

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

Code: IGBB	Title: ACCELERATED LEARNING DRAFT	Adopted:	Revised:
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Unity's Philosophy of Accelerated Learning

The Unity School District strives to meet the needs of all students, including those in the gifted/talented population who need services and activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop those capabilities. We recognize outstanding talents in children and youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership or specific academic areas from all cultural groups, across all economic strata and in all areas of human endeavor. We strive to identify students in five areas of giftedness:

- Intellectual
- Academic
- Creative
- Artistic/Dramatic
- Leadership

A. Evaluation, Referral Process, and Placement

1. Any student residing in the district may be referred by a teacher, administrator, guidance counselor, school psychologist, or a parent or legal guardian of the student to the principal of his or her school for evaluation for possible gifted and talented identification. A student may refer himself or herself or a peer through a district staff member who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities. Students may also be identified for referral through the district's RTI screening process.
2. Copies of this policy and referral forms for gifted and talented identification shall be made available to district staff and parents at each school building.
3. The principal (or his or her designee) of the referred student's school shall obtain written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible gifted and talented identification. The district shall evaluate all students who are referred for evaluation and whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have granted permission to evaluate the student as noted below:
 - a. Automatic
Universal RtI Screener score of 90% or higher.
 - b. Manual
Student's potential is noticed by staff or parent.
4. A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the referred student's principal.
5. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the local Superintendent within thirty days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his or her final decision within thirty days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he or she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

B. Accelerated Learning Committee

1. Composition

- a. The referred student's principal (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate, available learning environment for the referred student. This committee shall be comprised of the following:
 - i. A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school;
 - ii. A current classroom teacher and specials teacher of the referred student (with the exception of students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten);
 - iii. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student;
 - iv. A school psychologist or guidance counselor.

2. The gifted and talented evaluation committee shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

- a. The evaluation committee shall conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the student.
- b. Students shall be 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).
- c. The gifted and talented evaluation committee shall issue a written determination to the principal and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process.
- d. The gifted and talented committee shall develop a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for students who are identified as Level 1 (Accelerated Learning Matrix) and/or will be whole-grade accelerated, or accelerated in one or more individual subject areas. See acceleration section below for specifics of the plan. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student shall be provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan.

3. Transition Plan

- a. The acceleration evaluation committee shall specify an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual subject areas.
- b. 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 shall remove the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.
- c. 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 shall direct 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 will be placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.

At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

ACCELERATED LEARNING MATRIX

Accelerated Learning Levels	Academic/Intellectual Criteria	Visual/ Performing Arts/ Creativity/ Leadership Criteria	Programming Options
Level 1 (Advanced)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQ test score of 130 • Scores in the 97th - 99th percentile on Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE) • Scores in the 97th - 99th percentile of the nation on the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). • Explore, the Plan, and the ACT scores in the 97th – 100th percentile. • Local assessments indicate 1-2 years beyond grade level peers. • 6-7 items endorsed on the Intellectual Section of the CCAG or 5 - 6 items from Specific Academic Ability section of CCAG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-6 items from Artistic, Leadership or Creative Thinking section of Checklist for Characteristics of Areas of Giftedness (CCAG) • Student, in conjunction with a delegated staff member, will generate a portfolio of performance demonstrating performance 1+ years beyond grade level peers • Recommendation from specialist(s) in the area of nomination • Program participation in external programs that focus on a specific interest of ability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceleration-full grade: Students are moved ahead one or more grade levels for their entire schedule. Operating Principles for Grade-Based Acceleration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accelerated students should be expected to achieve, relative to their new grade peers, at a high level that is generally comparable to their performance in the previous grade. Such students are typically among the top 10% in a class, and they should be expected to remain in the top 10% throughout their academic careers. (Assouline, et al, 2009) ○ Acceleration should either have a positive impact on social and behavioral adjustment or maintain the student's same level of (appropriate) social and behavioral adjustment. Acceleration should not negatively impact social and behavioral adjustment. ○ Decisions about grade-based acceleration should be based upon a thorough, team-based review of the factors relevant to acceleration, according to the Iowa Acceleration Scale. ○ Consideration for grade-based acceleration and invoking the referral and selection process are an initial step and do not dictate the outcome. • Independent study: A programming option in which students pursue an extensive study of an area of interest, or complete a course independently rather than by attending a class. In some cases, students may earn credit for the independent study program. A mentor, often a member of the teaching staff, is available for consultation throughout the study. • Individual groups/guidance: An arrangement through which the student receives individual guidance related to issues of talent, including, for example, help with underachievement, college and career planning, and social/emotional issues arising from giftedness. • Mentorship: An option in which students are paired with a teacher, parent, or community volunteer in an area of expertise or interest. It is usually done on a one-to-one basis for an extended period of time to enable a student to develop knowledge and skills in a specific area and/or to develop a product from the experience. • Other services: Any other services that provide for the specific needs of a gifted individual, such as continuous progress curriculum, early graduation, correspondence courses, post-secondary options through Youth Options, and credit by exam.

