

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: GRADE ADVANCEMENT: PLACEMENT, RETENTION, PROMOTION
AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

DATE ADOPTED: February 19, 2002

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Colchester School District to assure all students are progressing in their educational program and have reached a standard of achievement necessary for satisfactory progress in the next grade.

BACKGROUND:

The Board believes that the primary goal of the education system is to educate all students. Since each child develops physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially at an individual rate, every student will not complete twelve grade levels of work at the same time. Some students will need more than twelve years, while others may need less.

The Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning opportunities defines what students should know and be able to do at various stages of their school careers. Schools are responsible for adopting curricula that provide students with opportunities to master the standards. Promotion from grade to grade as well as retention and acceleration should be based on a student's ability to meet the standards over time.

DEFINITIONS:

1. Acceleration is the advancement of a student by more than one grade beyond the current grade level or a request for early graduation.
2. Promotion is the single grade step most students take from year to year.
3. Retention allows a student to repeat all or part of a grade in order to more fully prepare for the work of the next grade.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Pupils will be assigned to grades, classrooms and classes in which they can be expected to achieve established district instructional/learning objectives. Placement decisions are made by each school principal after consulting with staff. Parental/guardian input will be a portion of each school's placement procedure. The principal's decision is final. The Superintendent will develop procedures regarding the decision making process.

Date Warned: February 1, 2002
First Reading: February 5, 2002
Second Reading: February 19, 2002

Classroom educators are responsible for assessing student progress and recommending the promotion of students each year. Educators will assess academic readiness to advance to the next grade using a thorough evaluation process that will include but not be limited to standardized testing - those offered by the State as well as others chosen by the District-classroom-based testing, portfolios and teacher observation. The evaluation will also take into account social, emotional, physical and mental growth, past academic performance and behavior, motivation, attendance, and other pertinent circumstances.

The Principal will develop rules to implement this policy that will specify a process for the consideration of retention or acceleration that will include the following characteristics:

1. Will seek the involvement of parents/guardians in a highly collaborative working relationship.
2. Focus the use of retention in the early primary grades at which time research indicates it is most effective.
3. Acceleration should be considered in rare cases after all enrichment opportunities have been thoroughly explored.
4. Students will be retained or accelerated if it is expected that the action will be beneficial to the student socially, emotionally, academically and when there are not other ways to meet student's needs.

When considering retention, such actions as remediation in class or out, tutoring in class or after school, mentoring, cooperative efforts with families, or summer school should be evaluated.

Before considering acceleration, actions such as inclusion in a full or part-time gifted program, enrichment in the classroom, or other advanced courses through correspondence, distance learning, or through another institutions should be examined.

5. Will outline steps and time frames that provide for a great deal of interaction with parents/guardians.
6. The final decision will be made by the Principal after consultation with parents/guardians, classroom teacher and other professional staff.