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Francophone Charter School Student Retention Policy

INTRODUCTION

Francophone Charter School of Oakland ("the School") is committed to the early identification of students at risk of retention in the belief that early detection and intervention enhance the potential for success. Students' academic progress is based upon meeting a range of expectations for promotion including academic grade level standards, course requirements, state, and local assessments. Students performing outside this range may be considered for acceleration, assignment, or retention.

The law requires that the classroom teacher(s) recommend that a student be retained. A Student Study Team process may be used to consult and review decisions regarding promotion, acceleration, assignment, or retention. Intervention programs will be provided to students who are recommended for retention or identified as being at risk of retention.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

When implementing the Promotion, Retention, and Assignment Policy, the following definitions of terms shall be used:

a. **Promotion** shall be defined as the advancement to the next higher grade level for a student who has met or exceeded the criteria for promotion as defined by the School's adopted indicators of achievement.

b. Assignment shall be defined as the procedure for students who have not met the criteria for promotion, as defined by the School's adopted indicators of achievement who may be assigned to the next grade under certain circumstances.

c. At-Risk of Retention shall be defined as a student experiencing serious difficulty in meeting grade level standards. At-risk students are eligible for intervention programs that focus on improving student academic achievement.

d. Retention shall be defined as a student remaining in the grade level s/he is currently enrolled in for a subsequent year because it is decided that s/he does not meet the minimum grade level criteria for assignment and will make significant academic progress by remaining in the current grade level. This decision is typically made after academic deficiencies with respect to grade level standards are defined and addressed through intervention, and appropriate progress is nevertheless not made.

e. Acceleration shall be defined as the process of advancing an exceptional, high-achieving student at a more rapid rate than year-by-year promotion. **f. Age-Appropriate Advancement** shall be defined as the process of advancing an over-aged student at a more rapid rate than year-by-year advancement. This definition also includes the advancement of a student from elementary to middle school level outside the usual time frame for promotion or assignment.

g. Grade Level Standards are the state and local standards that determine minimum and mastery performance of students at each grade level.

h. Criteria for Retention shall be defined as not meeting performance standards on identified indicators of achievement and other classroom/social indicators. **i.**

Instructional Support Programs shall be defined as supplemental instruction for students whose performance is far from meeting grade level criteria.

j. Student Study Team (SST) shall be defined as a group of professional staff (administrator, teachers, support personnel), the student's parent/guardian, and the student when appropriate, who explore strategies and interventions to support the student's academic, social, and emotional growth.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

For Promotion, Assignment, Retention, Acceleration, Age Appropriate Advancement, Administrative Placement, and Intensive Instructional Support Programs, the following criteria and procedural guidelines shall be implemented:

PROMOTION

Students who meet the criteria for promotion shall be promoted.

ASSIGNMENT

Students who have not met the criteria for promotion, as defined by the School's adopted indicators of achievement may be assigned to the next grade when:

- The recommendation of the teacher or the Student Study Team is that the student will not benefit from another year at the same grade level, or
- The student has been previously retained in the elementary grades.

RETENTION

For retention to be considered, it must be discussed with the student's family by the conclusion of the second trimester, at the latest. In addition to proposing retention, interventions and support must be offered. Data collected from the interventions and support offered, the student's response to the intervention, must be shared with family, administration, and co-teachers before the decision to retain is made.

The decision to retain shall be made by the classroom teacher based upon the student's grades and school-adopted indicators of achievement. A student with no elementary retention history who has not met the minimum criteria for assignment to the next grade may be retained. In cases when retention is being considered, the student's regular classroom teacher would provide written feedback on both academic and non-academic factors that can contribute to the decision to retain a student.

Factors to be considered must include:

- Academic success in French reading, English reading, mathematics, and other academic areas
- Student attitude about retention
- Parent support for retention
- Chronological age
- Maturity
- Physical size
- Social adjustment
- Ability level
- Availability of alternative programs
- Previous/possible interventions

This determination shall specify the reasons that retention is, or is not, appropriate for the student and shall include recommendations for interventions that are necessary to assist the student in advancing in their academic achievement.

The parents/guardians and the School's administrator(s) shall meet before any final determination of retention is made.

If a decision to retain is made, the classroom teacher shall put it in writing on the final report of the student and an Individual Retention Plan shall be developed. Such a plan should include an evaluation of the student's needs as well as recommended strategies to help him/her reach specific academic goals.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

A student who does not meet the minimum criteria for promotion shall be invited to participate in Instructional Support Programs that are age appropriate and designed to meet the needs of the participants.

Classroom Intervention Strategies

Interventions within the school day may include, but are not limited to, purposeful regrouping for specific skills, differentiated instruction, and intensive instructional time in language arts and/or mathematics.

Students in grades 3-8 will be screened using the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress assessments in Math and English reading. Students performing far below grade level peers will be invited to participate in Instructional Support Programs. Students who have a history of being retained and/or are at-risk of being retained will have priority enrollment in such programs.

AGE-APPROPRIATE ADVANCEMENT

Students who are over-age due to prior retention or late entry into school may be advanced with the recommendation of the classroom teacher in consultation with the Student Study Team. The wishes of the student and parents and the long-range effect on the student shall be important considerations before advancement takes place. No student will be advanced without the approval of his/her parent/guardian and the consultation of the Student Study Team.

RISKS

Retention and acceleration can present risks. Retention separates a student from their friends and can lead to social isolation and/or low self-esteem. Students who are retained may feel self-conscious and/or a sense of failure both in school and thereafter. Retention may also alienate a child from the school community and result in difficulty establishing trust in school staff. Acceleration separates a student from their peers and can lead to social isolation. Students who skip a grade may feel self-conscious or may have difficulty navigating class content and/or relationships with more mature classmates. In all cases, it is important to consider that the disruption to a child's schooling and a grade level cohort's dynamics caused by retention and acceleration is impossible to undo. If a Student Study Team decides to implement retention or acceleration, they must recognize and discuss the possibility of the student experiencing academic regression and/or social-emotional difficulty. The consequences of those types of difficulty must be discussed with the Student Study Team, and the potential positive outcomes of the decision must be found by the team to outweigh the potential risks.

APPEAL PROCESS

GRADE LEVEL RETENTION

To appeal a retention decision, the appealing party shall submit a written request to the School's administrator(s) specifying the reason(s) for the appeal. The appeal must be initiated within five (5) school days of the notification of retention. The School's administrator(s) shall respond to the appeal within fifteen (15) school days with one of the following three recommendations:

- Uphold Retention
- Deny Retention
- Set aside retention pursuant to fulfillment of remediation

agreement.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special needs will have their education objectives, including decisions on promotion, defined through their Individual Education Plan (IEP). This plan will describe the conditions by which the student will take standardized tests and alternative classroom tests

and assessments. If modified or differential criteria are set, they will be stated in the IEP.

Should a Student Study Team be convened to discuss the acceleration or promotion of a student with an IEP, the student's case manager for Special Education shall participate.

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

Data used for the consideration of student promotion, retention, and assignment can include but are not limited to the results of the following:

- Measures of Academic Progress test results
- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress test results in English, mathematics, and/or science
- Report cards
- Academic evaluations
- Social-emotional evaluations[1]
- Student questionnaires
- Teacher or specialist observation
- Letters of recommendation

MONITORING RESULTS OF THE POLICY

Data in promotion, retention, and assignment of students will be gathered annually and presented to the School's administrator(s).

[1] Reviewed by the Board on 10-29–2026