

CARLYNTON SCHOOL DISTRICT



COMMUNITY-CHARACTER-EXCELLENCE

**SUBJECT-MATTER AND WHOLE-GRADE
ACADEMIC ACCELERATION GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

Carlynton School District

Full Grade/Subject Acceleration Guide

Introduction

The Carlynton School District seeks to meet the intellectual and developmental needs of its student population by offering instructional programming capable of challenging them to achieve at their highest level. To this end, a protocol will provide direction for subject/course and grade level acceleration as an intervention for providing challenging educational opportunities for advanced learners as identified within Chapter 4 regulations.

§ 4.11. Purpose of public education

“(b) Public education prepares students for adult life by attending to their intellectual and developmental needs and challenging them to achieve at their highest level possible. In conjunction with families and other community institutions, public education prepares students to become self-directed, life-long learners and responsible, involved citizens.”

For some students, the prescribed rate of acquisition and retention is faster than the intended delivery of an adopted curriculum and it may become necessary for the district to consider some form of acceleration. What follows, supports the use of acceleration for students who demonstrate this need as part of the general education offering at Carlynton School District.

Definition

Acceleration is a modification of the regular curriculum that enables any student, (including ELL, at-risk, low socioeconomic status, profoundly gifted and twice exceptional as identified in Chapters 4, 14, 15 and 16) to progress at a faster pace or rate to complete a given course in less time, or at an earlier age. Therefore, in the case of acceleration, a student’s educational placement should correlate with his/her mastery level rather than his/her chronological age. Acceleration opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Moving through the curriculum at a faster pace
- Advanced grade placement in a core academic area
- Obtaining college credit while enrolled in High School for core academic areas

Criteria

The protocol only considers subject area/grade level acceleration when the needs of the student cannot be met through classroom differentiation. Single subject acceleration will only occur when a student is performing at least one or more years beyond grade level expectations and is showing readiness two years above the assigned instructional level. Multiple criteria will be considered in this decision making process.

The decision to consider subject area acceleration shall be a team decision. Acceleration should only be considered when the District Acceleration Committee, (DAC) comprised of the classroom teacher(s), (of the student's current grade level as well as the accelerated grade level), building level administrator, building level guidance counselor, a representative with expertise in language acquisition in the case the referred student is an ELL, as well as a representative with expertise in twice-exceptionality in the case the referred student is identified as dual exceptional have collaborated to review student data and academic evidence to determine that all possibilities for differentiation within the student's current academic placement have been examined. The determination for subject area acceleration must also take under advisement the social/emotional learning needs of the student as well as the data of the current academic cohort with which the student is placed. *(To this end, membership on the committee may be modified depending on the student's needs and type of acceleration being considered).*

*****If the student has a GIEP, the GIEP team will assemble with the parents to make a determination outside of this policy and adhere to Chapter 16 regulations.**

The District Acceleration Committee (DAC) will review each request for Literacy or Math subject area acceleration based upon the majority of the following criteria:

Literacy	Mathematics
Demonstration of need based upon documented strategies/interventions tried in the regular classroom.	Demonstration of need based upon documented strategies/interventions tried in the regular classroom.
MAP scores at or above the 95 th local percentile. (where available)	MAP scores at or above the 95 th local percentile. (where available)
PSSA scores at or above the 95 th percentile, (where available).	PSSA scores at or above the 95 th percentile, (where available).
CDT scores in the blue score range of the student's grade level. (where available)	CDT scores in the blue score range of the student's grade level. (where available)
PVAAS projections indicating 95% achievement or above, (where available).	PVAAS projections indicating 95% achievement or above, (where available).
Advanced Keystone scores, (where available).	Advanced Keystone scores, (where available).
Review of current curriculum based assessments.	Review of current curriculum based assessments.
Demonstration of mastery using district curriculum based literacy materials at least one year ahead of current placement. Mastery is considered achieving at least 90% or above on the end of year test a student would be accelerated through.	Demonstration of mastery using district curriculum based math materials at least one year ahead of current placement. Mastery is considered achieving at least 90% or above on the end of year test a student would be accelerated through.
Student work products of high quality or other evidence of outstanding performance.	Student work products of high quality or other evidence of outstanding performance

Demonstration of a genuine desire to subject accelerate without parental pressure.	Demonstration of a genuine desire to subject accelerate without parental pressure.
--	--

The District Acceleration Committee will also consider the traits listed below. A student considered for acceleration should exhibit all or a majority of the following traits:

- Qualitative evidence of social/emotional maturity, academic motivation and persistence to task completion.
- An intense interest in the specific academic area considered for acceleration.
- Attendance

