

BLUFFVIEW MONTESSORI SCHOOL
POLICY 513
STUDENT PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND PROGRAM DESIGN

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to professional staff, parents, and students regarding student promotion, retention, and program design.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school board expects all students to achieve at an acceptable level of proficiency. Parental assistance, tutorial and remedial programs, counseling, and other appropriate services shall be coordinated and utilized to the greatest extent possible to help students succeed in school.

A. Promotion

Students who achieve at levels deemed acceptable by local and state standards shall be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of each school year.

B. Retention

Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents feel that it is in the best interest of the student. Physical development, maturity, and emotional factors shall be considered, as well as scholastic achievement. The Head of School's decision shall be final.

C. Program Design

1. The Head of School, with participation of the professional staff and parents, shall develop and implement programs to challenge students that are consistent with the needs of students at every level. A process to assess and evaluate students for program assignment shall be developed in coordination with such programs. Opportunities for special programs and placement outside of Bluffview Montessori School shall also be developed as additional options. All programs will be aligned with creating the World's Best Workforce.
2. Bluffview Montessori School will adopt guidelines for assessing and identifying students for participation in gifted and talented programs. The guidelines should include the use of:

- a. multiple objective criteria; and
 - b. assessments and procedures that are valid and reliable, fair, and based on current theory and research. Assessments and procedures should be sensitive to under-represented groups, including, but not limited to, low-income, minority, twice-exceptional, and English learners.
- 3. Bluffview Montessori School will adopt procedures for the academic acceleration of gifted and talented students. These procedures will include how Bluffview Montessori School will:
 - a. assess a student's readiness and motivation for acceleration; and
 - b. match the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to a student to achieve the best type of academic acceleration for that student.
- 4. Bluffview Montessori School will adopt procedures which describe the comprehensive evaluation in cognitive, social, and emotional development domains to help determine a child's ability to meet kindergarten grade expectations and progress to first grade in the subsequent year for early admission to kindergarten or first grade of gifted and talented learners. The comprehensive evaluation must use valid and reliable instrumentation, be aligned with state kindergarten expectations, and include a parental report and teacher observations of the child's knowledge, skills, and abilities. The procedures must be sensitive to under-represented groups.

Since each Montessori learning environment is designed to be responsive to the developmental needs of each individual learner, and since as a course of nature, children develop holistically according to their own internal organic clocks which relate only marginally to the traditional calendar on the wall, it makes educational sense that a child remain within a particular developmental learning environment until he or she demonstrates readiness to leave. Likewise, if a particular learner demonstrates enough all-round maturity to move up a level of learning environments, he or she should be allowed to do so regardless of the time of year. Readiness is readiness.

D. Guidelines

- 1. Criteria: This policy requires that a request for an individual learner to remain in or move up out of a specific developmental learning environment must be supported by at least one of the following:

- a. A formal request submitted to the Head of School by the learner's Montessori Educator.
 - b. A formal request submitted to the Head of School by the learner's parents.
 - c. Documentation submitted to the Head of School by the Learning Specialist supporting the remaining or moving of the learner within the levels of learning environments.
2. Evaluation: The decision to enable the learner to remain or move within the levels of learning environments will always be made by the child's support team of parents, Montessori Educators, and Learning Specialist if child is on an I.E.P.
3. Transitions: All transitions should be made with careful planning and collaboration. The educational team and parents should consider the best possible timing of the move giving regard to such things as curriculum sequencing, field trips, and holidays.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.15 (Gifted and Talented Program)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, Subd. 1 (Superintendents)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and LEP Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 617 (School District Ensurance of Preparatory and High School Standards)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 618 (Assessment of Student Achievement)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 620 (Credit for Learning)