



ORANGE COUNTY CLASSICAL ACADEMY PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Orange County Classical Academy (OCCA) is committed to providing a student placement policy based on our philosophy that students benefit most from an educational program appropriate to their level of achievement, physical maturation and social development. Due to the robust nature of the academic program, we generally do not recommend promotion of grade. Most students will make regular progress through the grades and participate in educational programs designed for their age and maturity; however, individual circumstances may indicate a need for acceleration or retention. Factors to be considered in determining grade placement should include the educational progress of the individual student, age, physical and/or social maturation, and mental ability. The decision-making process to establish grade placement should involve the student, headmaster, assistant headmaster, parent, teacher and other school personnel.

This policy reflects State law requirements that every school have a written student Promotion and Retention Policy ("PPR") policy approved by the school's governing board. Consistent with *Education Code (EC) Section 48070.5(b)*, this PPR policy include students' grades and other indicators of academic achievement. Students' results on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASSP) may be included as one indicator of academic achievement. However, CAASSP results is not the exclusive criterion for promotion or retention, as they have not yet been certified for that purpose pursuant to *EC Section 60648*. There is also a difference between student abilities or skill, such as in math or reading or writing, and their understanding of content areas, such as in history or science. OCCA school personnel will consider both the skill and the content knowledge of a student.

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

The OCCA Board of Directors expects students to progress through each grade within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction accommodates the varying interests and growth patterns of individual students and include strategies for addressing academic deficiencies when needed. Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade level standards of expected student achievement set by the Board of Education. (cf. 6011--Academic Standards) (cf. 6146.1--High School Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency) (cf. Elementary School Promotion/Standards of Proficiency). students who are not accelerated or retained usually enter the sixth grade between the ages of 10-9 and 11-8.

Minimum and Maximum Age Norms

Minimum and maximum age norms given are extremes and school personnel should consider all factors carefully before retaining or accelerating students whose ages fall near one of these extremes. Adjustments should be made as early as possible to ensure that a student will proceed to the next school level within the established minimum and maximum age norm limits.

1. Minimum Age Norms

a. A child will be admitted to kindergarten or transitional kindergarten programs at the beginning of the school year, or at a later time in the same year, if the child will have his/her 5th birthday on or before September 1 of the current school year (Education Code 48000).

- i. If OCCA is maintaining one or more kindergartens, the school may, on a case-by-case basis, admit to a kindergarten a child having attained the age of five years at any time during the school year with the approval of the parent or guardian, if:
 - The school determines admittance is in the best interest of the child; and
 - The parent/guardian is given information regarding the advantages and disadvantages and any other explanatory information about the effect of this early admittance
- ii. As a condition of receipt of apportionment for students in a transitional kindergarten program, OCCA may at any time during a school year, admit a child to a transitional kindergarten program who will have his/her 5th birthday after December 2 but during that same school year, with the approval of the parent/guardian, if:
 - a. The school determines admittance is in the best interest of the child; and
 - b. There is an available spot in TK with no waitlist
- iii. Notwithstanding, a student admitted to a transitional kindergarten shall not generate average daily attendance or be included in the enrollment or unduplicated student count until the child has attained his/her 5th birthday, regardless of when the child was admitted during the school year.

b. A child will be admitted to first grade during the first month of a school year if the child will have his/her 6th birthday on or before September 1 of the current school year (Education Code 48010). A student who has been admitted to kindergarten maintained by a private or public school in California or any other state, and who has completed one school year shall be admitted to the first grade provided the child has reached his/her 5th birthday unless the parent or guardian of the child and OCCA agree that the child may continue in kindergarten for not more than an additional school year. (Education Code 48011).

4. Foreign students

Age-grade placement policies for immigrant and nonimmigrant foreign students are the same as for all other students. However, special care must be taken in verifying birth dates of students entering from foreign countries since documents presented often contain ages which are computed on a different basis or are otherwise in error. The educational experience of the foreign student is of particular importance in determining grade placement and assuring the orderly development of the students educational program. When grade placement is contingent upon verification of age and/or prior school work in a foreign country, the student and his/her parents are informed that grade placement is tentative until appropriate records can be obtained and evaluated.

