

Mahomet-Seymour CUSD 3



Parent & Teacher Guide to Student Acceleration

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ACCELERATED PLACEMENT ACT

OVERVIEW

This Accelerated Placement Act requires Illinois public school districts to adopt and implement policies on acceleration that, at a minimum, provide opportunities for early entrance into kindergarten and first grade, opportunities for accelerating a student in a single subject area, and opportunities for “whole grade” acceleration (sometimes referred to as “grade skipping”).

The law also allows districts to provide additional forms of acceleration not specifically addressed in the Accelerated Placement Act such as advanced courses, compacting (content presented over a shorter period of time), AP courses, dual enrollment programs, etc.

The law requires that district acceleration policies include:

- A provision that states that participation in accelerated placement is not limited to 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;
- A fair and equitable decision-making process that involves multiple persons and includes a student’s parents or guardians;
- Procedures for notifying parents or guardians of a child of a decision affecting that child’s participation in an accelerated placement program; and
- An assessment process that includes multiple valid, reliable indicators.

Other components mentioned in the law include:

- Procedures for annually informing the community-at-large, including parents or guardians, about accelerated placement opportunities and the methods used for the identification of children eligible for accelerated placement;
- A process for referral that allows for multiple referrers including a child’s parents or guardians, educational professionals with knowledge of the referred child’s

abilities and the child with written consent of a parent or guardian. In the case of possible early entrance referrers could include a parent or another individual with knowledge of the child's abilities including a preschool teacher, pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

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

The legislation also directs ISBE to collect and disseminate data on academic acceleration.

MAHOMET-SEYMOUR CUSD #3 BOARD POLICY

POLICY 6:135 ACCELERATED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

The District provides an Accelerated Placement Program (APP). The APP advances the District's goal of providing educational programs with opportunities for each student to develop to his or her maximum potential. The APP provides an educational setting with curriculum options usually reserved for students who are older or in higher grades than the student participating in the APP. APP options include, but may not be limited to (a) accelerating a student in a single subject; (b) grade-level acceleration; and (c) early entrance to kindergarten or first grade. Participation in the APP is open to all students who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from the accelerated placement. It is not limited to students who have been identified as gifted and talented. Eligibility to participate in the District's APP shall not be conditioned upon the protected classifications identified in Board policy 7:10, Equal Educational Opportunities, or any factor other than the student's identification as an accelerated learner.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement an APP that includes:

1. Decision-making processes that are fair, equitable, and involve multiple individuals, e.g. district administrators, teachers, and school support personnel, and a student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. Notification processes that notify a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of a decision affecting a student's participation in the APP; and
3. Assessment processes that include multiple valid, reliable indicators. The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify the community, parent(s)/guardian(s), students, and school personnel about the APP, the process for referring a student for possible evaluation for accelerated placement, and the methods used to determine whether a student is eligible for accelerated placement. Notification may: (a) include varied communication methods, such as student handbooks and District or school websites; and (b) be provided in multiple languages, as appropriate.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/14A. CROSS REF.: 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:130 (Program for the Gifted), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools)
Adopted: 7/16/2018 12:49:45 PM

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Any child who will be five on or before September 1 may attend school at the beginning of the school term. (School Code 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12)

A child does not have to attend school until her sixth birthday. (School Code 105 ILCS 2/26-1)

Based on an assessment of a child's readiness, a school district may permit a child to enter school at a younger age. (School Code 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12)

DEFINITIONS

WHOLE-GRADE ACCELERATION

The practice of assigning a student to a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age on a full-time basis for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Examples:

- After completing the first-grade year, a student is placed in a third-grade classroom (rather than a second-grade classroom) on a full-time basis at the beginning of the school year.
- After completing the fall semester of the fifth-grade year, a student is placed in the sixth grade at the start of the second semester of the same school year.

INDIVIDUAL SUBJECT ACCELERATION

The practice of assigning a student to an individual course or class at a higher level than what is offered at the student's current grade for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas.

Examples:

- A third-grade student performing above grade level in math goes to a fourth-grade teacher every morning for instruction in math and returns to the third-grade classroom for instruction in other subject areas.
- A musically gifted sixth-grade student is enrolled in a high school music course and returns to the sixth-grade classroom for instruction in other subject areas.

Non-Examples:

- A sixth grade student is placed in compacted math (formerly high math) to reach Algebra I in 8th grade. This is a non-example because compacted math is a math placement offered to sixth graders.
- A high school student is placed in Honors English I. This is a non-example because Honors English I and English I are placements offered to incoming freshman.

EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

The practice of admitting a student to kindergarten who has not yet reached 5 years of age, on or before September 1st, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Example:

- A child who can read independently and is socially similar to typical five-year-olds is admitted to kindergarten, even though he will not reach his fifth birthday until after the September 1st deadline.

