



## **Timothy Christian Statement on Acceleration:**

Timothy Christian Schools strive to provide many opportunities for student challenge and expertise. Philosophically, we consider time to be a gift for children to grow and develop at a developmentally appropriate rate; however, we make rare exceptions to grade level placement based on multiple measures and recommendations. This policy on acceleration acknowledges that a decision for grade level or content area placement is complex. The decision should take into account the whole child, the child's current levels of functioning and available programming based on available quality data. There is abundant evidence that bright children who are carefully selected for early entrance generally perform very well both academically and socially (summarized from research by John Hattie, 2012).

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) defines academic acceleration as:

*"...a strategy of progressing through education at rates faster or ages younger than the norm."*

Students demonstrating need for academic acceleration operate significantly above-grade-level and consistently perform at or above the 95th percentile on standardized ability and achievement measures. Accelerated coursework is fast-paced and rigorous. In alignment with the NAGC's statement on acceleration, Timothy Christian is pleased to currently offer five options for acceleration:

1. Early Admittance for Kindergarten.
2. Early Admittance for First Grade/ Grade Skipping.
3. Content area acceleration in Math for grades 4-8 students.
4. Content area acceleration for ELA for grade 7 and grade 8 students.
5. Content area acceleration for Science for grade 8 students.

The processes, policies and procedures to qualify for each of these paths are listed below. Timothy Christian's procedures are based on the *Iowa Acceleration Scale: A Guide for Whole-Grade Acceleration K-8*. This tool was developed at the Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa.

## Early admittance to Kindergarten procedures:

### September 1 is our deadline.

1. The current information regarding deadlines for parents in registration materials and communications for Kindergarten is a September 1 deadline.
2. Students requesting entrance to Kindergarten with a birthday of **September 1 or later** will be assessed following the procedures outlined below.
3. Parents will complete the [Whole Grade Request for Acceleration Consideration Form](#). This request form details the process and assessments that will need to be administered. Current TCS students will be eligible to complete the achievement assessment with a TC staff member at a cost. The teacher checklist will be completed by the Preschool teacher and the ability assessment will be administered by an outside provider, paid for by the family. For students who are applying to TC for the first time, all assessments will be administered by an outside provider, paid for by the family. Required assessments in ability, achievement and Social/Emotional are as follows:
  - a. Ability: WISC-V or WPPSI-IV: Scores within the very superior range  $\geq 130$  are recommended for acceleration. (one child in 50 scores in this range)
  - b. Achievement: KTEA-3, WIAT-II: Scores in the 95%tile or above at grade level are recommended.
  - c. Social/Emotional: Teacher Checklist (IAS), Parent Checklist
4. Assessment data is shared with the student's TCS educational team and reviewed by Educational Support Team.
5. TCS Educational Support Team gives parents a recommendation based on the assessment data that reflects what is perceived as the best educational decision for that child. The decision of the school is final and documentation of the recommendation will be noted on the [Whole Grade Request for Acceleration Consideration Form](#).
6. If acceleration is recommended, a 60-day trial period will commence at the beginning of the following school year. If after that trial period, the school determines the acceleration is not a good match for the student, Timothy Christian Schools reserve the right to terminate the acceleration.
7. All documentation and assessment data will be included in the student file at TCS.

## Early admittance to First Grade procedures and Grade Skipping:

For students applying to **enter first grade** with a September 1 birthday or later, and having completed kindergarten in a setting with a certified kindergarten teacher, the student will be assessed using the same process listed above and as described in the [Whole Grade Request for Acceleration Consideration Form](#). ***Any requests for grade skipping beyond first grade will use the Iowa Acceleration Scale, facilitated by the Director of Teaching and Learning.***

## Content area acceleration procedures: MATH

Acceleration in math at Timothy Christian is one method that the school supports students who have shown a great need for extension in math beyond the core curriculum. Decades of research and current best practice support that students who have shown significant understanding of current grade level concepts, a potential for a high level of cognitive ability and a desire to challenge themselves in math are good candidates for math acceleration. Timothy identifies students in grades 3-5\* to be considered for the math acceleration process during the spring of the school year. The process should be initiated by May 1 by either parents, teachers or students. Students then enter into the process after review of current data points, such as standardized achievement (MAP) and cognitive scores (CogAT). Parents are highly involved in the process as the choice to accelerate a student in the lower grades has a significant impact on their middle and high school classes. The entire process is facilitated by the Director of Teaching and Learning. A description of the process can be found below.

