



ACCELERATION HANDBOOK

2022-2023

Information for Parents

WE EDUCATE FOR EXCELLENCE...Empowering all students to achieve their educational goals, to direct their lives, and to contribute to society.

Acceleration Placement

Ohio Revised Code section 3324.10 requires that districts implement a student acceleration policy for advanced learners. Acceleration allows students who are ready to learn above grade-level content to experience appropriately challenging standards-based instruction at a level that promotes continued academic growth. Acceleration can be defined as an educational opportunity in which a child moves at a faster pace through academic content and when a child demonstrates competencies, knowledge, abilities, and/or skills at a higher grade level than typical for the child's age.

Acceleration Options:

- Early entrance to Kindergarten – moves a child into Kindergarten
- Whole grade acceleration - moves a child to a higher grade level for all classes.
- Single-subject acceleration - moves a child to a higher grade level in one subject area
- Early graduation- student meets graduation requirements

Research shows advanced students may need acceleration in math more than other core subject areas. Typically, the need for whole-grade acceleration is rare. The Westlake City School District may have one or two whole-grade accelerations in any given academic year.

Is Acceleration Right for My Child?

Sometimes a student may need more than what is currently offered in the classroom. If this is the case, typically the parent and/or teachers confer and then a referral requesting an acceleration conference is completed by District personnel. Parents should discuss with classroom teachers first or call building principals to discuss acceleration options.

Who might benefit from acceleration?

- A child with high cognitive ability. The higher the IQ, the greater the need to adjust the curriculum. For example, a student who has an IQ of 145 *may* need an enriched curriculum, intensive curriculum modifications or even whole-grade acceleration.
- A child in Kindergarten who already has mastered the curriculum.
- A student strong in math (or another subject) who typically finishes work quickly and consistently performs at the top of his/her class.
- A student who always finishes work early and the teacher can no longer modify the curriculum without simply using concepts from the next grade level.
- A student strong in reading who typically reads books well above grade level and who quickly reads class material. The student finishes class reading well before other students and possesses strong comprehension skills.

According to BOE Policy 5410, an acceleration committee will convene to review all students referred for the accelerated courses. The committee may consist of the building principal or assistant principal, current teacher, potential accelerated placement teacher, school psychologist, counselor, parent, gifted specialist or central office representative. The committee will review and discuss multiple criteria including but not limited to, normative data (i.e. MAP, ITBS, IAAT), cognitive results, state assessment results, academic progress through Ohio's Learning Standards, student work habits and social and emotional readiness.

Candidates for acceleration are evaluated through a review of cognitive, achievement, and aptitude scores plus demonstrated evidence of advanced achievement in core subject areas. This includes a review of the student's cognitive ability (CogAT) scores from 2nd and 4th grade, academic achievement and social/emotional growth.

Accelerated students do not need to be identified gifted to be accelerated. "Gifted" means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to

others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 3324.03 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Acceleration is an educational option and is not guaranteed for every gifted student. Once the team determines if acceleration is the appropriate placement, parents will be notified in writing. All students enrolled in Kindergarten through Eighth grade will be placed prior to the first official student day in August. Any placement changes after the first day of school will be reviewed by the committee and determined by a case-by-case basis.

Early Entrance

The practice of admitting a student to Kindergarten who has not yet reached the typical age at which students are admitted to Kindergarten for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities is referred to as early entrance.

The district uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) (3rd ed.) as a guide for determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate.

Early Entry Handbook and Application forms can be found on Academic Services website
(<http://www.wlake.org/departments/academic-services/acceleration>)

Whole Grade Acceleration

Step I: Acceleration Referral Form

Acceleration Referral Form submitted to the building principal. All referral forms should be sent to building principals by **March 17th** for currently enrolled students. Referral forms will not be accepted late. New to district students should contact their building principal for more information.

Step II: Data Collection, Testing and Analysis

The *Iowa Acceleration Scale (3rd ed.)* is used as a tool to guide acceleration teams on appropriate placement. The Westlake City School District adopted the *State Model Policy for Acceleration* in 2006. Evaluations related to referrals that occur during the school year will be completed and a written report issued within forty-five calendar days. Evaluations related to referrals that occur 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.