EARLY ENTRANCE TO FIRST GRADE

The practice of admitting a student to first grade who has not yet reached 6 years of age, on or before September 1st, and has not attended Kindergarten in a public school, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Example:

- A child has attended a private Kindergarten and is socially and academically similar to typical six-year-old is admitted to first grade, even though she will not reach her sixth birthday until after the September 1st deadline.

EARLY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

The practice of facilitating completion of the high school program in fewer than four years for the purpose of providing earlier than typical access to post-secondary opportunities. Example:

- An advanced student is granted a diploma after spending only five semesters in high school by accumulating credits on an accelerated basis through “dual credit” coursework taken while in middle school and by satisfying some high school graduation requirements by completing “educational options” rather than traditional courses. The student then enrolls in college as a full-time student at age 17.

ACCELERATION EVALUATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ROLES

BUILDING PRINCIPAL (OR DESIGNEE)

- Accept and respond to requests for acceleration
- Provide an overview of staff roles and duties
- Assist with scheduling
- Assist/Facilitate Acceleration Evaluation Committee meetings
- Provide written explanation to all committee members when acceleration is denied

CURRENT TEACHER

- Provide information about student's performance in current grade level, including student achievement (with examples) and social/emotional factors

ACCELERATED TEACHER

- Share information regarding expectations at the accelerated grade level

PARENT / GUARDIAN

- Receive the same data and information other committee members
- Receive information about social/emotional considerations
- Provide information on academically oriented achievements outside of school

PSYCHOLOGIST

- Administer tests
- Interpret test results
- Compare results to other students of the same age, grade, or ability
- Compare results to other students two grades above child's current grade placement

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR / SOCIAL WORKER (OPTIONAL)

- Address social/emotional issues affecting student achievement

STUDENT SERVICES COORDINATOR (OR DESIGNEE)*

- Assist with IEP or 504 Plan considerations

*Required member only if the student referred for acceleration has dual exceptions

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION

- Review appeals
- Provide final decision in writing

MAHOMET-SEYMOUR DISTRICT PROCEDURES

APPLYING FOR EARLY ENTRANCE

Parents or guardians interested in early entrance to Kindergarten or 1st grade should send a written request to the Middletown Prairie Principal.

As part of that response, the principal will inform the parents about important developmental factors, interpersonal skills, attitudes and supports that are characteristic of children for whom grade acceleration is successful.

The child will need to attend Kindergarten Round-up to allow the staff to complete an initial screening. Parents will also be asked to complete the *Early Entrance to Kindergarten/First Grade Form*.

TIMELINE: All requests for early entrance to Kindergarten and 1st grade must be made in writing to the Middletown Prairie Principal by **April 30th**. Parents will be notified of the decision regarding acceleration no later than **August 1st**. Exceptions to the timeline will be made for families new to the district.

WHOLE-GRADE ACCELERATION

Parents or guardians interested in whole grade acceleration should contact their child's building principal in writing. The principal will respond and schedule a meeting. At this meeting, the principal will discuss the considerations that impact the team decision including what to look for in the areas of ability, achievement, aptitude, and behavior. The principal will also discuss important developmental factors, interpersonal skills, attitudes and supports that are characteristic of children for whom grade acceleration is successful.

Parents or guardians who believe their child exhibits a number of characteristics that make him/her a strong candidate for acceleration will be asked to start the referral process by filling out the *Universal Referral Form for Acceleration*.

TIMELINE: All requests for whole grade acceleration must be made in writing to the building principal by **March 30th**. The AEC will convene and make a decision regarding the acceleration no later than **June 15th**. Exceptions to the timeline will be made for families new to the district.

SUBJECT AREA ACCELERATION

Parents or guardians interested in subject area acceleration should contact their child's building principal in writing. The principal will respond and schedule a meeting. At this meeting, the principal will discuss the considerations that impact the team decision including what to look for in the areas of ability, achievement, aptitude, and behavior. The principal will also discuss important developmental factors, interpersonal skills, attitudes and supports that are characteristic of children for whom subject acceleration is successful.

Parents or guardians who believe their child exhibits a number of characteristics that make him/her a strong candidate for subject acceleration will be asked to start the referral process by filling out the *Universal Referral Form for Acceleration*.

TIMELINE: All requests for subject area acceleration must be made in writing to the building principal by **March 30th**. The AEC will convene and make a decision regarding the acceleration no later than **June 15th**. Exceptions to the timeline will be made for families new to the district.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

EARLY ENTRY AND WHOLE GRADE

Upon receipt of the *Early Entrance to Kindergarten/First Grade Form* or the *Universal Referral Form for Acceleration*, student records will be reviewed by the building principal. For students not currently enrolled, the building principal will work with the parent to secure the needed information. Students whose initial review indicates the possibility of acceleration based on records review will be given an assessment to measure verbal, quantitative and nonverbal reasoning, cognitive domains that are highly correlated with school success. The school principal and psychologist will meet with the parents or guardians after the record review and the assessment administration (when administered) are completed.

