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**PEACHAM SCHOOL BOARD POLICY**  
**GRADE ADVANCEMENT: RETENTION, PROMOTION & ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS**

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Copies to: Principal: \_\_\_ School Library: \_\_\_ Board Members: \_\_\_ CCSU: \_\_\_ Town Clerk: \_\_\_ Town Library: \_\_\_

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**Policy**

It is the policy of the Peacham School District to assure that all students are progressing in their educational program and have reached a standard of achievement necessary for satisfactory progress in the next grade.

Special education students who are working under an Individual Education Plan are excluded from this policy and will be promoted or retained in accordance with their IEP.

**Background**

The Board 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 may not complete a prescribed course of study at the same time. Some students may need additional time, 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.

**Definitions**

1. **Promotion** is the single grade step most students take from year to year.
2. **Acceleration** is the promotion of a student by more than one grade beyond the current grade level, or advancing to the next grade level during a school year.
3. **Retention** allows students to repeat all or part of a grade in order to more fully prepare for the work of the next grade.

**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 chose 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 rules to implement this policy that will specify a process for the consideration of retention or acceleration that will include the following characteristics:

1. Will seek the involvement of parents/guardians in a highly collaborative working relationship.
2. Focus on the use of retention in the early primary grades at which time research indicates it is most effective.
3. Acceleration should be considered in rare cases after all enrichment opportunities have been thoroughly explored.

4. Students will be retained or 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.

When considering retention, such actions as remediation in class or out, tutoring in class or after school, mentoring, cooperative efforts with families, or summer school should be evaluated.

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.

5. Will outline steps and time frames that provide for a great deal of interaction with parents/guardians.
6. The final decision will be made by the Principal after consultation with parents/guardians, classroom teacher and other professional staff.
7. Parents may appeal a decision of the Principal to the Superintendent.

Legal References: Vt. State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices §2120.2.2 (b)