



PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

I. Philosophy

The Nevada City School of the Arts (“NCSOTA” or the “Charter School”) is committed to the success of each student. NCSOTA has adopted and follows a Student Success Team (“SST”) Policy to establish and implement student achievement and intervention strategies in a timely manner. Despite the implementation of such strategies it may be necessary to retain a student in the prior grade level or promote a student above his or her grade level for the following school year. In implementing this policy, the NCSOTA Charter Governance Council (“Council”) is guided by the following principles:

- 1) Retention and promotion criteria will be objectively based on a student’s ability or inability to meet the grade level NCSOTA standards of expected student achievement in language arts, mathematics, science, or social science, for students in grades kindergarten (k) through eighth (8), as determined by the NCSOTA staff as articulated in its California standards-based report card or performance on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress. (See “Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention or Promotion” Attached as Exhibit A).
- 2) For English Learners, retention cannot be based on the student’s lack of English fluency as related to meeting English standards.
- 3) Decisions about retention or promotion will not be based on requests for a student to be placed with or avoid a specific teacher or other pupils.

II. Retention

A. Required Steps Preceding Retention Decision

Before retaining a student, NCSOTA will follow the following steps:

- 1) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive notice of progress or lack of progress in target areas through mid-semester progress reports and semester report cards. Parents will be notified by the teacher of areas of academic concerns in parent teacher conferences or in writing on progress reports or semester report card. Student achievement will be determined “at risk” as defined by NCSOTA “Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention or Promotion” for one or more semesters. (Attached as Exhibit A).
- 2) NCSOTA will hold an SST meeting for Student.¹ Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to the SST meeting to discuss concerns and proposed interventions. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive a copy of the SST meeting notes which will serve as notice of proposed interventions and student achievement strategies.

¹ For students qualified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), any decisions regarding retention will be made by the Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) team in an IEP meeting. For Students with a Section 504 Plan, any decisions will be made by the Section 504 team in a 504 meeting.



- 3) Research based interventions suggested at the SST meeting will be implemented and documented in an ongoing and consistent manner. A recommended interval of six (6) weeks of academic interventions should occur before the initial SST and the recommendation for retention.
- 4) Following the above interventions, a teacher may make a recommendation for retention. Once made, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to conference with the teacher(s), Director, and other staff members as deemed necessary ("Retention Team"). Retention Team Conference invitation will be via telephone by teacher to the number Parent(s)/Guardian(s) provided to the Charter School, followed up by a written confirmation sent via US Mail to the address Parent(s)/Guardian(s) provided to the Charter School. Teacher will log all attempts to contact Parent(s)/Guardian(s). If after two (2) documented attempts to schedule a conference by phone, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) do not respond or attend the Retention Team Conference, the conference will be held without their presence.
- 5) The Retention Team Conference will include:
 - Review of previous SST notes;
 - Discussion of previous/current/ongoing interventions, review of intervention logs;
 - Review of current work and available assessments;
 - Development of a plan for support for the following academic year;
 - Determination of student's grade level for the following academic year; and
 - If the decision is to retain the Student, appropriate instruction and interventions are targeted for the following year so the student will be supported in meeting the standards the following year in the retained grade.
- 6) If there is disagreement among the Retention Team, the Director will make the determination based upon all information discussed at the meeting.
- 7) When a final decision is made, NCSOTA will send the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) notes from the meeting, a copy of this policy, and the decision of the Retention Team in writing within forty-eight (48) hours of the meeting at the address provided by Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to the Charter School via registered mail unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

B. Right to Appeal

If the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) disagree with the decision, they have the right to appeal to the NCSOTA Council.

- 1) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) choosing to appeal a decision to retain a student shall submit a completed Promotion or Retention Appeal Request Form (attached as Exhibit B) to the Director specifying the reasons why the decision should be overturned. The submission



of the Retention Appeal Request Form must occur no later than ten (10) school days following the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) receipt of the determination of retention.

- 2) The Council shall review the appeal as well as the student's academic performance records on which the Retention Team relied. The Director shall be provided an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which the Retention Team or Director's decision was based. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will also be given an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing their reason for appeal. The Appeal will be held in a closed session of the Council to maintain student confidentiality. The Council will prepare a written decision which summarizes findings and conclusions.
- 3) The Council shall notify the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Director of its decision in writing within seven (7) school days of the Appeal via registered mail at the address provided by Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to the Charter School unless otherwise agreed to in writing.
- 4) The Council's decision is final.

