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Osprey Wilds' Policy 553
Online and In-Person School's Policy
Required Osprey Wilds, Three-Year Review

553 GRADE ACCELERATION AND RETENTION

MN Statutes 120B.11, subd. 2; 120B.15

I.PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Crosslake Community Schools (CCS) provides academic acceleration for gifted and talented students, including how CCS assesses a student's readiness and motivation for acceleration and how it matches the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to the student, and how CCS handles requests for grade-level retention. This policy applies to both the online and in-person programs.

II.GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A.CCS offers a range of acceleration options so that each student is placed at a level, complexity, and pace that fits the student's demonstrated needs. Acceleration is not limited to skipping a grade.

B.Whole-grade acceleration is considered only for students in grades K–6. Students in grades 7 and 8 may be considered for acceleration on a course-by-course basis. Beginning in grade 9, students progress toward graduation by earning credits rather than by assigned grade level.

C.A student must have been enrolled at CCS for at least one grading period (trimester or semester) before being considered for whole-grade acceleration or grade-level retention, so that CCS has enough information about the student to make a sound decision.

III.FORMS OF ACADEMIC ACCELERATION

Depending on the student's needs, CCS may use one or more of the following:

A.Differentiation and Enrichment. The classroom teacher provides more advanced, complex, or in-depth work within the student's current class.

B.Curriculum Compacting. The student skips content already mastered, as shown by pre-assessment, and uses the time for advanced work.

C.Subject Acceleration. The student receives instruction in one or more subjects at a higher grade level while remaining in the assigned grade for other subjects.

D.Course-by-Course Acceleration (Grades 7–8). The student takes a higher-level course, such as high school mathematics, in place of the grade-level course.

E.Whole-Grade Acceleration (Grades K–6). The student is placed in a grade level above the assigned grade, using the process in Section VI.

F.High School Options (Grades 9–12). Advanced coursework, credit for learning under CCS Policy 620OL, and postsecondary enrollment options as provided by law.

IV.ASSESSING READINESS AND MOTIVATION

A.A request for acceleration may come from a parent or guardian or from a teacher recommendation. Differentiation, enrichment, and curriculum compacting may be provided by the teacher at any time without a committee review.

B.For subject, course-by-course, and whole-grade acceleration, the Acceleration Committee reviews both:

1.quantitative data, such as STAR and MCA scores, course grades, local formative and summative assessments, and attendance; and

2.qualitative data, such as input from teachers and the parent or guardian, and a student interview that explores the student's interest in and motivation for more challenging work.

C.Written consent from the parent or guardian is obtained before any individual evaluation. Any assessment CCS requires under this policy is provided at no cost to the family.

V.MATCHING LEVEL, COMPLEXITY, AND PACE

A.The Acceleration Committee recommends the form of acceleration that best meets the student's academic needs while supporting the student's social and emotional well-being.

B.Each approved acceleration is documented in a written plan that states the form of acceleration, the level and pace of instruction, the staff responsible, and how progress will be monitored.

C.The student's progress is reviewed at least each grading period, and the plan is adjusted as needed.

VI.WHOLE-GRADE ACCELERATION PROCESS

A.While the process is underway, the student remains in the current assigned grade and completes the work with the class. The teacher may provide accelerated coursework at the teacher's discretion.

B.Acceleration Committee. Each program (online and in-person) has an Acceleration Committee made up of the school principal, the school counselor or social worker, the student's current teacher, and the teacher of the proposed grade level. Other staff may be invited as needed, such as a special education teacher or curriculum coordinator.

C.Initial Review. The Committee reviews the data described in Section IV. If the Committee finds the request is supported, it will recommend a comprehensive evaluation. If not, the Committee may recommend another form of acceleration under Section III. The parent or guardian may accept the decision or appeal it under Section VIII.

D.Written permission from the parent or guardian to proceed with the comprehensive evaluation must be received within 30 days of notice of the Committee's recommendation.

