



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

GENERAL PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO PROMOTION, RETENTION AND ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS

AP 5123.2

Effective Date: February 6, 2025

- I. **PURPOSE:** Promotion, retention and acceleration of students within Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) shall be based upon the degree of success the individual student has achieved in completing the educational program designated to meet their needs. The purpose of this administrative procedure is to provide guidelines for the promotion, retention, and acceleration of students.
- II. **POLICY:** The Board of Education of Prince George’s County (Board) believes that students should not be indiscriminately promoted through the grades without a level of skill mastery that will allow them to be successful at each succeeding grade. Research shows that students learn at different rates and some need longer than others to master specific academic skills. The Superintendent will oversee the implementation of a system that measures student achievement and provides supplemental programs for students who are not achieving at appropriate levels, subject to annual budget resource availability. Parents must be kept informed of lack of student progress that might result in failure and of the existence of supplemental learning opportunities. (Board Policy 5117)
- III. **BACKGROUND:**
- A. The Maryland Annotated Code, Education Article Section 7-205, states that “(a) The promotion of students in a public school and graduation from a public high school shall be in accordance with: (1) Policies established by the county board; and (2) The rules and regulations of the State Board.” The Superintendent is responsible for establishing administrative procedures and specific provisions regarding the progression of students from grade to grade.
- B. The PGCPS ’Student Learner Profile describes the attributes and skills PGCPS wants for all students to thrive in a dynamic, complex, global community. In order for students to have opportunities to grow in the skills and attributes captured within the

Student Learner Profile, the Instructional Framework provides the blueprint for solid instructional practices. Promotion, retention and acceleration will be considered annually in terms of the best placement of an individual student

IV. **DEFINITIONS:**

- A. *Acceleration* - Acceleration means when a student moves through traditional curriculum at rates faster than typical. Among the many forms of *acceleration* are whole-grade, early entrance, and individual subject *acceleration*.
- B. *Acceleration Evaluation Committee* - A committee formed to process requests for acceleration comprised of a gifted educator, current teacher(s) and a teacher(s) at the level to which acceleration is being requested.
- C. *Instructional Framework* - A document that defines the PGCPS expectations for instruction and provides a framework for consistently planning and implementing evidence-based practices in all grade levels, classrooms, and content areas. (See Appendix A)
- D. *Intervention* - Specific strategies that are implemented and monitored to help students improve in an area of need.
- E. *Promotion* - The term means advancing a student to the next grade after the current school year's requirements are met. A student is promoted when they have demonstrated appropriate levels of achievement and would benefit from the curriculum designed for the next grade level.
- F. *Retention* - The term means repeating an academic year of school. *Retention* in school may also be called grade retention, being held back, or repeating a grade. *Retention* is an intervention that should be used only when other interventions have been exhausted.
- G. Service learning - The development of responsible citizenship by engaging students in service beneficial to their communities. The service includes academic preparation, action and structured reflection that is either:
 - 1. INFUSED - hours earned and embedded within the approved PGCPS curriculum; or
 - 2. INDEPENDENT - hours earned at an approved community based site chosen by the student.

- H. Individual Subject Acceleration - Academic acceleration may involve individual subject acceleration. Individual subject acceleration occurs when a student is doing the caliber of work necessary to be enrolled in the next course in the academic sequence or demonstrates the ability to do the caliber of work required of students in that next grade level/subject/course.
- I. *Skills for Transition* - The term refers to a document that describes the indicators of content mastery from Elementary to Middle and from Middle to High. (See Appendix B)
- J. *Student Learner Profile* - The term refers to a document that describes the attributes and skills PGCPs wants for all students to thrive in a dynamic, complex, global community. (See Appendix C)
- K. Student Support Team (SST) - Student Support Team (SST) is a multidisciplinary team with expertise in teaching and learning, problem solving, and interventions. It is used when strategies and/or interventions for a student have proven unsuccessful.
- L. Whole-Grade Acceleration – Whole- Grade Acceleration is a process of double promotion or higher grade placement based on the student’s learning ability as well as:
 - 1. age;
 - 2. maturity;
 - 3. academic skills;
 - 4. self-confidence;
 - 5. grade level;
 - 6. behavior; and
 - 7. other pertinent factors relating to the overall well-being of the student.

