

PROMOTION, RETENTION AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

The intent of this regulation is to align administrative procedures with the Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education (the Board) Policy IKE, Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students.

COVID-19/PANDEMIC RETENTION DISCLAIMER (Applicable from March 2020 through impacted student's graduation date)

The global pandemic is not a viable determination for retention. No student may be retained based solely on the loss of instructional time. Consideration for retention will adhere to previous processes, comprehensive evidence and collective inputs as detailed in the following document.

The Board believes that early identification of students who are not making adequate progress or are hindered from accelerating toward achieving standards or receiving effective intervention is crucial. According to research, the evaluation of student achievement and progress should be based on individual performance in comparison with expectancy. Therefore, student grade placement including promotion, retention and acceleration should not be based on a comparison of achievement or growth with the average or median of the class.

To remain consistent across Colorado Springs School District 11 (the District), the District will provide and annually review and/or update a Special Promotion and Retention of Students Handbook (hereinafter referred to as "the Handbook") to ensure all practices align with the most recent research and statute (the Handbook can be found on the EDSL web page).

All sites will follow the guidelines provided in the Handbook. In cases of disagreement between the policy or regulation and the Handbook, policy and regulation take precedence.

The Handbook should include but is not limited to:

- Require a review of a student's current academic, personal and social development.
- Parameters outlining limited use of retention based on social or emotional immaturity.
- Specific actions to take when considering promotion, retention, acceleration of Special Education (SPED), Gifted and Talented (GT), Culturally, Linguistically Diverse (CLDE), and Homeless students:
 - Retention consideration for a student who is identified GT, CLDE and SPED would include consultation with the school-based staff and District-level staff in each of these departments on behalf of the student considered for retention.
 - Grade placement of newly enrolled English learners are made at the school level based on the evaluation of the students' academic records and also considering the students' age. It is important for English learners to be placed with age peers to meet their socialization needs. The goal should be to place the student in a grade level that is appropriate for his or her age level, and then provide the additional English language development services to address the student's English language acquisition needs.

- Special Education Leadership acknowledges the complexity associated with “socially promoting” students who have not gained the requisite grade-level skills for the following grade level. However, academic skill deficits are inherent for students with disabilities and retention has proved to have detrimental effects on students.
- If a student will be considered for a full grade Acceleration, the Gifted and Talented Education Team will be involved. The GT Team will utilize the Iowa Acceleration Scale criteria to determine if the student is an ‘excellent candidate’ (see also Policy IHBB and Regulation IHBB-R, Gifted and Talented Education).
- Include a Student Evaluation and Placement Timeline, procedures for alternative placement or retention, detailed Special Promotion information including a common decision-making model, most recent processes and forms for sites to use District-wide.
- Offer implementation guidelines on use of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Plan using a student success team model. This model will include input from the student's parents/guardians. However, neglect by the parents/guardians with regard to participating in development of the plan or agreeing to support the plan shall not affect implementation of the plan. (see also Policy IHBA, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support)
- The MTSS student success model should include but not be limited to:
 - State that classroom teachers are qualified to interpret the achievement of a student and must be included in the MTSS Student Success Team process.
 - Teachers shall identify students early in the school year who may need promotion, retention and acceleration.
 - Research-based strategies designed to address needs such as intervention blocks, tutoring programs, after-school programs, cluster grouping, summer school programs, other intensive programs using proven strategies to include board and district funding and implementation support.
 - As determined by findings in the MTSS support plan, the MTSS support team and the principal 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 state or federal statute on early literacy and reading comprehension.
 - The Handbook will outline an appeals process, aligned with that found in IHBB-R, Gifted and Talented Education, including details on the use of a review team, steps and timelines in which an appeals process must take place, and communications requested throughout the appeals process.

The Handbook shall also offer clear guidance on how subsequent years should be implemented once promotion, retention, acceleration has occurred.

- When students are retained, the MTSS Student Success Team will evaluate the previous learning experiences of the student, including whether specific aspects of the MTSS plan were appropriate and effective, based on data. Based on this evaluation the student success team will review and adjust 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.

- Clear language stating a student should not be retained more than once, alternatives to retention must be considered.

Each school is also required to prepare an annual *Building Retention Report*. The *Building Retention Report* will be completed listing names of students being retained in alphabetical order by grade level beginning with Kindergarten. The report will be used for the year-end Board of Education report of retained students. The principal will review the *Building Retention Report* for accuracy. One copy will be sent to the Executive Director of School Leadership along with copies of all forms used for students whose names appear on the building report. A copy of the building reports and copies of all data will be kept for building files.

Revised June 9, 2021

LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 22-7-1013 (2.5)
C.R.S. 22-7-1201 et. seq.
C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1)(hh)

CROSS REFS.: AE, Accountability/Commitment to Accomplishment
BG, School Board of Education Policy Process
IHBA, Multi-Tiered System of Supports
IHBB, Gifted and Talented Education
IKA, Grading/Assessment Systems
IKAB, Report Cards/Progress Reports
IKACA, Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences
IKE-R, Regulation to Policy IKE, Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students
IKF, Graduation Requirements
JEB, Entrance Age Requirements
Special Promotion and Retention of Students Handbook (located on the EDSL webpage)