

ACCELERATION

The Board recognizes that all students learn and progress at different rates and that the time it takes to reach academic standards varies among students. The Board believes students should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential and that the practice of educational acceleration is used to match appropriate learning opportunities with student abilities. The goals of acceleration are to adjust the pace of instruction to the student's capabilities, provide an appropriate level of challenge by removing the barriers to accessing appropriately challenging curriculum and to reduce the time period necessary for students to complete traditional schooling.

The District uses acceleration strategies in four academic areas.

1. Whole-grade acceleration: The practice of assigning a student on a full-time basis to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.
2. Individual subject acceleration: The practice of assigning a student to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas.
3. Early admission to kindergarten/first grade: The practice of admitting a student to kindergarten/first grade who has not yet reached the typical age at which students are admitted to kindergarten/first grade, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.
4. Early high school graduation: The practice of facilitating completion of the high school program in fewer than four years, for the purpose of providing earlier than typical access to post-secondary educational opportunities.

Accelerated Placement Regulations

Acceleration of a student can occur only if the results of appropriate assessments/observations indicate that the student will function successfully and benefit academically, emotionally and socially from such acceleration. Additionally, a multi-factored assessment is required for whole grade acceleration.

The parents are to be involved before acceleration is recommended. A recommendation to approve or not to approve an accelerated placement shall be made to the building principal by an acceleration evaluation committee which is convened by the principal. The principal will provide written notification of the accelerated placement decision to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may appeal the decision to the Superintendent.

A student may be accelerated on a transition/probationary basis. An assessment of the student's progress shall be completed at the end of the transition/probationary period (typically four to six weeks) to determine the permanent placement.

Grade Placement Procedures

The following procedures will be followed to determine the appropriateness of an accelerated placement:

1. Referrals and Evaluation

Referral forms for evaluation for possible acceleration and copies of this acceleration policy will be available at each school building. Referrals may be submitted by staff and/or parents to the building principal/designee.

Upon receipt of a referral, the principal/designee will convene an acceleration evaluation committee at the school to assist in planning the evaluation and developing recommendations following the evaluation. The principal (or designee) will obtain written permission for evaluation from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Each student referred will be evaluated in a timely manner following receipt by the principal or designee of the written permission for evaluation.

Procedures will be initiated to assure that sufficient and objective information about the student is made available for consideration by the acceleration evaluation committee. Information will include, but not be limited to, test data, progress reports, social and emotional needs, and evidence of advanced ability. The committee shall also consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement.

The following people may be involved in the decision to accelerate a student, either as members of the acceleration evaluation committee or through consultation with committee members:

- A. classroom teacher and other teachers who work with the student
- B. parents
- C. principal
- D. speech and hearing therapist (if necessary)
- E. guidance counselor, elementary intervention teacher or other staff member familiar with appropriate uses of acceleration
- F. school psychologist
- G. receiving teacher
- H. Gifted Services staff member

A recommendation to approve or not to approve an accelerated placement shall be made to the building principal/designee by the acceleration evaluation committee. The principal/designee will provide a written notification letter of the accelerated placement decision to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

2. Acceleration Plan

The acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan which specifies the placement of the student, strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting, requirements for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable), and an appropriate transition period. A copy of the plan will be provided to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

When a student is accelerated, the principal/designee, current teacher and receiving teacher will determine the classroom assignment that will be most advantageous for the student.

The principal/designee will appoint a school staff member to monitor the adjustment of the student to the accelerated setting, and, once the placement has been made permanent, to ensure that the student's permanent record reflects the accelerated placement.

During the transition period, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from the accelerated placement, or that an alternative accelerated placement be considered.

3. Appeal Process

Once an accelerated placement decision has been reached, the parents or legal guardian(s) will be notified in writing by the principal. Parents will have 10 days to appeal the decision. Such appeal shall be in writing to the Superintendent/designee. The Superintendent's/designee's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity for consideration of accelerated placement.

[Adoption date: August 14, 2001]

[Re-adoption date: October 9, 2006]

[Re-adoption date: August 13, 2007]

[Re-adoption date: October 13, 2008]

[Re-adoption date: May 11, 2015]

[Re-adoption date: July 8, 2015]

LEGAL REFS.: ORC 3321.01
 3324.01 et seq.
 OAC 3301-51-15

CROSS REFS.: IGBB, Programs for Gifted and Talented Students
 IKFA, Early Graduation
 JB, Equal Educational Opportunities
 JEB, Entrance Age (Mandatory Kindergarten)
 JEBA, Early Entrance to Kindergarten
 Ohio Department of Education Model Acceleration Policy for Advanced
 Learners
 Student Handbooks