



Madeira City Schools Acceleration Guidelines

ACCELERATION GUIDELINES

Academic acceleration is the practice of placing a student in a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age for the purpose of providing the student access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Acceleration is an educational opportunity in which a child moves at a faster pace through academic content as a result of demonstrated competencies, knowledge, abilities, and/or skills at a higher grade level than typical for the child's age. Decisions on acceleration are based on objective data as described in Academic acceleration occurs when a student is not only doing the caliber of work necessary to be promoted to the next grade or enrolled in the next course in the academic sequence, but also demonstrates the ability to do the caliber of work required of students in that next grade level/subject/course. Acceleration of a student should be based on the premise that each student shall be placed in his/her best environment for learning. Therefore, the acceleration of each student in the district will be determined individually.

Types of Acceleration

- **Early Entrance to Kindergarten:** This type of acceleration occurs when a student meets the criteria to begin Kindergarten earlier age eligibility.
- **Whole Grade Acceleration:** This type of acceleration occurs when a student moves ahead an entire grade level.
- **Single-Subject Acceleration:** This type of acceleration occurs when a student moves ahead a grade level in one or more subject areas but retains their overall grade level.
- **Early High School Graduation for Advanced Learners:** This type of acceleration occurs when a student meets the requirements for graduation in less than four academic years and graduates high school early in order to pursue post-secondary education.

Parents, legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, professional staff members, or students may refer a student for an acceleration evaluation per the policies in this document. A formal request must be submitted in writing to the principal of the school that the child is currently attending in order to start the evaluation process. Evaluations of a referred student shall be scheduled at the building principal's discretion.

When the referral is received, an acceleration evaluation committee is formed. The acceleration evaluation committee may include but is not limited to the following individuals: gifted coordinator, gifted intervention specialist, school psychologist and/or school counselor, teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated, principal, parent or legal guardian, and current classroom teacher (with exception of students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten). The general process includes data collection, data review, committee meeting, and decision making. The specific process depends on the type of acceleration.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten and First Grade

Pursuant to R.C. 3321.01, children who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be evaluated upon request of the child's parent or legal guardian. Children who will not be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for early entrance if referred by an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

The kindergarten and first grade acceleration evaluation committee shall include a parent or guardian, gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist, school psychologist and/or guidance counselor, principal, and teacher at the grade level to which the student may be admitted. When considering early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, the team making the decision should refer to the guidelines listed below:

1. The parent or legal guardian completes the Early Entrance Application form.
2. Upon receipt of the early entrance application form, the student will be referred to the building's acceleration evaluation committee.
3. Consent has been obtained to conduct an acceleration evaluation.
4. Assessment data indicates that the student is academically ready for early entrance. Assessment areas to include: social and emotional maturity, student's desire for acceleration, cognitive ability, academic achievement, communication, motor skills, and self-help skills. The Iowa Acceleration Scale 3rd Edition will be completed as a guide to determine possible early entrance to kindergarten or first grade.
5. If the team recommends the student for early entrance, a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) will be developed. The plan should address: monitoring of the student's progress, criteria to ascertain if the early entrance is being successful, and the determination as to who will be responsible for the ongoing review and support of the student and communication with the parent or legal guardian.
6. Evaluations related to referrals submitted to the school principal between August 15th and April 15th will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days of submission of the referral to the school principal. Evaluations related to referrals submitted to the school principal between April 16th and August 14th will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) days of the start of the school year.
7. A six-week trial basis should be initiated. After that time, the acceleration committee should reconvene to determine if the early entrance should be retained. Input from both the parent or legal guardian and student should be considered.
8. At the request of the parent or legal guardian, the student may be withdrawn from early entrance placement. If this occurs, the student may not be considered again for early entrance during the course of the year the request was submitted. In such cases, the principal will withdraw the student without repercussion.
9. After the initial trial period is over and the early entrance has been deemed appropriate, the WAP becomes permanent and is noted on the student's permanent record.

Grade Level Acceleration

Academic acceleration occurs when a student is not only doing the caliber of work necessary to be promoted to the next grade or enrolled in the next course in the academic sequence, but also demonstrates the ability to do the caliber of work required of students in that next grade level/subject/course. An acceleration evaluation committee will determine whether the student will be permitted to skip a grade level (i.e., whole-grade acceleration) following the guidelines listed below:

