

PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

It is the Bangor School Committee'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 content standards of the system of Maine Learning Results at each grade level. The Committee 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 Learning Results 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. Assignment of a student to a grade level 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 content standards of the system of Learning Results 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 content standards of the Learning Results 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, or summer school. Whenever possible, decisions concerning retention should be made through a conference involving parents, the student's teacher, the building principal, and, as appropriate, the guidance counselor, 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.

The Retention Committee shall be responsible for making the final decision regarding retention. A parent who is dissatisfied with the Retention Committee's decision may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

C. Acceleration

Committed to the core value of accelerating all students, the Bangor School Department offers a continuum of instructional resources and services to support the varied and unique learning profiles of our students as they progress through the PreK-12 instructional program:

Classroom Instruction: Classroom instructional practice reflects the Department's commitment to acceleration. Through frequent review of student progress toward established benchmarks and ongoing consultation among teachers and administrators, teachers develop instruction that challenges and accelerates all students.

Elective Courses: Students with advanced learning and achievement profiles may access curricular experiences that extend beyond the regular instructional program, including a progression of accelerated, Honors, or Advanced Placement courses available in grades 4-12.

Gifted and Talented Program: In line with Maine Department Education Chapter 104 requirements, students with documented intellectual and/or creative abilities representing the top 5% of learners may be considered for Gifted and Talented identification. The Gifted and Talented program accelerates the learning of the most highly able students through curricula differentiated in breadth, depth, and pace and intended to reinforce and extend critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving. Specific protocols for identification of gifted and talented students are established in Regulation IGBB.

Advanced Grade Placement: In rare and unusual circumstances it may be in the student's best educational interest to consider placement beyond the current or expected next grade level. Request for this consideration must be made in writing by the parent/guardian to the principal and shall include a rationale for request. The principal will conduct a comprehensive review of the student's academic and social-emotional profile to include achievement data, attendance and citizenship records, teacher consultation, curriculum review, and other pertinent information. The principal will determine and communicate in writing to the parent/guardian a decision about the appropriateness of advanced grade placement.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the principal's decision may appeal in writing to the Superintendent, who will direct a review of the process to ensure that the decision appropriately aligns to the Department's commitment to student acceleration. The Superintendent's decision, also communicated in writing, shall be considered final.

D. High School Grade Level Assignment

Grade level assignment will be based on the number of credits earned prior to the beginning of the school year. The following thresholds do not account for the completion of specific credit dispersal requirements and therefore should be considered only as a minimum progression toward attaining the total credits required for graduation:

Sophomore Status: 5 credits

Junior Status: 10 credits



Senior Status: 15 credits

Specific procedures for the consideration of early graduation and early admission to post-secondary institutions are established in Policy IKFA.

E. Transfer Students

For students who transfer into the school system from another state or educational program not required to meet the content standards of the system of Learning Results, the principal will determine the value of prior educational experiences for the purposes of grade placement and the fulfillment of graduation requirements established in Policy IKF for the student's cohort graduation year.

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

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