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510 Student Promotion, Acceleration, Retention and Early Kindergarten Admission Policy

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I. Purpose

Three Rivers Montessori (TRM) is committed to delivering individualized, developmentally appropriate education rooted in Montessori philosophy. This policy outlines the procedures and considerations for student promotion, acceleration, retention, and early admission into kindergarten, ensuring decisions reflect the academic, emotional, and social needs of each student.

II. General Policy Statement

- TRM will place students at instructional levels that best support their academic, social, and emotional development.
- While students typically progress grade to grade annually, exceptions (promotion, acceleration, or retention) may be made in the best educational interest of the child.
- Decisions are made collaboratively, involving staff, parents/guardians, and school leadership.
- Academic readiness, motivation, and the ability to engage with the Montessori curriculum will guide placement decisions.
- The Executive Director's decision will be final.

III. Grade-Level Guidance

A. Elementary School (Grades K–6)

1. Promotion

Students will be promoted to the next grade level if they meet expectations based on:

- Local and state standards
- Montessori progress reports and formative assessments (sensitive to under-represented groups, including but not limited to: low-income, minority, twice-exceptional, and English learners)
- Individualized criteria based on developmental readiness and demonstrated skills

Parents/guardians will be notified in a timely manner if promotion is in question.

2. Acceleration

Acceleration is used for students whose performance and aptitude significantly exceed grade-level expectations.

a. Course/Subject Acceleration

- Differentiation within the Montessori environment is the first approach.
- If full subject acceleration is pursued:
 - A plan must support continued sequential learning
 - Requests must be submitted by March 15 of the prior school year

b. Full Grade-Level Acceleration (Acceleration Promotion)

Defined as advancing two grade levels (e.g., 1st to 3rd) based on exceptional ability.

Criteria include:

- Evidence of working at least two grade levels ahead in the Montessori environment
- Birthdate on or before November 1
- Demonstrated social and emotional maturity
- Recommendation from the Executive Director
- Parent/guardian approval

3. Retention

Retention is defined as remaining in the same grade based on unsatisfactory performance or lack of readiness for the next grade.

Considerations include:

- Academic performance
- Physical and emotional maturity
- Cognitive readiness and work habits
- Social development

The decision is made collaboratively, with the final decision resting with the Executive Director. Families may appeal to the TRM Board of Directors.

IV. Early Kindergarten Admission

Eligibility

- Children must be five years old on or before September 1 for regular kindergarten entry.
- Children turning five between September 2 and December 31 may be considered for early admission.

Evaluation Process

- Parents must submit a written request by May 15.
- A comprehensive evaluation will assess:
 - Cognitive and academic readiness
 - Social-emotional development
 - Motor skills
 - Parent and teacher observations

- Standardized assessments aligned with state and TRM expectations
- A written assessment summary must be submitted by August 15.

Decision Process

The Early Admission Team includes:

- A kindergarten educator
- Executive Director (or designee)

The team's decision is final and will be provided in writing to the family.

V. Process and Timeline for Retention or Acceleration

Timeline:	Action:
Early Spring	Teacher identifies a student for consideration.
Early Spring	Building team (Executive Director, teacher, MTSS lead, SPED Director) convenes.
By April 30	Parents/guardians join the meeting to review data and discuss recommendations.
By Mid-May	Final decision made by the Executive Director.
Appeal Option	Parents may submit a written appeal to the TRM Board of Directors.
Exceptions	May be made at the discretion of the Executive Director.

VI. Decision-Making Roles

Step:	Responsibility:
Participation	TRM Staff and Parents/Guardians
Recommendation	Building Team (including MTSS and SPED, as needed)
Decision	Executive Director and Building Team
Approval	Executive Director
Acceptance	Executive Director

Parent/Guardian Request/Student Input Form

Parents/Guardians who are requesting or are involved with the possible retention or acceleration of a student should fill out the form below and give it to the student's building principal following the timelines laid out in Appendices I and II.

Parent/Guardian name(s) _____

Student name _____ Date _____

Who is filling out the form? (select one):

_____ Parent/Guardian _____ Teacher

Request for (select one):

_____ Retention _____ Course/credit acceleration _____ Full grade acceleration

1. For what reasons would retention or acceleration be a good fit for your student?

In addition, please fill out Appendix IV to the best of your ability. By signing this form, you are giving permission for a general intellectual abilities screener to be given to your child, if necessary.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature(s) _____

Date _____

Contact Information: Email _____ Phone _____

Retention or Acceleration Student Information Form

The school district expects all students to achieve at an acceptable level of proficiency. All stakeholders will coordinate and collaborate to the greatest extent possible to help students succeed in school. Multiple factors will be considered as part of the procedure for retention or acceleration.

Student Name _____

Date _____

School _____

School Building Members _____

Social/Emotional Considerations

This document is meant to serve as a guide for discussion as part of the data collected about a student in order to ascertain the best placement/programming.

Factor	Definition	Low ▼ degree	to	High degree
Self-Awareness	Accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations			
	Possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism			
Self-Management	The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations			
	Managing stress			
	Motivating oneself			
	Controlling impulses			
	Setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals			

Social Awareness	The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures				
	To understand social and ethical norms of behavior				
Relationship Skills	The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups				
	Communicating clearly				
	Listening actively				
	Cooperating				
	Seeking and offering help when needed				
Responsible Decision-Making	The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions				
	Realistically evaluating consequences of various actions				
	Considering well-being of self and others				
Overall interpretation of students' strengths and weaknesses:					

Adapted from Conklin, Tom. Social and Emotional Learning: Essential Lessons for Student Success. Scholastic: New York, New York, 2014.

Scholastic Achievement

Knowledge and skill depth on grade level standards

Assessment information

Intelligence information* (if available and/or applicable)

*if a general intellectual abilities screener is used, students should be at least 2.5 standard deviations or greater above the mean to be considered for full grade level acceleration

Additional Factors

Attendance as it affects achievement

DECISION:

___Promote ___Retain ___Accelerate

Recommendations/Plan (attach extra documentation as necessary):

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature(s) _____*Date*

Contact Information: Email _____Phone _____

Principal Signature:

_____Date_____