Steps III-V – see subject acceleration steps listed below.

Subject Acceleration

Step I: Acceleration Referral Form

The Acceleration Referral Form should be submitted to building principal. All referral forms are sent to building principals by **March 17th**. Referral forms will not be accepted late.

Step II: Data Collection, Testing and Analysis

After the referral form and permission to test is received by the building principal, students will take the appropriate above grade level assessment.

Data Collection and Analysis – Information is gathered by the classroom teachers, support staff and building principals. Data used by Acceleration Committee: MAP data, state assessment data, teacher recommendations, progress through standards, social and emotional readiness, etc. Additional testing may be required.

Testing - The Ohio Department of Education does not have an approved list of assessments for subject acceleration placements. Westlake City School District uses the IAAT (Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test), ITBS

for science (above grade level) or any additional above grade level assessment during this process. Testing results will be provided within 45 calendar days per Policy 5410.

Step III: Acceleration Committee Meeting

The Acceleration Committee will review all available data. The committee will discuss and make recommendations for accelerated placement. The committee will reach a consensus and share the list with building principals no later than **May 1, 2023**. The acceleration 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.

According to BOE Policy 5410, parents have the right to appeal in writing to the Superintendent within 30 calendar days of the parent/guardian receiving the committee's decision. The Superintendent or his designee shall review the appeal and notify parent(s)/guardian(s) within thirty calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent or his designee's decision shall be final.

Step IV: Curricular Options Reviewed with Parents

All evaluation results and a written report will be issued to parent(s)/guardians(s) for the recommended placement. All information will be disseminated to parents during a conference, phone call or in writing.

Step V: Development of a Written Acceleration Plan

After placement, all students will be given a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP). Westlake City School District WAPs will include strategies to ensure success and list staff members responsible for monitoring academic progress until the end of the transition period. The WAP will provide a transition period of thirty school days. Parents can request an extension during the initial transition period.

At any time during the transition period, a parent/guardian may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the evaluation committee to consider other accelerative options and to issue a decision within thirty calendar days of receiving the request. If the student will be placed in a different accelerated setting from that initially recommended, the student's acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly and a new transition period shall be specified. 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 in order to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

If a student is taking a high school level course, the final grade will be part of the official transcript and the student will be required to take the End-of-course examination.

Transportation for Subject Accelerated Students

The district will provide transportation for students placed in advanced coursework which is offered at another building within the district. For example, a 4th grade student taking Advanced Math 5 at Dover Intermediate. In this situation, bus transportation is provided at no cost to parents.

Early Graduation

The Board of Education acknowledges that some students are pursuing educational goals which include graduation from high school at an earlier date than their designated class.

Application for early graduation will be submitted to the high school principal in accordance with school regulations. Before a student is evaluated for early high school graduation, the principal (or his/her designee) must obtain written permission from the student's parent/guardian. Interested students should speak to his/her counselor and complete an Early Graduation Acceleration Referral Form. The form should be

submitted by **December 1st** of students' junior year. The principal may honor this request if all conditions for graduation are met and the student fulfills the graduation requirements. Acceleration Committee decisions will be made prior to the first day of second semester of junior year. Special consideration may be given to new to district students or head principal recommendation for unique circumstances.

The student may participate in the graduation ceremonies with his/her newly designated class.

Students referred for early high school graduation will be evaluated in a prompt manner. Evaluations related to referrals that occur during the school year will ordinarily be completed within thirty calendar days. Evaluations related to referrals that occur at the end of a school year or during the summer will occur either before the end of the school year, if possible, or within thirty calendar days of the start of the next school year. The building principal will schedule the evaluations. Normally, changes in a student's schedule to accommodate the accelerated learning will only occur at the start of a semester.

Upon referral, the student's principal (or his/her designee) shall convene an acceleration evaluation committee to determine the appropriateness of early high school graduation for the student. The committee shall be comprised of the following:

- a. A parent/legal guardian of the referred student
- b. A school psychologist or school counselor with expertise in early high school graduation
- c. A principal or assistant principal from the student's current school
- d. The student

The acceleration evaluation committee shall be responsible for conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the student.

