



# YOSEMITE VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

## Students | Grade Level

### GRADE LEVEL PROMOTION & ACCELERATION POLICY & RETENTION CRITERIA

Yosemite Valley Charter School (School) is committed to making individual decisions on grade level acceleration based on the long-term, best interest of the individual student. Staff is committed to helping all students realize their fullest potential, when high academic achievement is evident, staff may request a student for acceleration into a higher grade level. The student's maturity level shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

The purpose of the Yosemite Valley Charter School Governing Board approving this Grade Level Promotion & Acceleration Policy and Retention Criteria is to accomplish the following:

1. Outline the Promotion Policy
2. Outline the Acceleration Policy
3. Outline the Retention Criteria
4. Outline the Appeals Process for Parents
5. Establish the Process for IDEA/504 Students
6. Outline the Charter School Rights

#### 1. Promotion Policy:

*K-8:* Each K-8 student will be enrolled in four core subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and include enrichment opportunities like art, music, athletics, world languages, technology, field trips, and virtual and in-person community and social experiences, providing a well-rounded education. Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and working appropriately towards grade level mastery.

*High School:* High school students can select courses from a variety of learning programs. Students will be enrolled in a minimum of 20 credits per semester (4 classes) unless considered a fifth-year senior. If the student is taking courses at a community college, he/she must meet with his/her counselor to obtain approval prior to enrolling in the community college courses.

Required Courses for All High School Grade Levels\*:

- English-Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies/History

\*This depends on the student's individual graduation plan and course progression.



*Four-Year Plan for High School Students:* Supervising Teachers develop a four-year individual graduation plan (IGP) for each high school student. The IGP will be reviewed by the Guidance Counselor and/or Regional Administrator and revisited annually (unless necessary due to mid-year course changes). The four-year individual graduation plan will include:

- Learning Program
- Student's intended courses
- Courses completed
- Course of Study
- College and/or Career path

## **2. Acceleration Policy:**

If a student has completed all grade level requirements and is requesting to accelerate to the following grade mid-year, a determination must be made as to whether it is in the best interest of the student. This determination is made by the Teacher and the Student Support Team with input from the parent/guardian.

If promoted, the student will need to complete the curriculum for the promoted grade by the end of the current school year.

*Mid-Year Grade Level Acceleration Requests:* The decision to promote a student mid-year will be made only after careful consideration has been given with regards to serving the academic best interests of the student. Mid-year promotions are approved or denied at the end of the first semester. If a student is promoted at the end of the first semester, he/she should be on target to complete all courses at his/her promoted grade level by the end of the school year. 8th to 9th grade acceleration requests are only considered in the fall semester before the high school add/drop date.

A child who is *not age-eligible* for kindergarten (that is, the child turned five after September 1) and who attended a California private school kindergarten for a year is viewed by the CDE as *not legally enrolled* in kindergarten, pursuant to *EC* Section 48000 requirements. Therefore, this child, upon enrollment in public school, is enrolled in kindergarten, assessed, and may (but is not required to) be immediately promoted to first grade if the child meets the following State Board of Education criteria, pursuant to Title 5, Section 200:

- The child is at least five years of age.
- The child has attended a public school kindergarten for a long enough time to enable school personnel to evaluate the child's ability.
- The child is in the upper 5 percent of the child's age group in terms of general mental ability.
- The physical development and social maturity of the child are consistent with the child's



advanced mental ability.

- The parent or guardian has filed a written statement with the district that approves placement in first grade.

A statement, signed by the School and parent/guardian, is placed in the official school records for these five-year-olds who have been advanced to first grade (EC Section 48011). This action prevents a subsequent audit exception for first grade placement of an *age ineligible* student.

*Procedure:* In order for the School to make sound academic decisions regarding mid-year grade level promotions, the following process will be followed:

*Parent/Guardian:*

Parent/Guardian Request: Parents/Guardians may request that the teacher promote their child one grade level at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

*Teacher:*

If the student's teacher agrees that a review for mid-year grade level promotion is appropriate, the teacher will complete a request for acceleration into a higher grade level and take the student's maturity level into consideration. The request should be sent to the Assistant Director(s). Requests must be received by email prior to Winter Break.

- If the student's assessment results are not above grade level, the teacher needs to provide documentation with a written request regarding why promotion is in the student's best interest.
- If the student is not on track to complete all courses at the grade level he/she would be promoted to, the teacher will need to explain in the written request why a promotion would be in the student's best interest.
- Information regarding prior grade retention and the circumstances of such.

*Student Assessment Records* (a combination of the following may be used to assess the student's readiness to promote):

Scores should be on the first page of all scored documents. The Language Arts and Math diagnostic assessments should demonstrate the student's independent ability and be administered by the teacher and done in person (or via Zoom supervised by the teacher) at a teacher/student/family meeting, and not administered by the parent/guardian.

- Score report for In-house Benchmark Assessment such as Star360
- Language Arts Diagnostic Assessment, such as Bader Reading Assessment or Moby Max
- Writing Sample, completed independently
- Math Diagnostic Assessment, such as Moby Max
- Work samples



- Summary of grade-level curriculum completion
- Parent written analysis: a compelling reason for the grade change
- Recommendation from the Teacher or Student Support Team Coordinator

### **3. Retention of Students Grades 1st-8th:**

Students in grades 1st through 8th grade are not considered for retention which is based on extensive research that demonstrates that retention is not an effective course of action for students not meeting grade level benchmarks in all areas. When a student is identified as not meeting typical benchmarks in either academic and behavioral areas, the student will enter into a targeted intervention program after an SST process takes place. Parents have the right to appeal the denial of a retention through an appeal process.

#### **Kindergarten Retention Criteria:**

Students can be retained in grade Kindergarten based upon current law. Kindergarten students who have completed one year of Kindergarten shall be admitted to First Grade unless the parent/guardian and the School agree that the student shall continue in Kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. Students who attended both Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten cannot be retained. The decision to retain will be based on the student's progress on the Desired Results Developmental Profile for Kindergarten, as well as on indicators of academic achievement in reading, English Language Arts, and Mathematics after intervention has been implemented (Ed Code 48011).

Whenever a student may need to continue in Kindergarten for an additional year, the School Staff shall hold a Student Success Team meeting and secure an agreement, signed by the parent/ guardian, stating that the student shall continue in kindergarten for not more than one additional school year. (Ed Code 46300)

### **4. Appeals and Parent Rights:**

Parents have the right to appeal a decision made by the Academic Team. If a parent wishes to appeal, they would complete the following steps:

- Appeal to School Administrator in writing.
- School Administrator responds within two (2) weeks.
- If not resolved, parents may appeal to the School Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
- The School Board meets in a closed session and will send the parent or guardian a response in writing

**5. IDEA/504 Students:** Students who participate in special education/504 plans have their education program and decision making process affected by state and federal regulations; therefore, decision-making in the area of grade promotion/retention is first governed by state and federal requirements.



- 6. The Charter School Rights:** The policy adopted pursuant to this section shall be adopted at a public meeting of the Governing Board of The Charter School. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the retention, promotion or acceleration of a pupil not included in grade levels identified in this policy, or for reasons other than those specified for pupils at risk for retention, if such retention is determined to be appropriate for that pupil. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Governing Board from adopting promotion, acceleration and retention policies that exceed the criteria established in the California Ed. Code 48070.5, Promotion or Retention of Pupils.

Adopted: August 25, 2022