III. Promotion

A. Required Steps Preceding Promotion Decision

Before promoting a student, NCSOTA will follow the following steps:

- 1) If NCSOTA receives a promotion request from a student's Parent(s)/Guardian(s), NCSOTA will schedule and hold an SST meeting for Student.² Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to the SST meeting to discuss student progress on grade level benchmarks and other considerations/concerns for promotion. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive a copy of the SST meeting notes which will serve as notice of proposed student achievement strategies (and interventions, where applicable).
- 2) If there is disagreement among the SST, the Director will make the determination whether to recommend the student for promotion based upon all information discussed at the meeting. The Director will send notice of this decision within forty-eight (48) hours of the meeting at the address provided by Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to the Charter School via registered mail unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

B. Right to Appeal

If the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) disagree with the decision, they have the right to appeal to the NCSOTA Council.

- 1) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) choosing to appeal a decision to promote a student shall submit a completed Promotion or Retention Appeal Request Form (attached as Exhibit B) to the

² For students qualified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), any decisions regarding promotion will be made by the Individualized Education Program ("IEP") team in an IEP meeting. For Students with a Section 504 Plan, any decisions will be made by the 504 team in a 504 meeting.



- Director specifying the reasons why the decision should be overturned. The submission of the Retention Appeal Request Form must occur no later than ten (10) school days following the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) receipt of the determination of promotion.
- 2) The Council shall review the appeal as well as the student's academic performance records on which the SST relied. The Director shall be provided an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which the SST or Director's decision was based. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will also be given an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing their reason for appeal. The Appeal will be held in a closed session of the Council to maintain student confidentiality. The Council will prepare a written decision which summarizes findings and conclusions.
 - 3) The Council shall notify the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Director of its decision in writing within seven (7) school days of the Appeal via registered mail at the address provided by Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to the Charter School unless otherwise agreed in writing.
 - 4) The Council's decision is final.



Exhibit A

Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention or Promotion

These promotion requirements are for all middle school students beginning in the 6th grade.

To Be Promoted to the Next Grade:

- No incompletes in any classes including Electives.
- Students must have a 2.0 over all academic classes including art and movement.
- Students on IEP's/504's will be held to the same standard as all other students since their academics have already been modified per their IEP Goals.

If a student has less than a 2.0 average at quarter grades (conference time) a conference with the parents will be mandatory. If a student receives an IE (Insufficient Evidence) in any class at the semester's end, an Academic Contract will be signed by the teachers, parents and School Director.

Promotion Allowances

NCSA allows one social promotion during middle school.

8th Grade Only (in addition to the list above)

- Completion of 8th grade project and presentation at Graduation Ceremony
 - Performance shall be ready to be performed two weeks prior to the ceremony

All requirements must be met two weeks prior to graduation. If an 8th Grade student does not meet all requirements two weeks prior to graduation, they will not be allowed to finish the year with their class. They will be referred to the Non-Graduate Review at the High School, and they will not graduate nor be allowed to participate in the Graduation Ceremony or related activities. These requirements are subject to modification for students with 504 or IEP designations.

Any student not meeting requirements two weeks prior to the end of the semester may be excluded from the Artistic Showcase and field trips.

6th – 8th Graduation Expectations

Students on behavior contracts must successfully complete them. Students with excessive referrals or behavioral problems will be required to attend an SST (Student Success Team) meeting with their teachers prior to graduation.

6th – 8th Field Studies

Students with excessive behavioral issues must have an SST meeting with teachers before attending overnight field studies, and may have the privilege of attending revoked, ***or require a parent to attend.***



Exhibit B

Promotion or Retention Appeal Request Form

Date: _____

Name of Student: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

Appealing the decision for (please circle one): Retention Promotion

As outlined in the Nevada City School of the Arts ("NCSOTA") Promotion and Retention Policy, my child was recommended for retention/promotion by the NCSOTA Retention Team or promotion by the SST. I do not agree with this recommendation and wish to appeal this decision to the NCSOTA Governing Council.

Please explain your disagreement: _____

I am aware that this appeal must be made within ten (10) school days of my receipt of the recommendation to retain or promote my child and should be submitted to the Director. This appeal will go before the NCSOTA Council and it will make a final determination regarding retention or promotion.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date