V. PROCEDURES:

A. Promotion and Retention Considerations - Elementary School

1. Promotion

- a. Students are expected to become creative and innovative thinkers and master certain skills if they are to be successful in succeeding years. Essential

foundation skills in reading, writing, and mathematics must be developed in Grades K-3. If these skills are not mastered, the student may experience difficulty with school tasks in subsequent years. In Grades 4-5, emphasis is placed on applying basic skills and strategies, developing higher order thinking and communication skills to learn content, and learning independently. Promotion from Grade 5 to middle school shall be based on the grades and success on the criteria skills listed in the transition skills document. (See Appendix B)

2. Retention

- a. A student may be considered for retention when the student has not demonstrated appropriate levels of achievement in response to interventions based upon their needs and would benefit from additional experiences with the curriculum at the same grade level. Retention is an intervention that should be used only when other interventions have been exhausted.
- b. School teams are required to follow the Retention Timetable and must hit each target monthly. (See Appendix D)
- c. When retention is determined to be the appropriate course of action, written notification will be sent to the parent/guardian and at least one parent/guardian conference per semester will be held prior to the retention.
- d. If a parent/guardian requests retention for a student in elementary school, the request must be submitted in writing to the school principal. The principal will hold a meeting to discuss the request with the parent/guardian and assigned classroom teachers, school counselors, and administrators.
- e. If the parent/guardian and school personnel cannot reach an agreement relative to the retention, the final decision will be made by the elementary school principal and communicated in writing to the parent/guardians.
- f. A parent/guardian's appeal of a retention decision must be made in writing to the Associate Superintendent for Elementary Schools within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of the written notification to the parent/guardian. The Associate Superintendent/designee shall review the appeal and notify, in writing, the parent/guardian of the decision within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the parent's/guardian's appeal.

- g. School staff are strongly encouraged to refer students who are not performing at the appropriate level to supplemental programs (*e.g.*, intervention, tutoring, credit recovery).
- h. Retention guidelines for different grade levels are further described under Section V.D. of this administrative procedure.

B. Promotion and Retention Considerations - Middle School

1. Promotion

- a. For purposes of clarification in this administrative procedure, a middle school student is any student in Grades 6, 7, or 8.
- b. The middle school years are a time when students consolidate previous learning, explore new program areas, and focus on continuous development and application of academic skills.
- c. Middle school students are expected to successfully complete all subjects taken.
- d. Promotion from middle school to high school will be based on the grades and success on the criteria skills as listed in the transition skills document (Appendix B) to this administrative procedure.
- e. Middle school students are required to earn a minimum of eight (8) hours of service learning prior to entering high school. Students must earn a total of 24 *independent* hours beginning in sixth grade in middle school in order to graduate with a Maryland High School Diploma. (See Administrative Procedure 6151)
- f. The final decision for promotions shall be made by the Associate Superintendent for Middle Schools.

2. Retention

- a. A student will be considered for retention when the student has not achieved satisfactorily in response to interventions based upon their needs and would benefit from additional experiences with the curriculum at the same grade

level. Retention is an intervention that should be used only when other interventions have been exhausted.

- b. School teams are required to follow the Retention Timetable and must hit each target monthly. (See Appendix D)
- c. When retention is determined to be the appropriate course of action, written notification will be sent to the parent/guardian and at least one parent/guardian conference per semester will be held prior to the retention.
- d. Middle school students who have failed at least two of the core content courses (mathematics, reading, social studies, and science) and must be considered for retention will be given the option of attending a summer school program. Students should complete the summer school program with at least a grade of “D”.
- e. If a parent/guardian requests retention for a student in middle school, the request must be submitted in writing to the school principal. The principal will hold a meeting to discuss the request with the parent/guardian and appropriate school personnel.
- f. Retention of students from middle school to high school will be discussed in collaboration between the school principal and the Instructional Director.
- g. The final decision for retentions escalated from the Instructional Director shall be made by the Associate Superintendent.
- h. A parent/guardian’s appeal of a retention decision must be made in writing to the Associate Superintendent for Middle Schools within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of the written notification to the parent/guardian. The Associate Superintendent/designee shall review the appeal and notify, in writing, the parent/guardian of the decision within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the parent’s/guardian’s appeal.
- i. Retention guidelines for the different grade levels are further described under Section V.D. of this administrative procedure.

