

PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

It is the Board’s intent to provide sequential instructional programming that provides equitable opportunity for students to acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to meet the state approved content standards of the system of at each grade level. The Board recognizes that at every grade level, there are differences among students in their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development, and that individual students may be more proficient in some content areas of the of the state approved content standards than in others. Students may also differ in their progress toward achieving the cross-curricular skills identified in the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.

While most students will advance from one grade to another at the end of the academic year, some students may benefit from retention or acceleration. Decisions concerning promotion, retention, or acceleration should be consistent with the best educational interest of that student.

A. Criteria

The following criteria will be used in making decisions concerning promotion, retention and acceleration. Although all listed criteria may be considered in the decision-making process, because of the relationship between a student’s achievement of the state approved content standards of the system and his/her future success in school, more consideration shall be given to the criterion articulated in paragraph “A” below than to any other factors.

1. Achievement of the state approved content standards as demonstrated through classroom assessments, common assessments, standardized tests, portfolios, performances, exhibitions, projects, and other elements of the school unit’s local assessment system;
2. Achievement of cross-curricular skills associated with the Guiding Principles of the Learning Results.
3. Participation and success in remedial programs, tutoring, summer school, and/or other opportunities for success;
4. Potential benefit from repetition of a grade or learning experiences;
5. Potential for success if accelerated;

6. Attendance;
7. Social and emotional maturity;
8. Health;
9. Age in relation to grade placement;
10. Program options;
11. Student attitude; and
12. Parental concerns.

B. Retention

Parents should be notified as early as possible in the event that retention is being considered. Parents will be informed of the remediation options available to students such as tutoring, online/Internet-based resources, after-school programs, and summer school. Whenever possible, decisions concerning retention should be made through a conference involving parents, the student's teacher, MECDHH/GBSD Administrator in conjunction with the Portland Public Schools building principal, and, as appropriate other professional staff, and/or consultants. Advancement to the next grade may be made conditional on successful remediation or demonstrated proficiency within a specified period of time.

In instances where consensus has not been reached, the MECDHH/GBSD Administrator in conjunction building principal with shall be responsible for making the final decision regarding retention. A parent who is dissatisfied with the decision may appeal to the Executive Director. The Executive Director's decision shall be final.

C. Acceleration

Decisions regarding acceleration shall be made by the principal in consultation with the student's teacher(s), and other professional staff or consultants, as appropriate. A parent who is dissatisfied with the decision may appeal to the Executive Director. The Executive Director's decision shall be final.

D. High School Grade Level Assignment

For students starting high school prior to the 2014-2015 school year, grade level assignment will be based on the number of credits earned prior to the beginning of the school year.

For sophomore status, a student must have successfully completed 12 credits, for junior status 24 credits, and for senior status 36 credits.

Beginning January 1, 2018, demonstrated proficiency in the state approved content standards system and successful completion of all other requirements specified in the Board's policy IKF (Graduation Requirements), will be required for a high school diploma. Starting with the 2014-2015 school year, credits will no longer be awarded or counted for graduation or other purposes.

High school grade level assignment will be based on the number of learning experiences/courses completed prior to the beginning of the school year.

According to State approved content standards system, sophomore, junior and senior status for learning experiences/courses will be consistent with requirements of the Portland Public Schools.

E. Transfer Students

For students who transfer into the school system from another state or educational program not required to meet the state approved content standards of the system, the principal in conjunction with MECDHH/GBSD Administrator will determine the value of the student's prior educational experience for the purpose of grade placement or the fulfillment of credits, learning experiences/courses.

Legal Reference: Ch. 127 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: IK – Student Achievement
IKA – Grading/Academic Assessment
IKAB – Report Cards/Progress Reports
IKF – Graduation Requirements
ILA – Student Assessment/Local Assessment System

Board Approved: January 4, 2007

Revised and Board Approved: June 5, 2014