PROMOTION

Kindergarten Students:

Kindergarten students who have completed one year of kindergarten shall be admitted to first grade unless the parent/guardian and the school agree that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. (Ed Code 48011)

First through Sixth Grades:

OCCA shall establish criteria for students who should be retained or who are at risk of being retained at the following grade levels: (Ed Code 48070.5)

1. Between grades 2 and 3
2. Between grades 3 and 4
3. Between grades 4 and 5
5. Between grades 5 and 6

Special consideration will be given to students with limited English proficiency and those with a special education IEP. Students between grades 1 and 3 shall be identified primarily on the basis of their level of proficiency in reading. Proficiency in reading, English language arts, and mathematics shall be the basis for identifying students between grades 4 and 5, between grades 6 and 7, and between grades 8 and 9. (Ed Code 48070.5).

Benchmark Grades:

OCCA staff will pay special attention to students performing below the minimum standards. Students can also be retained in grade K based upon current law. Students may be retained only once in their K-8 school career.

ACCELERATION

Acceleration to Elementary School Level

Acceleration of Kindergarten students to First Grade (California Administrative Code, Title 5, Section 200; Board Rule 2005).

1. Because promotion is on an annual basis, acceleration moves a student ahead a full year. Accordingly, parents and school staff should carefully review all factors in making this decision. If there is uncertainty, consideration for acceleration should be deferred to a later grade level. Generally, acceleration should take place by December 1 in order to provide sufficient first grade experience.
2. Criteria for acceleration of kindergarten students to first grade are as follows:
 - a. The student is at least five years of age at the time of acceleration.
 - b. The student has attended a public school kindergarten for a long enough time to enable school personnel to make an evaluation of the student's ability.
 - c. The student is in the upper five percent of his/her age group in terms of general ability.(To determine whether a student meets this criterion, an individual or group test may be administered by qualified school personnel, although the group test score is not recorded on the cumulative record).
 - d. The physical development and social maturity of the student are consistent with the students advanced mental ability.
 - e. The parent or guardian of the student has filed with the school a written statement approving placement in the first grade.
 - f. There is a spot available in First grade.
3. A record that all criteria have been met and the written statement of the parent or guardian approving placement in the first grade is filed in the students cumulative record.

Acceleration of students Grade 1 through Grade 5

In order that essential blocks of learning will not be omitted, any acceleration should be based on long-term planning and be determined primarily by the needs of the individual and not by age alone. Special attention may be focused on acceleration of the intellectually gifted student.

Procedures for Acceleration Identification/Data Gathering Phase:

1. Once a student has been identified by the teacher, counselor, or the parent/guardian as a potential candidate for acceleration, the special learning needs shall be discussed with the headmaster and the assistant headmaster. Alternative programs or options shall be attempted within the school first.
2. Information/data will be gathered and referred to the Student Success Team or like committee meeting for analysis.

3. When sufficient information has been collected regarding a student's performance, a conference will be scheduled with the student's parent/guardian to inform him/her of his/her child's progress, using the objective data collected.

School Intervention Phase:

1. Resource personnel designated by the school shall provide assistance to the classroom teacher and will recommend additional actions to meet the enrichment needs of the student.
2. Classroom modification will be made based upon the student's learning needs, strengths, and interests.

School Decision Phase:

1. When information has been collected for assessing the effectiveness of the intervention phase, the teacher, headmaster, assistant headmaster, and resource personnel through the SST or like committee will review the results and shall determine by consensus a recommendation for the best placement for that student.
2. Parent/guardian shall be invited to the SST or like committee meeting to discuss the school's recommendation.

Acceleration--Final Decision Phase:

1. The recommendation will be shared with the parents/guardians at an SST or like committee meeting.
2. The student's progress will be monitored by the teacher. A plan shall be developed through the SST to provide special assistance the receiving teacher might need to prepare for accelerated students.
3. A written plan for monitoring the student's performance at the next higher grade level shall be developed.
4. A summary of the recommendations and actions taken will be filed in the student's cumulative record.
5. The parent/guardian must approve and support the plan of acceleration.

Acceleration/Promotion: Appeal Process:

The school's final decision to promote a student may be appealed consistent with Board policy, administrative regulations, and law. The burden shall be on the appealing party to show why the school's decision should be overruled. (Ed. Code 48070.5)

To appeal a promotion/acceleration decision, the appealing party shall submit a written request to OCCA specifying the reasons why the school's decision should be overruled. The appeal must be initiated within ten (10) school days after the formal decision is made to promote or accelerate a student. If the board determines that the appealing party has overwhelmingly proven that the site decision should be overruled, it shall overrule the school's decision. The decision of the board shall be final.

RETENTION

Legal Criteria for Retention

As authorized by Ed. Code 48070.5, OCCA will identify students for retention or who are risk for retention on the basis of either:

1. the results of assessments administered pursuant to Ed Code 60640, Art. 4 and the minimum levels of proficiency recommended by the State Board of Education pursuant to Ed Code 60648; OR
2. The student's grades and other indicators of academic achievement designated by OCCA.