Possible Meeting Outcomes

- The student is not a candidate for early entry and/or acceleration. The process concludes.
- The student is recommended for differentiation within his/her current placement. A differentiation plan is written. The process concludes.

- The student is identified as a possible candidate for acceleration. An Acceleration Evaluation Committee (AEC) is formed and the team utilizes the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) as a guide for determining acceleration. The IAS is not a test. Nor is it something students can pass or fail. The IAS includes 20 items that are rated and categorized into five subcategories that include the most salient issues for consideration by educators and parents or guardians. The subcategories are (1) Academic Ability, Aptitude, and Achievement; (2) School and Academic Factors; (3) Developmental Factors; (4) Interpersonal Skills; and (5) Attitude and Support. From these five subcategories, a cumulative score is calculated.

Possible Outcomes Following Evaluation

- The student is not a candidate for early entry/acceleration. The AEC writes a differentiation plan for students enrolled in Mahomet-Seymour Schools.
- The student is a candidate for subject area acceleration. The AEC writes a subject area acceleration plan for the student.
- The student is a candidate for early entry/grade acceleration. The AEC writes an acceleration plan for the student.

SUBJECT AREA

Upon receipt of the *Universal Referral Form for Acceleration*, the principal should make a copy for the AEC to review. The principal will have a discussion with the student regarding the possibility of subject-area acceleration in an effort to gain the student's perspective. The principal will gather data from school records, parents, teachers and the student. The data gathered will contain information about the student's school history, academic ability, achievement, and aptitude. Once the data is gathered and reviewed, the school principal and/or psychologist will meet with the parents or guardians.

Possible Meeting Outcomes

- The student is not a candidate for subject area acceleration. The student needs are currently being met within the student's classroom. The process concludes.
- The student is not a candidate for subject area acceleration. The principal, teacher and parent meet to discuss a plan for differentiation within the student's classroom.
- The student is a candidate for subject area acceleration. The AEC writes a subject area Written Acceleration Plan for the student.
- The student is identified as a possible candidate for subject area acceleration. The AEC determines additional data are needed, and the student is assessed in the areas of ability, aptitude and achievement.

Possible Outcomes Following Collection of Additional Data

- The principal determines the student is not a candidate for subject acceleration, and the student's needs are currently being met. The process concludes.
- The student is not a candidate for subject area acceleration. The principal, teacher and parent meet to discuss a plan for differentiation within the student's classroom.
- The student is a candidate for subject area acceleration. The AEC writes a subject area acceleration plan for the student.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACCELERATION IS APPROPRIATE:

If the decision is made to accelerate the student, either subject or whole grade, the AEC will come together to write a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) for the student. This plan will outline the supports needed to ensure a smooth transition. The principal will touch base with the teacher and student within the first six weeks and make any necessary adjustments.

Students accelerated are typically two school years ahead of their peers and have an IQ in the very high to extremely high range. Students are above the 85%tile of the grade in which the student is being placed, allowing for typical regression. Placement is determined on an individual basis.

ACCELERATION IS NOT APPROPRIATE:

If the decision is made not to accelerate, the AEC will discuss other ways to support the child. Some possible options could include the following:

Differentiated Instruction	Consistently using a variety of instructional approaches to modify content, process and/or products in response to learner readiness.
Enrichment Activities	Adjunct activities that complement the classroom instruction and material being presented. This allows the student to proceed with self-guided, enriching activities.
Advanced Placement	Courses in high school that prepare students for taking an examination that can confer college credit for satisfactory performance.
Dual Enrollment	Course work or summer programs that confer advanced instruction and credit for study (e.g. courses offered in agreement with local community colleges).

What Acceleration Is and Is Not

Acceleration is...

- For students with higher than average general cognitive ability. A child's cognitive ability is different from academic achievement.
- For students who are performing well above their peers in the current grade level and have the ability to continue to perform in the 85%tile of the grade or subject, they will be accelerating into.
- Whole grade or subject area. Students can be accelerated in one subject or an entire grade (i.e. grade skipping or double promotion) depending on their individual needs.

Acceleration is not...

- A course assignment. Courses/classes available to students as part of their current grade placement are not considered acceleration. Examples of non-accelerated course assignments include high school honors classes and compacted math classes at the junior high (formerly high math).
- Something that can be paused later in school. When students are accelerated they remain accelerated for their whole school career. A student cannot be "held back" later to allow them to grow for sports or other activities. Students accelerated compete with and against students in the grade for which they are placed academically.
- A guaranteed path to high school honors classes. Students can be accelerated in elementary and/or junior high and not qualify for Honors Geometry or other high school honors classes.

