

# The Birches Academy of Academics and Art Promotion and Retention Policy

## **Statement of Belief:**

The Birches Academy believes that the role of our school is to meet students where they are academically, socially and emotionally. We may adapt our expectations and curriculum to advance and support students in their areas of need and strengths. We also recognize the importance of attendance in a student's ability to make expected gains towards their academic achievements. We withhold the right to retain students based on low attendance and the impact it has on their ability to understand the curriculum.

## **The Birches Academy Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration:**

The Administration of the following policies will be the decision of the school Leadership Team, including the Dean of School, Dean of Students, Dean of Administration, the classroom teacher and the parent/guardian.

## **Guaranteed promotion to the next grade:**

All students that meet the following criteria will be guaranteed promotion to the next grade:

- Passing all core courses and demonstrating mastery of the skills in the completed grade, including but not limited to; reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.
- Absent 18 times (10 tardies equals one absence) or less during the course of the year, this excludes documented medical diagnosis.
- A student that is socially and emotionally stable and ready to progress.
- Student meets the age requirements as stated by the State of New Hampshire.

## **Decision for Retention:**

Any student that does not meet the criteria above will be brought before the Leadership Team to decide whether they should be promoted to the next grade.

Students will never be retained more than once. The Leadership Team will meet to discuss the impact, both positive and negative, to decide retention.

## **Decision to Accelerate:**

At times, we recognize that students may be moving at a faster pace in comparison to their peers in all areas of development including academic, social, and emotional. In these situations, the Leadership Team including the classroom teacher will meet with the student's parent/guardian and discuss the positive and negative impacts of acceleration.

### **The Birches Academy policy on promoting students that do not meet all of the criteria:**

Any student that does not meet the criteria for promotion will be considered for promotion based on the following evidence:

- The student is passing most of the core subjects, as demonstrated by passing two out of the four core subject areas.
- The student is receiving support through an IEP, 504, or RTI.
- The student has consistently demonstrated effort through completion of homework, staying for homework support, and completing projects.
- The student has a record of attendance that exceeds 90% of the school year.
- Lacking any behavior or conduct concerns

### **Students with disabilities and policy for retention:**

The criteria of promotion should apply to students with a disability unless it is noted in their IEP that the area of concern is covered through the diagnosed disability.

### **Parent/Guardian Rights:**

The parent/guardian of any student considered for retention or acceleration will be contacted and will be invited to meet with the Leadership Team to discuss the decision.

The Birches Academy will complete an intensive process to determine the basis for retention or acceleration. Data will be provided to support the decision in all the following areas:

- Retention Scale for promotion as selected by the Leadership Team
- Evidence of Grade Level accomplishments
- Evidence of Grades collected during the course of the year
- Student background and narrative as provided by teacher
- State and school standardized testing results
- A student writing sample
- Evidence of school attendance and any behavioral concerns

The Leadership Team can recommend any interventions that they think are appropriate to support the student based on the evidence.

### **Parent/Guardian right to appeal:**

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision of the Leadership Team through the following process:

- The parent/guardian must write a letter within ten business days of final day of the school year and submit it to the Leadership Team. The Leadership will review the letter and make a decision based on the parent's/guardian's concerns.
- If the Leadership Team continues to support their decision, the parent/guardian has the right to submit the letter to Board of Trustees for additional review. The Board of Trustees will make a decision within in ten business days of receiving the letter.