

Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind (ARDB) Policy on Student Acceleration

Purpose

The Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind (ARDB) recognizes that some students may benefit from academic acceleration to meet their individual learning needs. Acceleration provides opportunities for students to progress at a pace aligned with their academic abilities, current success, and future educational goals. The purpose of this policy is to ensure acceleration is implemented as a pathway to student success—not simply as a method to shorten a student’s educational experience.

Policy Statement

- Academic acceleration at ARDB will be based on a comprehensive review of each student’s current academic progress and demonstrated success, as well as consideration of their future educational trajectory.
- Any decision regarding acceleration must be documented in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) and agreed upon by the IEP team after a thorough review of student data.
- Acceleration may include, but is not limited to:
 - Grade-level advancement
 - Subject-specific acceleration
 - Curriculum compacting
 - Concurrent credit courses
 - Taking high school credit courses during 8th grade
 - Other advanced course options approved by the IEP team and the school administration

Criteria for Consideration

Decisions regarding acceleration will be based on multiple sources of evidence, including but not limited to:

- Standardized assessment scores, such as ATLAS or NWEA MAP
- Current class grades and performance
- Teacher recommendations and observations
- Student motivation, engagement, and readiness

Process for Acceleration

1. **Referral:** A student may be referred for acceleration by a teacher, parent, or administrator.
2. **Data Review:** The IEP team reviews academic and behavioral data to determine readiness.
3. **IEP Documentation:** Any approved acceleration plan is documented in the student's IEP, including specific goals, supports, and monitoring procedures.
4. **Implementation:** Acceleration is implemented with appropriate supports to ensure student success.
5. **Monitoring:** Student progress is regularly reviewed, and adjustments are made as needed to ensure continued growth and achievement.

Guiding Principles

- Acceleration is a **pathway to success**, not a way to shorten the student's educational experience.
- Decisions must prioritize the **best interest** of the student.

Compliance

All acceleration decisions must comply with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations, ARDB policies, and IDEA requirements. Parents and guardians will be informed and involved throughout the acceleration process.