

ACADEMIC ACCELERATION, EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN, AND EARLY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

In accordance with the belief that all children are entitled to an education commensurate with their particular needs, students who can exceed the grade-level indicators and benchmarks set forth in the standards must be afforded the opportunity and be encouraged to do so.

The Board believes that such students often require access to advanced curriculum in order to realize their potential contribution to themselves and society.

All children learn and experience success given time and opportunity, but the degree to which academic content standards are met and the time it takes to reach the standards will vary from student to student. The Board believes that all students, including advanced learners, should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential. For many advanced learners, this can best be achieved by affording them access to curriculum, learning environments, and instructional interventions more commonly provided to older peers.

This policy describes the process that shall be used for evaluating students for possible accelerated placement and identifying students who should be granted early admission to kindergarten, accelerated in one or more individual subject areas, promoted to a higher grade level than their same-age peers, and granted early graduation from high school.

No child shall be admitted to kindergarten or first grade unless the child is five or six years of age, respectively, by the thirtieth day of September of the year of admittance except as otherwise set forth in this policy. Parents of children, who become six (6) years of age between October 1 and before January 1, may request testing for early entrance into first grade. Parents of children, who will become five (5) years of age between October 1 and before January 1, may request testing for early entrance into kindergarten. Pursuant to O.R.C. §3301.60, children of military families who transfer from a public school district in another state (the “sending state”) shall be enrolled in the grade level commensurate with their grade level in the prior district regardless of age. However, a student who has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in the public school district in another state shall be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade, regardless of age.

Kindergarten Early Entrance

The Ohio Revised Code establishes minimum age requirements for admission to kindergarten and first grade and sets forth requirements for a standardized testing program to evaluate those children deemed ready by parents for early admission, and a board of education must evaluate those children who reach five (5) years of age after October 1, but prior to January 1 if early admission is requested by parents.

Referrals and Evaluation

- A. Any student residing in the district may be referred by a teacher, administrator, gifted education specialist, guidance counselor, school psychologist, or a parent or legal guardian of the student to the principal of his or her school for evaluation for possible accelerated placement. A student may refer himself or herself or a peer through a district staff member who has knowledge of the referred child’s abilities.
- B. Copies of this policy and referral forms for evaluation for possible early entrance, whole-grade acceleration, individual subject acceleration, and early high school graduation shall be made available to district staff and parents at each school building. The principal of each school building (or his or her designee) shall solicit referrals of students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement annually, and ensure that all staff he or she supervises are aware of procedures for referring students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement.

- C. The principal (or his or her designee) of the referred student's school shall obtain written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement. The district shall evaluate all students who are referred for evaluation and whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have granted permission to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement.
- D. Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement sixty or more days prior to the start of the school year shall be evaluated in advance of the start of the school year so that the child may be placed in the accelerated placement on the first day of school. Children who are referred for possible accelerated placement sixty or more days prior to the start of the second semester shall be evaluated for possible accelerated placement at the start of the second semester. In all other cases, evaluations of a referred child shall be scheduled at the student's principal's discretion and placed in the accelerated setting(s) at the time recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee – if the committee determines the child should be accelerated. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3321.01, all children who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be evaluated upon the request of the child's parent or legal guardian. Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested may also be evaluated for possible early admittance at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.
- E. A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the referred student's principal. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.
- F. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the local Superintendent within thirty days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his or her final decision within thirty days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he or she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

Acceleration Evaluation Committee

A. Composition

1. The referred student's principal (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student. This committee shall be comprised of the following:
 - (a) A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school;
 - (b) A current teacher of the referred student (with the exception of students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten);
 - (c) A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated (with the exception of students referred for possible early graduation from high school);

- (d) A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student;
 - (e) A gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist. If a gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist is not available in the district, a school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration may be substituted.
2. The acceleration evaluation committee shall be charged with the following responsibilities:
- (a) The acceleration evaluation committee shall conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the student.
 - (i) Students considered for whole-grade acceleration and early entrance to kindergarten shall be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
 - (ii) Students considered for individual subject acceleration shall be evaluated using a variety of data sources, including measures of achievement based on state academic content standards (in subjects for which the state had approved content standards) and consideration of the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
 - (iii) Students referred for possible early high school graduation shall be evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on state academic content standards, and successful completion of state mandated graduation requirements. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
 - (b) The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision to the principal and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the committee, a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student will be determined by a majority vote of the committee membership.
 - (c) The acceleration evaluation committee shall develop a written acceleration plan for students who will be admitted early to kindergarten, whole-grade accelerated, or accelerated in one or more individual subject areas. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student shall be provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan. The written acceleration plan shall specify:
 - (i) placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
 - (ii) strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
 - (iii) requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable); and,

- (iv) an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual content areas.
- (d) For students the acceleration evaluation committee recommends for early high school graduation, the committee shall develop a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete graduation requirements on an accelerated basis. This may include the provision of educational options in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-06(G), waiving district prerequisite requirements for enrolling in advanced courses, waiving district graduation requirements that exceed those required by the state, and early promotion to sophomore (or higher) status to allow the student to take the Ohio Graduation Test.
- (e) The acceleration evaluation committee shall designate a school staff member to ensure successful implementation of the written acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the accelerated setting.

