

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Reg. No. 500-10
Subject: PLACEMENT AND PROMOTION OF STUDENTS	Issued: 11/1/78
Preparing Office: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT	Amended: 9/17/18

I. Policy

II. Definitions

- **Academic Placement Plan**
A documented plan of action created for individual students whose parent/guardian has requested academic placement different from that recommended by school staff. The written agreement will specify length and conditions of the probationary placement.
- **Individual Learning Plan**
A documented plan of action created for individual students who are being considered for or has been identified for non-promotion. The plan will include essential objectives that need to be mastered, appropriate interventions and the actions that will be taken by staff to accelerate learning.
- **Interventions**
Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) offers a variety of intervention programs, beyond the regular day-to-day teaching, for students who need help in specific academic areas. The goal is to provide short-term, intensive teaching to help students meet grade-level standards as quickly as possible.

III. Procedures

Note: For placement of students enrolling in FCPS from a home instruction program or a foreign exchange program, refer to FCPS Regulation 400-49 *Home Instruction for Students* or FCPS Regulation 400-74 *Enrollment of Foreign Exchange Students*.

A. Placement

Appropriate placement decisions are best made through a collaborative process involving school staff, parents, and the individual student. Placement decisions should be based on providing a pace of learning and level of challenge commensurate with the student's achievement level and abilities.

When a parent/guardian disagrees with a school-recommended placement decision, they may request an academic placement review. The academic placement review request must be in writing and submitted to the principal. The letter requesting a placement review should provide an explanation of why the student should be enrolled in

an advanced class or program and include any supporting documentation that supports the request.

Once the request for an academic placement review is received, the principal and selected staff members will review the letter/documentation and consult with the parent/guardian. If it is determined that a placement change is appropriate, the principal and parent may create an Academic Placement Plan (attached) placing the student in the parent-requested placement on a probationary basis. The Academic Placement Plan will specify length and conditions of the probationary placement. If the student successfully completes the plan within the probationary period, the probationary status and plan will be removed and the student will remain in the placement. If a student does not successfully meet the expectations of the plan during the probationary period, the principal may reinstate the school-recommended placement or extend the plan.

B. Promotion and Non-Promotion in Elementary School (Grades 2-5) ¹

Promotion/Advanced Grade Placement

In elementary school, students are promoted from one grade to the next as they progress through the essential curriculum toward the attainment of the essential goals. It is expected that all students are meeting grade level standards by the beginning of Grade 4. If a student is not meeting grade level standards, using a collaborative process with the student's parent/guardian, a school team will review and address barriers to meeting this expectation.

For a student who substantially and consistently requires enrichment in reading and mathematics, as determined by county standards, and whose academic needs cannot be met within the regular grade, an advanced grade placement may be considered. The recommendation for this placement must take into account the student's emotional, physical, and social development.

When it becomes evident that a student might be advanced a grade, the parent(s) are consulted. The principal, identified school staff and the parent(s) will work together in the best interest of the student. If the school's multidisciplinary team has reached a decision, approved by the principal, to advance a student a grade, a conference will be held with the student's parent(s) as early in the last marking period as possible.

Ideally, any decision about advancing a student should be a joint agreement by the school and parent(s). If the parent desires the student to be advanced and the staff does not agree, the principal will provide the final decision after conferring with the instructional director.

Non-Promotion

Research suggests that non-promotion is generally an ineffective intervention and carries with it the risk of later academic failure including a greater risk of dropping out of school.

¹ For early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, refer to FCPS Regulation 400-89 *Kindergarten – Early Entrance*

However, when extraordinary circumstances occur, and a recommendation is made by a multidisciplinary team and/or parents that a student not be promoted, the principal will:

- Meet with the parent(s) to discuss the recommendation,
- Consult with the grade level instructional team,
- Review student performance data,
- If applicable, review 504 or Individual Education Plans (IEP) progress, and
- Determine if extraordinary circumstances exist, and then determine if non-promotion is in the best interest of the child.

Ideally, any judgment made about non-promotion will be a collaborative one, shared by the school staff and parent(s). However, when disagreement occurs, the principal will provide a final decision after conferring with the instructional director.