1. Review the [TCS Math Acceleration Rubric](#) as a helpful quick reference guide for parents and staff to clarify data needed and ranges for scores. If a student is a good candidate for acceleration, then staff will complete the [Math Recommendation Form](#) including Student Information, recording Grade Level Achievement Testing, Cognitive Assessments and other pertinent assessment data. A meeting with parents, the Advanced Learning teacher, and other members of the student's educational team will occur to convey full understanding of procedure, policy and impact on the student's future education programming.
2. Complete the required testing, if necessary (ex. above level achievement test --PSAT 8/9, CogAT, IOWA assessments).
3. Complete the Teacher Recommendation.
4. Meet with the parents and educational team to review results and make decisions about math programming. If the recommendation is for acceleration, continue with the process.
5. Complete the Parent Statement of Support, Student Statement of Commitment and return to school. Parent reads and signs the High School Math Acceleration Enrollment Form. A copy of all documentation is shared with parents.
6. Approval of the entire Math Committee.
7. All paperwork is added to the student's cumulative files.

\*Based on the already accelerated sequence of math courses in 7th (pre-algebra) and 8th (algebra) at Timothy, it is highly recommended that all students are identified prior to their 6th grade year. This eliminates the possibility of students skipping 7th grade pre-algebra and the necessary content and skills from that course.

## **Content area acceleration procedures: ELA**

Acceleration in ELA at Timothy Christian is one method that the school supports students who have shown a great need for extension in ELA beyond the core curriculum after sixth grade. Decades of research and current best practice support that students who have shown significant understanding of current grade level concepts, a potential for a high level of cognitive ability and a desire to challenge themselves in ELA are good candidates for ELA acceleration. Timothy identifies students in 6th and 7th grade to be considered for the ELA acceleration process during the spring of the school year. The acceleration would then take place in their 7th or 8th grade year, with the 7th grade student attending the 8th grade ELA class and the 8th grade student attending the HS Honors English 1 course. The process should be initiated by May 1 by either parents, teachers or students. Students then enter into the process after review of current data points, such as standardized achievement (MAP) and cognitive scores (CogAT). Parents are highly involved in the process as the choice to accelerate a student has a significant impact on their middle and high school classes. The entire process is facilitated by the Director of Teaching and Learning. A description of the process can be found below.

1. Complete the [ELA Recommendation Form](#) with student Information, recording test scores, Cognitive Assessments and other pertinent assessment data on [ELA Acceleration Rubric](#).
2. Meet with parents, Director of Teaching and Learning, and other members of the student's educational team to convey full understanding of procedure, policy and impact on the student's future education programming including scheduling and GPA.
3. Submit the required testing.
4. Complete the Teacher Recommendation.
5. Meet with the parents and educational team to review results and make decisions about ELA programming.
6. Complete the Parent Statement of Support, Student Statement of Commitment and returned to school. Parent reads and signs the High School ELA Enrollment Form.
7. Approval of the entire ELA Committee.
8. All paperwork is added to the student's files.

## **Content area acceleration procedures: SCIENCE**

Acceleration in Science at Timothy Christian is one method that the school supports students who have shown a great need for extension in Science beyond the core curriculum before their eighth grade year. Decades of research and current best practice support that students who have shown significant understanding of current grade level concepts, a potential for a high level of cognitive ability and a desire to challenge themselves in Science are good candidates for Science acceleration. Timothy identifies students in 7th grade to be considered for the Science acceleration process during the spring of the school year. The acceleration would then take place in their 8th grade year, with the student attending the HS 9th grade Science course (Honors Biology). The process should be initiated by May 1 by either parents, teachers or students. Students then enter into the process after review of current data points, such as standardized achievement (MAP) and cognitive scores (CogAT). Parents are highly involved in the process as the choice to accelerate a student has a significant impact on their middle and high school classes. The entire process is facilitated by the Director of Teaching and Learning. A description of the process can be found below.

1. Complete the [Science Recommendation Form](#) with student Information, recording PSAT/SAT/ACT and NUMATS, Cognitive Assessments and other pertinent assessment data on [Science Acceleration Rubric](#).
2. Meet with parents, Director of Teaching and Learning, and other members of the student's educational team to convey full understanding of procedure, policy and impact on the student's future education programming including scheduling and GPA.
3. Submit the required testing (PSAT/ACT/SAT in addition to NUMATS recommendations).
4. Complete the Teacher Recommendation.
5. Meet with the parents and educational team to review results and make decisions about science programming.
6. Complete the Parent Statement of Support, Student Statement of Commitment and returned to school. Parent reads and signs the High School Science Enrollment Form.
7. Approval of the entire Science Committee.
8. All paperwork is added to the student's files.