Students referred for early high school graduation shall be evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on State academic content standards and successful completion of State mandated graduation requirements. The acceleration evaluation committee will consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

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 submitted in writing to the Superintendent within thirty calendar days of the parent/guardian receiving the committee's decision. The Superintendent or his designee shall review the appeal and notify parent(s)/guardian(s) within thirty calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent or his designee's decision shall be final.

If the student is recommended for early high school graduation, the acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete high school graduation requirements on an accelerated basis. The plan may include the provision of educational options in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-06(G), waiving District graduation requirements that exceed those required by the State, and early promotion to sophomore (or higher) status to allow the student to take the End-of-Course exams required by the State of Ohio or alternative assessment.

Acceleration Evaluation Committee Members - Roles and Responsibility

Current Building Principal – required, voting member of committee, shares components of building schedule that may impact acceleration, selects specific staff members for each role of acceleration committee

Current Teacher – required, voting member of committee, provides information about the student's performance in the current grade level, gives examples of achievement as well as social or emotional factors that might impact an accelerated placement

Accelerated Teacher – required, voting member of committee, informs the evaluation committee about expectations for students at that grade level, identifies possible knowledge gaps

Accelerated Building Principal – required if student's acceleration will result in a change of buildings, voting member of the committee, shares components of building schedule that may impact acceleration, selects specific staff members for each role of acceleration committee

Parent/Guardian – required, voting member of the committee, provides information about any social or emotional concerns related to an accelerated placement, provides information about any academically oriented achievements that the child may have made outside of school

Special Education Coordinator – required if student has dual exceptionalities, voting member of the committee, defines how the student's special education needs may impact the acceleration

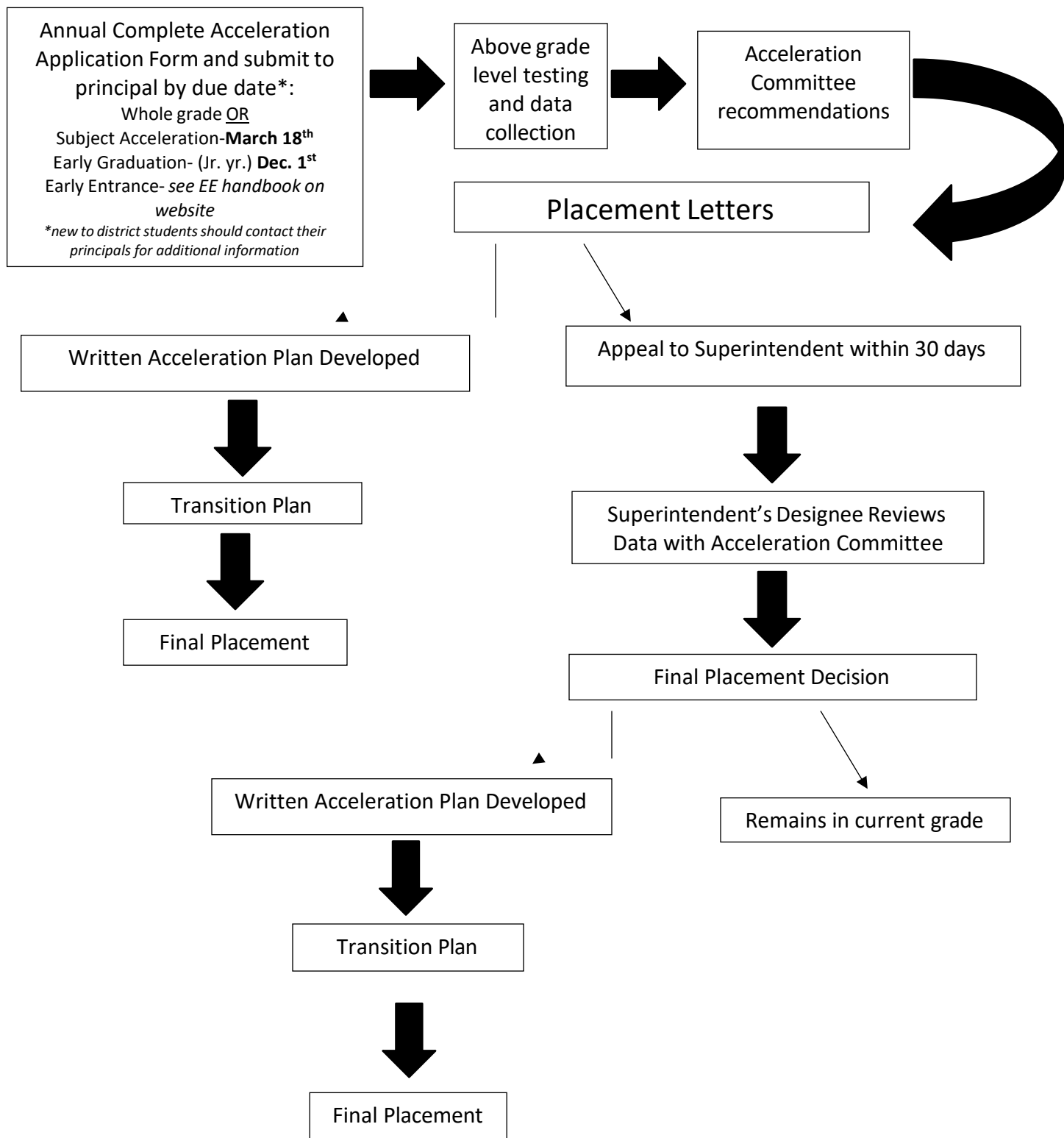
Gifted Intervention Specialist/Coordinator – not required, voting member of the committee, serves as acceleration coordinator and/or facilitator of the evaluation committee, provides information about effective acceleration practices and tools to aid in the process, provides information about the student's performance in current gifted services (if applicable), provides academic support during the transition period

