

Progression Policy

Approved:
21 April 2016

Rationale

The Bible reveals that the human journey towards spiritual maturity is demonstrated through various growth stages, sometimes 'two steps forward and one step back'. Some of our great heroes of faith – Abraham, Moses, David, Peter and Paul had lives of great success in spite of failures, lost opportunities and long waits

We acknowledge that all WRCA students are created in God's image, with unique gifts and abilities. Each student is different, and develops at different rates in different ways. As such, at WRCA we acknowledge that progression through grade levels is not automatic, and that therefore, there needs to be a process to assess students' readiness to progress through grade levels.

'Progression' is neither a reward, nor is 'retention' a punishment. WRCA aims to discern what is best for each student at his/her particular stage of development. Our educational programs at each year level are designed to cater for a range of student abilities. Teachers work hard to ensure that each student has the opportunity to achieve success. For the majority of students, this process ensures that progression to the next grade level occurs smoothly.

There are a number of factors that may contribute to a particular student not being ready to progress at the same time as their peers:

1. Level of cognitive, emotional and physical skills
2. Attitude
3. Level of maturity
4. The effect of outside influences (illness, injury, family or other trauma, etc.)

Allowing such students to automatically progress to the next grade level may compound their lack of readiness and increase the probability of an even greater lack of achievement in the future.

The school supports parents in the education of children; thus, parents must be fully involved in progression/retention decisions.

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| Policy Statements | Regulations |
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| <p>1. The primary criterion of student readiness to progress to the next grade level is their actual demonstrated level of achievement as assessed through the normal assessment procedures of class and subject teachers.</p> | <p>1.1 Assessment procedures at all grade levels are continual and comprehensive. Not only do they provide a summative assessment of students' achievement levels, they provide a formative basis for the continual adjustment and modification of student programs, so as to ensure that each student is given every opportunity to succeed. (Refer to Assessment Policy)</p> |
| <p>2 Any student considered for retention must be identified as early as possible in the present school year. Teachers, parents and principals will be involved in the consultation process.</p> | <p>2.1 In the normal course of events, when teachers identify concerns with a given student's learning program, they will be in regular consultation with parents to discuss strategies for alleviating the concerns. Such consultations could involve identification of particular learning difficulties the student may have, and the consequent possible changes to his/her learning program.</p> <p>2.2 Teachers will consult with the principal before any discussions of student retention is held with parents.</p> <p>2.3 If the student's level of achievement in the key areas of cognitive and motor skills, attitude, and maturity, as reported <u>at the end of the second term</u> in a given year, indicates that a student may not be ready to progress by the end of the year, the following timeline for consultation and decision-making will be followed:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a. The class teacher will inform the principal. Under their direction the class teacher will initiate the formal written referral process to the learning assistance teacher for assessment and initiate a parent-teacher conference as soon as possible after the second term reports become available. The purpose of this conference is for the teacher to inform parents officially of the possibility of retention, and to establish specific strategies to help the student to improve his or her achievement. These strategies will at all times be pro-active, positive and encouraging, helping the student to take more responsibility for his or her own</p> |

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| | <p>learning. They will be documented and placed on file.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Most students in this situation will be placed on a student learning plan (note: not an IEP as described in the Special Education Policy) negotiated fully and agreed to by parents, student, class teachers, learning assistance teacher and the principal. c. The improvement strategies will be closely monitored throughout the remainder of the academic year, during which time teachers and parents will be in regular contact and the student learning plan reviewed or modified. <p>2.4 <u>Before the end of the third and final term</u> a further parent-teacher conference will be held involving the principal, followed by a formal letter from the school regarding the outcomes of the conference; then parents will be notified of one of the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. confirmation of progression to the next grade level; or, b. the school recommends retention, but will negotiate this with parents, acknowledging their God-given responsibility as their child's primary educator; establishing an on-going educational support program and a probation process will be part of the negotiation; or, c. the school decides that progression to the next grade level is <u>not</u> in the child's best interests. If this decision is not accepted by the parents then discussions for an alternative school placement will occur. This option would be considered if option (b) was exercised in the previous year. |
| <p>3 For a student with a low level of cognitive or motor skills, retention in the same grade is recommended only if there is a reasonable expectation that the student will improve their skills by staying in the existing grade level.</p> | <p>3.1 No regulation developed at this time.</p> |
| <p>4 No student will be retained more than two years in the same grade level including previous school placement.</p> | <p>4.1 No regulation developed at this time.</p> |

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| <p>5 A student with cognitive or physical disabilities may progress to the next grade level on a modified or adapted program.</p> | <p>5.1 No regulation developed at this time.</p> |
| <p>6 Students with attitudinal problems may lead to poor motivation, lack of effort and consequently low achievement. While the threat of retention should not be used as a disciplinary tool, teachers and parents will need to work with students in using effective discipline measures that encourage a positive attitude towards learning.</p> | <p>6.1 No regulation developed at this time.</p> |
| <p>7 Social, emotional and physical maturities contribute toward readiness, although it is particularly relevant in the junior primary years.</p> | <p>7.1 No regulation developed at this time.</p> |
| <p>8 Events out of the student's control influence their learning negatively – for example, family trauma, physical injury or illness. In such cases it may be appropriate for the student to remain in the existing grade level for another year, in order to be given another opportunity to achieve readiness for the next grade level.</p> | <p>8.1 No regulation developed at this time.</p> |

The school leadership team through consultation with the school staff developed this policy, and it was approved by the WRCA Board of Directors. It will be communicated to the school community and made available on the school website. The leadership team will review the policy and the WRCA Board of Directors will approve suggested revisions every two years.