Good candidates for acceleration display the following characteristics:

- Above-average general cognitive ability;
- Achieves academically more than one grade level higher than his/her Mahomet-Seymour age-mates;
- Expresses a desire for more challenging instruction;
- Is socially mature enough to adapt to an environment serving older students; or
- Responds positively to the possibility of acceleration.

Acceleration may not be appropriate for students with some of the following characteristics:

- Has an older sibling in the same current grade or grade to which the student will be accelerated;
- Is sufficiently challenged by the curriculum at his/her current grade level;
- Would be significantly less emotionally mature than typical students at the grade level to which he/she may be accelerated; or
- Responds negatively to the possibility of acceleration.

Copied and slightly modified from iagcgifted.org/resources/Documents (Retrieved November 25, 2019)

APPEALS

Parents may appeal the decision of the AEC by requesting in writing a formal review by the Mahomet-Seymour CUSD #3 Director of Instruction within 10 calendar days of the committee's final decision. The Director of Instruction will review all data collected and inform the parents or guardians of the status of the appeal within 10 school days of receiving the appeal.

Mahomet-Seymour CUSD #3



EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN / FIRST GRADE

Directions: Please complete this application after meeting with your child's building principal, if you feel your child demonstrates academic achievement, and social/emotional/physical maturity appropriate for a kindergarten/first-grade placement.

PLEASE TYPE/PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Child's Name			
Date of Birth			
Gender			
Type of Acceleration Requested			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Entrance to Kindergarten (My child will be 5 before January 1.)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Entrance to Kindergarten (My child will NOT be 5 before January 1.)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Entrance to First Grade (My child will be 6 before January 1.)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Entrance to First Grade (My child will NOT be 6 before January 1.)		
Home Address			
Street and City			
Daycare or Preschool Experience			
Name			
Address			
Family Information			
Parent/Guardian			
Relationship to Child			
Phone Cell			
Phone Home			
Email Address			
Siblings	Name	Age	Grade

PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCE

(Please attach preschool reports if available.)

List the schools, Head Start, special programs and other daycare programs attended. Include the dates of attendance and the approximate number of hours per week attended.

Name of Program	Dates of Attendance	Number of Hours per Week

SUPPORTING REFERRAL INFORMATION

What were some early indicators which demonstrated your child was advanced for his/her age?

Describe recently observed characteristics that indicate your child is ready for kindergarten/first grade.

How does your child approach a challenging task? Please provide an example.

How does your child relate to same age peers?

Describe your child's preferred playmates.

How does your child interact with adults?

How does your child choose to spend his/her free time?

Does your child participate in any activities (e.g. dance, art, sports, etc.)? If so, please include a description of the activity and any awards or recognition received.

How does your child handle frustration?

What will early entrance at Middletown Prairie Elementary provide for your child?

Please provide additional comments/information you would like considered.

Your signature indicates that you have met with your child's building principal and understand the considerations for early placement. Your signature also grants the team permission to administer assessments to measure your child's academic ability, aptitude, achievement and social/emotional development.

Print Name

Date

Signature

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date referral was received _____

Date principal made contact with parent _____

Date of parent meeting _____

Mahomet-Seymour CUSD #3



UNIVERSAL REFERRAL FORM FOR ACCELERATION (Whole grade or subject)

Directions: Please complete this application after meeting with your child's building principal, if you feel your child demonstrates academic achievement, and social/emotional/physical maturity appropriate acceleration..

PLEASE TYPE/PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Child's Name			
Date of Birth			
Gender			
Type of Acceleration Requested			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whole Grade Acceleration		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subject Area Acceleration		
Home Address			
Street and City			
Family Information			
Parent/Guardian			
Relationship to Child			
Phone Cell			
Phone Home			
Email Address			
Siblings	Name	Age	Grade

SCHOOL HISTORY

Has the student done any of the following? (Check all that apply.)

- Qualified for a gifted education program in another district
- Accelerated in one or more subjects within a grade
- Entered kindergarten or first grade early
- Skipped a grade (indicate which grade)
- Participated in an enrichment/acceleration academic class or activity outside of school
- Other (Please explain)

Has the student demonstrated high ability, accelerated performance and/or talent as compared with same age peers in the following areas? (Check all that apply.)

- Music
- Art
- Drama
- Dance
- Sports
- Leadership
- Other (Please explain)

Please describe examples of exceptional talent in the areas checked above.

SUPPORTING REFERRAL INFORMATION

Please cite specific reasons why you feel that acceleration would be an appropriate placement for this student.

Please provide additional comments/information you would like considered.

Your signature indicates that you have met with your child's building principal and understand the considerations for early placement. Your signature also grants the team permission to administer assessments to measure your child's academic ability, aptitude, achievement and social/emotional development.

Print Name

Date

Signature

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date referral was received _____

Date principal made contact with parent _____

Date of parent meeting _____