Steps for Identification

1. **Referral** - A written referral is made, via the **Request for Acceleration**, (Appendix A), by a teacher, parent or other personnel. *****If the student has a GIEP, the GIEP team will assemble with the parents to make a determination outside of this policy and adhere to Chapter 16 regulations.** If the student is not identified as gifted, the guidance counselor will serve as the case manager and initiate discussion regarding potential evaluation for Gifted programming. Every attempt will be made to enact a decision to accelerate within 60 days of receipt of the **Request for Acceleration** form.
2. **Consultation** - A meeting is held to determine whether or not the student should be considered a candidate for potential subject area/grade level acceleration. Meeting participants should include members of the DAC-the parent may be included if the parent is making the request. The consultation will include a review of current records and data and dependent upon the subject area for consideration including, but not limited to those identified within the **Criteria** section of this document. In order to move to the next step, 75% of the existing individual student data must meet the above criteria. ***NOTE:** If the parent is not the referring party, it is not necessary to contact the parent regarding this initial consultation/records review as no new testing is being conducted. At the conclusion of the consultation, a decision will be rendered if the student shall move forward in the consideration process or remain in the current academic setting with appropriate differentiation and instruction.
3. **Request for Additional Information** – If the student moves forward in the consideration process, the DAC will recommend the Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition be administered. (Scores in the excellent range-60-80 will be considered.) All data sources, (quantitative and qualitative) will be reviewed by the DAC. **At this time, parent permission for additional data collection must be secured.**
4. **Placement Guidelines** – The primary goal of the acceleration action is to provide the appropriate level of challenge while continuing to allow the student to perform/achieve at a high level with the new curriculum. Therefore, in cases where subject acceleration is approved, the student will be placed in an appropriately leveled curriculum as identified by the DAC supported by a written **Acceleration Plan** (Appendix C). Continued formative assessment to determine

gaps of key learning areas of the grade missed should occur. During the initial transition period, student progress will be monitored on a biweekly basis for the initial six weeks of acceleration.

5. **Recommendation** – Student performance data and placement guidelines for acceleration are designed to be used as a guide in the decision making process. The decision to accelerate through the curriculum **is** and **will** continue to be made on an individual basis. The building principal must approve the final recommendation.
6. **Parent Meeting** – A second meeting to discuss the findings of the DAC is scheduled. During this meeting, an **Acceleration Plan** (Appendix C) will be developed and signed by the parent. No **Acceleration Plan** issued by the team shall be implemented without the signed consent of a parent/guardian. Written notification will also be sent to the parents by the building principal.

Implementation

(If subject acceleration is recommended by the District Acceleration Committee:)

1. An **Acceleration Plan** for the student will be developed by the district and signed by the parent(s) and DAC. The plan could include, but not be limited to: Attending class in a different grade, working with above grade level curriculum with a cohort group or independently in the student's own age based classroom under the supervision of the current classroom and any properly certified support teachers. Additional **Acceleration Options** identified in *Appendix B* may also be considered.
2. An **Acceleration Plan** will also include 'Escorting Procedures' for moving between classrooms and district buildings as deemed necessary for the student's age and overall safety and security. If the student has driving privileges and the plan calls for a dual enrollment option, the student will transport him/herself to the location of instruction with parent permission.
3. A hard copy of the **Acceleration Plan** will be housed in the student's Cumulative Folder for easy access and reference at any time during the student's educational career- Kindergarten through Graduation.
4. If subject placement into an advanced grade is warranted during the current school year, it should occur at a natural transition time, (i.e., end of unit, quarter or semester breaks).
5. The subject acceleration will be formatively monitored to ensure appropriate placement and student achievement. All cases of acceleration will be on an initial trial basis for a period of six weeks and formatively assessed at two-week intervals. Following the six-week trial period, the DAC and parents will meet to review information related to the student's ability to function successfully at the accelerated grade level/course as reflected through observation, data and empirical evidence provided by members of the instructional team.
6. If the team agrees the student is functioning satisfactorily, the student will remain in the accelerated placement and monitored using formative classroom

data sources as well as previously identified assessment results and empirical evidence.

7. If the team agrees that the student is not functioning at the optimal level of learning and knowledge retention to support further study, the DAC may recommend a modification, (such as course repetition) or revocation of the acceleration plan where appropriate. The modification or revocation shall be implemented with the consent of the parent/guardian. In the absence of such consent, the Superintendent shall permit the continuation of the original **Acceleration Plan** if the parent/guardian expressly and in writing waives the proposed modification or revocation and any claim that the original **Acceleration Plan** is not appropriate for the student. If the parent/guardian refuses to provide written consent to the modification or revocation the Superintendent shall take such action as deemed to be in the best interest of the student.
8. **Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this protocol, students who qualify for acceleration shall only be accelerated within the scope of the District's curriculum.
9. Communication is imperative between home and school. Follow up meetings will be scheduled as needed. The **Acceleration Plan** will be formally reviewed on a yearly basis.
10. **Acceleration Plans** must be evaluated yearly. Parents should be aware that future years may require the need for independent study or on-line options. (Please refer to *Appendix B Acceleration Options*).

