

ACCELERATION

Pre-Referral Informal Case Review

Upon being contacted by the teacher and/or parents about potentially unique student needs, the principal may conduct an informal case review with all relevant parties to review available data, discuss student learning and potential needs and review results of interventions already applied.

To respond to identified student needs, options such as these should be considered:

1. classroom differentiation;
2. flexible instructional groups;
3. intervention provided by other school staff;
4. referral to LAT and/or
5. completion of an Acceleration Referral to consider possible subject area or whole grade acceleration.

Documentation of an informal case review, IAT meeting/plan and/or any school interventions should be placed in the student file (blue intervention folder) to insure that there is a full and accurate record of such discussions and interventions.

Acceleration Referral

A child's teacher and/or parents may submit an Acceleration Referral to the building principal.

Referrals will be considered in April/May for the following school year, and in November/December for a January accelerated placement.

After the principal signs the referral, a copy should be placed in the student's file (blue intervention folder), and the referral should be forwarded to the building psychologist for data gathering.

Data Gathering by Building Psychologist

The building psychologist will review the data already available, and will communicate with the principal if any additional data are needed. The principal will approve the collection of additional data, and will communicate with staff who will be asked to administer assessments or provide additional information.

Upon approval of the principal, and receipt of written permission from the parents, the building psychologist will administer any individual cognitive and/or academic tests that are needed.

All curriculum-based assessment results and Iowa Acceleration Scale checklists will be returned to the building psychologist by teachers and other staff who are completing them.

The building psychologist will complete the Iowa Acceleration Scale, will create and maintain a file with documents related to the acceleration referral and will notify the principal when these steps have been completed.

Data Review and Decision

Upon receiving notification from the building psychologist that all data have been gathered and the Iowa Acceleration Scale has been completed, the principal will convene an Acceleration Evaluation Committee. Acceleration Evaluation Committee members may include:

1. principal and/or assistant principal (secondary);
2. intervention teacher (elementary);
3. child's current teacher;
4. A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated;
5. parent or legal guardian;
6. building psychologist;
7. gifted intervention specialist(s) if the child is receiving Gifted Education services;
8. special education teacher(s) if the child is receiving Special Education services and
9. gifted services facilitator

The Acceleration Evaluation Committee will examine the data and determine the appropriateness of whole grade or subject area accelerated placement for the child.

Minimum Criteria for Accelerated Placement in Hilliard City Schools

Part One: Iowa Acceleration Scale

Ranking of “Excellent” or “Good” — candidate for acceleration

1. Cognitive Ability (Iowa Scale IV) — Full Scale cognitive score 130 or higher* (most current score within the last 24 months)

The Full Scale (composite) cognitive ability score must be 130 or higher (i.e., at least two standard deviations above the norm for the test being used) on a nationally standardized test administered individually by a school psychologist that includes both verbal and nonverbal subscales. The assessment must have been conducted within the last 24 months. If test results are available from more than one individual assessment (as described above), the most recent scores should be used.

*If the child’s Full Scale (Composite) cognitive score is below the level indicated, (but not lower than a 115 Full Scale score, or one standard deviation above the mean) and/or if cognitive ability has been measured by a nonverbal instrument score, all other criteria should be met.

2. Academic Aptitude (Iowa Scale V) — Above-level achievement test: 50th percentile (most current score within the last 12 months)

Academic aptitude is measured by an above-level standardized achievement test, such as an above-grade Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Stanford Achievement Test or an achievement test administered individually by a school psychologist that allows measurement of academic ability beyond the student’s current grade level.

If the student has been tested through the Midwest Academic Talent Search program (Explore test, ACT, SAT), scores should be considered in relationship to the group upon whom the test was normed, rather than in relationship to other high-ability students who took the test when this student did. The test must have been taken within the last 12 months.

3. Academic Achievement (Iowa Scale VI) — Grade-level achievement test (most current within the last 12 months)

Academic achievement is measured by results on a nationally standardized achievement test for the grade level at which the child is currently placed. The test must have been taken within the last 12 months. It may be a test typically used in whole class or small group settings, such as the Iowa Achievement Test or Stanford Achievement Test, or may be a test typically administered individually by a school psychologist. If more than one set of test scores is available, the most current score should be used.

