

Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union Ludlow Elementary School District Mount Holly Elementary School District Plymouth School District Union #39 School District	<b>GRADE ADVANCEMENT:                  RETENTION, PROMOTION &amp;                  ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS</b>	<b>POLICY: F28</b>
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**Policy**

It is the policy of the Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union, Ludlow Elementary School District, Mount Holly Elementary School District, Plymouth School District, and Union #39 School District (hereinafter “District”) to assure all students are progressing in their educational programs and have reached a standard of achievement necessary for satisfactory progress in the next grade.

**I. Background**

The District believes that the primary goal of the education system is to educate all students. Since each child develops physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially at an individual rate, every student will not complete twelve grade levels of work at the same time. Some students will need more than twelve years, while others may need less.

The Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities defines what students should know and be able to do at various stages of their school careers. Schools are responsible for adopting curricula that provide students with opportunities to master the standards. Promotion from grade to grade as well as retention and acceleration should be based on a student's ability to meet the standards over time.

**II. Definitions**

- A. **Acceleration:** is the advancement of a student by more than one grade beyond the current grade level.
- B. **Promotion:** is the single grade step most students take from year to year.
- C. **Retention:** Allows a student to repeat all or part of a grade in order to more fully prepare for the work of the next grade.

**III. Implementation**

Classroom educators are responsible for assessing student progress and recommending the promotion of students each year. Educators will assess academic readiness to advance to the next grade using a thorough evaluation process that will include but not be limited to standardized testing - those offered by the State as well as others chosen by the District - classroom-based testing, portfolios and teacher observation. The evaluation will also take into account social, emotional, physical and mental growth, past academic performance and behavior, motivation, attendance, and other pertinent circumstances.

The Principal will develop procedures to implement this policy that will specify a process for the consideration of retention or acceleration that will include the following characteristics:

Will seek the involvement of parents/guardians in a highly collaborative working relationship, through the Education Support Team (EST).

**A. Retention:** A student will be considered for retention if the student has not demonstrated satisfactory progress and/or is failing two or more courses in English, Science, Math or Social Studies, or has 20 or more absences per year.

1. Focus will be on the use of retention in the early primary grades at which time research indicates it is most effective.
2. Before considering retention, such actions as remediation in class or out, tutoring in class or after school, mentoring, cooperative efforts with families, should be reviewed by the Educational Support Team (EST).
3. Decisions regarding retention of students working under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be made through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA –B) process and by the team.
4. Decisions regarding retention of a student working under a Section 504, Individual Education Plan will be made by the Section 504 team and follow the Section 504 Rehabilitation Act procedures.
5. The final decision will be made by the Principal after consultation with parents/guardians, classroom teacher, and other professional staff.

**B. Acceleration:**

1. Acceleration should be considered in rare cases after all enrichment opportunities have been thoroughly explored.
2. Students will be accelerated if it is expected that the action will be beneficial to the student socially, emotionally, academically and when there are not other ways to meet student's needs.
3. Before considering acceleration, actions such as inclusion in a full or part-time gifted program, enrichment in the classroom, or other advanced courses through correspondence, distance learning, or through another institution should be examined.
4. Acceleration decision should be made by Educational Support Team (EST) process, which should begin no later than **February 1<sup>st</sup>**.

**C. Decision:** The final decision will be made by the Principal after consultation with parent/guardians, classroom teacher and other professional staff.

**D. Appeal:** Parents may appeal a decision of the Principal to the Superintendent.

**Legal Reference(s):** Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices: § 2120.2.2(b)(8)  
 20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq. (IDEIA)  
 29 U.S.C. §794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973)

**Cross Reference(s):** Student Attendance (F25)

<b>District:</b>	<b>Reviewed only</b>	<b>Date Warned</b>	<b>Date Adopted</b>	<b>Replaces Policy</b>
Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union		December 23, 2008	April 29, 2009	<b>F28/G9</b>
Ludlow Elementary School District		December 23, 2008	February 4, 2009	<b>JX</b>
Mount Holly School District		December 6, 2008	December 16, 2008	<b>JX</b>
Plymouth School District		December 6, 2008	January 5, 2009	<b>JX</b>
Union #39 School District		December 6, 2008	December 17, 2008	<b>JX &amp; ML</b>