C. Promotion and Retention Considerations - High School

1. Promotion for entering freshmen in Fall 2014 through Fall 2020 (See Appendix F)
 - a. From Grade 9 to 10, a student must have a total of five units of credit, including one credit of English 9. Progress toward fulfilling the graduation requirement with regards to the Maryland assessments should be included.
 - b. From Grade 10 to 11, a student must have a total of ten credits, including two credits of English (English 9 and English 10) one credit of mathematics, one credit of science, and one credit of social studies. Progress toward fulfilling the graduation requirement with regards to Maryland High School Assessments should be included.
 - c. From Grade 11 to 12, a student must have a total of fourteen units of credits, including three credits of English (English 9, English 10, and English 11) (or the equivalency) two credits of mathematics, one credit of science, one credit of social studies, and be able to fulfill all requirements, for a Maryland High School Diploma in June.
 - d. All students in grade 12 must be enrolled in courses daily to meet their graduation requirements. A minimum of four credits is required over the course of the school year (see Administrative Procedure 6150).
 - e. Students must meet the assessment requirements or alternative option defined by the Maryland State Department of Education per first year in ninth grade in high school in order to graduate with a Maryland High School Diploma.
 - f. Students must meet the remaining service-learning requirements established per their sixth grade year in middle school in order to graduate with a Maryland High School Diploma (See Administrative Procedure 6151).
 - g. Failure to achieve either assessment or service-learning requirements will result in a student not being able to graduate, regardless of credits and grades earned.
2. Promotion for entering freshmen in Fall 2021 (students entering high school in school year 2021-2022) or after (See Appendix F):

- a. From Grade 9 to 10, a student must have a total of five units of credit, including one credit of English 9 and one credit of Mathematics. Progress toward fulfilling the graduation requirement with regards to the Maryland assessments should be included.
 - b. From Grade 10 to 11, a student must have a total of ten credits, including two credits of English (English 9 and English 10), two credits of mathematics, one credit of science, and one credit of social studies. Progress toward fulfilling the graduation requirement with regards to Maryland assessments should be included.
 - c. From Grade 11 to 12, a student must have a total of fourteen units of credits, including three credits of English (English 9, English 10, and English 11), three credits of mathematics, one credit of science, one credit of social studies, and be able to fulfill all requirements for a Maryland High School Diploma in June.
 - d. All seniors must be enrolled in courses daily to meet their graduation requirements. A minimum of four credits is required over the course of the school year (see Administrative Procedure 6150).
 - e. In addition, a student must have taken all required course assessments.
 - f. Students must meet the assessment requirements or alternative option per first year in the ninth grade in high school in order to graduate with a Maryland High School Diploma.
 - g. Students must meet the remaining service-learning requirements established per their sixth grade year in middle school in order to graduate with a Maryland High School Diploma (see Administrative Procedure 6151).
 - h. Failure to achieve assessment or service-learning requirements will result in a student not being able to graduate, regardless of credits and grades earned.
3. Notification of Seniors Graduation Status:
- a. A Graduation Notification/Agreement (electronic and/or PS-13) will be completed with each senior in a conference with his/her school counselor during the first eight weeks of the student's grade 12 year.

