

# SMYRNA SCHOOL DISTRICT

## *POLICY*

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<b>Section:</b>	<b>6000 Instruction</b>	<b>Office Responsible:</b>	<b>Office of Curriculum and Instruction</b>
<b>Policy:</b>	<b>6115 Retention &amp; Promotion</b>		
<b>Related Policies:</b>	N/A	<b>Administrative Procedures:</b>	N/A

### **I. Purpose**

To clearly outline the requirements of Retention and Promotion in the Smyrna School District

### **II. Authority**

*Delaware Code, Title 14 § 230*

*Delaware Code, Title 14 § 505*

### **III. Definitions**

The following words and terms, when used in this regulation, shall have the following meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Acceleration” is the placement of a student in a grade level above their typical age. More commonly referred to as ‘skipping’ a grade level.

“Promotion” indicates the successful completion of the requirements of a grade level and advancement to the next grade level.

“Retention” indicates a student is denied promotion to the next grade level and will be required to repeat a grade level. More commonly referred to as ‘being held back’ at a grade level.

### **IV. Policy Statement**

Recognizing that students are individuals, there must be guidance for all students for how students are expected to meet high academic standards. The basic criterion for promotion and retention is based on the ability of the student to succeed at the next grade level.

#### **ACCELERATION**

Acceleration is the placement of a student in a grade level above their typical age, in effect “skipping” a grade level.

Basic guidelines for acceleration for Kindergarten - Grade 8 include:

1. Acceleration must be beneficial to the student socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.
2. A combination of screeners, evaluations, and teacher judgment will be used to determine students' readiness for acceleration
3. When all data is gathered and acceleration is considered, the Case Study Team will meet to consider all relevant information.

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4. For children who appear to be performing above grade level in reading and/or mathematics but do not meet the requirements for acceleration, efforts will be made to enrich the curriculum with meaningful and challenging activities.

### **RETENTION:**

Retention indicates a student is denied promotion to the next grade level and will be required to repeat a grade level.

Basic guidelines for retention for Kindergarten - Grade 8 include:

1. The student must meet district attendance policy guidelines. (SSD Board of Education Policy 5112)
2. Poor work habits and/or poor attitude are not grounds by themselves for retention.
3. Parents of students in danger of being retained must be notified no later than the end of the third marking period or second trimester. Reasons for possible retention and suggestions for increasing the child's achievement level(s) will be provided.
4. Retained students will be assigned to a new classroom and teacher unless the teacher, student, and parents request identical placement or unless no other placement is available.
5. For students with disabilities, including students who participate in a functional life skills curriculum, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team will determine promotion and placement according to the provisions of the student's IEP using all available data and in consultation with the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
6. For Multilingual Learner (MLL) students, during their first three years in Delaware schools, retention decisions shall be made by the school principal in consultation with the student's teachers and parent(s) or guardian. After three years, except in extenuating circumstances, promotion decisions for MLL students shall be determined according to standard district guidelines.

### **RETENTION, KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 5:**

The fundamental purpose of standards-based grading is to compare student performance to established levels of proficiency in knowledge, understanding, and skills. The intent is to evaluate student work against pre-established standards. When a recommendation for a student's retention is made either by the school or the family, a best-interest team meeting that includes parents/guardians, school administration, teachers, and counselors, will be conducted.

### **RETENTION, GRADE 6 - GRADE 8:**

A student will be considered for retention if it can be demonstrated that the student is not academically ready for the comprehensive curriculum at the next higher level. Satisfactory levels of performance are defined below:

1. Students must pass all four core subjects (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) with grade of D (1.0) or higher.
2. Students who fail a subject with a score of  $\geq 0.5$  -  $< 1.0$  may be eligible for summer school. Upon the successful completion of all summer school requirements, students will receive credit for the course and a maximum of 'C' on their permanent record for the summer school course.

### **RETENTION, GRADE 9 - GRADE 12:**

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Students in high school will receive credit or be denied credit on an individual course basis. To receive credit, students must meet district attendance policy guidelines. (SSD Board of Education Policy 5112) Students who fail to meet the academic requirements of an individual course (receiving a final Grade of F < 1.0) will not receive credit and may need to retake the course the following year.

1. Students who fail a subject with a score of  $\geq 0.5$  - < 1.0 may be eligible for summer school. Upon the successful completion of all summer school requirements, students will receive credit for the course and a maximum of 'C' on their permanent record for the summer school course.

### **PROMOTION**

Promotion indicates the successful completion of the requirements of a grade level and advancement to the next grade level.

### **PROMOTION, KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 5:**

The fundamental purpose of standards-based grading is to compare student performance to established levels of proficiency in knowledge, understanding, and skills. The intent is to evaluate student work against pre-established standards. The promotion of each student will be determined individually, and the decision to promote a student is made based on multiple factors including but not limited to progress toward meeting reading and writing expectations, mastery of math standards, and social-emotional development.