1. The student has been referred to the building's acceleration evaluation committee (must have a completed Student Acceleration – Referral Form).
2. Consent has been obtained to conduct an acceleration evaluation.
3. Evaluations related to referrals that occur during the school year will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days. Evaluations related to referrals that occur at the end of a school year or during the summer will be completed and a written report issued either before the end of the school year, if possible, or within forty-five (45) calendar days of the start of the next school year.
4. The student has a cognitive ability score in the superior range and scores at the 95th percentile or higher on the complete battery of a norm-referenced academic achievement test (i.e., the student performs at an advanced level on standardized assessments that have been approved by the Ohio Department of Education for purposes of gifted identification and administered within the past twenty-four months).
5. The student consistently performs above average, in the current grade level, in the core subject areas. Performance may be determined using the following assessments: Ohio Achievement Assessments, grades, norm-referenced assessment, out of level testing, or other assessments.
6. Assessment(s) that show the student has mastered the grade level curriculum.
7. The student has the appropriate level of social and emotional maturity, motivation, and responsibility needed for the acceleration to be successful. The Iowa Acceleration Scale 3rd Edition will be completed as a guide to determine possible grade acceleration.
8. The student, parent or legal guardian, and the acceleration committee support the acceleration.
9. As determined by the committee, the student's needs cannot be adequately met in the classroom with his or her age peers because the student is so far advanced.
10. Grade level acceleration should occur at the beginning of an academic school year or a new semester and should be initiated with a six-week trial basis. After that time, the acceleration committee should reconvene to determine if the acceleration should be retained. Input from both the parent or legal guardian and student should be considered. At the request of the parent or legal guardian, the student may be withdrawn from the accelerated placement during the trial period. If this is done, the student may not be considered again for the same subject level acceleration placement until the following school year.
11. A Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) should be developed. The plan should specify the student's placement, list support strategies for assisting with the transition, address any of the student's knowledge gaps, delineate how the student's progress will be monitored, show what criteria will be used to ascertain if the acceleration has been successful, and determine who will be responsible for the ongoing review and support with the student and communication with the parent or legal guardian.
12. After the initial trial period is over and the acceleration has been decided to continue, then the WAP becomes permanent and is noted on the student's permanent record.

Single-Subject Acceleration

Academic acceleration occurs when a student is not only doing the caliber of work necessary to be promoted to the next grade or enrolled in the next course in the academic sequence, but also demonstrates the ability to do the caliber of work required of students in that next grade level/subject/course. An acceleration evaluation committee will determine whether the student will be permitted to take a subject at a higher-grade level or skip a course in the usual and customary academic sequence (i.e., single-subject acceleration) following the guidelines listed below:

1. The student has been referred to the building's acceleration evaluation committee (must have a completed Student Acceleration – Referral Form).
2. Consent has been obtained to conduct an acceleration evaluation.
3. Evaluations related to referrals that occur during the school year will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days. Evaluations related to referrals that occur at the end of a school year or during the summer will be completed and a written report issued either before the end of the school year, if possible, or within forty-five (45) calendar days of the start of the next school year.
4. The student consistently performs above average on grade level assessments, in the subject area(s) to be accelerated. Performance may be determined using the following assessments: MAP assessments, grades, norm-referenced assessment, out of level testing, or other assessments.
5. Assessments that show that the student has mastered the grade level curriculum for the accelerated subject area, and scores at the 95th percentile or higher on a norm-referenced academic achievement test in that subject area (i.e. the student performs at an advanced level on standardized assessments that have been approved by the Ohio Department of Education for purposes of gifted identification and administered within the past twenty-four months).
6. The student has the appropriate level of social and emotional maturity, motivation, and responsibility needed for the acceleration to be successful.
7. The student, parent or legal guardian, and the acceleration committee support the acceleration.
8. As determined by the committee, the student's needs in this subject area cannot be adequately met in the classroom with his or her same age peers because the student is so far advanced.
9. Subject area acceleration may occur at any point in the academic school year and should be initiated with a six-week trial basis. After that time, the acceleration committee should reconvene to determine if the acceleration should be retained. Input from both the parent or legal guardian and student should be considered. At the request of the parent or legal guardian, the student may be withdrawn from the accelerated placement during the trial period. If this is done, the student may not be considered again for the same subject level acceleration placement until the following school year.
10. A Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) should be developed. The plan should specify the student's placement, list support strategies for assisting with the transition, address any of the student's knowledge gaps, delineate how the student's progress will be monitored, show what criteria will be used to ascertain if the acceleration has been successful, and determine who will be responsible for the ongoing review and support with the student and communication with the parent or legal guardian.
11. After the initial trial period is over and the acceleration has been decided to continue, then the WAP becomes permanent and is noted in the student's permanent record.

Early High School Graduation – Advanced Learners

Early graduation for advanced learners involves moving a student through the educational organization more quickly, and that some students may seek to pursue educational goals that include graduation from school at an earlier date than their designated class.

The early high school graduation committee shall include a parent or legal guardian, gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist, guidance counselor, principal, and a current teacher of the referred student. When considering early high school graduation for advanced learners, the team making the decision should refer to the guidelines listed below:

1. The student has been referred to the building's acceleration evaluation committee (must have completed the Early High School Graduation for Advanced Learners – Referral Form).
2. Consent has been obtained to conduct an acceleration evaluation.
3. Evaluations related to referrals that occur during the school year will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days. Evaluations related to referrals that occur at the end of a school year or during the summer will be completed and a written report issued either before the end of the school year, if possible, or within forty-five (45) calendar days of the start of the next school year.
4. The student referred for early high school graduation shall be evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on State academic content standards, and successful completion of State mandated graduation requirements.
5. The acceleration evaluation committee will consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
6. The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision on the outcome of the evaluation process to the principal and the student's parent/guardian.
7. If the student is recommended for early high school graduation, the acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete high school graduation requirements on an accelerated basis. The plan may include the provision of educational options in accordance with A.C. 3301-35-06(G), and early promotion to a higher grade level to allow the student to take end-of-course examinations or other required State tests.

Appeals

The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision on the outcome of the evaluation process to the principal and the student's parent/guardian. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the decision.

Appeals must be made in writing to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of the parent/guardian receiving the committee's decision. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the appeal and notify the parent/guardian of his/her decision within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent or his/her designee's decision shall be final.