- b. The original copy will be retained for the school file; a copy will either be sent by U.S. mail or emailed to the student and parent or guardian prior to the end of the first grading period.
 - c. Students in 12th grade who are entering high school after issuance of the first report card will, at the time of registration, complete a Graduation Notification/Agreement. If an official transcript from the previous school is not available, a note on the Graduation Notification/Agreement will indicate “pending receipt of official previous school records.” When official records are received, the Graduation Notification/Agreement will be completed.
 - d. Additional notification of student’s progress on the assessment requirements, credits earned, and grades is provided in the form of progress reports and report cards issued every nine weeks. Ongoing communication will be provided to parents of seniors in danger of not graduating.
 - e. Students not meeting graduation requirements will be notified immediately following final examinations by a personal conference with the assigned school counselor, a telephone call to parents or guardians, and a certified letter sent to parents or guardians.
 - f. Multilingual Learners at any grade level should not be retained solely on the basis of their English proficiency (see Administrative Procedure 5111.3).
4. Appeal for Denial of Diploma for Failure to Meet Maryland Assessment Requirements for students entering high school in Fall 2022 or before (see COMAR 13A.03.02.09):
- a. The principal or his/her designee shall notify each senior and the senior's parents or guardians on or before the end of February of the senior year if a student may not graduate. The notice shall explain the reasons the student may not graduate, the options available to meet all graduation requirements, that a waiver of the Maryland assessment graduation requirement may be one of the options if the student meets the criteria, the waiver process and timeline, and to submit information in writing to the principal concerning eligibility of their child for the waiver.

- b. On or before the end of February, the principal shall report to the area superintendent the name and student identification number of each student identified in the February notice.
- c. On or before April 1, the principal shall identify each student who may fail to graduate because the student has taken none or failed some or all of the required Maryland assessments.
- d. On or before April 1, the principal shall report to the Associate Superintendent the name and student identification number of each student identified.
- e. Waiver requests based on extenuating circumstances will be reviewed. By April 1, for each senior identified, the school principal shall recommend to the Associate Superintendent a waiver of the Maryland assessment graduation requirements that the student has not fulfilled to date if:
 - 1) The student meets the following criteria:
 - a) The student has or will meet all other graduation requirements;
 - b) The student has or will take all required Maryland assessments before the graduation date; and
 - c) If the student had an opportunity to participate in one or more interventions or remediation opportunities, the student participated in them; and
 - 2) The student is prevented from meeting the Maryland assessment graduation requirements because:
 - a) Of a decision made by PGCPs concerning the provision of appropriate assistance;
 - b) The student experienced a circumstance(s) preceding the administration of the most recent Maryland assessment, such as a recent death in the immediate family, a serious or prolonged illness or pregnancy with medical complications, an accident causing serious injury, or a destructive house fire;

- c) The student moved to the United States in the junior or senior year and the student is literate in the student's native language but not literate in English; or
- d) The student moved to Maryland in the senior year, has passed all the Maryland assessment courses, but has failed the related Maryland assessment, and has had no adequate opportunity for intervention.
- e) On or about April 1, the principal shall notify the student and the student's parents or guardians that the student is being considered for a waiver of the Maryland assessment graduation requirements that the student has not fulfilled to date. The notice shall explain the waiver decision-making process.
- f) On or before May 1 (subject to results being reported back to the district from MSDE), the principal of the high school shall submit a written Maryland assessment waiver recommendation to the area superintendent for each student who meets the criteria set forth with the participation of one or more from this list:
 - i. The student's IEP team, if the student is a student with disabilities;
 - ii. The English Language Development staff, if the student is an Multilingual Learner;
 - iii. Other school personnel; or
 - iv. One or more of them.
- g) The principal shall explain the reason for each recommendation, whether the recommendation is to grant or deny the waiver.
- h) The Associate Superintendent shall review each recommendation and shall:
 - i. Grant or deny the waiver;
 - ii. Promptly notify the student and the student's parent or guardian of the decision in writing; and