Second and Third Grade

Identification of students for retention or who are at risk for retention shall be assessed on the basis of the student's level of proficiency in reading.

Fourth, Fifth, Sixth

Identification of students for retention or who are at risk for retention shall be assessed on the basis of the student's level of proficiency in reading, English language arts, and mathematics.

Retention is a placement option which is used when there is reasonable expectation that the additional experience in a particular grade level will be in the best interests of the student. Any recommendation for retention of a student is based on a continuous and thorough analysis of the

student personal and educational development and the possible benefits to the student which might be derived from such retention. This policy is implemented on an individual basis by the local school administrative and teaching staffs in close consultation with the student's parents.

A. Roles/Responsibilities for Promotion/Retention of students

Promotion or retention of students is based on a student's reasonable progress in meeting school standards of achievement.

1. The responsibility for the individual students promotion to the next grade level is a shared effort among administrator, teacher, counselor/supportive staff, and parent. However, no decision to retain an elementary school student may be made without the prior written approval or consent of the students' parent or legal guardian.

2. In order to establish a definitive profile of the progress of the student, certain records and appropriate documentation must be maintained.

- a. Teacher records must substantiate any recommendation.
- b. School organization data must substantiate alternatives or repeated opportunities for instruction.
- c. Cumulative files and other documentation indicate such items as performance test scores, progress, effort and attendance.
- d. Parent conferences must be held.

3. The teacher is responsible for assigning the final mark and for recommending promotion or retention of the individual student based upon an assessment of reasonable progress.

4. Parent conferences shall be held as soon as it becomes evident that a student is not achieving or maintaining reasonable progress.

Kindergarten Retention Criteria:

Parent/guardian and the school may agree that a student shall continue in kindergarten for an additional school year if he/she performs below grade level standards on Reading, Kindergarten Benchmark Assessment, and receives report card grades of Not Satisfactory in English Language Art and Math.

Retention at the Elementary Level

A student may be retained at any grade level in the elementary school. The decision to retain a student is based on an evaluation of the individual students progress and his/her ability to achieve the measures of reasonable progress successfully. Student success at Grade K, 1, and 2 is most important before promotion to the upper grades where increasing instructional program requirements and/or length of instructional day occur. No decision to retain an elementary school student may be made without the prior written approval or consent of the students' parent or legal guardian.

Retention of a student at Grade 5 is recommended only after other alternatives have been exhausted.

Repeated opportunities for additional instruction or remediation should be offered students to ensure continuous progress in subsequent grades.

When a student is identified as being at risk of retention, the teacher shall so notify the student's parents/guardians as early in the school year as practicable. The student's parent/guardian shall be provided an opportunity to consult with the teacher(s) responsible for the decision to promote or retain the student. (Ed Code 48070.5) If the student does not have a single regular classroom teacher, the school shall specify the teacher(s) responsible for the decision to promote or retain the student. (Ed Code 48070.5) The school shall provide a copy of the school's promotion/retention policy and administrative regulation at the time parents/guardians are notified that their child is at risk of retention. (cf 5145.6--Parent Notifications). Once a student has been identified by the teacher or the parent/guardian as a potential candidate for retention, based upon performance against OCCA benchmark measures, the special learning needs of the student will be discussed with the headmaster and the SST team. When possible, this discussion with the headmaster should occur on or before December 1.

Retention Data-Gathering Phase:

The school initiates the data-gathering phase. The student's performance shall be examined based upon the aforementioned benchmark multiple measures for all grade levels, with particular emphasis on performance in reading and math. The Student Success Team plan shall be developed for students at risk of retention to monitor his/her performance during the year of retention and address specific outcomes of how the student shall receive focused instruction to increase performance in reading and/or mathematics. Classroom modification shall be made for a student in danger of failing, whether he/she is retained. If the teacher's recommendation to promote is contingent upon the student's participation in summer school or interim session remediation program, the student's academic performance shall be reassessed at the end of the remediation program, and the decision to retain or promote shall be provided to and discussed with the student's parent or guardian and the school before any final determination of student retention or promotion. (Ed Code 48070.5) When sufficient information has been collected in regard to academic achievement and/or other factors, a conference will be scheduled with the student's parent/guardian to inform them of their child's progress, using the objective data collected. During the conference, the parent/guardian will be made aware of the intervention phase and any recommendations for remediation for their child through the development of SST.

Retention Intervention Phase:

Modifications to the student's instructional program will be made by the SST or like committee and based on the student's learning needs. Assistance will be made available to identified students. Interventions will be offered to students who have been retained, as well as those in danger of retention.