Note: For reading or math, if the student has recently been assessed using an out-of-level nationally standardized achievement test, and the student has scored 90th percentile or higher (using grade- vs. age-based academic scores), it is not necessary to also administer a grade-level nationally standardized achievement test in that subject area. In this case, to complete this section of the Iowa Acceleration Scale, it should be assumed that the child would score at the 95th percentile on a grade-level achievement test in that subject area.

For whole grade acceleration: 95th percentile or above in both reading and math on a nationally standardized achievement test within the last 12 months.

For subject area acceleration

- A. 95th percentile or above in the accelerated subject on a nationally standardized achievement test within the last 12 months and
- B. If the accelerated subject is not reading, reading must be 90th percentile or above on a nationally standardized achievement test taken within the last 12 months.

4. Behavioral Checklists

The four Iowa Acceleration Scale checklists should be completed by the student's current teacher(s), and the results should be considered in determining the student's eligibility for an accelerated placement

- A. school and academic factors (Iowa. Scale VII)
- B. developmental factors (Iowa Scale VIII)

Note: Developmental factors should be considered in relationship to the child's cognitive abilities. Students with exceptional cognitive abilities may score at lower levels on this section; however, their high cognitive ability and achievement will serve as a balance on the final tally of points for the Iowa Scale.

- C. interpersonal skills (Iowa Scale IX)
- D. attitude and support (Iowa Scale X)

Part Two: Curriculum-Based Assessments

Curriculum-based assessments in reading and math (for whole grade acceleration) or in the specific subject area (for subject area acceleration) should be completed in addition to the standardized assessments required for the Iowa Acceleration Scale.

Note: Results of the Ohio Achievement Test, or of any other test which measures minimum proficiency, should be reviewed with the expectation that the student has surpassed the minimum level of proficiency required at his/her current grade level.

Accelerated Placement Recommended

If the Acceleration Evaluation Committee makes a decision in favor of whole grade or subject area acceleration, the following steps should be followed, under the direction of the building principal/designee.

1. The Acceleration Evaluation Committee should create a written acceleration plan, which includes signatures of parents and all other members of the committee.
2. The Acceleration Evaluation Committee should coordinate the Acceleration Plan with any other services being received by the child, in consultation with the staff members who are providing those services.
3. The signed Acceleration Plan should be placed in the child's school file (blue intervention folder), and a copy should be sent to the Gifted Services office for the student's Gifted Services file.
4. The building secretary should record the accelerated placement in the District's student database (i.e., eSchoolPlus).
5. The principal should assign a school staff member to monitor student transition and ongoing progress during the accelerated placement.

Accelerated Placement NOT Recommended

If the Acceleration Evaluation Committee does not recommend either whole grade or subject area acceleration, the following steps should be followed, under the direction of the building principal/designee.

1. The Acceleration Evaluation Committee should document its findings, including the names of committee members and the reason(s) for not recommending accelerated placement at this time. Any member of the committee, including the parent/guardian, may include a statement of dissent.
2. This document should be placed in the student's school file (blue intervention folder) and a copy should be sent to the Gifted Services office for the student's Gifted Services file.

3. Parents should be informed of their right to make a written appeal of the decision to the Superintendent within 10 school days of their receipt of the written Acceleration Evaluation Committee's decision from the building principal. Information provided to parents should include the mailing address of the Superintendent and should identify any factors or documents the parents should include in their letter of appeal to the Superintendent.
4. The Acceleration Evaluation Committee should recommend alternative steps that might be taken within the school to address the student's educational needs, and should offer to provide information to parents, as it becomes available, about any programs, websites or experiences the parents could investigate (and access privately) outside the school to provide additional challenges to the student.

Annual Review and Planning

Following successful completion of the transition period defined by the Acceleration Evaluation Committee, a student's whole grade or subject area acceleration is considered permanent, based on the child's continued success in the accelerated placement.

For students in subject area accelerated placements, the building principal/designee will conduct a planning conference during the second semester of the school year to identify, for the following school year, the classroom placement for subject area acceleration, and any specialized resources that might be needed to insure the student's continual progress. If the student's regular class placement will be changing from elementary to sixth grade, from sixth grade to middle school or from middle school to high school, the principal/designee from the new school should participate in the planning conference.

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