- iii. If the waiver is granted, include in the notification the local procedures and requirements that must be met for a diploma to be awarded.
 - i) A student or the student's parents or guardians may appeal the waiver denial to the State Superintendent by sending a written appeal letter explaining why the waiver denial was an arbitrary or unreasonable decision. The State Superintendent may affirm or reverse the superintendent's decision and shall inform the student, the student's parents or guardians, the superintendent, and the State Board in writing of the decision.
 - j) The decision of the State Superintendent may be appealed to the circuit court. By August 1, the Chief of School Support and Leadership by approval of the PGCPs Superintendent shall send a report to the State Superintendent or the State Superintendent's designee on waiver decisions.
 - k) No part of this procedure is intended to establish any right to participate in the graduation ceremony while an appeal is pending.
 - l) Participation in the graduation ceremony remains at the discretion of school principal.
- 5. For students entering high school in Fall 2023 or after, the waiver process for the Biology and Local, State, and National end of course assessments will be considered for extenuating circumstances.
- D. Retention Guidelines - Retention is an intervention that should be used only when other interventions have been exhausted. School teams are required to follow the Retention Timetable and must hit each target monthly (see Appendices D and E).
 - 1. Guidelines for Elementary and Middle Schools
 - a. The indicators below are offered as a reference for educators when making decisions about the retention of students.
 - 2. Kindergarten – A **combination of two or more** of the following factors may suggest that another year in kindergarten may be appropriate for the student:

- a. Exhibits significant delays in language and communication skills as indicated by early identification screening procedures;
 - b. Demonstrates very short attention span, exhibited by significant difficulty attending to activities, tasks and following simple directions; and
 - c. Has a documented pattern of sporadic attendance (attendance should be monitored).
3. Grade 1 – A **combination of two or more** of the following factors may suggest that another year in grade one may be appropriate for the student:
- a. Remains at an emergent reading level in spite of interventions offered;
 - b. Has not mastered learning names and sounds of letters, and simple sound blending skills;
 - c. Experiences much difficulty with handwriting activities;
 - d. Demonstrates poor skill development on mathematics objectives for grade one even when using manipulative aids;
 - e. Cannot work independently even for limited periods of time;
 - f. Exhibits much difficulty in following directions; and
 - g. Has a documented pattern of sporadic attendance (attendance should be monitored).
4. Grade 2 – A **combination of two or more** of the following factors may suggest that another year in grade two may be appropriate for the student:
- a. Remains at a grade one reading level in spite of interventions offered;
 - b. Has not mastered learning names and sounds of letters, and simple sound blending skills;
 - c. Experiences much difficulty with handwriting activities;

- d. Demonstrates poor skill development on mathematics objectives for grade two even when using manipulative aids;
 - e. Cannot work independently even for limited periods of time;
 - f. Exhibits much difficulty in following directions; and
 - g. Has a documented pattern of sporadic attendance (attendance should be monitored).
5. Grades 3, 4, and 5 – A **combination of two or more** of the following factors may suggest that another year in grades three, four, and five may be appropriate for the student:
- a. In spite of interventions provided, the student lacks fluency and/or demonstrates poor reading comprehension and is reading at a level lower than the previous grade;
 - b. Demonstrates poor skill development on mathematics objectives for the current grade even when using manipulative aids;
 - c. Experiences significant difficulty with written communication;
 - d. Demonstrates significant difficulty following two and three part directions; and
 - e. Has a documented pattern of sporadic attendance (attendance should be monitored).
6. Grades 6, 7, and 8 – If a student is retained during the middle school years, every effort should be made to help that student benefit from the opportunities middle school provides for preparation for high school. Rather than retaining a student simply because he/she has received one or more failing grades, a **combination of two or more** of the following factors may suggest that another year in Grade 6, 7, or 8 may be appropriate for the student who:
- a. Experiences difficulty reading fluently, constructing meaning from text, and communicating in written form;

- b. Demonstrates poor performance on mathematics objectives;
- c. Experiences significant difficulty working independently, lacks appropriate study skills, and demonstrates repeated failure to complete assignments; and
- d. Has a documented pattern of sporadic attendance (attendance should be monitored).

