

## ACCELERATION

### 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 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 is 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.

### Referrals and Evaluation

1. 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/her school or the Early Entrance Acceleration Team (EEAT) intake personnel for evaluation in consideration of acceleration placement. A student may refer himself/herself or a peer through a District staff member who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities.
2. Copies of this policy for evaluation for possible early entrance, whole-grade acceleration, individual subject acceleration and early high school graduation are made available to District staff and parents at each school building.
3. The principal or EEAT intake personnel of the referred student's school, obtains written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement. The EEAT evaluates 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.
4. Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement 60 or more days prior to the start of the school year are 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. In all other cases, evaluations of a referred child are scheduled at the student's principal's and/or EEAT's discretion and placed in the accelerated setting(s) at the time recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee – if the EEAT determines the child should be accelerated.

Pursuant to Ohio Administrative 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 are 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 are 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 and or EEAT of the school to which the student may be admitted.

5. A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student is notified, in writing, of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the student's principal or EEAT. This notification includes instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.
6. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the EEAT to the Superintendent within 30 days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent reviews the appeal and notifies the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his/her final decision within thirty days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision is final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he/she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

#### Early Entrance Acceleration Team

1. Composition

The EEAT consisting of, but not limited to the building principal, possible receiving teacher, parents or legal guardian, coordinator of gifted services and school psychologist. The team may apply the district approved IOWA Acceleration Scale process in consideration of the evidence presented in the process of assessment.

2. The EEAT is charged with the following responsibilities:

- A. The EEAT conducts a fair and thorough evaluation of the student.

- 1) Students considered for whole-grade acceleration and early entrance to kindergarten are evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education. The EEAT considers the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
- 2) Students considered for individual subject acceleration are 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 EEAT considers the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

- 3) Students referred for possible early high school graduation are evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on state academic content standards and successful completion of state mandated graduation requirements. The EEAT considers the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
- B. The EEAT issues a written decision to the principal, Gifted Services Coordinator, as well as the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the EEAT a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student is determined by a majority vote of the EEAT membership.
  - C. The EEAT develops a written acceleration plan for students who are 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 are provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan. The written acceleration plan specifies:
    - 1) placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
    - 2) strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
    - 3) requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable); and
    - 4) 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 who the EEAT recommends for early high school graduation, the EEAT develops 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 EEAT designates a school staff member to ensure successful implementation of the written acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the acceleration setting.

#### Accelerated Placement

1. The EEAT specifies an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students and students accelerated in individual subject areas.
  - A. 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 removes the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.

- B. 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 or EEAT directs 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 is placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan is revised accordingly, and a new transition period is specified.
- 2. At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement becomes permanent. The student's records are modified accordingly and the acceleration implementation plan becomes part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

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