

4.54--STUDENT ACCELERATION

The Board believes acceleration is an effective and research-based intervention for the academic growth of students who are ready for an advanced or faster-paced curriculum. It can allow a student to move through the traditional educational setting more rapidly, based on assessed readiness, capability and motivation. At the same time, the Board understands that acceleration is not a replacement for gifted education services or programs.

Generally, acceleration can occur through one of two broad categories: content based and grade based. Grade based acceleration shortens the number of years a student would otherwise spend in K-12 education, while content based acceleration occurs within the normal K-12 time span. Either form of acceleration can be triggered by either a parent/guardian, student, or by the referral of school personnel. In either case, the process of determining the appropriateness of the request shall be under the direction of the District Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator who shall convene the individuals necessary to make an informed decision which shall include the student's parents or guardians.

The optimal time for referrals is in the spring which gives adequate time for working through the determination process and for preparing those concerned for a smooth transition to the acceleration beginning in the following school-year. A written referral should be made to the building principal by May 1 in order for acceleration to be considered for the following school year.

The following format will be used to govern the referral and determination process.

Acceleration and Pre-Referral Qualifications

Prior to an acceleration referral, a student should demonstrate achievement and ability in the following areas.

- High academic performance in core content areas
- High intellectual ability on assessments administered through the gifted program

Acceleration Referral

A student may be referred for acceleration by a parent, administrator, counselor, teacher or student. A written referral stating the reason for the referral should be made to the building principal by May 1 in order for acceleration to be considered for the following school year.

Acceleration Placement Committee

Once a referral for acceleration is made to the building principal, he/she will contact the District Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator and a committee will be formed. The committee will include the following school personnel.

- District GT Program Coordinator
- Building principal
- GT specialist
- Counselor
- Teachers

Factors Considered by the Acceleration Committee

In reaching a decision, the committee members shall consider the following:

- Teacher recommendation
- Academic ability
- Learning aptitude
- Educational achievement
- Interpersonal and emotional maturity
- Development factors
- Parental/guardian support

Acceleration Procedures

1. Upon referral, student data will be collected and reviewed by the District GT Coordinator. The District reserves the right to conduct further testing if warranted. Parent will sign a permission to test form prior to the administration of testing by the gifted and talented program.
2. Parent and teachers may be asked to complete a rating scale for characteristics of giftedness.
3. The GT specialist, counselor, and/or District GT Coordinator may consult with the student and current classroom teacher.
4. Committee members will review records, grades, assessments, and written comments from parents and teachers. They will discuss appropriate placement for the student. Parents of the student may request to address the committee members prior to the acceleration meeting.
5. A decision will be made by the committee after the review of the data collected.
6. The placement decision may be appealed to the District's GT Coordinator (see procedures below).
7. If the decision is made to accelerate a student, an evaluation of the implementation will be conducted each quarter during the first year and will continue subsequent years if warranted.

Appeal Process

The parents/guardians of any student whose request for acceleration has been denied may appeal the decision, in writing, to the District's GT Coordinator. The District's GT Coordinator and the Acceleration Placement Committee will again thoroughly review the case study that was completed on the student. Upon completion of the review, the Committee will either request additional new testing be conducted to help the Committee make its determination or it will uphold the initial decision. The Committee's decision may not be further appealed.

Legal Reference: ADE Gifted and Talented Rules

Approved by Board of Education: 09/13/16