E. Students with IEPs

- 1. A student with a disability under IDEA who is considered for retention shall be referred to the IEP team to first consider whether the student requires revisions to the IEP as an alternative to retention.
- 2. A student with a disability under IDEA should not be retained due to the need for additional special education or compensatory services. A student's disability and the need for specially designed instruction should not be considered as a basis for retention.
- 3. Strategies to modify instruction for students if it appears that the student is not making adequate progress include:
 - a. Place students in small instructional groups using materials appropriate for each student's instructional level;
 - b. Increase use of multi-sensory instructional techniques and manipulative materials;
 - c. Provide flexible grouping for skills instruction;
 - d. Obtain assistance from the reading teacher or other specialists;
 - e. Provide an extra period for instruction in critical skills areas;
 - f. Provide extended day programs for reinforcement of skills;
 - g. Incorporate technology-based instructional interventions within the student's instructional program;

- h. Employ the use of specifically identified intervention materials; and
 - i. Divide the lesson into manageable steps.
 - j. If the student is in special education, the IEP team will convene to discuss appropriate services for Students with Disabilities under IDEA.
4. Summer School Option – Middle school students who have failed at least two of the core content courses (mathematics, reading, social studies, and science) and are considered for retention will be given the option of attending a summer program. Students should complete the courses with at least a grade of “D”. Middle schoolers who fail a high school course may have the option to take a high school credit recovery program.
- a. Timetable – The timetable to follow in considering possible Grades K-retention is provided (see Appendix D). Activities specified in the timetable must be completed for all students retained. The principal’s designee will complete a checklist or record indicating that these procedures have been followed and maintained in the folder of each student who is retained.
 - b. Instructional questions that should be considered when planning a program for the student who is retained include the following:
 - 1) What teaching strategies would be most appropriate for the student?
 - 2) Does the student have an IEP or a 504 Plan?
 - 3) How does the disability affect the student’s ability to access instruction?
 - 4) Are the identified supplementary aids and services, accommodations, and program modifications appropriate for the student to make academic progress?
 - 5) Is the student’s program or placement appropriate?
 - 6) What additional instructional/support service will be offered beyond the regular instructional schedule?

- 7) How can parents/guardians be supported in providing assistance for their child?
 - 8) What are the most appropriate instructional and resource materials to use with the student?
 - 9) Will the student have the same teacher and if so what will be done differently with delivery of instruction?
5. Guidelines for High School– Retentions in high school occur based on credits earned (see Appendix F). School teams are required to follow the Retention Timetable and must hit each target monthly (see Appendix E). A checklist or record indicating that these procedures have been followed must be maintained in the folder of each student who is retained. This timetable must be adjusted accordingly for students who are enrolled in schools with a four-period schedule.
 6. Accelerated Promotion of Students – In elementary and middle schools, the principal’s designee must file documents related to all components of an acceleration request in the student’s cumulative folder. These components include a written referral for acceleration, a list of documents reviewed, a list of Acceleration Review Team members, the decision of Acceleration Review Team members, an assessment of the impact of skipping a prerequisite course(s), and a waiver of prerequisites formalized in memo format.
 - a. Elementary School Grades PreK-5: Students are expected to complete all courses and/or earn applicable credits as defined by Code of Maryland Regulations and PGCPs ’publications. In the case where school staff deem it appropriate to consider a student for accelerated placement, the guidelines below are provided.
 - b. PreK - Grade 1 (Also see Administrative Procedure 5111.1, Admission to Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and First Grade.)
 - c. Early Entrance into Pre-Kindergarten – Per Administrative Procedure 5111.1, the Board allows early admission into pre-kindergarten for three (3) year-old students who meet all other enrollment qualifications and have demonstrated educational needs warranting early admission based on assessment results.

- d. Early Entrance into Kindergarten – The Board allows early admission into kindergarten for four (4) year-old students who meet all other enrollment qualifications and demonstrate capabilities warranting early admission based on assessment results.
- e. Early Entrance into Grade 1 – The Board maintains that extremely talented kindergarten students should be declared eligible to enroll into the first grade when it is determined by staff that those students have the maturity and ability to succeed academically in the first grade. An Acceleration Evaluation Committee meeting must be held to review all assessment and classroom data. The Elementary Reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics Supervisors can assist with an evaluation of documents if needed. These data and written acceleration plans should be sent for approval from the Principal to the Instructional Director.

