

GRADE ACCELERATION

Whenever the school or a family is considering whole grade acceleration for a learner, the team will follow the procedures outlined below:

Either a family or an educator may initiate the process of whole-grade acceleration. If an educator believes that whole-grade acceleration should be considered, they will begin with a discussion with the GATE coordinator/Director of Curriculum & Instruction.

- The request for consideration will be made to the building principal. The principal will arrange an initial whole-grade acceleration meeting within 30 calendar days from request.
 - This meeting will include: the family, classroom educator, GATE educator in K-5, curriculum director, school psychologist, and designated building administration.
 - The initial meeting will include an opportunity to share the rationale for the request from the family or educator and an explanation of the assessment process utilized by the district. (Agenda 1).

If any of the following critical items apply to the learner, whole-grade acceleration is not recommended. The team should consider whether the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) will be completed and what other options are available to continue enriching the learner's academic skills in one or more subject areas.

- Learner would be accelerated into the same grade a sibling.
- Learner presently has a sibling in the same grade/twin.
- Learner indicates that he/she does not want to be whole grade accelerated.

With the exception of Early Entrance to kindergarten, consideration of whole grade acceleration may only occur after a minimum of six weeks in the learner's age appropriate grade level classroom in West Fargo Public Schools. This time ensures that the classroom educator has had an opportunity to observe the learner's social and academic skills.

If the team determines that whole-grade acceleration could be an option for the learner, the school psychologist will obtain signed consent for evaluation from the family (see consent for evaluation form). The assessment process will be completed as outlined below. Any existing evaluation data will be reviewed and applied to the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) protocol to prevent unnecessary testing. The school psychologist on the team will summarize the results of the assessments in writing within 60 calendar days from the time of consent. These results will be shared with the family at a meeting, as well as provided in writing.

- The principal will arrange a second whole-grade acceleration meeting to correlate with the completion of the assessment and report writing, within 60 calendar days from consent. (Agenda 2)

Consideration for grade level acceleration is determined through the completion of the Iowa Acceleration Scale for children. This comprehensive assessment has many components, including obtaining a full-scale intelligence quotient (FSIQ) along with standardized academic assessments and components to look at the overall development of the learner. (Appendix A)

The statements in this document are intended to provide guidance for daily procedures and practices in order to maintain order, efficiency, and continuity amongst our schools.

APPENDIX A – GRADE ACCELERATION

The assessment process will begin with an individually administered intellectual assessment appropriate to the learner's age. The learner must attain a full-scale intelligence quotient (FSIQ) of 115 or higher (with consideration to the GAI for significantly variable index scores) to proceed to the next step. A child attaining less than 115 FSIQ will not be considered for single-subject or whole grade level acceleration.

If the intellectual assessment results in a FSIQ of 115 or greater, the school psychologist will continue with the following assessment procedures. The Iowa Acceleration Scale will summarize the results of the assessments and will guide a final recommendation for whole-grade acceleration. This process is completed by the school psychologist in collaboration with the team where appropriate.

Assessment Procedure	Criteria for Acceleration	Purpose
Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS)	46 points or greater for whole-grade acceleration If less than 46 points consider single-subject acceleration or additional enrichment in strength area(s)	Objectifies and summarizes major factors to consider for grade acceleration (school history, academic ability, aptitude, achievement, school factors, developmental factors, interpersonal skills, attitude and support)
Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Battery (Broad Reading, Broad Math, Broad Written Language, Broad Oral Language, and Science) or Wechsler Individual Achievement Test AND Curriculum Based Measurement in <i>proposed</i> grade level for reading, writing, and/or math	50-69 th percentile in comparison to the learner's proposed grade level norms = <i>high level of aptitude</i> in that area 70 th percentile or greater in comparison to the learners proposed grade level norms = <i>exceptional aptitude</i> in that area	Measures the learners potential to learn new material, the content of which typically has not been taught. Scores in language, math, reading, and science will be considered.
Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Battery (Broad Reading, Broad Math, Broad Written Language, Broad Oral Language, and Science) or Wechsler Individual Achievement Test AND Review of Recent STAR Reading/Math Assessments AND Curriculum Based Measurement in <i>current</i> grade level in reading, writing, and/or math	90-94 th percentile in comparison to the learner's current grade level norms = high achievement 95 th percentile or greater in comparison to the learner's current grade level norms = exceptional achievement	Measures the learner's current academic achievement in comparison to grade level peers. Scores in vocabulary, reading, math, and language will be considered
Observations, File Reviews, Interviews with Educators, Family, and/or the Learner	Each Factor will be scored on a scale of 1 – 3 or 4. The scores will be added to the ability, aptitude, and achievement scores to determine an overall recommendation	Identifies potential problems that an accelerated learner may have by examining school-related issues. Factors include school and academic factors, developmental factors, interpersonal skills, and attitude and support
Social Behavioral Assessments (optional) if other assessments indicate need		Identify social behavioral needs that may require support prior to whole-grade acceleration.

