



Student Retention and Acceleration Policy

Policy Number: 3108

I. Purpose

Summit Academy Board of Trustees recognizes that special consideration may need to be given to some students for grade placement. The board is committed to an educational program that offers opportunities for students to acquire skills for cognitive, academic, social and emotional development. The Board of Education believes differentiated instruction provides for individual academic student needs as students remain with their own age peer group. However, the Board recognizes circumstances may exist where student retention or acceleration may be in the best interest of an individual student.

The Summit Academy Board of Trustees supports and acknowledges that a student's parent/legal guardian is the primary person responsible for the education of the student and that the school is in a secondary and supportive role to the parent/guardian. A student's parent/guardian has the right to reasonable academic accommodation(s) from a student's school regarding a parent's retention decision. (**Utah Code 53G-6-803**)

To assist a parent/legal guardian in making an informed decision, determinations regarding retention or acceleration will be made only after the needs and abilities of the student have been assessed and reviewed by a school governed committee.

II. Procedure and Appeal

- A. The school will evaluate a request for a student's retention or acceleration on a case-by-case basis. Each evaluation committee will include:
 - a. Parent/legal guardian and the student, at the discretion of the parent/guardian
 - b. Teacher
 - c. Administrator

The Administrator will lead the team and makes the final decision(s) based on the recommendations gathered.

- B. The Administration shall reasonably accommodate requests for retention of student(s) in kindergarten-8th grade, as required by State policies (**Utah Code 53G-6-803-2.**) Requests for students in grades 9-12 may be approved by the school administrator in extreme cases when warranted by their situation, assessment data, and/or a recommended by the Evaluation Committee.
- C. Reasonable acceleration of student retention that is completed by another LEA, and reflected on the student's official transcript or record, will be honored by the receiving LEA upon the enrollment of the student. New students to the LEA must typically enroll in the age-appropriate grade long enough for the evaluation team to assemble relevant data regarding the acceleration or retention decision.



- D. The decision of retention or acceleration may be reviewed by the committee at any time during the student's educational experience, but retention or acceleration change may only occur once per academic year.
- E. A request for student retention or acceleration will be approved or denied at the local school level.
- F. A school's determination of a retention or acceleration request may be appealed to a three-person LEA Retention/Acceleration Appeal Panel appointed by the Executive Director. The members of the appeal panel shall not have prior participation in the matter being reviewed.
 - a. A written appeal must be made to the Executive Directors or designee within ten (10) business days of the retention or acceleration decision.
 - b. The appeal panel shall review the determination of the school, and any documents submitted on behalf of the student.
 - c. A decision of the appeal shall be issued within twenty-one (21) business days of receipt of the appeal.
- G. The decision of the LEA Retention/Acceleration Appeal Panel may be appealed to the Summit Academy Board of Trustees only for procedural error or to submit any new evidence.
 - a. The written appeal must be submitted within ten (10) business days of receiving the decision of the LEA appeal Panel.
 - b. The Summit Academy Board of Trustees shall review written appeals submitted at the next available Board meeting.

III. Guidelines

Retention regarding any Multilingual Learner student should occur in consultation with the Director or designee. The Director or designee will help coordinate necessary evaluations to provide the parent/legal guardian with information on the linguistic and cultural elements of the request to retain.

If during the retention process, the school team suspects that student may be a student with a disability, the school must follow Special Education Child Find Procedures USBE Special Education Rules Section II.

Grades K-8 Guideline

- A. The student's physical, social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and academic development should be considered. The school's psychologist will collect data and information from as needed for the team to make an informed decision. Tools used to collect data include but are not limited to:
 - a. Benchmark data to determine academic ability
 - b. Interviews with the student, parent, school counselor, teacher(s), administrators and others as needed.
 - c. Official student reports/data (benchmark assessment, progress monitoring, report cards, responses to targeted instruction/intervention.
 - d. Other academic, social, behavioral, and psycho-educational assessments as needed. These could include but are not limited to:
 - i. Cognitive development, as assessed by a standardized, norm-referenced intelligence test.



- ii. Academic achievement, as assessed by the standardized, norm-referenced academic achievement battery
 - iii. Social-emotional and behavioral assessments completed by parent, teacher, and if appropriate, self-report.
- B. The student should possess the academic pre-requisite skill necessary to be successful at a higher grade.
- C. When retention involved moving to another school level in Summit Academy (i.e. a sixth-grade middle school student retained to a fifth grade elementary school), there must be collaboration and coordination between the two schools.
- D. Evaluation should include a degree of parental support.

The data and information gathered by the school team shall be shared with the parents or legal guardian to assist in making an informed decision about retention. Unless the school team finds that the data and information indicate that the requested retention is an unreasonable accommodation the parent or guardian(s) request to retain shall be granted.

Grades 9-12 Guidelines

- A. Retention in grade 9-12 should only be considered in extreme cases and is considered an unreasonable accommodation unless the parent or guardian provides clear evidence to the contrary.

If circumstances warrant retention consideration is grades 9-12, procedures as listed above in the Guidelines should be followed

XI. References

Utah Code 53G-6-803
Utah Code 53G-6-803-2

XII. Attachments

XIII. Revision History and Approval Date

Version 1: June 5, 2025 Drafted – Original Policy
Version 2: August 21, 2025 Approved