

Lincoln Elementary School District 156 ACCELERATION PLAN



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Acceleration Procedures

Lincoln Elementary School District 156 adopts the following procedure for the referral, evaluation, and implementation of acceleration.

Illinois Definition of Program Requirements

Illinois Accelerated Placement Act, Public Act 100-0421

Section 14A-17 defines “accelerated placement” as:

1. Placement of a child in an educational setting with curriculum that is usually reserved for children who are older or in higher grades than the child; and,
2. Includes, but is not limited to, the following types of acceleration: early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, acceleration of a child in a single subject, and grade acceleration.

Section 14A-32 requires that each school district develop a policy for accelerated placement that includes or incorporates by reference the following items:

1. A provision indicating that participation in accelerated placement is not limited to those children who have been identified as gifted and talented, but rather is open to all children who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement;
2. A fair and equitable decision-making process that involves multiple persons and includes a student's parents or guardians;
3. Procedures for notifying parents or guardians of a decision affecting that child's participation in an accelerated placement program; and,
4. An assessment process that includes multiple valid, reliable indicators.

Section 14A-32 also provides that the adopted policy may include or incorporate, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. Procedures for annually informing the community at large, including parents or guardians, about the accelerated program and the methods used for the identification of children eligible for accelerated placement;
2. A process for referral that allows for multiple referrers, including the child’s parents or guardians; licensed education professionals of the child with the written consent of a parent or guardian; a peer, through a licensed education professional who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities; or, in the case of possible early entrance to school, a preschool educator, pediatrician, or psychologist who knows the child; and,

3. A provision that provides that children participating in an accelerated placement program and their parents or guardians will be provided a written plan detailing the type of acceleration the child will receive and strategies to support the child.

Definition of Terms

Accelerated placement is the placement of a student in an educational setting with curriculum that is usually reserved for students who are older or in higher grades than the student. Accelerated placement includes, but may not be limited to: early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, accelerating a student in a single subject, and grade acceleration.

Early entrance to kindergarten is the admission to kindergarten of a student who: (a) will not be five years of age on or before September 1 of that school term; or (b) is admitted prior to the dates established in the School Code based upon an assessment of his or her readiness to attend school.

Early entrance to first grade is the admission to first grade of a student who: (a) is assessed for readiness, attended a non-public preschool and continued his or her education at that school through kindergarten, was taught in kindergarten by an appropriately certified teacher, and will attain the age of six years on or before December 31; or (b) is admitted prior to the dates established in the School Code based upon an assessment of his or her readiness to attend school.

Single subject acceleration is the practice of assigning a student to a higher subject level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas. It may be accomplished by either: (a) physically moving the student to a higher level class for instruction; or (b) using higher level curricular or study materials in the student's current classroom.

Grade acceleration is the practice of assigning a student to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in all subject areas. Commonly referred to as *skipping* a grade, grade acceleration may be done at the beginning of or during the school term.

Annual Notification

The Superintendent, or designee, annually notifies the community, including parent(s)/guardian(s), students, and school personnel about the:

1. Accelerated Placement Plan (APP)
2. Process for referring a student for possible evaluation for accelerated placement, including:
 - a. Steps to be taken to make a referral;
 - b. Individual(s) to whom a referral may be submitted;
 - c. Deadlines by which a referral must be made; and
 - d. Information that must be provided in the referral.
3. Methods used to determine whether a student is eligible for accelerated placement.

The Superintendent, or designee, provides such notification:

1. By varied communication methods, such as student handbooks and District/school websites;
2. In multiple languages.

Referral Process:

- I. The *Referral Form for Considering Acceleration* does not have to be completed unless subject or grade acceleration is being considered. RtI Committee can review pre-existing information to offer differentiation strategies without obtaining parent permission, and general education teachers can implement differentiation strategies without parent permission.
- II. If the RtI Committee decides that subject/grade acceleration should be considered, a general education teacher in the grade level above the student's present placement must be included.
- III. The person requesting the referral should be very specific in providing a reason for the request. Avoid statements that are too general and difficult to support with evidence. (Ex. The student should be moved ahead because he never has homework and is bored in class.)
- IV. Within fifteen (15) school days after receiving a referral, a determination whether an evaluation for accelerated placement is warranted.