E.Comprehensive Evaluation. The evaluation includes:

1.the current edition of the Iowa Acceleration Scale, which gathers information on academic ability, aptitude, and achievement; school and academic factors; developmental factors; interpersonal skills; and attitude and support;

2.the current edition of an individually administered ability test, such as the WISC, Stanford-Binet, DAS, KABC, or Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities; and

3. an above-grade-level aptitude or achievement test. This may require the student to meet in person with a staff member.

F. Following the evaluation, the Committee meets to recommend, deny, or postpone whole-grade acceleration. The parent or guardian may be invited to this meeting.

VII. WRITTEN REPORT AND TRANSITION

A. The Committee prepares a written report for the student's file and provides a copy to the parent or guardian.

B. If acceleration is not recommended, the report includes: appropriate placement and other acceleration or enrichment options; the school counselor and other staff available to support the student's instructional, social, and emotional needs; enrichment opportunities and family resources; and the appeal process in Section VIII.

C. If acceleration is recommended, the report includes: the student's placement; an appropriate transition period; the school counselor and other staff responsible for overseeing the transition; ongoing counseling opportunities; a plan for communication with the family and staff; strategies to support a successful transition, including addressing any gaps in knowledge or skills; and enrichment opportunities and family resources.

D. A student who is accelerated is coded as "accelerated" for reporting purposes and takes required state assessments for the grade or course in which instruction is delivered.

E. A student may be returned to the prior placement only after the stated transition period, following a conference with the school counselor, a written request from the parent or guardian, and the signature of the classroom teacher.

VIII. APPEALS

A parent or guardian who disagrees with a decision of the Acceleration Committee or Retention Committee may appeal in writing to the District Superintendent within 30 days of receiving the written report. The District Superintendent will review the record, may meet with the family and the committee, and will issue a written decision within 30 days. The District Superintendent's decision is final.

IX. GRADE-LEVEL RETENTION

A. It is the general practice of CCS to advance students in grades K–8 to the next grade each year, regardless of course grades earned. Research has linked grade-level retention to lower later achievement, and other interventions have been shown to better support students' learning and adjustment.

B. Some students in grades 7 and 8 may need to repeat a mathematics course to be prepared for higher-level mathematics. This is a course repeat, not a grade-level retention.

C. After grade 8, students progress toward graduation by passing courses and earning credit. Required courses that are failed must be retaken to earn credit. Students not on track to graduate with their class may attend additional semesters or years until graduation requirements are met or until the end of the school year in which they turn 21.

D. Students who struggle with grade-level content have supports available, including Title I services, Reading Corps and Math Corps tutoring, and differentiated instruction. CCS monitors student growth through regular assessment, and its MnMTSS teams review students who need academic or behavioral support. Families may request additional assessment or intervention through the classroom teacher, or the learning coach for online students.

E. Retention Process. In very special circumstances, grade-level retention may be considered upon parent or guardian request for students in grades K–7:

1. The parent or guardian submits the request in writing to the school principal.

2. While the process is underway, the student remains in the current assigned grade and completes the work with the class. The teacher may provide additional support at the teacher's discretion.

3. A Retention Committee reviews the request. It includes at least the student's most recent classroom teacher, the school principal, and the school counselor or social worker. Other staff may be invited as needed.

4. The Committee reviews the same types of quantitative and qualitative data described in Section IV and may request additional information or assessments.

5. The Committee recommends, denies, or postpones retention. The parent or guardian may be invited to this meeting.

F. The Committee prepares a written report for the student's file and provides a copy to the parent or guardian. If retention is not recommended, the report includes appropriate placement and support options, the staff available to support the student, family resources, and the appeal process in Section VIII. If retention is recommended, the report includes the student's placement, the staff responsible for the transition, counseling opportunities, a communication plan, strategies to address gaps in knowledge or skills, and family resources. The student takes required state assessments for the grade or course in which instruction is delivered.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.11, subd. 2 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.15 (Gifted and Talented Students Programs and Services)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 (Postsecondary Enrollment Options)

Cross References: CCS Policy 513 (Student Promotion, Retention, and Program Design)
CCS Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
CCS Policy 620OL (Credit for Learning)