If a student is being considered for or has been identified for non-promotion, an Individual Learning Plan will be developed by school staff in cooperation with the parents to identify the essential objectives that need to be mastered and the response by the school to deploy supports, including appropriate interventions to accelerate learning.

C. Promotion and Non-Promotion in Middle School

Promotion

In Grades 6-8, a student who passes all four core subjects (mathematics, English/language arts, science or social studies) will be promoted.

A parent/guardian may request a social promotion to the next grade level if a student is two years or more above the age of their current grade level peers. If the parent desires the student to be advanced and the staff does not agree, the principal will provide the final decision after conferring with the instructional director.

Non-Promotion

Research suggests that non-promotion is generally an ineffective intervention and carries with it the risk of later academic failure including a greater risk of dropping out of school. However, when extraordinary circumstances occur, and a recommendation is made by a multidisciplinary team and/or parents that a student not be promoted, the principal will:

- Meet with the parent(s) to discuss the recommendation,
- Consult with the grade level instructional team,
- Review student performance data,
- If applicable, review 504 or Individual Education Plans (IEP) progress, and
- Determine if extraordinary circumstances exist, and then determine if non-promotion is in the best interest of the child.

Ideally, any judgment made about non-promotion will be a collaborative one, shared by the school staff and parent(s). However, when disagreement occurs, the principal will provide a final recommendation after conferring with the instructional director.

If a student is being considered for or has been identified for non-promotion, an Individual Learning Plan will be developed by school staff in cooperation with the parents to identify

the essential objectives that need to be mastered and the response by the school to deploy supports, including appropriate interventions to accelerate learning. If a student has a 504 or an IEP, the creation of an additional Individual learning Plan is not necessary.

In Grades 6-8, non-promotion may be considered by the principal when a student meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Fails more than two core subjects (mathematics, English/language arts, science or social studies) for the year
 - Chronic absences
 - Developmental and/or emotional factors that are documented and shared with school staff by a licensed medical/or mental health professional.
1. A parent or guardian may request non-promotion for their child. When a parent or guardian makes a request for non-promotion, the principal will meet with the parent or guardian, consult with the grade level instructional team, and use the criteria listed above to evaluate each request to determine if non-promotion is the best option.
 2. Due to the overwhelming body of research noting the strong correlation between non-promotion and "dropping out" of school, any identified student who may not be promoted to the next grade will have an intervention plan developed by the instructional team to reduce the likelihood of non-promotion. The intervention plan will be based on identified needs and include appropriate interventions. Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the creation of the intervention plan so they can support both their child's performance and the school staff. If a student has a 504 or an IEP, the creation of an additional intervention plan is not necessary
 3. When it becomes evident that a student will not be recommended for promotion to the next grade level by the instructional team or by a parent/guardian, the principal and parent/guardian will meet to discuss the recommendation(s) and review the student's strengths, challenges, prior non-promotions and, if applicable, 504 or IEP progress. Ideally, any decision made will be a cooperative one, shared by the school and parent(s). When agreement cannot be reached regarding the non-promotion of a student, the final decision will be made by the principal after conferring with the instructional director.
 4. If a student is retained in the current grade, the instructional team for that grade will review interventions provided to the student during the current school year and make revisions designed to accelerate the student's pace of learning for the following year.
 5. In Grades 6-8, students not on or above grade level in reading and/or mathematics will participate in appropriate reading and mathematics interventions, based on identified needs as determined by the middle school staff.
 6. At the end of Grade 8, students not on or above grade level in reading and/or mathematics, will be recommended for enrollment in appropriate interventions offered in Grade 9 and may access designated summer courses for summer learning when offered (See FCPS Reg. 400-40 *Summer Session Programs*).

7. The IEP team will consider and review placement and promotion options for students who are working toward a Maryland High School Certificate of Completion.

D. Promotion and Non-Promotion in High School

Promotion in high school is based upon progress toward meeting the minimum 21 credit requirement for a Maryland high school diploma and 4 additional credits required by FCPS. Refer to Policy 405 of the Board of Education of Frederick County and Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR).