Referral for Subject or Grade Acceleration:

- 1) Any student enrolled in the district may be referred for consideration for acceleration by a general education teacher, administrator, gifted specialist, guidance counselor, or parent/guardian.
- 2) The district will follow the written procedures outlined below for any student referred beginning with Level I, which includes differentiation at the current grade level. If at all possible, a student will be subject accelerated (Level II) for a grading period before grade acceleration (Level III) is considered (in most instances subject acceleration coupled with differentiation will be successful in meeting the academic needs of high-end learners). The committee may proceed directly to Level III if the curriculum and instruction has already been differentiated or the committee simply feels that they have enough documentation to consider grade acceleration.
- 3) Principal must ensure that all staff members are aware of the procedures including referral, evaluation, and acceleration options.
- 4) The process of considering acceleration options will take place in a timely and logical fashion. For instance, if subject or grade acceleration is going to be implemented, the best time for the student to make this move is either at the start of school or the beginning of the second semester. Consequently, the process of gathering the necessary information and subsequent committee meetings will be conducted with these dates in mind.
- 5) The referral process for subject/grade acceleration will begin at the school site.
- 6) The principal or special education coordinator will establish an RtI Committee to determine the most appropriate learning environment for the student.

- 7) The RtI Committee will include an interventionist, the current general education teacher and school administrator.

Level I : Differentiation Procedures

- 1) The RtI Committee will be charged with conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the student's educational needs.
- 2) The RtI Committee will consider the areas of concern (math, reading, etc.) utilizing pre-existing information such as: (1) achievement test results; (2) grades; (3) work samples/products; and (4) aptitude.
- 3) Based on an analysis of the data collected, the RtI Committee will provide the general education teacher with differentiation options/strategies (both individual and grouping strategies) to modify the curriculum and instruction in the present grade placement.
- 4) If the differentiation strategies are successful in meeting the student's academic needs, the student will remain in his/her present placement. The RtI Committee (including a teacher from the next grade level) will reconvene at the end of the year to develop a differentiation plan for the upcoming school year. The principal will consider the differentiation needs and ensure that the student is assigned to an appropriate teacher. This teacher will be trained in differentiation, and demonstrate a willingness to address the needs of diverse learners. (Appropriate professional development will be provided if needed.)
- 5) The RtI Committee will waive steps 3 and 4 if the student's curriculum and instruction has already been differentiated or the committee simply feels that they have enough documentation to consider subject acceleration.

Level II: Subject Acceleration Procedures

- 1) If the differentiation strategies are implemented (for a reasonable time such as a grading period) and the student's academic needs are still not being met, the RtI Committee will reconvene to consider if subject acceleration is appropriate. The possible receiving teacher (in the next grade level) should be added to the RtI Committee at this time.
- 2) Parent permission will be documented on a referral form if one has not already been completed. After parent permission has been obtained any additional individual assessments (particularly subject specific) will be conducted if needed. If the student has never been referred for accelerated services, a referral will also be initiated.
- 3) If after considering all collected data and information the RtI Committee decides that subject acceleration is appropriate, a consideration of the student's desire for accelerated placement will be considered and parents will be notified and permission obtained. If the student or his/her parents are not in favor of the decision the student will not be subject accelerated.
- 4) The RtI Committee will reconvene after a grading period to determine if the student's academic needs are being met. If the student's academic needs are being met the plan will remain in place

until the end of the year when the RtI Committee will reconvene to develop a plan for the next school year. The principal will consider the differentiation needs and ensure that the student is assigned to an appropriate teacher. This teacher will be trained in differentiation, and demonstrate a willingness to address the needs of diverse learners. (Appropriate professional development will be provided if needed.)

