

**SECTION J
STUDENTS**

2. Placement

a. Kindergarten Entrance Age:

(Voted 5/11/93, #93-150; 5/18/93, #93-154; 3/1/94, #94-14; 3/14/96, #96-24; 2/7/02, #02-18; 3/21/02, #02-32; 4/25/02, #02-45; 11/15/10, #10-86)

In order for a child to be eligible to enter kindergarten, he/she must have reached the age of five (5) years on or before August 31 of the year in which he/she enters kindergarten. No exceptions shall be made.

J 2 b. Assignment of Students to Classes: (Voted 11/24/87, #87-576)

The grade level or class placement of students shall be determined by ~~school department~~Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) staff in accordance with the following guidelines established by the staff and approved by the School Committee:

J 2 b. 1. Class Placement/Grade Level: Transferees: (Voted 11/24/87, #87-576)

1. Decisions regarding the placement of students transferring into ~~the Public Schools of Brookline~~PSB from other systems shall be made by the Principal in the Elementary Schools after consultation with appropriate specialists and by the House Heads after consultation with the Guidance Counselors and Department Coordinators at the High School.
2. The following factors shall be considered:
 - a. The child's age, ability, achievement, social development, and previous grade.
 - b. Scores and evaluations on such tests as are utilized by ~~the Public Schools of Brookline~~PSB.
 - c. Parent/~~caregiver at~~ input.
 - d. Input from the child's previous teacher, where possible.
3. Appeals
 - a. Elementary school parents/~~caregiver(s)~~ may appeal the decision of the ~~Principal~~ to the ~~Assistant Deputy~~ Superintendent for ~~Curriculum and Instruction~~Teaching and Learning and to the Superintendent of Schools. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.
 - b. High School parents may appeal the decision of the ~~House Head to the~~Head of School to the ~~Deputy Assistant~~ Superintendent for ~~Teaching and Learning~~Curriculum and Instruction, and to the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.
4. ~~The Brookline Public Schools~~PSB will not engage in or pay for additional testing or other diagnostic procedures as part of the placement process.

Commented [NM1]: I don't know what the current practice is but I know this is outdated. Does it all happen in central?

Commented [NM2]: Is it still principal?

Commented [NM3]: Is it still head of school?

J 2 b. 2. Promotion and Retention of Students (Voted 11/24/87, #87-576; 2/12/09, #09-13)

1. Regular promotions of all pupils who have attained a satisfactory proficiency shall be made at the close of the school year with the approval of the elementary school Principal and the Head of School at the High School.
2. Student grade retention shall be determined as appropriate by the elementary school Principal or the High School Head of School.

a. Factors to be considered in these actions shall include:

1. The child's age, social development and previous grade and achievement levels.
2. Scores and evaluations on such tests as are utilized by ~~PSB~~the Brookline Public Schools.
3. The recommendations of the relevant Dean (BHS), the teacher(s), guidance counselor and social worker, as appropriate.
4. Parent/~~caregiver~~ +input.

b. Pupils who for two consecutive years have been in the same class and who have been constant in attendance, who produce a certificate from their teacher that they have worked faithfully during that time may be promoted if deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools.

3. Appeal of a decision of the elementary school Principal or High School Head of School may be made to the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and to the Superintendent of Schools. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

J 2 b. 3. Grade Acceleration

(Voted 2/12/09, #09-13)

1. ~~The Public Schools of Brookline~~PSB recognizes that children develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically at different rates. While the vast majority of children are well served by progressing through the preK-8 elementary system, there may be a few exceptional children who have mastered concepts and skills far beyond their grade level peers, have exhausted all available resources, and are in need of a different academic experience. In these situations, careful consideration must be taken to determine the best course of action for meeting the needs of these children.

Grade Acceleration, defined as students being placed in a grade ahead of their usual placement by age, may be one viable alternative. It should, however, be viewed as an exception in educational protocol, requiring careful consideration and support.