F. Grades 2-5

- 1. Referral for Acceleration – Students may be referred for acceleration by the teacher, parent, or self-nomination. Students referred for accelerated placement (individual subject or whole grade acceleration) will be evaluated in a prompt manner. The principal will schedule the evaluations. Normally, changes in a student's schedule will occur only at the start of a semester. Before a student is evaluated for accelerated placement, the principal or his/her designee shall obtain written permission from the student's parent or guardian.
- 2. Process for Acceleration – An Acceleration Evaluation Committee convened by the principal will determine whether the student will be permitted to skip a grade level (i.e., whole-grade acceleration) or take a subject at a higher grade level or skip a course. If assistance is needed with the evaluation, the Office of Professional School Counseling should be contacted. This acceleration evaluation committee shall include the following:
 - a. A parent or guardian, or a representative designated by that parent or guardian;

- b. A gifted education coordinator, gifted intervention specialist, a school psychologist, or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration.
 - c. A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school.
 - d. A current teacher of the referred student.
 - e. A teacher at the grade level or course to which the referred student may be accelerated.
 - f. Others as the committee deems appropriate.
3. Criteria for Acceleration - A student will be accelerated when the acceleration evaluation committee determines and documents that a student:
- a. Achieved the grade/course objectives and State-mandated requirements, if applicable, for the grade/course in which he/she is presently enrolled, as well as for the grade(s)/course(s) that will be skipped;
 - b. The opinion of the professional staff, achieved the instructional objectives set for the present grade/course, as well as the succeeding one(s);
 - c. Demonstrated sufficient proficiency to permit him/her to be accelerated in the educational program; and
 - d. Demonstrated the degree of social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the grade/course to which he/she will be promoted or enrolled.

G. Decision Notification/Appeal Process

- 1. The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision on the outcome of the evaluation process to the principal and the student's parent or guardian. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the decision and will become a part of the student's cumulative folder. If the student is recommended for whole-grade or individual subject acceleration, the acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan. The parent or guardian shall be provided with a copy of the plan. The plan shall specify

placement of the student in an accelerated setting. The plan shall be filed in the student's cumulative folder with all documented evidence.

2. Appeals must be made in writing to the Associate Superintendent within (15) calendar days of the date of the notification to the parent or guardian of the committee's decision. The Associate Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the appeal and notify the parent or guardian of his/her decision in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the plan. The Associate Superintendent or his/her designee's decision shall be final.
3. Accelerated Promotion of Students – Middle School, Grades 6-8: See Administrative Procedure 6150, Educational Requirements and Options in Secondary Schools for required credits in middle school per the Annotated Code of Maryland.
4. Individual Subject Acceleration – In addition to the guidelines provided in this section, honors courses or the accelerated course sequence would be the first level of acceleration for students in Grades 6-8.
5. In extreme cases when students demonstrate an extensive knowledge base well beyond their current content or peers, and where mastery on grade level standards has been exceeded, then an acceleration evaluation committee will be convened by the principal.
6. This committee will make a recommendation on whether the student will be permitted to skip a grade level (i.e., whole grade acceleration), or take a subject at a higher-grade level or skip a course.
7. In addition, high school courses that earn high school credit are only those courses approved by the PGCPS and for which all prerequisites are met via MSDE. Approved online credit, transfer credit from approved institutions, home-schooling credit or other credit via Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) testing when credit to be considered, is not from an approved, accredited source.
8. Referral for Acceleration – Students may be referred for acceleration by the teacher, parent, or self-nomination. Students referred for accelerated placement will be evaluated in a prompt manner. The principal or his/her designee will schedule the evaluations. Normally, changes in a student's schedule will occur only at the start of a semester. Before a student is evaluated for accelerated

placement, the principal or his/her designee shall obtain written permission from the student's parent or guardian.

9. Process for Acceleration – An acceleration evaluation committee convened by the principal will determine whether the student will be permitted to skip a grade level (i.e., whole-grade acceleration), take a subject at a higher-grade level, or skip a course. If assistance is needed with the evaluation, the Office of Professional School Counseling should be contacted.
10. This acceleration evaluation committee shall include the following:
 - a. A parent or guardian, or a representative designated by that parent or guardian.
 - b. A gifted education coordinator, gifted intervention specialist, school psychologist, or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration.
 - c. A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school.
 - d. A current teacher of the referred student.
 - e. A teacher at the grade level or course to which the referred student may be accelerated.
 - f. Others as the committee deems appropriate.
11. Criteria for Acceleration – The acceleration evaluation committee is expected to take into consideration:
 - a. Placement in Honors course/section prior to acceleration.
 - b. Existing content acceleration plans that have been provided thus far to the student and the data that supports this recommendation. Middle school R/ELA and Mathematics Supervisors can assist with an evaluation of data.
 - c. Classroom participation and interaction with peers.
 - d. Performance on state-based assessments.

