

513R Student Promotion, Retention, and Program Design

Guidelines for Implementing Whole Grade Acceleration in Grades K-5:

- Whole grade acceleration acknowledges that a student has already achieved at the requisite level to qualify for a higher grade placement.
- Whole grade acceleration is seen as an intervention within the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework to be considered when the current grade level curriculum is a significant mismatch between the student's academic needs, motivation, and readiness.
- Acceleration decisions must involve a comprehensive team (Acceleration Team) discussion guided by an objective and timely process.
- The gifted education/differentiation specialist will maintain communication with the team during the evaluation period.
- The assignment of the student is the legal prerogative of the superintendent or his/her designee.

Whole Grade Acceleration Procedure:

1. The acceleration referral is made to the building principal by the parent/guardian or staff member based on the student's current academic performance using the district's referral form (Acceleration Request form). The process may be initiated at anytime, but should be no later than April 15th for the following fall acceleration.
2. The gifted education/differentiation specialist gathers existing student data including at least two documented strategies to meet student's acceleration needs, previous test scores, work samples, teacher rating scales and a summary of classroom achievement.
3. The Acceleration Team, consisting of the building principal, gifted education/differentiation specialist, the student's classroom teacher and other personnel as deemed necessary by the principal, will review the existing data.
4. If acceleration is a consideration, written approval is obtained from the parent/guardian for an assessment process to begin regarding potential acceleration.
5. District personnel (gifted education/differentiation specialist or school psychologist) will administer appropriate assessments which are included on the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS).
6. Critical items to consider for successful grade acceleration include:
 - The student's ability as measured by assessments chosen from IAS.

- Whether the student would be accelerated into the same grade, or higher than a sibling, or whether the student presently has a sibling in the same grade.
 - The student's desire to be grade-accelerated.
7. Criteria for grade acceleration may include:
- Student scores consistently are 95% or higher on curriculum-based assessments.
 - Student achievement skill of approximately two years above grade level in core subject areas as measured by local and/or state assessments.
 - A full-scale ability score of 130 +/- the standard error of measurement.
 - Information from the IAS.
8. Results of testing and Acceleration Team discussion will result in one or more of the following:
- The students will continue in regular programs with no changes.
 - The students will receive curriculum-based services or extensions in one or more subjects to be determined by classroom teacher and gifted education/differentiation specialist.
 - The student will accelerate one grade level.
9. If grade acceleration is recommended a plan for class placement and transitions will be developed.
- If placement in the advanced grade is necessary within the school year, it should occur at a natural transition time. Best time to accelerate is a year before a transition year (Example: from 3-5, as to not miss 5th grade transition year to middle school expectations, and responsibilities.)
 - Evidence suggests the earlier acceleration happens, the easier for the child to adjust (reforming Gifted Ed- Karen Rogers)
 - The transition plan should address minor gaps that may occur. Accelerated students should be expected to achieve at a performance level comparable with their performance at their previous grade.
 - A supported six-week transition period is recommended.
10. If acceleration is not recommended the following will be considered.
- Recommendations for the current grade level will be developed as necessary.
 - Classroom teacher and gifted education/differentiation specialist will monitor student progress.
 - Parents may appeal the committee's decision by writing a letter of request for further consideration to the superintendent or his/her designee.

Elementary Retention:

- 1. Students who do not achieve at a level deemed acceptable by local and state standards may be retained at their current grade level. Efforts will be made to alter the student's program to better suit each student's needs.*
- 2. Retention will be considered when professional staff, in cooperation with the parents, have determined that it is in the best interest of the student. Many factors will be considered prior to making such a decision. Some of the factors to be included are scholastic ability and achievement, physical development, maturity, cultural norms, emotional factors, as well as attendance and age. It is also recommended that the Light Retention Scale be utilized as another tool to assist in the decision. Retention shall not be based on a single factor.*
- 3. Conferences/discussions between school personnel and parents concerning retention should be initiated by the winter conferences and earlier if the situation warrants it.*
- 4. Retention is a decision that must be made between school personnel and the parent (guardian). If school personnel and parents (guardian) disagree over the issue of promotion and/or retention, a conciliation meeting will be held in an attempt to resolve the differences. The Director of Curriculum or designee will conduct the conciliation meeting as soon as possible after it is obvious that the school and parents (guardians) cannot agree. The school or the parent (guardian) may initiate the conciliation meeting by contacting the Director of Curriculum or designee.*

Early Admission to Kindergarten Testing Criteria:

- 1. Your child must score at or above the 90th percentile on the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, Third Edition. Performance at or above the 90th percentile is a generally identified and agreed upon marker designating high ability in a given area.*
- 2. Your child must demonstrate the ability to read 100 words from a list provided; as well as read fluently and comprehend a story appropriate for mid-level kindergarten. He/She must also achieve 80% accuracy on a letter identification sound-symbol relationship measure.*
- 3. There must be evidence that your child has successfully completed two years in preschool. This addresses the area of social development. Your child's preschool teacher will be asked to complete the ABAS-II (Adaptive Behavior Assessment System) rating form.*

Adopted: 5/16/2017 ISD 709
Revised: 3/20/2018

Grade Acceleration Request Form

Student's Name:

Date:

Date of Birth:

School:

Current Grade:

Current Teacher:

Name of person requesting grade acceleration:

Relationship to student:

To be filled out by parent/guardian:

I would like to request that _____ be considered for grade acceleration.

Please state rationale for this request:

Please feel free to include a letter of request with this form with additional anecdotal information to enable the Acceleration Committee develop a clear understanding of the student that will aid in determining appropriate placement.

Please note this form will start the process of collecting preliminary information about the student. It does not mean acceleration will necessarily occur.

I have read the procedures for whole grade acceleration and understand the process that will be followed to determine if grade acceleration is appropriate for this student. I grant permission for the necessary assessments needed to determine if grade acceleration is appropriate.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date