



LABRADOR SCHOOL BOARD

Student Programming Decision Policy

December 7, 2007

PROGRAMMING DECISIONS

Programming and placement decisions will be made in the best interests of the learner taking into consideration the learners' academic, social and emotional needs and strengths.

INTRODUCTION

It is important to provide a number of program options to accommodate individual differences in performance.

GUIDELINES

- 6.1 Decisions regarding promotion/non-promotion/retention shall be made in the best interests of the individual student. Consideration shall be given to the student's level of cognitive, intellectual, social and emotional development, work commitment, and attendance including past and present levels of achievement.
- 6.2 Generally, students will be promoted or placed, however, in exceptional circumstances, a learner may be retained or accelerated.
- 6.3 Students, parents/guardians and others must be informed of programming options and the criteria for their selection prior to decisions being made.
- 6.4 Any school recommendations for the possibility of retention shall be submitted to the Assistant Director Education (Programs) or designate for information purposes, in case of appeal, by end of April.
- 6.5 For students experiencing academic, social, emotional or other difficulties, the school shall initiate appropriate interventions as outlined under the Pathways process.
- 6.6 Decisions related to programming/placement are subject to appeal via the appeals procedure. (see Policy Statement 8)
- 6.7 A record shall be maintained of all ISSP Team meetings and communications with parents/guardians about students requiring interventions.

PRACTICES

- 6.8 **Promotion**
 - 6.8.1 Promotion occurs when a student has successfully achieved the outcomes in a program. The purpose of promotion is to place the learner in the environment which will best contribute to success. It is assumed that the vast majority of students will progress from one grade to another with their age group.
 - 6.8.2 Grades K-6: A student will progress through the primary/elementary grades with their peers, unless, in exceptional cases the School Placement Team decides that retention or acceleration is in the best interests of the student. All decisions will be based on the assessment of the whole child in relation to the curriculum outcomes.

- 6.8.3(1) Grades 7-9: A student on the prescribed program (Pathway 1 and Pathway 2) must attain a minimum grade of fifty percent (50%) in each of **Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts (English or French Immersion) and attain an overall average of at least fifty percent (50%) in the other subject areas being studied.**
- 6.8.4(1) Levels I-III: Students shall be required to meet the graduation requirements as set out by the Department of Education.
- 6.8.4(2) Students shall be required to meet credit attainment in order to be given level status as defined by the Department of Education Guidelines (see High School Certification Manual).
- 6.8.4(3) Students on an ISSP who do not meet graduation requirements will receive an achievement certificate and/or a school leaving certificate when they have successfully completed the outcomes outlined in their ISSP at each level and upon school leaving.

6.9 ***Retention***

- 6.9.1 Retention is the least desirable alternative and all other viable options of addressing student needs shall be considered before such a decision is made.
- 6.9.2 Retention may be considered in extenuating circumstances. Any decision to retain a student must be made in the best interest of the student and when no viable option accommodation can be determined for the student in the next grade level. As well there must be general agreement by all stakeholders (parents and/or guardians, principal, teachers, etc.) that promotion is not in the student's best interest and his/her needs cannot be met at the next grade level.
- 6.9.3 After the April reporting period, if retention of a student is being considered, a School Placement Retention Team shall be formed to review relevant documentation. This team shall consist of, but not be limited to the Principal (or designate), teachers concerned, other personnel (counselor, special services teachers, etc.) as required, and parents/guardians. The team shall review all viable options of addressing the student programming needs prior to making a decision in June. This team shall commence at the end of the April reporting period. This review shall be documented.
- 6.9.4 Appropriate accommodations/modifications shall be determined and implemented by the School Placement Team through an ISSP for any student who is retained.
- 6.9.5 Students may be retained once in K-9.
- 6.9.6 Notwithstanding, 6.9.5, in extenuating circumstances, with the recommendation of the School Placement Team/ISSP Team, and with the approval of the Assistant Director of Education (Programs) or designate, a student may be retained for a second time.
- 6.9.7 All final decisions for retention must have the approval of the Principal and a rationale to support the retention shall be forwarded to the Assistant Director of Education (Programs) or designate in case of appeal.

6.10 *Placement*

- 6.10.1 Grades K-9: Students who have not met the recommended outcomes and where retention is not a viable option shall be placed in the next grade level upon approval from the designated team (teachers, administration, student services and parents/guardians).
- 6.10.2 Students placed at the next grade level shall require a list of strategies and interventions to assist in their achievement at this level.

GRADE 9 - HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION PROCESS

- 6.11 Grade 9 students must obtain a minimum of 50% in Math, Language Arts and Science to enrol in the subsequent high school course. Students not achieving 50% shall be placed in General Status courses. Appeals will be in accordance with the appeal process.
- 6.12 At the beginning of grade 9, parents/guardians should be informed of the implications of achievement in grade 9 for the potential for success in senior high school courses.
- 6.13 Administrators/teachers and other appropriate personnel, in consultation with the student and his/her parents/guardians, will decide the most appropriate placement for high school students.
- 6.14 Methods of informing Grade 9 students and their parents/guardians about program options for senior high and the criteria for selection shall include:
- a scheduled information session for parents/guardians and students will occur on or before March 31st
 - distribution and review of the contents of Oncourse - Handbook for Grade 9 Students and Parents (Department of Education, 2003)

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

The administration/teachers and other appropriate personnel, in consultation with the student and his/her parents, will decide the most appropriate placement for high school students.