Psychologist – optional, non-voting member of the committee, administers tests, interprets test results to show how the student compares to other students of the same age, grade or ability

School Counselor – optional, non-voting member of the committee, mediates conflicting viewpoints or addresses social or emotional issues that impact student achievement

Other Teachers – optional, non-voting members of the committee, provides information about the student's performance in the current grade level, gives examples of achievement, informs the evaluation committee about expectations for students at the accelerated grade level, identifies possible knowledge gaps.

Acceleration Process



Application for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Early Entry Handbook and Application can be found on Academic Services website.

(<http://www.wlake.org/departments/academic-services/acceleration>)



Application for Acceleration 2022.2023

Please complete this application to have your child considered and evaluated for acceleration.

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: BUILDING PRINCIPAL

(Due dates: Early Graduation (**12/1/22- Jr. Yr.**); Whole Grade or Subject Acceleration (**3/18/23**); Early Entrance form located on the registration website.

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Child's Current Grade: _____ Address _____

Custodial Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Name _____

Home #: _____

Work #: _____ Cell #: _____

Email: _____

Why do you feel that your child would be ready for formal acceleration? Comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills. *(Use additional paper, if needed)*

Which type of acceleration are you seeking?

- ☐ **Subject Acceleration**
 - ☐ **Mathematics** (course specific – please check one below)
 - ☐ Math 6 Adv → Algebra I
 - ☐ Math 7 or Math 7B/8 → Algebra I
 - ☐ Math 4 → Math 6 Adv
 - ☐ Math 5 Adv → Math 7B/8
 - ☐ Other grade level (from) _____ → (to) _____
 - ☐ **Science (Grade 8 → 9 only)** Science 8 → Honors Biology
- ☐ **Whole grade acceleration**
- ☐ **Early Graduation**

By signing below, I understand that I am granting permission for my child to participate in additional assessment(s) by designated school personnel and that the information may be shared with teachers, principals, and other appropriate school personnel. In accordance with state and district policy, a team will convene to decide the best placement for my child.

Parent/ Guardian Signature _____

Relationship to child _____

Date _____

Board of Education

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2260 Dover Center Rd.
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27830 Hilliard Rd.
440.835.635