



Responsible Office: Office of School Leadership

BOARD POLICY 5025

STUDENT PLACEMENT and COMMUNICATION OF PROGRESS - PROMOTION, ACCELERATION, and RETENTION

PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees ("Board") recognizes the profound effect that academic placement, promotion, acceleration, and retention decisions have on students and their families. The administrators, faculty, and other staff of the Washoe County School District ("District") shall work in partnership with parents/guardians, and the community at large, to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for graduation from high school prepared for college, highly-skilled careers, or military service. At all stages along the pathway to graduation, parents/guardians must be well informed about the progress of their student(s) so that they may guide their student(s) in making appropriate choices. This policy, and any accompanying documents, establishes the basic structure regarding procedures related to the placement, promotion, acceleration, and retention of students.

DEFINITIONS

1. Social Promotion is defined as the practice of promoting a student to the next grade based on age and social grouping, regardless of whether the student has met the academic and/or attendance standards necessary to progress.
2. Acceleration is defined as the advancement of students at a rate that placed them ahead of where they would normally be in the regular school curriculum.
3. Retention is defined as repeating an academic year of school.
4. Academic Plan is defined as a guide to design, monitor, and manage a student's educational development and make determinations of any assistance that may be necessary for the academic success of the student.
5. Graduation Plan is defined as an academic plan for a student who is not on track to graduate with his/her class. The plan shall outline the way in which such a student may graduate with a standard high school diploma not later than 3 semesters after the date on which the student was otherwise scheduled to graduate.

6. In accordance with federal law:

- a. "Foster care" means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom an approved agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes.
- b. "Homeless children and youths" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and includes:
 - i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
 - ii. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - iv. Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this part because the children are living in circumstances described above.
- c. "Unaccompanied student" youth includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

POLICY

1. The Board has established its commitment to "challenge all students to reach their full potential by specifying what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level and in each area of study ..." through Board Policy 6605, Academics: Curriculum and Content Standards. All students can learn, progress, and achieve when individual differences are recognized and addressed through adjustments in curriculum and instructional methods.
2. Recognizing that ongoing communication with parents/guardians is an essential ingredient in student achievement, to the extent possible, all aspects of a student's progress in school shall be communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s). Students, and their parents/guardians, shall have access to information related to the requirements for promotion from grade to grade and eventual graduation with a high school diploma. This includes the ability to track ongoing progress.

3. The District understands that students who are homeless, unaccompanied, or living in foster care may need additional support and assistance. Under the authority of the Superintendent, procedures shall be developed for use at each school to identify those students; and to review and adjust those students' academic plans as the progress toward graduation is monitored.
4. The District shall implement and maintain Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) as a means to support students and identify and provide interventions and remediation as needed.
5. The processes expressed within this policy shall be administered fairly, equitably, and consistently in all schools and for all students without regard to gender, race, religion, socio-economic status, or any other distinguishing or protected characteristic.
6. The District, through its schools, will make the processes and standards referenced in this policy available to every student and parent/guardian. Such access may include through use of the District website, electronic communication, school handbooks, newsletters, and parent/staff meetings.
7. This policy is applicable to all students who are in the general education program. Students enrolled in special education programs will be governed by state laws and regulations and their Individual Educational Plan (IEP) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).
8. Student placement, promotion, retention, and acceleration shall be based on academic progress and attainment of objectives assigned to the student. The minimum requirements necessary for a student to progress and ultimately receive a high school diploma through the District is established through state law and regulations.
9. Typically, students are promoted annually after meeting the required standards, spending one year at each grade level. Promotion to the next grade is based on academic achievement, student attendance, and student mastery of the state standards in areas to include English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, and not social promotion based on age.
10. The basis for making the determination to promote a student will reflect:
 - a. Teacher judgment based on progress tests, classroom assignments, daily observation, standardized tests, state assessments, and other objective data;
 - b. Student compliance with the District's minimum student attendance requirement; and
 - c. Any other necessary academic information, as determined by the District and state laws and regulations.

11. Communication of Progress

- a. School staff shall inform the parent/guardian of a student's progress through ongoing and consistent communication. The means used to communicate may include, but is not limited to, grading/progress reports, teacher/counselor/parent conferences, and access to ongoing student progress through the District's online student records portal.
- b. If there is a belief that a student may be retained in the same grade for the succeeding school year, notice shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian alerting them to that fact as soon as possible but not later than May 1. The student's teacher and principal shall arrange to meet with the student's parent/guardian to discuss the reasons and circumstances for the potential retention.

12. Retention. In elementary and middle school grades, retention of a student in the same grade or acceleration of a student to an advanced grade will only be made after a collaborative process between school staff and the student's parent/guardians in which the student's level of performance and ability to function academically, socially, and emotionally will be considered. However, the final decision regarding a student's placement, promotion, acceleration, or retention will rest with the principal.

- a. Retention of an elementary school student should only be considered when:
 - i. planned intervention efforts to assist the student in achieving the assigned objectives have been unsuccessful; and/or
 - ii. attendance mandates retention.
- b. The decision to promote or retain a student in grades seven and eight shall be based on the student earning at least the minimum units of credit as required by state law for promotion to high school, and meeting the minimum attendance requirements.

13. Acceleration. Before a student in 1st through 8th grade may be considered for acceleration to an advanced grade, a team that will include, but not be limited to, the student's teacher(s), counselor, school administrator, and parents/guardians must review the student's needs. The final responsibility for the decision shall rest with the principal.

14. The Superintendent shall establish administrative regulations and/or protocols necessary to implement the standards expressed in this policy. They include, but are not limited to:

- a. Student retention;
- b. Academic probation – Students Entering 9th Grade;

- c. Intervention and/or Remediation Strategies;
- d. Graduation/Intervention Plans;
- e. Academic Plans; and
- f. Promotion/Retention of a Student on an Individualized Educational Program.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and complies/aligns with the governing documents of the District, to include:
 - a. Board Policy 5400, Student Attendance
 - b. Board Policy 5050, Academic Planning, Counseling, and Student Support
 - c. Board Policy 6600, Course of Study
 - d. Board Policy 5200, Family Engagement
2. This policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
 - a. Chapter 389, Examinations, Courses, Standards and Diplomas.
 - b. Chapter 392, Pupils, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 392.033, Regulations prescribing requirements for promotion to high school; ...; placement on academic probation;
 - ii. NRS 392.122, Minimum attendance requirements; ... notice and opportunity for parent to review absences before credit or promotion is denied;
 - iii. NRS 392.125, Retention of pupil in same grade: Requirements; limitation;
 - iv. NRS 392.750 – 392.775, Literacy Requirements
3. This policy complies with federal laws and regulations, to include:
 - a. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
 - b. Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision	Modification
11/27/2018	1.0	Adopted
10/15/2019	2.0	Revised to add references to homeless, unaccompanied, and foster youth (Senate Bill 147 of 2019)