

Executive Summary: Updates to Accelerated Placement Program (APP) Procedures (AP 6:135)

This executive summary outlines proposed updates to the administrative procedures for Board Policy 6:135 Accelerated Placement Program. Developed in collaboration with Lead Instructional Coach Beth Kleinschmidt, and informed by research into comparable district policies as well as principal and teacher feedback, these procedures aim to provide a transparent, equitable, and data-driven framework for student acceleration. The updates were discussed at the Education Committee meeting on January 26th.

The updated procedures clarify eligibility, timelines, and assessment metrics for Early Entrance, K-5 Subject/Grade Acceleration, and Junior High Advanced Coursework, ensuring alignment with the District's goal to allow every student to reach their full potential.

Key Procedure Updates by Grade Level

The following table summarizes the primary updates and criteria established in the new procedures:

Category	Target Group	Key Criteria & Timeline
Early Entrance	Kindergarten & 1st Grade	Timeline: Eligibility determined by August 1 prior to the school year. Age Cutoff: K students turning 5 by Oct 31; 1st Grade students turning 6 between Sept 2–Oct 31. Metrics: High proficiency on Readiness Screeners (90%+), DIBELS, and STAR CBM.
Subject/Grade Acceleration	Grades K-5	Timeline: Referral in Early May; decisions by Late May/Early June. Metrics: Consistent history (1 calendar year) of 90th percentile or above on STAR Math/Reading; "Above Proficient" on IAR if applicable. Process: Includes a review of social-emotional development and teacher input.
Advanced Coursework	Grades 6-8 (Middle School)	Timeline: Qualification notification by August 1; automatic enrollment with an opt-out option. Metrics (Math): STAR Math PR consistently at or above the 75th percentile; IAR Proficient/Above Proficient.

		Metrics (ELA): STAR scores At/Above State Benchmark; proficiency in writing samples.
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Detailed Highlights

1. Equity and Access

Consistent with Board Policy 6:135, the APP is not limited to students identified as "gifted". The new procedures ensure equity by:

- **Automatic Enrollment:** Students meeting state standards in middle school are automatically enrolled in advanced coursework unless a parent opts out, removing barriers to entry.
- **Multiple Indicators:** Decisions are based on a comprehensive set of data points (STAR, DIBELS, IAR, local screeners) rather than a single test score.

2. Rigorous Maintenance Criteria

To ensure students are placed appropriately for their success, the procedures introduce clear stipulations for maintaining enrollment in advanced courses (Grades 6-8):

- **Math:** Students must maintain a **B- (80%)** summative grade and continue to meet STAR/IAR benchmarks.
- **ELA:** Students must maintain a **B- (80%)** average and an **A- (90%)** on major writing assignments.
- **Probation:** Early entrance students (K-1) are subject to a first-quarter probationary period to confirm placement is in their best interest.

3. High School Alignment

For Grades 9-12, the procedures explicitly refer students and parents to the Stillman Valley High School (SVHS) Course Guide for advanced coursework requirements, ensuring a seamless transition to high school expectations, including dual credit and AP options.

Recommendation

Administrative procedures do not require Board of Education approval. However, we are seeking feedback to ensure support for the updated guidelines.