Accelerated Placement

- A. The acceleration evaluation committee shall specify an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual subject areas.
 - 1. At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.
 - 2. At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the acceleration committee to consider other accelerative options and issue a decision within 30 days of receiving the request from the parent or legal guardian. If the student will be placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.
- B. At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

LEGAL REFS: O.R.C. §§3301.60; 3324.10

Student Name: _____ **Homeroom:** _____

Date: _____

Accelerated Packet Checklist

_____ Acceleration Referral Form Received (*45 days to notify parents of results*)

_____ Permission to Evaluate Form received

Data Gathering for IAS: (*The following items will be collected as deemed necessary as per the type of acceleration requested,*) *Committee Meetings (first few weeks)*

_____ 4 Week Committee Meeting (progress meeting- continue, cease, or alternate plan)

_____ 8 Week Committee Meeting (final decision- permanent placement, no placement, or alternate plan)

_____ Grades (Current and past,) copy enclosed

_____ State Mandated Testing. Copy of results enclosed

_____ Achievement/Ability Results, copy enclosed

_____ Checklists/Interviews

_____ Acceleration Scale Rubric

_____ Academic, Ability, Aptitude, and Achievement

_____ School and Academic Fact

_____ Developmental Factors

_____ Interpersonal Skills

_____ Attitude and Support

_____ Additional Assessments

_____ Acceleration Committee Decision Letter
(*Within 45 days of receiving referral*)

_____ Yes _____ No

_____ Permission to Participate in Transition

_____ Yes _____ No

_____ Transition Period (Up to 9 weeks)

_____ Principal/ Teacher(s) informal

_____ Acceleration Committee Final Decision Letter

_____ Yes (*WAP) _____ No

_____ Permission to Participate in Acceleration

____ Yes ____ No

____ Appeal (*Within 30 days of receiving Decision Letter*)

____ Superintendent's Appeal Response Form
(*within 30 days of receiving appeal*)

____ Special request during process (*list*)

* WAP = Written Acceleration Plan

Acceleration Referral Form

Child _____ School _____ Grade _____

Is referred for possible acceleration in the following area(s):

Reason

Early Entrance • Kindergarten

Subject Acceleration

Mathematics

Science

Reading/Language

Social Studies

Other

Grade Acceleration

Early Graduation

Additional pertinent information to be considered (attach additional page if needed):

Signature of person
Initiating referral

Position or Relationship
to child

Phone

Signature of Person Receiving Referral

Date

PLEASE RETURN TO BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR

Permission to Evaluate

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child has been referred as a possible candidate for Acceleration. Before any decision can be made, we need your permission to evaluate the student. This evaluation may include testing, data collection of grades, checklists, interviews, testing results, credits earned, or other pertinent information. Please indicate your choice below and return this form to school. You will be notified of the results of the evaluation and the committee's recommendation.

Please answer these three questions as we begin this process:

*Will the child be accelerated into the same grade as (or a higher grade than) a sibling? _____

*Does the child presently have a sibling in the same grade? _____

*Does the child indicate that he/she wants to be accelerated? _____

Child's Name

Grade

__ Yes, I give permission for my child to be evaluated as a candidate for Acceleration.

__ No, I do not give permission for my child to be evaluated as a candidate for Acceleration.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Permission to Participate in Acceleration

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child has successfully completed a "Transition Period" for acceleration. A final decision for permanent placement has been recommended.

Before the acceleration can become permanent, we need your permission once again. Please complete this form and return it to school at your earliest convenience.

Child's Name

Grade

_____ Yes, I give permission for my child's acceleration to become permanent

_____ No, I do not give permission for my child's acceleration to become permanent

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Superintendent's Appeal Response Form

Appeal for:

Decision regarding:

Superintendent Response: _____ Appeal Upheld

 _____ Appeal Denied

Reasons/Action to be taken:

Superintendent Signature

Date

WRITTEN ACCELERATION PLAN

School District _____

Student Name _____ Sex F / M Birth Date ___/___/___

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

_____ Parent/Guardian _____



QUALIFYING CRITERIA:

Intelligence Test Score _____ (group or individual) Test

Name: _____

Normed Achievement Test Scores: Test

Name: _____

____ Reading ____ Language _____ Math ____ Science ____ Social Studies

State Mandated Testing Scores: Test Name:

_____ Reading _____ Language

_____ Math _____ Science _____ Social Studies

_____ Writing _____ Citizenship _____ Other (Specify) _____

Other criteria/data:



ACCELERATED SETTING:

____ Early entrance to Kindergarten

____ Whole Grade Acceleration (From grade _____ to grade _____)

____ Individual Subject Acceleration (Subject: _____)

____ Early High School Graduation (Proposed graduation date: _____)

Month/Year _____

TRANSITION PERIOD:

(Not applicable for Early Graduation Candidates)