The requirements for a Maryland high school diploma issued by FCPS include:

1. Successful completion of approved programs unless one of the alternatives in COMAR is satisfied.
2. The accumulation of a minimum of 25 credits, which includes 4 additional credits required locally by FCPS.

Credits earned must reflect:

- a. Successful completion of specific subject area requirements.
 - b. Successful completion of a completer program which includes a series of courses in a specialized career area.
3. Student promotion to the next grade is based upon the cumulative number of credits earned. The minimum cumulative number of credits required for promotion is as follows:
 - Promotion to Grade 10 - 6 credits earned
 - Promotion to Grade 11 - 12 credits earned
 - Promotion to Grade 12 - 18 credits earned

Students not earning the requisite minimum number of units for promotion at the end of the school year may earn an additional credit by attending summer school.

The credit will count toward graduation.

4. Meet the state's graduation assessment requirements.

The IEP team will consider and review placement and promotion options for students who are working toward a Maryland High School Certificate of Completion.

E. Credits

Maryland State Board of Education High School Graduation Requirements indicate that, in addition to earning credits during the regular school day and year, a student may earn credits at the discretion of the local school system in various other programs.

1. The Frederick County Virtual School (FCVS) offers online courses for credit that meet graduation requirements and are recorded on the high school transcript. The diploma is awarded upon completion of the minimum high school graduation requirements as outlined in Maryland law.
 - a. As an alternative to a comprehensive high school, students may enroll, learn in online courses offered by FCVS, and earn a diploma from Flexible Evening High School.
 - b. Students enrolled in comprehensive high schools may earn credit in online courses offered by FCVS during, after and beyond the school day in specified programs.
 - c. FCVS Summer Session Programs offer online courses to currently enrolled and attending FCPS students who wish to earn new credits or improve a previously earned grade. See FCPS Regulation 400-10.
2. Work-study, job entry training, or experience outside the school are recognized as valid ways of learning. Credit toward graduation shall be granted for cooperative work-study, pre-apprenticeship, student service learning, mentoring/internship and other school-to-community experience.
3. College credit is available through our Dual Enrollment program with prior approval of the principal. College credits earned may also meet high school graduation requirements. (FCPS Regulation 400-94)
4. Credit by demonstrated mastery (CDM) is offered by Frederick County Public Schools through the Linking Youth to New Experiences (LYNX) program; however, credit by examination is not offered.
5. Independent study is available. Credit toward high school graduation may be earned for independent study in which students successfully demonstrate specific course objectives.
6. In addition to earning credit during the school day, COMAR allows credits to be earned at the discretion of the local school system through various programs that include:
 - Summer school offered by approved public and nonpublic institutions in or outside of Maryland if the principal of the student's home school authorizes the study in advance.
 - Acceptable summer study offered by approved public and nonpublic institutions in or out of Maryland, if the principal of the student's own school authorizes the study in advance.
7. Middle school students who complete designated high school courses and earn final passing grades will receive high school credit. Earned credit will appear on their high school transcript and their final course grade(s) will be factored into their high school grade point average.

Approved:

original signed by

Theresa R. Alban, Superintendent

Academic Placement Plan

Name of Student: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

Subject/Course: _____

School Recommended Level: _____

Parent-Requested Level: _____

Reason for Request: _____

Conditions of Probationary Placement

- **School Responsibilities**
- **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**
- **Student Responsibilities**
- **Establish standards for determining success of placement**

Timeline of Probationary Placement

- **Start Date**
- **Review Date**
- **End Date**

Approval of Agreement, Conditions, and Responsibilities:

(signatures)

Principal: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Student: _____

Date: _____

cc: Student File

Individual Learning Plan

Name of Student: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

Essential objectives that need to be mastered:

Roles and Responsibilities to Accelerate Learning:

- **School Staff:**
 - Supports Identified:
 - Interventions Assigned:
 - Progress Monitoring Strategies
- **Parent/Guardian:**
- **Student:**

Approval of Agreement, Conditions, and Responsibilities:
(signatures)

Principal: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Student: _____

Date: _____

cc: Student File