

Student Acceleration

Acceleration

The Board of Education recognizes that children's personal, social, physical, and educational growth will vary and that they should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

It is the Board's intent that each student be moved forward in a continuous pattern of achievement and growth that is in harmony with their own development.

Definition

Academic acceleration may involve whole-grade acceleration or individual 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.

Types of Acceleration

Whole-Grade Acceleration

Whole-grade acceleration places a student in the next grade level. Whole-grade acceleration can start at the beginning of a school year or the beginning of a semester. For example, a student may complete second grade at the end of the year and begin the next school year in a fourth grade class. Another student may complete the first semester of second grade and begin the second semester as a third grade student. State accountability testing occurs as if the student has always been in that grade level. It is important to note that whole-grade acceleration is rare and many factors are considered when determining if a child is a good candidate. More information can be accessed in [The Ohio Department of Education Pathways to Acceleration \(PDF\)](#).

Single Subject Acceleration

Single subject acceleration allows a student to advance to a higher level in that subject. For example, a fourth grade student may take a fifth grade math class. All other classes would be taken in the fourth grade classroom. In this case, the state accountability testing will occur at the fifth grade level in mathematics, and at the fourth grade level for other subjects.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten

A student who is not five years old by August 1 may enter Kindergarten if criteria are met through the acceleration process. However, it is important to note that early entrance to Kindergarten is rare, and many factors are considered when determining if a child is a good candidate. The Ohio Department of Education has information about the [process for Early Entrance to Kindergarten \(PDF\)](#).

Early Entrance to First Grade

A student who is not 6 years old by August 1 and has not completed Kindergarten may enter 1st grade if criteria are met through the acceleration process. This supersedes the mandatory Kindergarten

requirement. It is important to note that early entrance to first grade is rare and many factors are considered when determining if a child is a good candidate.

Early Graduation

A student may graduate early from high school by skipping courses through the acceleration process. However, this is not the same as graduating early because of completing courses earlier than planned.

Acceleration Process

Any student residing in the District may be referred by a staff member or a parent/guardian to their school's principal for evaluation for possible accelerated placement. Students may refer themselves or a peer through a staff member who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities.

Before a student is evaluated for accelerated placement, the principal shall obtain written permission from the student's parent/guardian.

Evaluations related to referrals that occur during the school year will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five 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 calendar days of the start of the next school year.

Typically, changes in a student's schedule will occur only at the start of a trimester/semester.

Upon referral, the student's principal shall convene an acceleration evaluation committee to determine the appropriate learning environment for the referred student. The committee shall include the following:

- A parent/guardian or a representative designated by that parent/guardian
- A gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist, or, if neither is available, a school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration
- A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school
- A current teacher of the referred student
- A teacher at the grade level or course to which the referred student may be accelerated

The acceleration evaluation committee shall be responsible for conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the student. The acceleration evaluation committee will consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberation. If career-technical programs are considered for acceleration, a career-technical educator shall be consulted as a part of the evaluation.

Students considered for whole-grade acceleration will be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education, which includes the Iowa Acceleration Scale.

Students considered for individual subject acceleration will be evaluated using a variety of data sources, including measures of achievement and aptitude through standardized testing (in subjects for which the State Board of Education has approved content standards) and consideration of the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement.

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 calendar days of the parent/guardian receiving the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent/guardian of their decision within thirty calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

If the student is recommended for whole-grade or individual subject acceleration, the acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan. The parent/guardian shall be provided a copy of the plan. The plan shall specify:

- Placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
- Strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
- Requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable); and,
- An appropriate transition period for accelerated students.

A school staff member will be assigned to oversee implementation of the acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the accelerated setting.

At any time during the transition period, a parent/guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the student from the accelerated placement without repercussions.

At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's record shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

Frequently Asked Questions

The Acceleration Institute has a list of [Questions and Answers](#) that were produced by the Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. The Ohio Department of Education also has a list [Frequently Asked Questions about Acceleration \(PDF\)](#) that may be helpful.