Grade Acceleration decisions will be based on a comprehensive evaluation of the child, using multiple measures including, but not limited to: ability tests, aptitude tests, achievement tests, measures of developmental areas and social skills, and samples of student work. In addition, students being considered for Grade Acceleration must demonstrate proficiency, or demonstrate the ability to become proficient independently, of the ~~Brookline-PSB~~ Learning Expectations within the four core subjects of the grade(s) being skipped. Based on these outcomes and in collaboration with the parents and the school personnel involved (principal, classroom teacher, ~~ECS resource teacher,~~ guidance counselor, school psychologist, ~~ECS program coordinator~~and other educators/staff as applicable), ~~the School Department~~PSB will determine the best grade placement for the student.

J 2 b. 4. Student Grouping, Inclusion and Placement Practices: Originally approved: 1/9/97; 1/23/97, #97-4; Revised Policy Adopted by School Committee 3/11/10, #10-19.

~~The Public Schools of Brookline~~ (PSB) is committed to identifying and eliminating barriers to educational achievement and to providing educational opportunities that ensure every student meets our standards for achievement and is challenged in meaningful ways. To this end, we consciously and explicitly hold all students to high expectations and engage in grouping, inclusion and placement practices that create the necessary classroom conditions for all students to achieve at high levels.

Consistent with Massachusetts General Laws and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) with respect to student grouping, inclusion and placement practices, it is the policy of the Brookline School Committee that:

- All students are expected to meet high learning standards as defined by High School Course Syllabi and Expectations and pK-8 Learning Expectations in all grades, courses and levels. With thorough knowledge of their students' strengths and needs, and with resources and support available to them, classroom teachers will have primary responsibility for identifying, coordinating, and providing learning opportunities that promote high achievement for all their students.
- All classes and sections are open to all students, including elementary school enrichment programs, high school courses and, in the case of students with disabilities, general education classrooms. Parents/[caregivers](#), school personnel and students (where appropriate) shall collaborate in the decision-making process to determine the placement that is in the best interest of the student consistent with state and federal law. The goal is for the student to be in the most challenging and least restrictive class/section available.
- Elementary classroom teachers will use a variety of grouping strategies to challenge and engage students in meaningful ways. Groups created in an elementary classroom or grade shall be flexible and dynamic so that the composition of these groups can change over the course of a year.
- When determining class placement of students at any grade level in elementary school and in the creation of middle school class lists, consideration shall be given to various student learning needs. In order to create effective learning environments and maintain valued diversity within each classroom, efforts will be made to place students with some peers who share similar profiles so that teachers can more effectively address the strengths and needs of all students.

Furthermore, the Superintendent is charged with developing and implementing the following programs and procedures:

- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop guidelines outlining the classroom practices and school procedures aligned with this policy.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee, in collaboration with school principals, will create and implement programs and practices to support and develop teachers' understanding of content, instruction and classroom conditions that meet the needs of diverse learners consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 38Q and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 38Q½.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee will provide additional or alternative opportunities for students who demonstrate mastery of the learning expectations in a particular subject area. Mastery will be determined by various and multiple PSB assessments and by school personnel. These opportunities are intended to provide students with curricular challenge in a setting appropriate to the student's social and emotional development, and will include the possibility of elementary student enrollment in BHS courses, as well as high school student participation at local colleges or universities.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop programs and processes that enable all high school students who wish to progress into a higher level class to attend courses, including, but not limited to, summer school classes that may be necessary for such progression.

- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop programs and practices that encourage and enable teachers to provide instructional differentiation at all academic levels (including, but not limited to, enrichment and challenge support) so that all students are appropriately challenged academically and experiencing progress at the elementary level.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop practices, aligned with the IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B, s. 3, to ensure that students are educated in a general education setting (with appropriate support) to the maximum extent possible. Determination of educational setting will be made through the special education team process, informed by a child study team at each building.

J 2 b. 4. Class Size and Sectioning

The decision of class size and number of class sections per grade is ultimately a decision between the Principal and the Superintendent. Traditionally the district has had guidelines of less than 22 students in K-2 and 25 students in 3-8. This is not a firm cap but rather a best practice. However, class size and number of sections are determined by several factors in addition to the guidelines, including but not limited to:

- Classroom size and features
- Number of students with disabilities
- Teacher experience
- Whether there are additional educators assigned to support the classroom
- Feasibility of assigning new students to other elementary schools

When class size exceeds guidelines, the School Committee supports the district/building leadership in identifying ways to ensure student learning is maximized, including multi-grade classrooms, additional classroom supports, and other means as deemed appropriate.