



Pupil Promotion & Retention Policy

Philosophy

Connecting Waters Charter Schools (“CWCS” or the “Charter School”) is committed to the success of each student. CWCS has adopted and follows a Personalized Learning Team (“PLT”) 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 their grade level for the following school year. In implementing this policy, the CWCS Board of Directors (“Board”) 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 CWCS 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 CWCS staff as articulated in its California standards-based report card or performance on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (“CAASPP”). (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 students.

Retention

A. Required Steps Preceding Retention Decision

Students may only be retained while enrolled in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Retentions are not considered for High School students, but additional supplemental support will be available for High School students, including credit recovery options. Before retaining a student, CWCS 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 Education Plan/Learning Plan meetings, or in writing on progress reports or semester report card. Student achievement will be determined “at risk” as defined by CWCS “Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention or Promotion” for one or more semesters. (See Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention or Promotion, attached as Exhibit A). If Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have concerns, CWCS asks that it be notified as early in the school year as possible, so the PLT process can be initiated.
2. CWCS will hold a PLT meeting for a student.¹ Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to the PLT meeting to discuss concerns and proposed interventions. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive a copy of the PLT meeting notes which will serve as notice of proposed interventions and student achievement strategies.
3. Research based interventions and instructional scaffolding support suggested at the PLT 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 PLT and the recommendation for retention.
4. Once the student has undergone the PLT process, if the parent or guardian still has concerns, they may submit their concerns and their request for the student to be retained in writing to: plt@cwcharter.org or faxed to 209-874-9531, before March 1 of each school year. Once made, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to a conference with the teacher(s), PLT Coordinator, Executive Director or designee, and other staff members as deemed necessary (“Retention Team”). Retention Team Conference invitation will be via email by PLT Coordinator to the email that the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) provided to the Charter School. The parent or guardian will be invited to a conference with the PLT Coordinator and/or the Retention Team within 30 days of the request. The PLT Coordinator will schedule the conference in early spring to present information on the student’s progress/proficiency in all areas and reasoning behind a possible recommendation for retention.
5. The Retention Team Conference will include:
 - a. Review of previous PLT notes
 - b. Discussion of previous/current/ongoing interventions

¹For 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.

- c. Review of current work and available assessments
 - d. Development of a plan for support for the following academic year
 - e. Determination of student's grade level for the following academic year
 - f. 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. PLT Coordinator shall send written notification of the final decision to retain or not retain a student via email to the parent and ES, within 10 calendar days after the Conference. While family input is an important part of the decision process, the Retention Team will make the determination on student retention. If there is disagreement among the Retention Team, the Executive Director or designee will make the determination based upon all information discussed at the meeting.

B. Right to Appeal

If the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) disagree with the decision, they have the right to appeal to the CWCS Board through the following steps:

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 Executive 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 Board shall review the appeal as well as the student's academic performance records on which the Retention Team relied. The Executive Director or designee shall be provided an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which the Retention Team or Executive Director's/designee'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 Board to maintain student confidentiality. The Board will prepare a written decision which summarizes findings and conclusions.
3. The Board shall notify the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Executive Director or designee 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 Board's decision is final.

C. Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental instructional programs will be available for students who are recommended for retention, retained, or identified as at-risk of retention. Such programs may be offered by CWCS during the summer, during regular school hours, after school, and/or during intersession.

The Executive Director or designee may require recommended students to participate in supplemental instructional programs. Parents who exclude their students from supplemental instructional programs will be notified in writing by CWCS of their risk of retention for the student's failure to access supplemental instruction.

Promotion

A. Required Steps Preceding Promotion Decision

CWCS will only promote students in grades 4-8. Before promoting a student, CWCS will follow the following steps:

1. A parent or guardian may submit a promotion request in writing to: plt@cwcharter.org or faxed to 209-874-9531, before March 1 of each school year. If CWCS receives a promotion request from a student's Parent(s)/Guardian(s), CWCS will schedule and hold a PLT meeting for Student.² Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to the PLT meeting along with the PLT Coordinator to discuss student progress on grade level benchmarks and other considerations/concerns for promotion. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will receive a copy of the PLT meeting notes which will serve as notice of proposed student achievement strategies (and interventions, where applicable).
2. If there is disagreement among the PLT, the Executive Director or designee will make the determination whether to recommend the student for promotion based upon all information discussed at the meeting. The Executive Director or designee 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. This notice will go out at least 30 calendar days before the last day of school.

B. Right to Appeal

²For 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 Section 504 team in a 504 meeting.

If the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) disagree with the decision, they have the right to appeal to the CWCS Board through the following steps:

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 Executive Director or designee 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 Board shall review the appeal as well as the student's academic performance records on which the PLT relied. The Executive Director or designee shall be provided an opportunity to state orally and/or in writing the criteria on which the PLT or Executive Director's or designee'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 Board to maintain student confidentiality. The Board will prepare a written decision which summarizes findings and conclusions.
3. The Board shall notify the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Executive Director or designee 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 Board's decision is final.

Exhibit A

Connecting Waters Charter Schools Specific Grade Level Criteria for Retention or Promotion

Promotion and Retention Criteria:

Connecting Waters Charter Schools (“CWCS”) has verified a **research-based, grade level** core curriculum has been used:

- The program has been used with fidelity with the student for a significant amount of time.
- Parents/Guardians have been provided training on how to effectively instruct from the curriculum.
- CWCS has verified all necessary components of the program are available to and being used with the student (teacher’s editions, practice books, supplementary workbooks, etc).

The student has completed comprehensive diagnostic assessments to help determine targeted skills deficiencies or strengths.

Promotion Criteria:

For promotions to be considered, on or before March 1 of each school year, a parent or guardian must submit to the PLT Coordinator:

1. A minimum of three (3)-years state standardized assessment scores.
2. iReady scores
3. Two letters of recommendation
4. Grades/GPA must be above average in all subjects
3. Students must also provide A minimum of five (5) current work samples in each core subject area.

Outside assessments paid for by a parent or guardian may also be considered.

Retention Criteria:

For retentions to be considered, on or before March 1 of each school year, a student must be performing one (1) grade level or more behind in a minimum of two (2) academic areas, as evidenced by:

1. Consistently scoring in Tier 3 on the approved schoolwide local assessment or other

relevant assessment(s).

2. State CAASPP scores, other local and state assessments, and class grades (if available) will also be reviewed as part of the overall decision on retaining the student.

Exhibit B

**Connecting Waters Charter School
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 Connecting Waters Charter Schools (“CWCS”) Pupil Promotion and Retention Policy, my child was recommended for retention/promotion by the CWCS Retention Team or promotion by the PLT. I do not agree with this recommendation and wish to appeal this decision to the CWCS Board of Directors.

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 Executive Director. This appeal will go before the CWCS Board of Directors and it will make a final determination regarding retention or promotion.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date