

RETENTION & ACCELERATION

Policy and procedure 2421 shall apply to the placement of students currently enrolled in the Sequim School District, who have been enrolled in the district for the last 30 consecutive school days. The placement of new students, students entering the system after being formally withdrawn or of students in the first 30 school days immediately following enrollment is governed by policy 3110, Qualification of Attendance and Placement.

A parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, school counselor or administrator may recommend that a student be retained or accelerated. Recommendations must be provided in writing to the student's current school principal and should include the specific recommendation with detailed rationale for retention or acceleration (use form 2421A or 2421R).

Procedures

A parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, school counselor or administrator who wish to initiate the retention process for a student must communicate this recommendation to the school principal prior to the end of the third quarter of the current school year. Recommendations for grade acceleration may be submitted at any time by a parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, school counselor or administrator. If the school year has commenced when a recommendation is made, the student will remain in their current placement until the written recommendation is made.

Upon receipt of a recommendation to retain or accelerate a student, the school principal, or designee, will assemble a team to review the request and convene a meeting of such team. This team must include the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school principal or designee, school counselor, and the teachers for the subject area in which the change is being requested. If a student has been identified for a special program (including but not limited to: ELL, Special Education, Highly Capable, etc.), a representative from that special program must be included.

Information will be presented to the team to explain the student's academic, social and emotional development to date (use form 2421A/2421R – Data Collection and Decision Making form). If the team determines that additional information is necessary to decide, plans will be made to gather the additional information in an appropriate and timely fashion. Parents will be advised on how they might assist the student during the balance of the school year to avoid retention or to prepare for acceleration.

After the team makes the decision regarding acceleration or retention, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be provided with a written recommendation within thirty (30) calendar days of the original request. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) agrees with the recommendation, appropriate plans will be made to place the student in the recommended grade/class within five (five) school days. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagrees with the recommendation of the team, the parents may appeal the recommendation to the Assistant Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days. For students in kindergarten through eighth grade, no retention or acceleration will occur without written consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Placement of Highly Capable Students

Students identified as Highly Capable/Gifted shall have the opportunity to accelerate in a subject area or a grade level based upon the student's educational achievement of district and state learning objectives, performance on a nationally-normed aptitude test, and any other pertinent factors. The Highly Capable Program Coordinator shall be a member of the team reviewing the student's portfolio.

Grade Placement of Transferring Students

The placement of a student shall be accepted in another school on the basis of grade placement at the previous school on the date of transfer. Retention or advancement of such a student should take place only after previously outlined procedures are followed.

Grade Placement of New Students

Kindergarten and first grade students must enter the grade level designated by state law and district policy (see Policy No. 3110). Other students entering elementary school for the first time will be placed temporarily at an appropriate age/grade level. If, after a trial period, it is found that the student is inappropriately placed, the parent(s)/guardian(s) is to be notified, and the student placed at a more appropriate grade level.

Grade Placement of Special Education Students

Decisions regarding the appropriate placement of special education students are addressed within the context of the development of the Individualized Education Plan (WAC 392-171). Procedures for the development and implementation of an IEP are outlined in the WAC and are detailed in the special education procedures/forms manual available in each school. Decisions regarding initial placement and subsequent promotion of a special education student should be made by the IEP committee and reflected on the IEP document.

Notification: The District shall develop procedural forms ("Request for Acceleration" and "Request for Retention") and shall ensure that parents/guardians and students are annually notified that forms are available in all school offices (See form 2421A and 2421R).

Appeals: An appeal of decisions involving this policy and procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions found in Sequim School District Procedure 4220P.