

Instruction

Retention, Promotion, Graduation

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The administration and professional staff shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on standardized tests, meeting the statewide reading standards in the primary grades, maturity, academic potential, and student aptitude. The Board of Education desires to minimize/eliminate the practice of promoting students to the next grade level for social reasons when they are failing academically. The district shall provide alternatives to support promotion and may recommend students whose academic performance jeopardizes their promotion or graduation to attend after-school, summer school, or other programs the district offers that are designed to help them. These alternatives to support promotion may include, but are not limited to:

Elementary

- Individual/small group instructional support to remediate academic deficiencies
- Establishment of a Personal Reading Plan
- K-5 Summer School

Middle School/High School

- Individual/small group instructional support to remediate academic deficiencies
- Summer school

Prior to deciding on retention for a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district shall provide intervention strategies/supplemental services designed to assist students in remedying their area of deficiency. The administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted.

Retention or acceleration will be decided on an individual basis by the teacher, the principal and/or by student development services. Both academic and developmental factors will be considered. Parents will be informed by the teacher/school by the end of the second marking period if there is a concern about possible retention. The final decision will be approved by the Superintendent who may refer the matter to a special committee.

Any exception to this promotion policy must be referred to a special committee appointed by the Superintendent and the principal or principals involved.

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Elementary Promotion/Retention Policy (K-5):

The purpose of the following is to provide an objective and unified process for reviewing the possibility of promotion/retention based upon the social, emotional and educational needs of individual students.

Early intervention is imperative in meeting the needs of potential retention candidates. Early intervention strategies need to be implemented prior to considerations of retention. Intervention strategies may include:

- utilizing appropriate instructional techniques
- remediation in areas of deficit
- provision for psychologist/social work services
- implementation of strategies to reduce truancy
- provisions for special education services
- language development for English As a Second Language (ESL) students

Retention is considered when early intervention strategies have not achieved desired outcomes and is based upon consideration of all relevant factors.

Although discussions about possible retention should not be made *before* the end of the second marking period, they should begin, however, *by the end of the second marking period*. Such discussions should be held on several occasions with parents in order that all views may be weighed.

Since retention may have negative effects as the age of the student increases, a retention in grades 3-5 should occur only under the most extenuating circumstances.

The recommended procedure attempts to:

Keep the best interests of the individual student foremost.

Recognize the responsibilities of everyone involved (the school, the student, the parents or guardians).

Insure parental knowledge of the problem as early as possible.

Provide a clear rationale and accurate record keeping process, in cases of possible retentions.

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The following will be considered in the process in addition to any other factor deemed necessary:

Generalized Factors

How far is the student functioning below the particular grade in question?

How far is the student functioning below his or her own potential?

Will retention place the child in a group that is closer to his or her achievement level?

Does the child appear to be emotionally immature or more mature than the others in the grade?

What effect would retention have on the self-esteem of the child?

What are the child's work habits?

Is the child's present age a factor? No more than two retentions will occur in grades K through 5 and not in successive years.

Are parents actively involved in supporting their child's academic progress at home?

Specific Criteria by Grade

A child in kindergarten, who has not demonstrated basic literacy and math concepts or sufficient social, emotional and developmental maturity, may be considered a candidate for retention.

A child in grade one, who has not successfully completed the primer level of the reading/language arts anthology and has not mastered the beginning mathematics concepts clustered under grade one may be considered a candidate for retention.

A child in grade two, who has not satisfactorily completed or reached the first book of the grade two reading/language arts anthology and has not mastered the basic mathematics concepts clustered under grade two may be considered a candidate for retention.

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A child in grade three who has not satisfactorily completed or reached the first book of the grade three reading/language arts anthology and has not mastered the basic mathematics concepts clustered under grade three may be considered a candidate for retention.

A child in grades four or five who has failed more than two major subjects may be considered a candidate for retention. Major subjects would include Language Arts, Reading, Math, Social Studies, and Science.

A child in grades four or five, who is reading one or more grades under grade standing, may be considered a candidate for retention.

If retention is being considered, the student should be judged at his or her individual instructional level in the area of reading and math. Special education student grade placement may be decided upon at a PPT.

The final decision will rest with school personnel.

Middle School Promotion/Retention Policy - Grades 6-8:

All students at Vernon Center Middle School are required to take a program of studies that consists of core and unified arts subjects and physical education. The core subjects include English, reading, math, science, social studies and world language (7&8). The unified arts subjects include all of the non-core courses, band and chorus. Since promotion and/or retention is determined by individual performance, each student is encouraged to do his/her very best in all classes. Promotion requires a yearly passing average in a minimum of four of five academic subjects in grade six and in a minimum of five of six academic subjects in grades seven and eight and a combined passing average in physical education, band/chorus, and unified arts. In addition a child who fails the same academic subject for 2 or more years may be considered a candidate for retention. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements will be reviewed by the principal, who will take into consideration the individual's maturity, chronological age, emotional and educational needs to reach a decision as to grade placement.

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Rockville High School Promotion/Retention Policy - Grades 9-12:

Retention: Students are promoted, not by years, but by units of credits, as defined in the administrative regulation for Policy #6146. A student must meet the minimum requirements established by the Board of Education before he/she will be granted a Rockville High School diploma and before he/she can participate in graduation exercises.

Graduation from the district's public schools implies:

1. that students have satisfactorily completed the prescribed courses of study for their several grade levels in accordance with their respective abilities to achieve
2. that they have satisfactorily passed any examinations and/or standards established by the faculty and approved by the Board of Education
3. that they have successfully demonstrated the performance standards established by the administration and faculty as required by Public Act No. 01-166
4. that they have fulfilled the legally mandated number and distribution of credits.

Graduation shall not be held until at least 180 days and 900 hours of actual school work are completed. The adopted school calendar shall indicate a graduation date which is no earlier than the 185th day. The Vernon Board of Education conforms with state regulations regarding credits required for graduation from high school and periodically reviews these requirements. Such requirements are listed in the student handbook and course selection catalogue.

Revised: December 10, 2001
 June 10, 2002
 May 24, 2004

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Students must successfully earn a required number of credits in order to advance to the next grade level. Qualifications for each grade level will be defined as follows:

Class of 2015

Grade 10 – Student has completed at least one academic year of high school and has earned at least 5 credits.

Grade 11 – Student has completed at least two academic years of high school and has earned at least 10 credits.

Grade 12 – Student has completed at least three academic years of high school and has earned at least 15 credits.

Graduate – Student has completed four academic years of high school, has met all district requirements, and has earned at least 23 credits.

Class of 2016

Grade 10 – Student has completed at least one academic year of high school and has earned at least 5 credits.

Grade 11 – Student has completed at least two academic years of high school and has earned at least 10 credits.

Grade 12 – Student has completed at least three academic years of high school and has earned at least 16 credits.

Graduate – Student has completed four academic years of high school, has met all district requirements, and has earned at least 24 credits.

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Class of 2017 and beyond

Grade 10 – Student has completed at least one academic year of high school and has earned at least 5 credits.

Grade 11 – Student has completed at least two academic years of high school and has earned at least 11 credits.

Grade 12 – Student has completed at least three academic years of high school and has earned at least 17 credits.

Graduate – Student has completed four academic years of high school, has met all district requirements, and has earned at least 25 credits.

Students who have not earned the required number of credits will remain at their current grade level until they qualify for promotion.

Adopted: January 24, 2011