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Administrative Procedures and Procedural Guidance - Accelerated Placement Program

The District's Accelerated Placement Program (APP) places qualified students in an educational setting that includes curriculum usually reserved for students who are older or in higher grades than the student.

This administrative procedure contains five sections as follows:

1. Definitions
2. Annual Notification
3. Referral Process
4. Evaluation Process
5. Eligibility Determination

Definitions

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 current age/grade placement, 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

Actor	Action
Superintendent or designee	<p>Annually notifies the community each August , including parent(s)/guardian(s), students, and school personnel, about the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. APP 2. Process for referring a student for possible evaluation for accelerated placement, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>Provides such notification:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. By varied communication methods, such as student handbooks and District/school websites; and b. In multiple languages.

Referral Process

Actor	Action
<p>Parent(s)/Guardian(s), Licensed Educational Professionals, Student (with written consent of a parent/guardian), or Peer (through a licensed educational professional who has knowledge of the student's abilities). In addition to the above-noted individuals, referrals for possible early entrance to kindergarten or first grade may also come from: Preschool Educator, Non-public Kindergarten Teacher, Pediatrician, or Psychologist who knows the student.</p>	<p>Refers a student for possible evaluation for accelerated placement using the process set forth in this procedure.</p>
<p>School team which may include school psychologist, school social worker, building administrator, classroom teacher, and also may include any other staff member who has knowledge of the student and/or the evaluation determination process.</p>	<p>Within 14 school days after receiving a referral, determines whether an evaluation for accelerated placement is warranted.</p> <p>To determine whether an evaluation is warranted, school staff may review existing data about the student, utilize screening data, and conduct preliminary procedures such as observation of the student, consultation with the teacher or other individual making the request, and a conference with the student.</p> <p>School staff will provide the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of the referral determination. For cases not warranting an evaluation, the process ends here. For cases warranting an evaluation, proceed to Evaluation Process, below.</p>

Evaluation Process

Actor	Action
Building Administrator	<p>Convenes an Evaluation Team (consisting of classroom teacher(s), building administrator, and school support personnel, as appropriate) having the knowledge and skills necessary to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify multiple valid, reliable indicators to use during the evaluation;2. Identify appropriate assessment instruments;3. Administer said assessments; and4. Interpret evaluation results. <p>The composition of the team may vary depending upon the type of acceleration requested and other relevant factors.</p>
Evaluation Team	<p>Identifies multiple valid, reliable indicators and any assessment instruments appropriate to use during the evaluation.</p> <p>Prepares a written document identifying the evaluation components.</p>
Building Principal or designee	<p>Provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notification of the Evaluation Team's conclusions regarding the evaluation components and facilitates meeting to plan evaluation and request parent(s)'/guardian(s)' written consent to conduct the evaluation.</p>
Parent/Guardian	<p>Provides written consent to conduct the evaluation.</p>
Evaluation Team	<p>Completes the evaluation within 60 school days following the date of receipt of parent(s)'/guardian(s)' written consent to conduct the evaluation.</p> <p>Ensures the evaluation is nondiscriminatory and follows policy 7:10, <i>Equal Educational Opportunities</i>.</p>

Eligibility Determination

Actor	Action
Evaluation Team	<p>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.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">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. The parent will provide written consent for the plan to be implemented.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
Parent/guardian	If desired, within 30 calendar days after receiving written notice that student is not eligible for the APP, submits written appeal to the Superintendent.
Superintendent	<p>Within 30 calendar days after receiving the written appeal request, reviews the case, and provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of his/her decision.</p> <p>The Superintendent's decision is final.</p>

CUSD #27 - Procedural Guidance for Acceleration Teams

The Referral Process

- The staff member receiving the request for acceleration will consult with the building principal or designee to provide the referring person the Request for Acceleration Referral Form.
- The referring party completes the referral form and returns it to the building administrator.
- The building administrator or designee contacts the parent/guardian to discuss the referral.
- Within 14 school days after receiving a referral, the school team determines whether an evaluation for accelerated placement is warranted and schedules a meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the referral.
- To determine whether an evaluation is warranted, school staff may review existing data about the student, utilize screening data, and conduct preliminary procedures such as observation of the student, consultation with the teacher or other individual making the request, and a conference with the student.
- School staff will provide the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of the referral determination outcome. For cases not warranting an evaluation, the process ends here. For cases warranting an evaluation, proceed to the Evaluation Process below.
- The parent/guardian may appeal, in writing, the decision of receiving written notice not to evaluate for acceleration to the local superintendent within 30 calendar days of receiving written notice not to consider a student for acceleration. The superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent/guardian of his or her final decision within 30 calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