Level III: Grade Acceleration Procedures

- 1) If the RtI Committee determines that subject acceleration has not adequately met the student's academic needs and grade acceleration should be considered, the RtI Committee will invite staff members (special education coordinator, interventionist, psychometrist, Director of Instruction, etc.) to participate. This individual will ensure that the appropriate steps have been followed.
- 2) Students being considered for whole grade acceleration will be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process (such as the Iowa Acceleration Scales) approved by the Illinois State Department of Education. The acceleration process should include a review of: (1) all previously collected information listed above (aptitude and achievement test scores, grades, and work samples/products), (2) birth date, (3) physical description, (4) social/emotional maturity, (5) documentation of previous attempts to meet academic needs through differentiated curriculum and instruction and subject acceleration, and (6) input from the student, parents, general education teacher and gifted specialist.
- 3) The RtI Committee will submit a written decision to the principal who will determine how the parent/guardian will be notified (unless the parent/guardian was a member of the committee). If the RtI Committee cannot reach a consensus recommendation, a decision will be determined by a majority vote. The ***Acceleration Determination and Approval Form*** will be completed.
- 4) If the RtI Committee determines not to grade accelerate the student, the parent/guardian will be given the opportunity to review the information considered. If the parent/guardian wishes to appeal the decision to the local Superintendent it should be in writing and within thirty days of the decision. The Superintendent will review the decision and notify the parent of his/her determination within 30 days of receiving the appeal.
- 5) If the RtI Committee determines that the student will be grade accelerated, a written plan will be shared with the parent/guardian. This plan will include the decision, strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting, and parent/guardian permission to implement. This plan will become part of the student's permanent record. If the parent or student is not in favor of the committee's recommendation this will be noted on the ***Acceleration Determination and Approval Form*** and the student will not be grade accelerated.
- 6) The RtI Committee will establish an appropriate transition period for the accelerated placement. At any time before or during the transition period, a parent/guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from the accelerated placement without repercussions. If during the transition period, school personnel decide that the accelerated placement is inappropriate, the committee will be reconvened. The parent/guardian will be included, and a consensus will be obtained before changing the placement. At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement will become permanent, and the student's records will be revised to reflect the new

placement. A RtI Committee consisting of at least an interventionist, general educator, psychologist, and school administrator will continue to meet regularly (at least annually) to review the student's progress and social/emotional adjustment.

- 7) At an appropriate time, the RtI Committee should meet to discuss and plan for any effects a proposed acceleration may have on the student's social-emotional development and academic progression /programming throughout his/her school career. This will include input from the committee and/or other appropriate representatives from the next level (i.e. Middle School).

Evaluation Process

Step One: Screening

All students in grades K-8 undergo the initial screening process via the STAR360 assessment every school year. Students are tested in two areas: Reading and Math during the fall, winter, and spring. Students who score at or above the 90th percentile on one or more of the assessments are automatically considered for the second identification step. District 156 also recognizes the referrals of parents/guardians, teachers, and outside professionals for consideration for further screening.

Step Two: Collect body of evidence

Information is collected on students from a variety of sources, which may include:

- Lincoln ESD 156 Referral for Acceleration Form
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - *Intellectual Ability*
- State standardized test scores- *Achievement*
- Iowa Acceleration Scale - Early entrance to a grade level - *Characteristics and behaviors of gifted*
- Historical local assessments achievement scores - *Achievement*

Step Three: The school's RtI Committee reviews the body of evidence for identification consideration and to determine eligibility.

Eligibility Determination

Step Four: Parent/Guardian meeting to share results

The Evaluation Team convenes a meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) to review evaluation results and determine eligibility for the APP. Provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of eligibility determination.

1. If the student is found eligible for the APP, prepares and provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with a written plan detailing the type of acceleration the student will receive and strategies to support the student.

2. If the student is not found eligible for the APP, provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of their right to appeal the eligibility determination, within five calendar days after receiving the determination, by submitting a written request to the Superintendent.

If the parent/guardian desired, within ten (10) calendar days after receiving written notice that student is not eligible for the APP, submits written appeal to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent, or designee, within ten (10) calendar days after receiving the written appeal request, reviews the case, and provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of his/her decision. The Superintendent's decision is final.

Step Five: Develop the student acceleration plan

The RtI Committee will create a student acceleration plan that identifies programming and learning goals. The plan will include strategies and success indicators related to each goal. A progress meeting will be scheduled annually with parent/guardian and the committee.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade

The Illinois legislature passed the Illinois Accelerated Placement Act, Public Act 100-0421, effective July 1, 2018. This act allows Illinois public school districts to provide early access to educational services for kindergarten and first grade students to meet the needs of the highly advanced gifted child.

Children are normally admitted to kindergarten if their 5th birthday is on or before September 1 of that school year, and to first grade if their 6th birthday is on or before September 1 of that school year.

District 156 recognizes some children may benefit academically, socially and/or emotionally from accelerating and/or grade skipping. Highly advanced gifted students may be granted early entrance to kindergarten or first grade and accelerated in District academic programs.

