

4.54 - STUDENT ACCELERATION

The Board believes that acceleration is an effective and research-based intervention for the academic growth of students who are ready for an advanced or faster-paced curriculum. Acceleration can allow a student to move through the traditional educational setting more rapidly, based on assessed readiness, capability, and motivation. At the same time, the Board understands that acceleration is not a replacement for gifted education services or programs.

Generally, acceleration can occur through one of two broad categories: content based and grade based. Grade based acceleration shortens the number of years a student would otherwise spend in K-12 education, while content based acceleration occurs within the normal K-12 time span. Either form of acceleration can be triggered by either a parent/guardian, student, or community member's request or by the referral of school personnel.

Elementary School Students

The process of determining the appropriateness of a request for an elementary school student to receive acceleration shall be under the direction of the district Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator. The district Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator shall convene the Acceleration Placement Committee and communicate with the individuals necessary for the Acceleration Placement Committee to make an informed decision, which shall include the student's parents or guardians.

While the needs of the student should dictate when acceleration decisions are considered, the Board believes the optimal time for referrals is in the spring, which gives adequate time for working through the determination process and for preparing those concerned for a smooth transition to the acceleration beginning in the following school-year.

The District's Gifted and Talented (GT) Program Coordinator will create a written format to govern the referral and determination process for elementary school students, which shall be made available to any parent or staff member upon request.

The parents/guardians of any elementary school student whose request for acceleration has been denied may appeal the decision, in writing to the District's GT Coordinator. The District's GT Coordinator and the Acceleration Placement Committee will again thoroughly review the case study that was completed on the student. Upon completion of the review, the Committee will either request additional new testing be conducted to help the Committee make its determination or it will uphold the initial decision. The Committee's decision may not be further appealed.

Course Selection Students

District students who attend a District school that authorizes the student to select individual courses shall have acceleration options provided to them by the counselor during the course selection process. The course selection process shall be part of the Student Success Plan created and modified in accordance with Policy 4.55- STUDENT PROMOTION AND RETENTION.

Notes: ¹ Districts will need to modify this language as necessary to account for when you start allowing students to select individual courses. If you allow students to start opting into accelerated courses in the fifth (5th) grade, then this should be amended to kindergarten through fourth (K-4) grade students. It is entirely possible that you may need to have different schools specifically referenced depending on the grade makeup and course selection opportunities at your different campuses.

² Choose the appropriate designation/option. In a large district with more than one GT Coordinator responsible for the determination process, insert “school”. In districts with only one GT Coordinator, insert “district”. It is conceivable that in districts with more than one GT Coordinator, the choice of inserting district and school will not always be the same.

²³ The DESE Rules require that the acceleration placement committee be made up of at least five (5) professional educators (including administrators, teachers, and/or counselors) and chaired by a gifted education specialist. Suggestions for individuals to be included on the committee include, but are not limited to:

- Building Principal;
- Counselor;
- Teachers (This may include both the student’s current teacher(s) as well as teacher(s) that the student would have if the acceleration is granted).

³⁴ The student’s parents, legal guardian, person having lawful control, or person standing in loco parentis must be provided an opportunity to provide input into the possible acceleration of their student; however, the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control, or person standing in loco parentis of the student does not have a vote in the determination on whether the acceleration request will be granted as only the acceleration placement committee may make the determination.

Cross Reference: 4.55- STUDENT PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Legal Reference: DESE Gifted and Talented Rules

Date adopted: 7/2005

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