

PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION

Background

The Ministry of Education's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum places particular emphasis on developing solid foundations in literacy and numeracy while supporting the developing of responsible citizens who are effective communicators and competent thinkers.

A key feature of the curriculum is a focus on personalized learning, which involves providing engaging and relevant learning opportunities that meet the diverse needs of all students.

The district values diversity and inclusion and supports the use of a variety of strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual learners in the classroom.

Student Placement

1. Promotion

The District believes in the promotion of students with their age-appropriate peers and the use of differentiated instruction to meet the individual needs of learners in the classroom. If a student begins to show signs of not working at grade level expectations, the teacher in collaboration with the School Based Team will identify the learning need and set out a plan of action that may include assessment. Where a student is identified as a student with special needs, policies and procedures are in place to provide him or her with an Individual Education Plan (see [Administrative Procedure 214 - Delivery of Special Education Services](#)).

2. Acceleration

Acceleration is the practice of placing students at a higher than normal level of instruction to meet their learning needs. It occurs when a classroom teacher provides the student with advanced curriculum, when a student skips a grade, or when a student takes a specific course at a higher level.

Before acceleration is considered, curriculum compacting should be used as a way of differentiating instruction for students who have mastered the curriculum and require ways to enrich and extend the learning experience. Curriculum compacting enables high-ability students to substitute content they already know with more challenging content.

Please see the following link for more strategies for meeting the needs of gifted students: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/gifted/strategies.htm.

Students may be accelerated by grade, when they are advanced in all areas, or by subject. In the latter case, a student in Grade 6 may be doing math at an advanced level and language arts at his age level.

- 2.1 When considering planned grade acceleration, it is advisable for the School-Based Team to consider the student's:
 - Cognitive ability;
 - Consistency of high academic achievement;
 - Social/emotional adjustment;
 - Health and general physical development; and,
 - Unique aspects of each individual.
- 2.2 Consideration of an accelerated program for a student must involve the following steps:
 - An Expanded School-Based Team meeting involving a Director of Instruction to discuss the considerations noted in 2.1;
 - A follow-up meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the Expanded School-Based Team's recommendation;
 - If acceleration is the plan of action, a learning plan must document the student's accelerated educational program and include a plan for review;
 - All accelerations must be approved by the Associate Superintendent.

3. Retention

Retention involves the repetition of a grade or course. Ideally, it will involve an instructional program that commences at the retained student's current level of ability in the skill or subject area.

- 3.1 The research on retention generally supports promotion with intervention over retention. The following is a synopsis of research on promotion and retention:
 - The achievement and adjustment of students who are retained tends to be no better than those of comparable children who are promoted.
 - Repeating a grade does not ensure that children will overcome the areas of deficiency. Students who repeat the same material without new instructional strategies tend not to attain the same levels of competence as students who are promoted.
 - Retained students tend to have a more negative attitude toward school.
 - Students who are retained often develop problems in the areas of personal adjustment and socialization.
 - Students who have been retained are more likely to drop out of school.
 - Where students have been retained and show significant increases in achievement, there have been marked changes in instructional strategies.

Source: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/assessment/classroom>

- 3.2 In the rare instance where retention is being considered, the following steps must be followed:
- There must be clear evidence of comprehensive, tiered interventions over time to support the student's learning;
 - An Expanded School-Based Team meeting involving a Director of Instruction to discuss the appropriateness of retention for the student;
 - A follow-up meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the Expanded School Based Team's recommendation;
 - If retention is the plan of action, an Individual Education Plan must document the student's educational program and include a plan for review;
 - All retention must be approved by the Associate Superintendent.

*Reference: Sections 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act
School Regulation 265/89
Educational Program Guide Order M333/99*

SD No. 40 (New Westminster)

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