<p>Level 2 (Accelerated)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoring in the top 10% of the nation in a particular subject area in the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. • Scoring in the top 10% of the state in a particular subject area in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) assessment. • Explore, Plan, ACT test score of 90th - 96th percentile. • Local assessments demonstrating 1+ years beyond grade level peers. • Student products demonstrating performance 1+ years beyond grade level peers. • Successful completion (80%) on representative course assessments, such as unit tests or tests devised by high school academic departments. The student may prepare for such exams with appropriate materials for the course in consideration. Academic subject assessments should be equivalent to what other students in the course should know. • An Intelligence Quotient (IQ) of 115 or greater. • Assessments of social and emotional functioning and Iowa Acceleration Scale when considering full-grade acceleration. • For fine arts acceleration (<i>both criteria are required for identification</i>). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exceptional performance in the fine arts in comparison to one's peers as determined by arts experts. ○ Recommendation from specialist(s) in the area of fine arts nomination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 items from Artistic, Leadership or Creative Thinking section of Checklist for Characteristics of Areas of Giftedness (CCAG) • Student, in conjunction with a delegated staff member, will generate a portfolio of performance demonstrating performance 1+ years beyond grade level peers • Recommendation from specialist(s) in the area of nomination • Program participation in external programs that focus on a specific interest of ability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate assignments: Assignments given to a particular student or small group <i>instead of</i> the assignment given to the rest of the class. The assignments are designed to be more challenging and/or to capitalize on a student's special interests or skills. • Change in content/process: Modification of what is taught or studied, or how it is taught or studied, in order to better match the learning styles or needs of talent pool students. • Choice in the content, the process of learning or the product of the learning: Choice may be offered by varying these according to different types of intelligence or levels of thinking. • Compacting: Allowing students to spend less time learning a topic, chapter, or unit by either: 1) pretesting for mastery so some material can be eliminated, or 2) creating a study guide or other procedure for students to cover material at a faster pace or in less time than the rest of the class. The purpose of compacting is to move on more quickly to new material or to create class time for more challenging enrichment or accelerated activities. • Creative thinking skills: Specific instruction in techniques that encourage the development of fluency, flexibility, elaboration, originality, complexity, curiosity, imagination, and risk-taking. • Enrichment: A curricular choice that expands the learning beyond the existing curriculum. • Flexible grouping: Grouping talent pool students together within a classroom or between classrooms in order to provide instruction or activities at an appropriate level for the students' talent areas. Groupings may be short-term or long-term and will change depending on the educational needs of the students. • Higher level thinking: Activities or assignments that require the students to operate at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The activities may be enhanced by teaching students the differences between the levels of thinking and by discussing the thinking levels/skills used in various activities. • Open-ended projects: Projects that allow students to create their own options and that encourage problem-solving, higher level and/or creative thinking. • Pretesting for mastery: Assessment in which students demonstrate mastery of basic skills, knowledge, and concepts that are planned for instruction with the regular class in order to eliminate some work and allow students to move on to new, more challenging material. • Research projects: Activities in which students may identify a topic or subject for study, narrow the focus of study, gather resources, locate information through reading or other means (e.g., surveys, interviews, audiovisual material) and/or create a product or presentation. Such projects may be used to pursue an area of interest either related or unrelated to the grade-level curriculum.
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