### **PROMOTION, GRADE 6 - GRADE 8**

Students in Grade 6 - Grade 8 successfully meeting the requirements in all four core subjects (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) will be promoted to the next grade.

1. Students may need to utilize summer school to fulfill this requirement.

### **PROMOTION/GRADUATION GRADE 9 - GRADE 12:**

1. Promotion from ninth to tenth grade - A student must have earned one credit in English, one credit in Math, and four additional credits for a total of six credits.
2. Promotion from tenth to eleventh grade - A student must have earned two credits in English, two credits in Math, and nine additional credits for a total of thirteen credits.
3. Promotion from eleventh to twelfth grade - A student must have earned three credits in English, three credits in Math, and twelve additional credits for a total of eighteen credits.
4. Students must accumulate a minimum of 26 credits in grades nine through 12 in order to receive a diploma. Of these, the following are required: English - 4; Social Studies - 3 (one must be US History); Mathematics - 4; Science - 3 (one must be Biology); Physical Education - 1; Health - .5; Career Pathways - 3; World Language - 2. The additional 5.5 credits are to be selected from elective offerings.
5. During the senior year, a student must carry a daily course load equivalent to half of the total instructional periods of a full day.
6. Students shall complete mathematics coursework that includes no less than the equivalent of the traditional requirements of Geometry, Algebra I, and Algebra II.
7. Students may fulfill the two (2) credit World Language requirement by either:
  - a. Earning a minimum of two (2) World Language credits in the same language or,
  - b. Demonstrating Novice-high or higher proficiency level on a nationally recognized assessment of language proficiency, except English, in the skill areas of oral or signed

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expressive and receptive communication, reading, and writing, that uses the levels of proficiency as identified by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language, or as approved for use by the Delaware Department of Education.

- c. Any student enrolling in a Delaware public high school from an out-of-state school or nonpublic Delaware high school between and including October 1st of the 11th-grade year and September 30th of the 12th-grade year with one (1) World Language credit from a previous school shall be required to earn the second credit in that language unless the language is not offered at the enrolling school. In such cases, the student shall earn one (1) credit in an additional language for a total of two (2) credits or pursue available independent study options (policy 6116) to earn the second credit of the original language.
  - d. Any student enrolling in a Delaware public high school from an out-of-state school or nonpublic Delaware high school between and including October 1st of the 11th-grade year and September 30th of the 12th-grade year with no World Language credits shall be required to earn at least one (1) World Language credit before graduation.
  - e. Any student enrolling in a Delaware public high school from an out-of-state school or nonpublic Delaware high school on or after October 1st of the 12th grade year, the World Language requirement shall be waived.
  - f. Any student transferring between Delaware public schools with one (1) World Language credit from a previous school shall be required to earn the second credit in that language unless the language is not offered at the enrolling school. In such case, the student shall pursue available independent study options (policy 6116) to earn the second credit of the original language students or earn one (1) credit in an additional language for a total of two (2) credits.
8. Driver Education will be recorded using Pass (P), No Grade (N), Fail (F) and not be calculated as part of a student's GPA. Students will receive  $\frac{1}{4}$  credit upon the successful completion, earning a P, for the 44-hour course, to include both the in-class (30 hours) and in-car components (14 hours) of driver education. The pass/fail grade will be enforced at a D - A as passing and an F as failing for both the Delaware State Driver Final Exam and the 30-hour in-class portion of the course. To earn a passing grade for the 44-hour course and obtain  $\frac{1}{4}$  credit, students must meet the aforementioned criteria and earn a blue certificate during the in-car portion of driver education. Driver Education will be accepted for athletic eligibility per DIAA interpretation.

P – In-class and in-car portions are completed successfully

F – The in-class portion was not successfully completed or the in-car portion was not successfully completed.

N – In-class portion is completed successfully but due to the student's birthday he/she has not completed the in-car portion yet.

### **STUDENTS IN DSCYF CUSTODY**

When a student is in DSCYF custody, the student's prior transcript will be reviewed. Values for credit may be awarded through:

1. Distance learning course,
2. Courses completed in mental health or rehabilitation facilities,
3. Courses completed in other districts that use a different standard for awarding credits,
4. Or other means as approved by the Superintendent in accordance with state and district policy.

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### Board Approval Acknowledged by:



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Christine B. Malec, President  
Smyrna School District Board of Education

### Policy Actions

Adopted: 07/24/91

Revised: 03/16/1994  
08/17/1994  
09/15/1999  
09/19/2001  
08/20/2003  
05/11/2005  
08/17/2005  
02/22/2007  
01/17/2008  
01/21/2009  
05/11/2011  
02/18/2015  
05/13/2015  
05/11/2016  
08/11/2021  
10/16/2024