These interventions may include:

- Before, during, and after-school classes

- Homework Club
- Summer School
- Saturday School or holiday recess tutorials
- Tutorial
- Elective classes to support core classes
- Classroom modifications

These services shall be provided to students in the following priority order: (Ed Code 37252.5)

1. Students who have been recommended for retention or who have been identified as being at risk or retention, pursuant to Ed. Code 48070.5.
2. Students who have been identified as having a deficiency in, CAASSP English Language Arts/ Math and student report card grades of N or D or lower. These interventions shall be developed in accordance with the requirements of Ed. Code 37252.5.

Retention: School Decision Phase:

By the end of the 2nd grading period or no later than May 15, the teacher, headmaster, counselor, and other resource personnel, will review results of the intervention phase through the SST or like committee and arrive at a consensus recommendation for the next placement for the student. (This is not meant to preclude retention consideration for later-entering students.) If the student's intervention involves summer school performance, a decision to retain may be postponed until the student has completed the intervention. The final determination rests with headmaster as advised by the teacher(s) of record.

Retention: Final Decision Phase:

Final decision for placement should be reached by June 1, or when the student has completed remediation/interventions recommended by the teacher(s). The ultimate responsibility for the retention decision rests with the headmaster as advised by the teacher(s) of record, except in the case of kindergarten students whose parents must mutually agree that the student shall continue in kindergarten. (Ed. Code 48011). The teacher(s) evaluation, including reports of summer school progress, shall be provided to and discussed with the student's parent/guardian and the school principal before any final determination of student retention. (Ed. Code 48070.5(d)) The final decision shall be made no later than 12 days prior to the start of the school year.

In all cases, a parent/guardian conference will be held and a summary of the recommendations and actions taken will be filed in the student's cumulative record. Retained students shall not be placed in combination classes or repeat the grade with the same teachers.

Retention: Appeal Process:

The school's final decision to promote or retain a student may be appealed consistent with Board policy, administrative regulations, and law. The burden shall be on the appealing party to show why the school's decision should be overruled. (Ed. Code 48070.5)

To appeal a retention decision, the appealing party shall submit a written request to OCCA specifying the reasons why the school's decision should be overruled. The appeal must

be initiated within ten (10) school days after the formal decision is made to retain a student. If the board determines that the appealing party has overwhelmingly proven that the site decision should be overruled, it shall overrule the school's decision. The decision of the board shall be final.

PROMOTION/ACCELERATION/RETENTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

1. If a preschool special education student is scheduled to start kindergarten in September (Section 48000 of the Ed Code), the parent or teacher can request that the student remain one more year at the preschool level. The final decision will be made as part of the IEP process. The IEP team needs to consider and address the factors that are involved when retaining a K-6 student, in case the student is brought up for retention in a subsequent grade.
2. All retentions will be initiated in accordance with the notice and implementation requirements listed in these regulations.
3. If a special education student is placed in a special class (including a non-public school), the Special Day Class teacher recommends retention. The final decision will be made as part of the IEP process.
4. If the special education student is enrolled in the regular education program the retention process is initiated by the regular classroom teacher in collaboration with appropriate special education staff. Parents must be notified that they can request an IEP meeting to address promotion/retention. The decision of the IEP team will be the determiner of whether or not the student is retained.
5. Multiple measures must include individually administered achievement tests, as well as other special education measures of student performance levels.

PROMOTION/ACCELERATION/RETENTION OF STUDENTS WITH 504 PLANS

1. All retention will be initiated in accordance with the notice and implementation requirements listed in these regulations.
2. As soon as retention is being considered, and as part of the monitoring required by BP/AR 6170, the SST shall meet to assess the appropriateness of the accommodations, aids, and/or services provided. If the conditions that are causing the potential retention are related to the disability, they shall be addressed in the 504 accommodation plan according to 504 procedures. If the conditions are not related to the 504 disability, then a separate retention intervention plan should be developed.

3. If the SST moves to retain the student, it must provide written documentation that it complied with the requisite procedures and content of the student's 504 plan and that the disability is not the reason for the retention.
4. Determine the appropriateness of a special education evaluation if one has not already been completed.

PROMOTION/ACCELERATION/RETENTION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL) STUDENTS

Students identified as EL cannot be considered for retention due to lack of English proficiency.

Factors to consider include:

1. Length of time in the United States.
2. Length of time in an appropriate program.
3. Level of English acquisition.

Students who are LEP or with an IEP may function on a separate set of standards.