



## Administrative Procedures Memorandum

### APC 006

### Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Learners JK to 9

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**Revised:** March 31, 2006, June 2015, October 2016

**MEMO TO:** All Staff

**FROM:** Director of Education

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#### PURPOSE

To provide a framework for principals and school staffs to make decisions about the promotion, retention and acceleration of learners.

#### REFERENCES

*Education Act* and Regulations  
*Growing Success*, 2010

#### COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES

The *Education Act* states that, subject to the approval of the Superintendent, one of the duties of principals is to “*promote students*” and to issue a statement to that effect.

It is the practice of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board that students of the same age be grouped together in classrooms, regardless of the grade level expectations within individual programs.

- **If a learner is being considered for retention**, the outlined procedures must be followed.
- In every case, where retention is being considered, the involvement of the school superintendent is required and the primary concern must be the best interests of the learner (*emotional, social, academic*).
- In all cases where consideration is being given to retention the parent/guardian must play a role.
- When the consideration is initiated by parents (*as is often the case with retention*), the principal must act to have appropriate discussions and consideration of the request. Late requests (*May or June*) will not be considered for the following school year. The consultation process could commence during the following school year.
- All students must receive ongoing opportunities to demonstrate achievement of expectations at grade level with differentiation and accommodations in place. An adequate period of time is to be provided for the program accommodations to take effect.
- After due and complete consideration by the school team (*including principal, teacher, special education staff as appropriate*) with the involvement of parents as appropriate, the principal shall make a recommendation in writing to the parent and school superintendent, including an outline of the minutes of the meeting held to discuss the school recommendation.
- A student shall be retained no more than one year at the elementary level
- **If a learner is being considered for acceleration**, the outlined procedures must be followed.

- Acceleration shall be used in only rare cases in the proper circumstances, and with the necessary safeguards. For acceleration to be considered a student must:
  1. Attain a level 4 in all Ministry testing or at 99% or better in a Board approved test.
  2. Demonstrate a proven commitment to academic tasks.
  3. Exhibit excellent social and emotional stability.
  4. The student must be motivated and demonstrate a desire for acceleration.
- In every case in which acceleration is being considered, the over-riding concern must be the best interest of the pupil. Staff must consider emotional readiness, social readiness, academic achievement, learning skills and self-regulation skills of the pupil.
- In all cases where acceleration consideration is a viable option, parents must play a role, and the involvement of the school superintendent is required.
- When consideration is initiated by staff, it must be raised by January and parents/students must be fully involved in discussions leading up to a recommendation from staff for acceleration.
- When the consideration is initiated by parents, the principal must act to have appropriate discussions and consideration of the request. Late requests (May or June) will not be considered for the following school year. The consultation could commence during the following school year.
- After due and complete consideration by the school team (including principal, teacher, special education staff as appropriate) with the involvement of parents as appropriate, the principal shall make a recommendation in writing to the parent and school superintendent, including an outline of the minutes of the meeting held to discuss the school recommendation.
- A student shall be accelerated no more than one year at the elementary level.

**For Learners With an Individual Education Plan:**

1. All learners who have achieved the grade level expectations will be promoted.
  - a) Students requiring ongoing accommodations and/or program modifications have an IEP. If the student is not successfully demonstrating achievement of the expectations as outlined in their IEP, the expectations may need to be changed (*i.e. altering the strategies and resources used in instruction, breaking expectations down into smaller steps*).
  - b) Students with an IEP would not be considered as at risk of promotion. If the learning expectations outlined in the IEP are appropriate for the student's instructional level, the promotion status of the provincial report card should state "*progressing well towards promotion*".
2. Research indicates that Kindergarten retention of students with special education needs has no benefit on their academic achievement or the social-emotional adjustment.

**For English Language Learners:**

3. English Language Learners should be placed in the grade that is appropriate for their age, rather than in a lower grade on the basis of their level of academic functioning.
  - a) English Language Learners (ELL's) will require varying lengths of time and levels of support in ESL/ELD programs to acquire the English language skills necessary for integration into the mainstream program. Ongoing monitoring of student progress and a flexible approach are needed to ensure that students' ESL / ELD programs continue to be appropriate for them.

**Procedures for Promotion Grade 8 to 9:**

1. Students who have successfully completed the Grade 8 expectations will be promoted from elementary school and admitted to a secondary school.

2. For those students with an IEP who are working on modified Grade 8 expectations planning decisions will be made at the Grade 8 transition meeting or IPRC Annual Review (*if the student was IPRC'd in our board*). The students will be placed in an appropriate secondary school program. This will be a consultative process involving members from the elementary school, secondary school, the student and their parents.

**Reach-Ahead Opportunities for Elementary School Students:**

- The involvement of the school superintendent is required:

*“Under exceptional circumstances, an individual student in Grade 8, with parental consent, may be given permission by the principal of a secondary school to “reach ahead” to take secondary school courses, either during the school year or in the summer prior to entering Grade 9. The principal of the elementary school and the principal of the secondary school will decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether “reaching ahead” to take a secondary school course is in the best interest of the student. The principal of the secondary school will assume responsibility for evaluating the student’s achievement and for granting and recording the credit.” (Ontario Schools, KG to Grade 12, pg.27 2.5.2.1)*