

SECTION 19 – SCHOLAR POLICY – RETENTION AND PROMOTION POLICY

Philosophy

Compass Charter Schools (“CCS” or the “Charter School”) is committed to the success of each scholar. CCS has adopted and follows a Scholar Success Team (“SST”) Policy to establish and implement scholar achievement and intervention strategies in a timely manner. Despite the implementation of such strategies it may be necessary to retain a scholar in the prior grade level or promote a scholar above their grade level for the following school year. In implementing this policy, the CCS Board of Directors (“Board”) is guided by the following principles:

1. Retention and promotion criteria will be objectively based on a scholar’s ability or inability to meet the grade level CCS standards of expected scholar achievement in language arts, mathematics, science, or social science, for scholars in grades kindergarten (k) through twelfth (12), as determined by the CCS staff based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, performance on state and local assessments, course performance, social emotional development, and teacher observation. Specific grade level criteria for retention or Promotion shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Minimum and maximum age norms
 - b. Performance levels on state testing (CAASPP) in all areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics compared to grade level proficiency
 - i. below minimal proficiency for retention consideration
 - ii. 90th percentile or above for promotion consideration
 - c. Performance on Compass Charter Schools internal benchmark assessments compared to grade level proficiency
 - i. below minimal proficiency for retention consideration
 - ii. 90th percentile or above for promotion consideration
 - d. Physical and social maturity development commensurate with the grade level in which the scholar will be placed
 - e. Academic performance in courses
 - i. at-risk performance for retention purposes
 - ii. notably above grade level for promotion purposes
 - f. Effectiveness of full implementation of MTSS interventions, accommodations, and differentiation
 - g. Cumulative file documentation
 - h. Teacher substantiation of recommendation
 - i. Mastery of prerequisite courses, if applicable
 - j. Other indicators deemed appropriate by Compass Charter Schools
2. For English Learners, retention cannot be based on the scholar’s lack of English fluency as related to meeting English standards.
3. For identified gifted scholars, promotion cannot be based solely on GATE identification and lack of GATE identification shall not be a criterion to exclude a scholar from promotion consideration.

4. Decisions about retention or promotion will not be based on requests for a scholar to be placed with or avoid a specific teacher or other scholars.

A. Required Steps Preceding Retention/Promotion Decision

Before retaining a scholar, CCS will follow the following steps:

1. For retention requests originated by Compass Charter Schools staff: Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive notice of progress or lack of progress in target areas through mid-semester progress reports and semester report cards. Parents will be notified by the teacher of areas of academic concerns in parent teacher conferences or in writing on progress reports or semester report card. Scholar achievement will be determined “at risk” as defined by CCS Criteria for Retention or Promotion listed above.
2. If the parent/guardian is initiating the request, the request must be made to the Supervising Teacher (ST) in writing. The ST will, within two (2) school days of receipt of written request, either: a) submit an SST Referral Form within two (2) school days of receipt of the written request if there is evidence of specific, differentiated accelerated/advanced support actions and outcomes demonstrated by assignments, or b) respond to the parent/guardian in writing and copying the Supervising Teacher’s supervisor and Program Director, notifying the parent/guardian that differentiated support has not been implemented and documented over a period of at least 4 weeks, which is necessary to move forward with the SST referral. For scholars with IEPs, the Supervising teacher will alert the special education case manager and special education coordinator within two (2) school days of receipt of written request for retention or promotion so that an amendment IEP can be scheduled. The IEP team will make a determination for retention and inform the Program Director; the IEP team will make a recommendation to the Program Director regarding promotion.
3. Once the request has reached the SST level, CCS will hold an SST meeting for Scholar. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to the SST meeting to discuss concerns and proposed interventions. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive a copy of the SST meeting notes which will serve as notice of proposed interventions and scholar achievement strategies.
4. Research based interventions suggested at the SST meeting will be implemented and documented in an ongoing and consistent manner. A recommended interval of four (4) to six (6) weeks of academic interventions/differentiation should occur before the initial SST. Once additional interventions or differentiation have been recommended and implemented, a second SST meeting is held and the determination regarding retention will be made, unless the SST recommends additional interventions, in which case a third meeting may be scheduled.
5. Scholars may be required to take a placement exam and/or end of unit subject tests, as identified by the Assistant Superintendent & CAO, to determine appropriate placement based on requests for repeating or skipping a grade.
6. The SST team for retention and promotion purposes shall consist of, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) the teacher(s), Director of Counseling Services or a designated Counselor (if available), an LEA administrator designee, and other staff members as deemed necessary. Invitation will be via email or telephone by teacher or other designated staff to the number and email address Parent(s)/Guardian(s) provided to the Charter School. Teacher will log all attempts to contact Parent(s)/Guardian(s). If after two (2) documented attempts to schedule a conference by phone and/or email, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) do not respond, a third attempt will be sent by a written confirmation sent via US Mail to the address Parent(s)/Guardian(s) provided to the Charter