Grading and Assessment

It is the policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education that students take the grade-level (state mandated) assessment for which they are enrolled not the grade level of the course they have been accelerated into. For example, a 4th grade student who is taking a 5th grade Math course will take the 4th grade PSSA and not the 5th grade assessment. Similarly, a 2nd grade student who would be taking the 3rd grade Math course would not be taking the 3rd grade PSSA. Additionally, state assessment scores of an accelerated student will not adversely affect access to future classes in the middle or high schools. In the event a student is whole grade accelerated, they will be dis-enrolled in the current grade level and re-enrolled into the accelerated grade level and take that grade level's assessment.

Acceleration Appeals Process

(If subject acceleration is not recommended by the District Acceleration Committee:)

1. The classroom teachers will continue to monitor student progress to ensure the appropriate level of challenge and rigor including recommendations for differentiation/enrichment at the current grade level.
2. The DAC's determination for placement and services will be provided in writing. Students and/or their parents may appeal procedural issues in writing to the

- building principal within five (5) school days of the receipt of the principal's notification.
3. The building principal will collaborate with the Director of Curriculum and Director of Special Education to review the request. A written decision will be provided to the parent and building principal.
 4. If parents continue to disagree with the decision of the appeal, parents may appeal the placement decision in writing to the District Superintendent. The Superintendent will review all student documentation and evidence and render a final written decision in regarding placement.
 5. Parents may resubmit a request for acceleration on behalf of their student once per academic school year.
 6. In the case of an identified gifted student, all Chapter 16 regulations will be in full effect.

Appendix A

Carlynton School District

Request for Acceleration

Parent

Student Name_____ **DOB**_____

Parent/Guardian_____ **Date**_____

Please provide a rationale for the request including academic, interpersonal or other supporting factors. (Parents are encouraged to include a letter of request with this application. The letter should contain additional anecdotal information about the student to help the DAC in determining appropriate placement.

Please note: This form will start the process of collecting preliminary information about this student. This does not mean acceleration will necessarily occur. Parents may choose to return this form to the Building Principal or Guidance Counselor to meet with the District Acceleration Committee to present their request.

I have read the Acceleration Protocol and understand the process that will be followed to determine if grade acceleration is appropriate for my student. I grant permission for the necessary assessments needed to determine if grade acceleration is appropriate.

_____ Date _____
(Parent/Guardian signature)

Appendix B

Acceleration Options	
Differentiated Instruction	Consistently using a variety of instructional approaches to modify content, process, and/or products in response to learner readiness, interest, and/or learner profile of academically diverse students.
Online Learning	The student is provided the opportunity to further his or her learning using curricular software and instruction delivered through the use of an electronic device and involves feedback from a virtual instructor in the same manner. This option is available only at the high school level when the student has exceeded course selections for that subject-area.
Curriculum Compacting	A procedure used to streamline the regular curriculum for students who are capable of mastering it at a faster pace. Pre-testing identifies learning objectives already mastered, and allows students to move on to more complex and new material.
Subject-Matter Acceleration	The student is placed for part of a day with students at a more advanced grade level for one or more subjects without being assigned to a higher grade, or the student works for part of the day on material above grade level for one or more subjects within his/her regular classroom.
Whole-Grade Acceleration	The student is promoted a full grade level, or more, beyond the normal grade level of their same-aged peers.
Advanced Placement Courses	Student takes a high school course that prepares him/her for taking an examination that can confer college credit for satisfactory performance on AP Exam.
Dual-Enrollment	Student is enrolled in coursework that confers advanced instruction and credit for study
Early Graduation	Graduation from high school in less than (4) years based on current district policy #217 – Graduation Requirements
Parallel Scheduling	The students takes two courses that are scheduled at the same time and splits their time between the two and completes the coursework as though they were full time in the course.

Appendix C

Acceleration Plan

Student _____ Grade _____

Type of Acceleration _____ Subject (specify) _____
 _____ Grade (from-to) _____

Placement From _____
Grade/Subject _____ Teacher _____

Transition Period Begins _____ Ends _____
M/D/Y M/D/Y

Strategies for Transition:

Strategies for Progress following Transition:

Case Manager :

Building Principal Date

Parent/Guardian
Date

Appendix D

Carlynton School District

Consent for Acceleration Evaluation

Date:

Student:

Date of Birth:

Parent/Guardian:

As part of the process of determining your child's eligibility for acceleration, a comprehensive educational assessment will be conducted. The assessment will be conducted to gather information concerning your student's intellectual abilities, academic skills and social/emotional development.

The following assessments will be administered as a part of this evaluation:

The results of the evaluation will be discussed with you and the District Acceleration Committee in the process of determining appropriate placement recommendations. A copy of the evaluation results will become a part of your student's school record.

Please indicate your permission for the evaluation by checking the appropriate space and signing below:

☐ I consent to these assessments being administered as part of the Acceleration Process.

☐ I do not consent to these assessments being administered as part of the Acceleration Process and understand that the Acceleration process will not be able to be completed without this information.

Parent/Guardian

Date