

PALMETTO SCHOLARS ACADEMY

I - INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Policy IKE - Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students

Introduction

The Palmetto Scholars Academy will provide each student an opportunity to progress in a continuous growth pattern of academic achievement in harmony with normal chronological, intellectual, social and emotional development. The school affirms academic excellence for students in our expectations for their learning and that those expectations are defined by the curriculum standards for our gifted and talented program adopted by the board of directors for the Palmetto Scholars Academy in the core discipline areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

While the retention of students is not a total solution to address substandard student performance, it is recognized that retention may allow some students the necessary additional instructional time at a grade level to achieve a minimal level of competency in skills that are essential for success at the next grade level of a gifted and talented curriculum.

Promotion of disabled students

All students with disabilities, as defined and identified by federal and state statutes and regulations, will be subject to the promotion criteria appropriate to the student's age and grade placement unless the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), as developed by a duly assembled IEP committee, addresses and defines alternative learning goals and promotion standards.

Waiver of promotion criteria under special circumstances

In the event of catastrophic illness, injury or psychological trauma for a child, the school principal may waive promotion criteria for the child provided that the incident has a demonstrated negative effect on the child's academic performance when compared to prior achievement. The school principal will notify the board of directors of this action and the circumstances prompting the action.

Grades six through eight

Promotion criteria

Students in grades six through eight are expected to learn, at a minimum, the state English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies and appropriate foreign language gifted curriculum standards, as evidenced by the following criteria that must be met for promotion.

- Criterion 1: The student has earned passing grades in all four core academic courses and the appropriate foreign language.
- Criterion 2: The student has met the attendance requirements of Palmetto Scholars Academy.¹

End-of-year promotion/retention status

The following are summary designations and descriptors for end-of-year promotion/retention status of students in grades six through eight.

- Promoted

The student has met all promotion criteria.

PALMETTO SCHOLARS ACADEMY

I - INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Policy IKE - Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students

- Promoted - academic plan required

The student has met all promotion criteria, but assessments indicate the student is not performing consistently at the grade level in gifted English/language arts, mathematics, science or social studies curricula. An academic plan will be developed at the end of the current school year to enhance the student's skills.

- Retained - summer school

A student may take in summer school up to two core academic courses that he/she has failed during the regular school year. The student will be promoted at the conclusion of the summer school term if he/she passes a total of four core academic courses, either during the regular school year or during summer school.

- Retained

The student has failed to meet promotion criteria. The student will be encouraged to seek academic assistance to accelerate student learning but the student will not be promoted to the next grade.

Academic assistance plans, parent conferences and academic probation

Parent conferences

At the beginning of the school year, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian of a student in grades six through eight performing below grade level. According to guidelines or regulations issued by the state board of education, the parent/legal guardian will be notified of a time and place for an academic conference. At the conference, the parent/legal guardian, teacher and student will discuss the necessary steps to ensure student success at the next grade level.

Academic plans

Participants in the conference at the beginning of the school year will develop an academic plan outlining district, school, parent and student responsibilities to include the following: (1) special assistance/intervention services the school will provide during the course of the school year to accelerate the learning of the student; and, (2) actions the parent/legal guardian and student will take to ensure accelerated learning. The parent/legal guardian will sign the academic plan, including notification that the student may be retained if student progress in meeting grade level expectations is not achieved. If the parent/legal guardian is unable to participate in the conference, the school will appoint a school mentor (teacher, school staff member or school volunteer) to act in his/her stead, and the school will send a copy of the plan to the parent/legal guardian by certified mail. The mentor will observe all district policies regarding confidentiality of information about the student.

Review

The district will implement review procedures in accordance with law.

Appeals for grades six through eight

The parent/legal guardian may appeal a decision to retain a student within 10 calendar days of receipt of the decision. The appeal must specify the parent/legal guardian's reason(s) for disagreement in writing and should be addressed to the Chairmen of the Board of Directors for the Palmetto Scholars Academy, 2415 Avenue F, North Charleston, SC 29405. A board panel will render a decision and mail notice of that

PALMETTO SCHOLARS ACADEMY

I - INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Policy IKE - Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students

decision within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. A copy of the decision will be sent to the school principal.

Parent communication procedures for grades six through eight

The teacher and/or principal will notify the parent/legal guardian of a child who is failing one or more core academic subjects of the possibility of retention and the need for a conference within two weeks of the end of each nine-week grading period. An academic assistance plan will be developed at the conference if one has not been previously developed for the student.

When a student's lack of achievement is evident, the parent/legal guardian should be notified and a conference scheduled with the parent/legal guardian as soon as the need is apparent.

The parent/legal guardian should be involved in the promotion/retention process; however, the final decision will be made by the teacher(s) and the principal based upon the promotion criteria in this policy.

The parent/legal guardian should be notified as soon as is feasible concerning an impending retention. The parent/legal guardian will be informed of the final promotion status for his/her child no later than the time the last report card is issued.

Acceleration of students in grades six through eight

Any student who, in the opinion of his/her principal and teacher(s), warrants consideration for acceleration and/or adjustment either in subject instructional grade level or in grade placement for all subjects will be carefully evaluated in order to determine the educational program in his/her best interests. The criteria for decisions will include the following: achievement level, cognitive ability, background experiences, emotional and social development and maturation, and the complexity and rigor of the current and proposed curricular program.

A committee composed of the child's teacher(s), guidance counselor, psychologist and principal will examine the available information and make appropriate program adjustments. The parent/legal guardian may attend committee meetings and present independent information to the committee members. Any change in educational program will require the approval of the parent/legal guardian.