School. If the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) do not respond within 10 (ten) calendar days of receipt of the written confirmation, the conference will be held without their presence.

7. Following the above interventions/differentiation, the SST may make a recommendation for retention or promotion.
8. The SST review will include:
 - a. Review of previous SST notes
 - b. Discussion of previous/current/ongoing interventions, review of intervention logs, differentiation
 - c. Review of current work and available assessments;
 - d. For promotion, a review of performance on a designated grade level assessment identified by the Assistant Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer
 - e. Development of a plan for support for the following academic year
 - f. Determination of scholar's grade level for the following academic year
 - g. If the recommendation is to retain the Scholar, appropriate instruction and interventions are targeted for the following year so the scholar will be supported in meeting the standards the following year in the retained grade. If the recommendation is to promote the scholar, progress will continue to be monitored.
9. With the recommendation from the SST, the Program Director will make the final determination based upon all information discussed at the meeting.
10. When a final decision is made, the Program Director or designee will send the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) notes from the meeting, a copy of this policy, and the decision of the SST in writing via email and certified mail within ten (10) school days of the meeting.

B. Right to Appeal

If the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) disagree with the decision, they have the right to appeal to the Superintendent & CEO through the following steps:

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) choosing to appeal a decision to retain a scholar shall submit a completed Promotion or Retention Appeal Request Form (attached as Exhibit A) to the Superintendent & CEO specifying the reasons why the decision should be overturned. The submission of the Retention Appeal Request Form must occur no later than seven (7) calendar days following the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) receipt of the determination of retention.
2. The Superintendent & CEO shall review the appeal as well as the scholar's academic performance records on which the Retention Team relied. The Program Director shall be provided an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which the Retention Team or Program Director's decision was based. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will also be given an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing their reason for appeal. Superintendent & CEO will prepare a written decision which summarizes findings and conclusions.
3. The Superintendent & CEO shall notify the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of his/her decision in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Appeal via registered mail at the address provided by Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to the Charter School, unless otherwise agreed to in writing.
4. The Superintendent & CEO's decision is final.

C. Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental instructional programs will be available for scholars who are recommended for retention, retained, or identified as at-risk of retention. Such programs may be offered by CCS during the summer, after school, on Saturdays and/or during intersession.

The Program Director or designee may require recommended scholars to participate in supplemental instructional programs. Parents/Guardians who exclude their scholars from supplemental instructional programs will be notified in writing by CCS of their risk of retention for the scholar's failure to access supplemental instruction.

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Exhibit A

Compass Charter Schools
Promotion or Retention Appeal Request Form

Date: _____

Name of Scholar: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

Appealing the decision for (please circle one): Retention Promotion

As outlined in the Compass Charter Schools (“CCS”) Promotion and Retention Policy, my child (please circle one): was was not recommended for retention/promotion by the CCS SST. I do not agree with this recommendation and wish to appeal this decision to the Superintendent & CEO.

Please explain your disagreement and provide documentation, as applicable:

I am aware that this appeal must be made within seven (7) school days of my receipt of the recommendation to retain or promote my child and should be submitted to the Superintendent & CEO. This appeal will go before the Superintendent & CEO, who will make a final determination regarding retention or promotion.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date