite numerous interventions, is well documented over time through methods such as:
 - Student achievement measures (formative assessments, benchmark assessments, summative assessments, state assessments)
 - Attendance records
 - Previous school records
 - Educator observation
 - Special programs consultation
2. Progress reports and other documentation that indicate continuous communication with parents/guardians regarding student progress

Elementary and middle school retention procedures

1. The elementary and middle schools will adopt a decision making model that will provide an objective standard to aid the school professionals in determining whether a student would benefit from grade retention. This standard will help ensure that the decision will be made in accordance with the intent of district policy and in accordance with the timelines delineated in these procedures.

By the first week of December, teachers will make the building principal aware of any student(s) that they are considering for retention. The student must be referred to the building support team for interventions by this time.

2. After notifying the principal of the possibility of retention and prior to the end of first semester, teachers will make arrangements with the parents/guardians of the student to discuss the educational alternatives for the student and the potential recommendation for retention.
3. Before the end of the third quarter, the progress of the student should be reviewed again with the building support team, including parents. If there is reason for further consideration of retention, discussion of available alternatives for the child, including retention, should be reviewed. Additional assessments, including a published assessment designed for consideration of retention, should be considered and completed as appropriate.
4. No later than 20 school days prior to the end of the school year or immediately following spring benchmark assessments if completed within the last 20 school days, a conference will be scheduled involving the parents/guardians and teacher(s) of the student and the building principal for the purpose of making a final decision regarding the retention of the student.

5. The teacher(s) and/or principal shall document in writing all decisions made at meetings with parents/guardians regarding the retention of a student.
6. No conditional retentions or promotions will be made.
7. Middle school students will not be retained for reasons of behavior or conduct.
8. Maximum emphasis should be placed on conferencing with parents/guardians about possible retention of a student. It is important that parents/guardians have an understanding of the student's educational problems and the possibility of retention.
9. The final decision regarding retention of a student rests with the school's principal.
10. The principal will arrange a conference with the receiving teacher(s) to discuss in detail the needs of the retained student. This conference will be held prior to the beginning of the following school year.

Acceleration

Grade acceleration shall be considered only in rare and extreme cases. Teachers are urged to utilize methods and supplemental materials of instruction which broaden the interests and achievements of those students who are academically superior and use acceleration only in an extraordinary situation. Students in grade K-8 may be accelerated to another grade if all of the following conditions are met:

- Classroom performance indicates mastery of the material to be skipped.
- District benchmark and standardized test results indicate outstanding performance.
- Social and emotional development of the student would not be harmed by the acceleration.
- The parents or guardians desire and request acceleration.

Procedures regarding acceleration

1. Parents/guardians of the student must request grade acceleration in writing, outlining the reasons for the request.
2. The principal and teacher will use a six week period of time to observe the student and gather data for the decision. Areas of consideration will include:
 - Physical characteristics
 - Peer relationships
 - Academic performance
 - Intellectual ability
 - Special needs
 - Special talents and interests
 - Student's comfort with acceleration

3. In addition to collecting data, an interview with the student by the school psychologist, or other child development specialist, will be completed.
4. After all data has been collected and procedures followed, a team meeting will be arranged to review all data and to make a decision. Meeting participants will include: parents, principal, school psychologist, current teacher, anticipated teacher and other school staff as identified by the principal.
5. The final decision regarding acceleration of a student rests with the school's principal.
6. When a decision has been made, a detailed plan will be developed by the professional staff and parents/guardians to outline how the student's needs will best be met.
7. Parents/guardians may appeal a decision to the superintendent in writing outlining their reasons objecting to the decision by the team and principal.

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