

## The Vanguard School

### **POLICY: Vanguard IKE – Student Retention (Pass/Fail)**

**POLICY ADOPTED: 4-15-2026**

The Vanguard School is academically rigorous and students are promoted to the next grade when they master the year's curriculum and demonstrate that they are prepared for success at the next level.

#### Elementary Grades

The term Gift of Time defines our approach and reasoning in deciding to retain a student in kindergarten through sixth grade. The determination to give a student the Gift of Time is based on data from the year's worth of work and the level of effort and focus that a student is able to bring to his work. Mastery of skills in reading, writing, and math, as well as mastery of information in science and history in each grade level is critical for successful growth at the next grade level. If the data indicates that the student is not likely to be successful in the next grade, it is recommended that the student be given an opportunity to catch up in the curriculum and truly master it, so he is not continually required to struggle through a level of material that is beyond his ability to master.

The Gift of Time is recommended by the teacher to the principal and then to the parents. In some cases, parents will be given a choice of whether or not to accept the Gift of Time for their child. In other cases, the evidence will indicate that the Gift of Time is mandatory for the child if he is to remain at The Vanguard School.

Many factors come into play when determining whether to recommend a Gift of Time or to make it mandatory. If in the teacher's and principal's professional assessment the student has not met the grade level benchmarks, would significantly benefit from repeating the course of instruction, and will likely not be successful without repeating, then the school will make the Gift of Time **mandatory**.

If in the teacher's and principal's professional assessment, the student has not met the grade level benchmarks, would likely benefit from repeating the course of instruction, and would have a stronger chance of future success at the school with retention, a Gift of Time will be **recommended**, but the final decision is made by the parents. The Gift of Time cannot be required for students with an active IEP or a well-documented medical condition / 504 plan contributing to their Gift of Time consideration.

In all cases, teachers, administration, and parents will collaborate to determine what is best for the student's development of character and academic potential, and how to best take advantage of the Gift the following year.

## **I. Guidelines for Gift of Time Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

- A. The Gift of Time will help the student develop intellectually and emotionally to a degree that will allow him/her to be successful in subsequent grades.
- B. The teacher feels the student needs further development intellectually or emotionally to be prepared for the next grade.
- C. The student is performing significantly below established grade-level cut points/benchmarks in reading and/or math.
- D. The student falls significantly short of mastery in most subjects.
- E. Parents request the Gift of Time

## **II. Guidelines for Gift of Time in 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- A. The Gift of Time will help the student develop intellectually and emotionally to a degree that will allow him/her to be successful in subsequent grades.
- B. The student fails two courses for the year (based on an average of all quarters)
- C. The student has not met course requirements and is performing significantly below established grade-level cut points/benchmarks in reading and/or math.
- D. Parents request the Gift of Time

## **III. Guidelines for Retention in Junior High**

- A. A student will be retained if they fail two courses. Failure constituting the cumulative average of all quarters and both final exams combined. If a student fails only one course, administration will offer a contract of remediation for that student. If the student's parents or legal guardians successfully comply with the contract plan, they will be allowed to advance to the next grade. If consent is not given to the contract plan, the student will be retained. Possible methods of remediation for the contract plan will include, but are not limited to, summer school, tutoring, independent study followed by assessment, and placement tests.

## **IV. Guideline for Retention in High School**

- A. Advancement in High School is determined by the number of credits earned. See Policy IKF for specifics of these requirements.

***Initial Adoption: 12-14-2011***

***Revised: 2-13-2018***

## **SOP: Gift of Time Procedures and Guidelines for Elementary**

- Document all relevant information relating to the student – academic progress, interventions in place to support the student, overall student well-being and attitude, and if an MTSS is in place for the student.
- Schedule a meeting with Building Leader, Director of Instruction, Team Leader, and Director of Student Services (if applicable).
- If the decision is made to consider a Gift of Time, the teacher should schedule a meeting with the parents to discuss the possibility of retention. This should occur early in the second semester and discussion should focus on best meeting the learning needs of the student.
- At the beginning of April, the teacher should schedule a second meeting with Building Leader, Director of Instruction, Team Leader, and Director of Student Services (if applicable) to review student documentation and discuss current feelings regarding recommendation for retention.
- If the decision is made to recommend or require a Gift of Time, the Building Leader will initial and date an acknowledgment that the student is being considered as a possible candidate.
- Parents are notified at spring parent-teacher conferences of the final recommendation, and all the steps taken to support the student throughout the school year are reviewed.
- The letter indicating acceptance or refusal of the Gift of Time is due back from the parents by the third week of May.