

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION/ACCELERATION**

The curriculum and schedule of elementary, middle and high schools will provide flexibility in placing students in programs or subjects normally considered above or below their grade level. Scheduling students into classes above or below the normal grade level should be done with counseling based on evidence of ability, past scholastic achievement, and cooperation of the individual student and his or her parents or guardian.

When students below the ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grades 9 through 12, credit is counted toward meeting the standard units required for graduation provided the courses are equivalent in content and academic rigor as those courses offered at the secondary level. To earn a verified credit for these courses, students below ninth grade level must meet the same requirements applicable to other students.

In any high school credit-bearing course taken in middle school, a parent may request that the grade be omitted from the student's transcript and the student not earn high school credit for the course. Such request shall be made as outlined in School Board Policy IKFA and IKFA-R.

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Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:3  
 8VAC20-131-50  
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Cross Ref.: IGBB, Programs for Gifted Student  
 JO, Student Records  
 JOA, Student Transcripts  
 IKFA, Middle School Students Taking High School Credit Courses

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION/ACCELERATION**

The following criteria are to be considered when making promotion/retention/acceleration decisions:

- Academic achievement as evidenced by teacher evaluation, classroom assessments, products/portfolios, standardized achievement measures, and Standards of Learning (SOL) test results.
- Social/emotional development as evidenced by observation of maturity, motivation, and attitude.
- Physical development including chronological age, size, overall health and well-being.
- Ability as evidenced by standardized ability measures.
- Other considerations include attendance, learning disabilities or special needs, transiency, and parent support.

### Guidelines for Grade Level Retention in Grades K-8

Based on research, it is the philosophy of the Albemarle County School Board that retention is not the preferred option for providing remediation services to students who are at-risk of academic failure. However, to meet the unique needs of all students, grade level retention may be an option for some students if all other interventions have been exhausted. Retention recommendations are best made at the school level by a team (educators and parents).

Criteria for consideration:

1. Retention should be considered in cases where there is evidence it will benefit the student both academically and socially.
2. If retention of a student is being considered, there should be notification to parents in writing well in advance.
3. After receiving all input from the team, the principal makes the final decision for retention.
4. When a student is retained, an individual plan will be developed, which includes additional support and progress monitoring for the student.

### Guidelines for Grade Level Acceleration in Grades K-8

1. Grade level acceleration decisions are made at the school level and are based on the criteria outlined above.

2. Request for grade level acceleration must be made in writing to the principal.
3. Principal, classroom teacher, parent, and other school personnel as needed are involved in the acceleration decision. The principal makes the final decision for acceleration.
4. The student's ability and academic achievement should be significantly above the mean for the target grade.
5. When feasible, a student should skip a grade at the end or the beginning of the school year.
6. If a student is not successful in the transition, the decision should be reviewed with the option of the student returning to the former grade level.
7. It is possible through grade level acceleration that a student will exhaust the existing high school program offerings prior to graduation. Parents will need to provide other alternatives.

#### Guidelines for Grade Level Placement in Grades 9-12

A student's grade level in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 is determined by their cohort group as defined by the Virginia Department of Education. The VDOE defines a cohort as a "group of students who enter the ninth grade for the first time together with the expectation of graduating within four years." Should a student take more than four years to graduate, each subsequent year after their fourth year will be considered a Grade 12 year.

International transfer students should be placed in grades levels based on the following factors:

- Graduation plans created in collaboration with students and families;
- International transcript evaluations;
- English language proficiency; and
- Math placement tests.

#### Guidelines for Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit

1. Dual credit is defined as credit earned in a course in which the students pay the cost and take the course either at the institution of higher learning or at the high school campus; the student earns credit at both the institution of higher learning and at the high school. Prior approval of the principal is required if the course is to be a credit toward graduation.

Dual enrollment is defined as credit earned in a course which is paid for by the high school and is offered during the regular day; the student earns credit at both the high school and at the institution of higher learning.

2. Tuition and all other expenses for dual credit classes are the responsibility of the student's parents.
3. The school will facilitate scheduling for dual enrollment class.

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