
GRADE RETENTION POLICY

Sage Oak Charter Schools (“SOCS” or the “Charter School”) adopt this Grade Retention Policy to apply to all students requesting grade retention.

SOCS is committed to the success of each student. Retention is an academic intervention that has a student repeat a grade level that has already been completed. The goal of retention is to create a bridge between the readiness of a student and the level and pace of instruction.

Retention of a student and the repeating of the academic content can happen naturally within an independent study model and doesn’t typically need to be formally reflected in the student’s assigned grade level. Therefore, a thorough evaluation of a request to retain will be conducted before approving a retention request.

Please note that TK students that were not eligible for kindergarten due to the legal age cut-off requirement must finish the two-year program by completing kindergarten before being considered for retention. All other grade levels may request a grade level retention of their student.

SOCS only reviews retention requests at the end of each school year, after the student has been enrolled in the school for the majority of the current school year. Rare exceptions may be made by the Director of Education Services, or designee, to review a retention request earlier.

A retention request may only be made if a SST meeting has been held during the current school year for the student. If a SST meeting was not held during the current school year, then a retention request cannot be made for that school year.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must submit the following to the Education Services Department by the last day of learning period 7:

1. A written request by the parent/guardian for the retention of the student
2. Explanation of why the request is being made
3. List of all interventions and curriculums utilized during the school year to help the student meet grade-level standards
4. Evidence and documentation to show that the student has not yet met grade-level standards (this may include, but is not limited to assignment and work records, assessment scores, work samples, report cards). Please note the school may request additional documentation as needed.

Teachers of students for whom a grade retention request has been made must review the Retention Internal Talking Points with the parent prior to submitting the above documentation through the Retention Questionnaire found in the EA/Teacher manual.

An SST/retention meeting will be held during learning period 9 with the teacher, Assistant Director of Education Services, and Director of Education Services. If the parent/guardian is requesting a student be retained for a high school grade level, then a representative from the Secondary Education Department will also be in attendance. The parent/guardian is invited to attend the beginning of the meeting to explain their request and present any documentation that supports the request, however, their attendance is not required. The team, minus the

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parent/guardian, will review the information and decide if retention is an appropriate determination. If the team cannot come to a consensus, then the Director of Education Services holds the responsibility of making the final decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified via email of the decision within two school days of the SST/retention meeting.

If the request is denied, the parent(s)/guardian(s) has the right to appeal. If the retention request is approved, then the parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the Parent/Guardian Retention Acknowledgement Form before the student's grade level will be changed in the school database.

The school may choose to retain a student without parent/guardian approval under the following circumstances:

- A) The student has been chronically absent. Chronically absent has been defined in *EC* Section 60901(c)(1) as a pupil who is absent on 10 percent or more of the school days in the school year when the total number of days a pupil is absent is divided by the total number of days the pupil is enrolled and school was actually taught in the regular day schools of the district, exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays. For students identified as Title I students, chronically absent has been defined pursuant to section 203(c)(1) of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3413(c)(1)) for Title I schools. The federal definition for chronic absenteeism counts students who have missed 15 days of school for any reason during one school year rather than students who have been absent 10 percent or more of the school days.

Right to Appeal

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagree with the school's decision to retain or not retain a student, they have the right to appeal to the school's Executive Director.

- 1) Parent(s)/guardian(s) choosing to appeal a denial to retain a student shall submit a request to appeal the decision to the Executive Director with a detailed explanation specifying the reasons why the decision should be overturned. The submission of the request to appeal must occur no later than five (5) school days following the date the parent(s)/guardian(s) were notified via email of the denial.
- 2) The Executive Director shall review the appeal as well as the student's academic performance records on which the SST relied. The Executive Director shall be provided an opportunity to discuss records with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and SST meeting members if they deem it necessary.

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- 3) The Executive Director will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision via email within seven (7) school days of receiving the appeal request.
- 4) The Executive Director's decision is final.