

SMYRNA SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Policy

Article: 6000 Instruction

Title:
Promotion/Retention/Acceleration/Graduation
Policy

Policy #: 6115

The basic criterion for promotion is the probability that the student will succeed at the next higher-grade level. While children are unique because each child grows at his/her own rate according to individual ability, environment, and life experiences, high academic standards have been established for all children. However, flexibility to provide for individual differences must be planned for within the boundaries of the promotion standards.

RETENTION:

Basic guidelines for retention include:

1. K-8 The student must meet the performance level requirements for both reading and mathematics.
2. K-8 Parents of students in danger of being retained must be notified no earlier than the end of the second marking period or first trimester but no later than the end of the third marking period or second trimester. Reasons for possible retention and suggestions for increasing the child's achievement level(s) will be provided.
3. K-8 Poor work habits and/or poor attitude are not grounds by themselves for retention, unless they are major contributors to academic failure.
4. K-8 Retained students will be assigned to a new classroom and teacher unless the teacher, student, and parents request identical placement or unless no other placement is available.
5. K-8 For students with disabilities, including students who participate in a functional life skills curriculum, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team will determine promotion and placement according to the provisions of the student's IEP using all available data and in consultation with the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
6. K-8..... For EL students, during their first three years in Delaware schools, decisions for promotion and placement shall be made by the school principal in consultation with the EL teacher, the student's regular teacher(s) and parent(s) or guardian. After three years, except in extenuating circumstances, promotion decisions for LEP students shall be determined as for other students.
7. K-12..... The student must meet district attendance policy guidelines (Smyrna School District Policy 5112: "Comprehensive Attendance Procedures").

PROMOTION / RETENTION, GRADES KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 5:

The fundamental purpose of standards-based grading is to compare student performance to established levels of proficiency in knowledge, understanding and skills. The intent is to evaluate student work in relation to pre-established standards. The promotion of each student will be determined individually, and the decision to promote a student is made on the basis of multiple factors including progress toward meeting reading and math standards, social and emotional development and school attendance ([SSD Board of Education Policy 5112](#)). When a recommendation for a student's retention is made either by the school or the family, a best-interest team meeting that includes parents/guardians, school administration, teachers, and counselors, will be conducted.

ACCELERATION, GRADES 1 - 5:

Acceleration is the placement of a student in a higher grade level which is more academically appropriate.

Guidelines for acceleration include:

1. Acceleration will be beneficial to the student socially, emotionally, physically and academically.
2. For children who appear to be performing above grade level in reading and/or mathematics but do not meet the performance levels stated below, the curriculum will be enriched with meaningful and challenging activities.

3. The student will be evaluated using screeners at a higher grade level to determine students academic profile
4. When all data is gathered and acceleration is considered, the Case Study Team will meet to consider the above information.

RETENTION, GRADES 6-8:

A student will be considered for retention if it can be clearly demonstrated that the student is not academically ready for the comprehensive curriculum at the next higher level when he/she has not reached satisfactory levels of performance as defined below:

- Students are expected to meet performance and achievement standards before promotion to the next higher grade.
- Sixth, seventh and eighth grade students must pass all four core subjects (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)
- For students grades 6 - 8 who fail a major subject, a score of 0.5 - 0.7 is required for summer school attendance. Upon the successful completion of all summer school requirements, students will receive a maximum of 'D' on their permanent record for the summer school course.

ACCELERATION, GRADES (6-8):

Acceleration is the placement of students in a grade level which is more academically appropriate.

A student will be considered for acceleration based upon the following factors:

1. Acceleration will be beneficial to the student socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.
2. Written evaluations, observation scales and charts, and teacher judgment indicate that the student's skills and performance are substantially above grade level.
3. Physical and social development must be sufficiently accelerated to allow the student to function comfortably at the grade level considered.

The final decision regarding acceleration will be made by the Case Study Team consisting of appropriate staff and parents.

PROMOTION/GRADUATION: (Class of 2016 and beyond)

Credits required for promotion:

1. From eighth to ninth grade - A student must pass English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
2. From ninth to tenth grade - A student must have earned one credit in English, one credit in Math, and four additional credits for a total of six credits.
3. From tenth to eleventh grade - A student must have earned two credits in English, two credits in Math, and nine additional credits for a total of thirteen credits.
4. From eleventh to twelfth grade - A student must have earned three credits in English, three credits in Math, and twelve additional credits for a total of eighteen credits.
5. Students must accumulate a minimum of 26 credits in grades nine through 12 in order to receive a diploma. Of these, the following are required: English - 4; Social Studies – 3 (one must be US History); Mathematics - 4; Science – 3 (one must be Biology); Physical Education - 1; Health - .5; Career Pathways – 3; World Language - 2. The additional 5.5 credits are to be selected from elective offerings.
6. During the senior year the student shall maintain a credit load each semester that earns the student at least a majority of credits that could be taken that semester including one credit of mathematics. Senior credits shall include regular high school offerings and independent study options as outlined in Policy 6116, with permission from the principal.