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Within 60 days of obtaining consent for evaluation, the team will reconvene to review the assessment findings and make a final recommendation. The team may determine to continue to provide enrichment opportunities, to accelerate the learner in one or more subject areas, or to advance the learner to the next grade level. If whole-grade acceleration is the recommendation, the team will plan for a smooth transition of the learner to the next grade level.

The final decision to accelerate a learner is made by the building principal. If the family does not agree with that decision, they may appeal the decision to the appropriate assistant superintendent.

Math Only Acceleration Consideration:

The assessment process for learners being considered for single-subject acceleration in math will be consistent with the whole-grade acceleration process outlined above. The learner must attain a full-scale intelligence quotient (FSIQ) of 115 or higher (with consideration to the GAI for significantly variable index scores). If the overall score on the Iowa Acceleration Scale is less than 46 points or if academic data indicates exceptional or high achievement patterns in one subject area, the team may consider single-subject acceleration. If the team recommends single-subject acceleration, the team must consider and carefully plan for impacts to the learner’s schedule, peer relationships, and transportation for the current school year and beyond.

Indicators of success for single-subject acceleration:

<p>Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Battery <u>or</u> Wechsler Individual Achievement Test</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Curriculum Based Measurement in <i>proposed</i> grade level for reading, writing, and/or math</p>	<p>70th percentile or greater in comparison to the learners proposed grade level norms <u>in single-subject area</u> begin considered for acceleration</p>	<p>Measures the learners potential to learn new material, the content of which typically has not been taught. Scores in, math, reading, language, and science will be considered.</p>
<p>Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Battery <u>or</u> Wechsler Individual Achievement Test</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Review of Recent STAR Reading/Math Assessments</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Curriculum Based Measurement in <i>current</i> grade level in reading, writing, and/or math</p>	<p>Consistent scores of 95th percentile or greater in comparison to the learner’s current grade level norms <u>in single-subject area</u> begin considered for acceleration</p>	<p>Measures the learner’s current academic achievement in comparison to grade level peers. Scores in reading, math, and language will be considered</p>

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AGENDA 1

Items to Prepare:

Iowa Acceleration protocol
Consent form for assessment.
Calendar date for reconvening within 60 days

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Process Explanation (either school psychologist or Director of Curriculum & Instruction)
 - Utilize the Iowa Acceleration Scale protocol
 - Explain the testing:
 - If full scale IQ is at or greater than 115 assessment continues, if not, it stops.
 - Whole grade acceleration
 - Consideration for math only acceleration – middle school
3. Obtain parent/guardian consent for evaluation
 - School psychologist will perform cognitive assessment (FSIQ)
 - FSIQ 115 or greater: Iowa Acceleration Scale
 - Academic Assessments
 - Cumulative file review
 - Interviews
 - Observations
4. Team will reconvene to review all findings and discuss recommendations within 60 days

AGENDA 2

Items to Prepare:

Printed agenda: note attendees & date
Completed Iowa Acceleration protocol
Completed evaluation report – printed
The report may be emailed to parents/guardians and the team prior to the meeting to allow ample time to review.
Acknowledgement of receipt of report form

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Review evaluation results
3. Highlight percentile ranks and scores of particular interest.
4. Review score areas from the Iowa Acceleration Scale
 - If acceleration is recommended, discuss a smooth transition plan.
 - If acceleration is NOT recommended, discuss alternative enrichment options.

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