

I. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of this policy is to set forth procedures for responding to a parent to request a retention of their student in kindergarten through grade eight (K-8), or request a specialized class, program, or advanced course. With regard to retention, the general philosophy of the District is to encourage and assist each student to advance year to year with their cohorts in order to maximize normal social and emotional development. Research which has shown that retention is usually not the optimum solution. Other options—such as summer school, before-school, and after-school programs, or extra help during the school day—could provide equivalent extra time in more instructionally effective ways. Without early diagnosis and targeted intervention, struggling students are unlikely to catch up if retained. However the District recognizes there may be instances where promotion or retention of a student does serve that student's best interest and does not impose an undue burden on the District, school, or staff. Also, the District understands and respects a parent's right to reasonable accommodations regarding placement of students, and will work closely with students to make this determination in accordance with the Parental Rights in Education Act (Utah Code §53G-6-803).

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Weber School District to reasonably accommodate any parent or guardian request to retain or promote a student in kindergarten through grade eight (K-8) based upon the student's academic ability, as well as the student's social, emotional, and physical maturity as determined by the student's parents and school and district personnel. Weber School District will also reasonably accommodate a parent or guardian request to place a student in a specialized class, a specialized program, or an advanced course as long as the request would not create a substantial impact to the school or district.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Reasonably accommodate" means the District's best effort to enable parents to place their child in an appropriate grade, class, or program without substantial impact to staff and resources. When determining a reasonable accommodation, the District will seek to balance the following:
 - 1. parental rights;
 - 2. educational needs of other students;
 - 3. academic and behavioral impacts to a classroom;
 - 4. a teacher's workload; and
 - 5. the assurance of the safe and efficient operation of a school.
- B. "Substantial impact" means altering an employee's working conditions, compromising the safety and supervision of students on school premises and at school activities, and allocating excessive expenditures in an inefficient manner.

- C. "Parent" means parent or legal guardian.

IV. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING RETENTION

- A. A parent seeking to retain a child in K-8 class must comply with the following process:
1. The parent will request in writing their desire for retention with an explanation for the reason for the retention.
 2. The principal of the school the student is currently enrolled at the time of the request will gather student grades, testing data, behavioral data, attendance, and other relevant records for the student. The principal will then set up a meeting with the parents to discuss:
 - a. the student's records, as described in IV.A.2;
 - b. recommendation of appropriate school and district personnel (e.g., teacher(s), principal, nurse, district psychologist, school counselor, district student services coordinator, etc.;
 - c. any substantial impact that would result from retaining the student;
 - d. parent's interests;
 - e. student's interests; and
 - f. information on the educational impact for other students, academic and behavioral impact to a classroom, a teacher's workload, and the assurance of a safe and efficient operation of the school.
 3. Team members shall include the principal (or principals if moving from one school to another), parent/guardian, teacher(s), and school counselor. Team members may also include the student, district psychologist, or district coordinator.
 4. A decision regarding whether the request can be reasonably accommodated is made based on the information discussed by the team and ultimately, upon what the team feels is best for the child.
 5. If the decision is to deny the request, the district must provide an explanation in writing stating the reason the request cannot be accommodated.
 6. If a request is denied, the parent(s) is informed of their right to appeal the decision through a process with the Weber School District Student Services Department. The appeal must be in writing and delivered to the director of student services within 30 days of the school's decision to deny. The Director of Student Services will set up a Retention Appeals Committee to hear the request. The Retention Appeals Committee will consist of student services coordinators, elementary and secondary education supervisors, and, where appropriate, the special education coordinator.
 7. The district Retention Appeals Committee will make the final decision.
- B. A student in 9 - 12 grade at the time of the request for retention will not be considered for retention.
- C. Requests for promotion will be considered by the District.

**V. REQUEST FOR SPECIAL CLASS, SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS, AND
ADVANCEMENT**

- A. A parent may also request that a student be placed in a specialized class, a specialized program, or an advanced course.
- B. The school principal will reasonably accommodate such requests as long as the request would not create a substantial impact to the school or district and can be reasonably accommodated.
- C. The principal will consider multiple academic data points when determining requests for a special class, program, or advanced course,
- D. The principal's determination of whether to place a student in a special class, program, or advanced course is the final determination.