7. Students shall complete mathematics course work that includes no less than the equivalent of the traditional requirements of Geometry, Algebra I, and Algebra II.
8. World Languages
 - a. Students may fulfill the two (2) credit World Language requirement by either:
 - i. Earning a minimum of two (2) World Language credits in the same language or,
 - ii. Demonstrating Novice-high or higher proficiency level on a nationally recognized assessment of language proficiency, except English, in the skill areas of oral or signed expressive and receptive communication, reading and writing, that uses the levels of proficiency as identified by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language, or as approved for use by the Delaware Department of Education.
 - b. Any student enrolling in a Delaware public high school from an out-of-state school or nonpublic Delaware high school between and including October 1st of the 11th grade year and September 30th of the 12th grade year with one (1) World Language credit from a previous school shall be required to earn the second credit in that language unless the language is not offered at the enrolling school. In such cases, the student shall earn one (1) credit in an additional language for a total of two (2) credits or pursue available independent study options (policy 6116) to earn the second credit of the original language.
 - c. Any student enrolling in a Delaware public high school from an out-of-state school or nonpublic Delaware high school between and including October 1st of the 11th grade year and September 30th of the 12th grade year with no World Language credits, shall be required to earn at least one (1) World Language credit prior to graduation.
 - d. Any student enrolling in a Delaware public high school from an out-of-state school or nonpublic Delaware high school on or after October 1st of the 12th grade year, the World Language requirement shall be waived.
 - e. Any student transferring between Delaware public schools with one (1) World Language credit from a previous school shall be required to earn the second credit in that language unless the language is not offered at the enrolling school. In such case, the student shall pursue available independent study options (policy 6116) to earn the second credit of the original language students or earn one (1) credit in an additional language for a total of two (2) credits.

Beginning with Class of 2019

9. Driver Education will be recorded using Pass (P), No Grade (N), Fail (F) and not be calculated as part of a student's GPA. Students will receive ¼ credit upon the successful completion, earning a P, for the 44 hour course, to include both the in-class (30 hours) and in-car components (14 hours) of driver education. The pass/fail grade will be enforced at a D - A as passing and an F as failing for both the Delaware State Driver Final Exam and the 30 hour in-class portion of the course. To earn a passing grade for the 44 hour course and obtain ¼ credit, students must meet the aforementioned criteria and earn a blue certificate during the in-car portion of driver education. Driver Education will be accepted for athletic eligibility per DIAA interpretation.

P – In-class and in-car portions are completed successfully

N – In-class portion is completed successfully and due to the student's birthday he/she has not completed the in-car portion yet.

F – The in-class portion was not successfully completed or the in-car portion was not successfully completed.

STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

1. Every eighth through twelfth grade student shall have a Student Success Plan (SSP) developed by the student, the student’s advisor, and the student’s parent(s), guardian(s) or relative caregiver. For a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) the Student Success Plan (SSP) shall also incorporate the other aspects of the transition plan required by 14 DE Admin. Code 925.
2. Each local school district and charter school shall establish an advisement process for developing Student Success Plans which includes the student, the student’s parent(s), guardian(s) or relative caregiver. The advisement process shall include:
 - a. Setting learning goals for the student based on academic and career interests.
 - b. Actively monitoring student progress in the Student Success Plan through conferences held with the student and student’s advisor to discuss educational progress and career planning.
 - c. Annual review and update of the Student Success Plan by the student, the student’s advisor, the student’s parent(s) guardian(s) or relative caregiver.
 - d. Providing support services if a student is in danger of failing a course or is not on track toward completing the entry requirements for his or her post-secondary goals as stated in the SSP.
 - e. Reviewing each student’s transcript at the end of the first and second year to determine if the student is on track to graduate based on the following criteria:
 - i. At the end of the first year of high school the student has earned at least four (4) core course credits and two (2) other course credits for a total of six (6) course credits;
 - ii. At the end of the second year of high school the student has earned at least eight (8) core course credits and four (4) other course credits for a total of twelve (12) course credits; and
 - iii. At the end of the third year of high school the student has earned at least eleven (11) core course credits and seven (7) other course credits for a total of eighteen (18) course credits.
 - iv. For a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), on track to graduate shall be consistent with i, ii, and iii unless otherwise determined by the student’s IEP Team.

STUDENTS IN DSCYF CUSTODY

When a student is in DSCYF custody, the student’s prior transcript will be reviewed. Values for credit may be awarded through:

- a. Distance learning course,
- b. Courses completed in mental health or rehabilitation facility,
- c. Courses completed in other districts that use a different standard for awarding credits,
- d. Or other means as approved by the Superintendent in accordance with state and district policy.

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Revision approved by the Board of Education, 08/20/03

Revision approved by the Board of Education, 5/11/05
Revision approved by the Board of Education, 8/17/05
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Revision approved by the Board of Education, 1/21/09
Revision approved by the Board of Education, 5/11/2011
Revision approved by the Board of Education, 2/18/2015
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