The Process

Step 1: District 156 residency must be established by the parent/guardian. Parent/guardian must also provide the child's birth certificate.

Step 2: Individual referring the child fills out the referral for acceleration form and permission to screen form. Appointment is scheduled for achievement screening (30-90 Minutes) between March 1st and May 15th.

Step 3: Parent/guardian fills out the permission to screen form.

Step 4: Student is screened and results are collected. If the preschool child scores 212 or more using the Dial-4, then the student will be assessed with STAR360.

If the Kindergarten child has attended preschool and has successfully completed education through kindergarten at that facility and was taught by an appropriately certified teacher. The Kindergarten child's

sixth birthday falls between September 2 and December 31, as documented by a certified copy of the birth certificate. If the Kindergarten child is within the 90th percentile using STAR360, then more information is collected on the student from a variety of sources, which may include:

- Lincoln ESD 156 Referral for Acceleration Form
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - *Intellectual Ability*
- Iowa Acceleration Scale - Early entrance to a grade level - *Characteristics and behaviors of gifted*
- Historical local assessments achievement scores - *Achievement*

Step 5: Placement is determined from data results with a majority of the results falling at or above the 90th percentile.

Step 6: Parent/guardian meeting is scheduled to discuss results and possible placement options. RtI Committee will schedule an academic acceleration plan meeting with the parent/guardian.

Differentiation Strategies

Differentiation strategies that the RtI Committee could suggest before recommending subject or grade acceleration are:

- a. Cluster Grouping
- b. Flexible Skills Grouping
- c. Individualized Programs in Math/Reading such as Accelerated Math
- d. Tiered Centers
- e. Tiered Assignments
- f. Learning Contracts
- g. Literature/Socratic Circles
- h. Independent Study Projects
- i. Dual Enrollment Programs

Lincoln ESD 156 Referral for Acceleration

Child's Name		Date of Birth:	
Address:		Current Grade	

Parent/Guardian		Phone	
Referred By			

Please consider the above student for the following type of acceleration

- Whole Grade Acceleration from Grade ____ to Grade ____

- Subject Acceleration from Grade ____ to Grade ____ in:
 - Mathematics
 - Reading
 - Science
 - Social Studies

- Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- Early Entrance to First Grade

- Early Graduation

Reason for referral:

Signature

Relationship to Child

Date

Please return to principal.

Lincoln ESD 156 Permission for Acceleration Assessment

Child's Name		Date of Birth:	
Address:		Grade	

Parent/Guardian		Phone	
Referred By			

Your child has been referred as a potential candidate for academic acceleration. Assessments are required for identification purposes. The following assessments **may** be administered to your child:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children
- Iowa Acceleration Scale

No assessment will be done without your written permission. Please read the information below and return this form to school as soon as possible. If you have questions, please contact the Principal at (708) 862-6620.

TESTING IS FOR PLACEMENT PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT GUARANTEE THAT ACCELERATION WILL BE OFFERED.

I understand that if I grant permission, my child will receive assessment(s) by designated school personnel and that the information may be shared with teachers, principals, and other appropriate school personnel. I will be notified of the decision making process and meeting to determine the appropriate placement for my child based on this assessment.

- Permission is given to conduct the assessment(s)
- Permission is denied

Signature

Relationship to Child

Date

Please return to your child's teacher by _____

Date

LINCOLN ESD 156 WRITTEN ACCELERATION PLAN

Student _____ School _____ Grade _____

Type of Acceleration	___ Subject (specify)	
	___ Grade (from-to)	
	___ Early Entrance	

Placement	From	Grade	Teacher
	To	Grade	Teacher

Transition Period	Begins		Ends	
		Month/Day/Year		Month/Day/Year

Strategies to ensure a successful transition:

Strategies to ensure continuous progress following the transition period:

Staff member assigned to monitor the implementation of this plan:

_____	_____
Staff Name	Position

Signatures	
_____	_____
SCHOOL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE	DATE
_____	_____
PARENT/GUARDIAN	DATE
_____	_____
STUDENT (WHEN APPLICABLE)	DATE

DISTRIBUTE COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT TO: BUILDING PRINCIPAL, CURRENT TEACHER, RECEIVING TEACHER, GIFTED COORDINATOR AND PARENT/GUARDIAN. PLACE A COPY IN THE STUDENT'S FILE