- 6.15 Course results at Senior High School are expressed as percent marks. A minimum of fifty (50) percent is required for a pass and awarding of credit. There is no grade retention as such in senior high school as the program is structured on a course credit basis entailing the accumulation of credits over three years or more. Graduation requires the accumulation of thirty-six (36) credits satisfying specific requirements, on an official transcript as outlined in the Department of Education's Senior High School Certification Handbook.
- 6.15.1 Students shall be required to enrol in a minimum of 14 course credits per year. Exceptions may be considered for fourth year students.
- 6.16 Students who are on an ISSP and who do not meet graduation requirements will receive a School Achievement Certificate when they have successfully completed the outcomes outlined in their ISSP at each level and upon school leaving.

6.17 CHALLENGE FOR CREDIT OR INDEPENDENT STUDY

Challenge for Credit and/or Independent Study provides a process for students to demonstrate that they have achieved the specific learning outcomes as defined in the Program of Studies and the Provincial and/or District Curriculum Guides/Course Descriptors and assessment guidelines.

- 6.17.1 Any student wishing to challenge a course for credit and/or to conduct an independent study must follow the procedures required by the Department of Education.
- 6.17.2 Challenge for Credit / Independent Study is applicable only to provincially approved or authorized high school courses.
- 6.17.3 Students may only Challenge for Credit if they are concurrently enrolled in fourteen (14) credits or if the course they wish to challenge cannot be accommodated within the regular school schedule.
- 6.17.4 Students may challenge / study independently no more than four credits in any given year. However a maximum of eight challenge credits can be used towards a High School Graduation Diploma.
- 6.17.5 Courses for which a student has already received credit are not eligible for Challenge for Credit / Independent Study. Challenge for Credit is not a way to improve a course grade. Similarly, Challenge for credit is not intended as a process by which a student can challenge a lower level course in the same subject.
- 6.17.6 Challenge for Credit / Independent Study shall be given a grade in the same form as other courses evaluated for submission to the Department of Education.
- 6.17.7 In a course with a provincial examination, the Challenge for Credit / Independent Study must include the writing of this examination.

6.18 ACCELERATION

- 6.18.1 It is the belief of the Labrador School Board that acceleration is not a recommended program option. The Board promotes the progression of students in line with their age appropriate peers.
- 6.18.2 Only under extenuating circumstances (maturity, demonstrated academic ability and standardized assessment) a student may be considered for acceleration. The School Placement Team shall review the individual student circumstance through the ISSP process and a recommendation shall be made.
- 6.18.3 All recommendations for acceleration must have the approval of the School Placement Team, the student's parents/guardians, and the Assistant Director of Education for Programs (or designate).

6.19 STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- 6.19.1 For interventions Pathway 1 and beyond, refer to *Pathways to Programming and Graduation* (Department of Education, 1998).
- 6.19.2 Appropriate interventions for students experiencing academic, social, emotional or other difficulties may include:
- peer mentoring and/or buddy system
 - increased program options through such means as local courses, modules, or counselling and advisory services
 - peer tutoring and peer counselling
 - flexible scheduling to allow for a greater variety of programming options
 - promotion of greater student bonding: reduction in the number of teachers each student encounters through such practices as home room concept, looping, team teaching, interdisciplinary teams.
- 6.19.3 Students with identified exceptionalities who have been documented with an ISSP will be promoted when they have successfully completed the outcomes in the educational component of their ISSP.
- 6.19.4 Students following an Alternate Curriculum (Pathway 5) or an Alternate Course (Pathway 4) shall progress each year with appropriate adjustments made to their ISSP.
- 6.19.5 Students following a modified course (Pathway 3) who successfully completes the outcomes shall be promoted to the next grade level with appropriate adjustments made to their ISSP.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Decisions regarding assessment, evaluation, programming, and placement may be appealed by a parent or guardian of a student or by a student, if they are 18 years of age or older.

INTRODUCTION

Parents/guardians and learners shall be informed of their right to appeal decisions related to assessment, evaluation, programming and placement as well as the proper procedure involved in making an appeal.

GUIDELINES

- 7.1 All appeals shall be made in accordance with the Schools Act (1997) and school district by-laws.
- 7.2 There are three levels of appeal:
- 7.2.1 Classroom / Subject Teacher

An appeal shall be made to the classroom / subject teacher . The teacher shall record pertinent details and inform the principal. After considering the appeal, the teacher shall communicate the

decision to the appellant and their right to appeal to the principal. The teacher shall inform the principal of the recommendation.

7.2.2 School Administration

A second level of appeal may be made to the principal. The principal shall record details of the appeal and attach documents received from the classroom /subject teacher. After considering the appeal, the principal shall communicate the decision, in writing, to the appellant, and copy all such correspondence to the classroom/subject teacher. Should the appeal not be resolved at this level the appellant shall be informed of the right to appeal to the Assistant Director of Education (Programs). The principals shall inform the Assistant Director of Education (Programs) of the background pertaining to the matter and supply the related documentation.

7.2.3 District

A third level of appeal may be made in writing by a student or parent/guardian to a district appeals committee appointed by the Assistant Director of Education (Programs). The Assistant Director of Education (Programs) will inform the appellant and the school of the appeals committee decision.

- 7.3 The district appeal must follow the process as outlined in the by-laws of the Labrador School Board regarding appeals to the board.
- 7.4 In each stage, written appeals must be made within fifteen (15) days of the particular matter giving rise for the need to appeal. A decision made regarding an appeal should be provided to those involved within ten (10) days.
- 7.5 Students and parents / guardians shall be provided the right to review, upon request, completed unit tests / assignments (within reason), and mid- or year-end examinations with teachers by appointment.
- 7.6 Within reason is defined as the child / parent will be responsible for retaining the unit tests / assignments that were distributed to the students.
- 7.7 All year-end or final examinations must be stored in a school in a secure place until the end of September.