- e. Review of prerequisites for each core content course.
 - f. Decision Notification/Appeals Process – If the team recommends whole-grade acceleration, all considered factors must be described in a written recommendation to the principal. If in agreement, the principal will then submit a written request to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction inclusive of all determining factors by March of the school year preceding the change for approval. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will confer with the appropriate content area supervisors and record-keeping stakeholders and respond through a memo that will be placed in the student’s cumulative folder by May. This written notification shall be emailed to the student’s parent and shall include instructions for appealing the decision.
 - g. Appeals must be made in writing by the parent to the Associate Superintendent within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date on the notification from the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The Associate Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the appeal and notify the parent or guardian in writing of his/her decision within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the appeal.
 - h. Middle school students who meet prerequisites for a high school course are eligible to take the course for high school graduation credit where available. See High School Graduation Credit for Middle School Students in Administrative Procedure 6150 Educational Requirements and Options in Secondary Schools for details.
12. Accelerated Promotion of Students – High School, Grades 9-12: See Administrative Procedure 6150 - Educational Requirements and Options in Secondary Schools for required credits in high school and the Early Admissions process for students who wish to leave high school in less than four years. Students must earn specified credits for promotion from one grade level to the next. Additionally, acceleration can be attained by course selection once prerequisites are met, approved summer school options, approved online courses (approved by the PGCPs and paid for by the parent), dual enrollment, or advanced placement courses.

VI. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE:

- A. The school principal or designee will review this administrative procedure with all staff with responsibilities herein by September 30 of each school year. A record containing staff signatures to signify completion of this task will be kept on file in the principal's office for four (4) years.
- B. The school principal or designee will implement a school plan to align with the schedule for student interventions and notifications.
- C. The school principal or designee will designate an acceleration review committee by the first day of school each year.
- D. The school Enrollment Manager in consultation with the school Registrar will set the Retention Flag in the student information system.

VII. RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Administrative Procedure 5111.1, Admission to Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade;
 Administrative Procedure 5111.3, English Learner Students;
 Administrative Procedure 5113, Student Attendance, Absence and Truancy
 Administrative Procedure 5121.1, Grading and Reporting for Elementary Schools, Early Childhood Through Grade Five;
 Administrative Procedure 5121.2, Grading and Reporting for Middle Schools, Grade Six Through Grade Eight;
 Administrative Procedure 5121.3, Grading and Reporting for High Schools, Grade Nine Through Grade Twelve;
 Administrative Procedure 5124, Student Intervention Team (SIT), and Student Support Team (SST);
 Administrative Procedure 6150, Educational Requirements and Options in Secondary Schools;
 Administrative Procedure 6151, Student Service-Learning Graduation Guidelines;
 Student Learner Profile
 PGCPs Strategic Plan 2021-2026

VIII. LEGAL REFERENCE:

Maryland Code, Education Article Section 7-205
 Maryland Rules 7-201
 COMAR 13A 03.02.07
 COMAR 13A 03.02.08

COMAR 13A.03.02.09-1
COMAR 13A.03.02.11

IX. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

The Division of Academics and the Division of School Support and Leadership will be responsible for updating these procedures as needed.

X. CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES:

This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 5123.2, dated July 1, 2024.

XI. EFFECTIVE DATE: February 6, 2025.

Attachments:

Appendix A – Instructional Framework

Appendix B – Transition Skills

Appendix C - Student Learner Profile

Appendix D – Retention Timetable Grades K-8

Appendix E – Retention Timetable Grades 9-12

Appendix F – High School Promotion Requirements Chart