The Evaluation Process

- The building administrator or designee contacts the parent/guardian to set up a meeting to plan the evaluation for acceleration with the building evaluation team. The team will typically consist of the administrator, school psychologist, school social worker, classroom teacher, interpreter (as appropriate), and any other staff who may have information/expertise in the acceleration decision-making process. Parents are welcome to bring any additional individuals to the meeting who may aid the decision-making process.
 - The meeting will be scheduled at a mutually-agreed upon time between the parent/guardian and school staff.
 - The district will provide an interpreter for families, if needed/requested
 - The evaluation team will consist of multiple participants and may consist of the building administrator, school psychologist, school social worker, instructional coach, literacy interventionist and classroom teacher. The evaluation process shall include multiple valid, reliable indicators. The composition of the team will vary based on the specific situation and type of acceleration being requested.
 - Assessments/Procedures should:
 - Be linguistically and culturally appropriate and should include any assessment accommodations that are identified on an IEP/504 plan that are appropriate for assessment.
 - Take into consideration the students desire to be accelerated
 - Take a multi-faceted approach to assess academic and social emotional competencies to determine the appropriateness of the acceleration request.
 - The team has 60 school days from the time written consent for evaluation is received from the parent/guardian to complete the evaluation and hold a meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the results of the evaluation.
 - Any referral received within 60 school days of the end of the school year may not be considered until the start of the next school year to give the evaluation team sufficient time to complete the evaluation.
 - When the evaluation is completed, the building principal or designee will contact the parent/guardian to schedule a meeting to discuss the results of the evaluation
 - The meeting will be scheduled at a time that is mutually agreeable to parents and the evaluation team.
 - The team will prepare a written report documenting the findings of the evaluation and recommendation of the evaluation team regarding acceleration.
 - The team will also communicate the decision regarding acceleration to relevant educators and relevant administrative personnel (including educators and administrative personnel at the level to which the student will be accelerated, as appropriate) to ensure that all are informed and prepared to support the accelerated placement, as appropriate.
 - Only one evaluation for acceleration will be conducted within a twelve month period for an individual student, unless the parent/guardian and school district both agree to conduct another evaluation within that time frame.

- The parent/guardian may appeal, in writing, the decision of the evaluation team to the local superintendent within 30 calendar days of the meeting to discuss the results of the evaluation. The superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent/guardian of his or her final decision within 30 calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.
- A student will not be evaluated for acceleration more frequently than once every twelve months, unless both the parent and school evaluation team agree to conduct an evaluation before that twelve month timeframe has elapsed.

The Acceleration Plan

- The acceleration team shall create a written placement and transition plan for students selected for acceleration. The written plan will be provided to the student's parent/guardian and will detail the type of acceleration the student will receive and strategies to be used to support the student to facilitate a successful transition to the accelerated setting during a transition period specified in the written plan. Any accommodations the student is entitled to receive as documented on a student's IEP or 504 plan shall be available to the student as part of the acceleration plan.
- The plan will also designate an individual who will monitor and support the transition during the 30 school days after placement. During the transition period specified in the written plan, the accelerated student's parent/guardian may request in writing that the student be returned to the non-accelerated setting without penalty.
- The acceleration team shall use the district "Accelerated Placement and Transition Plan" form to document the plan for acceleration/transition.
- At the end of the transition period, the student's records will be updated to reflect the student's accelerated status. This is designated to facilitate continuous progress in future years in the same district or if the student matriculates or transfers to a different district.
- If a student is recommended for acceleration, every reasonable effort will be made to make that placement at the student's home school. However, under some circumstances the placement may be made at a different school.