

**New City School**

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**Grade Acceleration Policy**

**Part 1: Initial Screening**

1. A staff member, parent or student may initiate grade acceleration. The Acceleration Committee (selected by the Board) will review the procedures with staff and/or parent(s) who are considering acceleration for a student.
2. The parent must submit the Acceleration Request form to the Acceleration Committee. The parent may also submit information using the Parent Inventory for Finding Potential (PIP).
3. The administrator and the Acceleration Committee meet to discuss the request.
4. Acceleration Committee gathers existing student data including 2 documented strategies (each strategy should be implemented for 4 weeks) to meet the student's acceleration needs, previous test scores, interview with student, work samples, teacher rating scales and a summary of classroom achievement.
5. The Acceleration Committee, classroom teacher, and other necessary school personnel (for example, school psychologist and special education director) will review the existing data.
6. Requests which meet the following guidelines will be given further consideration:
  - Strong achievement in the classroom or exhibits potential to do advanced work
  - Grade level achievement scores of 90 percentile or higher on district test or equivalent.
  - Ability scores of 95 percentile or higher on Cognitive Abilities Test or equivalent
  - Social skills checklist
7. Critical considerations include:
  - If a child would be accelerated to the same grade as an older sibling, alternative servicing is recommended. If a child is currently in the same grade as a sibling, alternative forms of acceleration and servicing are recommended. Research indicates this can negatively impact sibling relationships and self-esteem.
  - If the child does not want to be grade-skipped, regardless of the reason, there is a lower chance of success. Grade acceleration is not recommended.
8. The Acceleration Committee communicates with parent about whether to continue the process of whole-grade acceleration.

## Part 2: Data Gathering

1. If the process continues, the Acceleration Committee determines what additional data is needed.
2. The most recent version of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) or the Stanford Binet individual measure of intellectual ability is required.
  - Parents may choose to submit scores from an outside psychologist at their own expense. In these cases the Stanford Binet is recommended, as it has a higher ceiling for exceptionally gifted students.
  - The school district will provide a WISC to qualified candidates (see #6 above) based on assessment of individual ability.
3. Additional assessments may include any combination of the following:
  - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test or equivalent, curricular-based assessments and/or group achievement tests (ex. MAP) are needed to show student performance at least one year above grade level.
  - An interview with school psychologist and Social Skills Rating System to determine social readiness and student motivation.

## Part 3: Criteria for Grade Acceleration

1. The Acceleration Committee reviews data and recommends acceleration based on the following criteria:
  - Intellectual ability score of 130 (Full Scale IQ) on an individual measure of intellectual ability.
  - Students who have an ability score lower than 130 and are within the 95% confidence interval to the target score of 130 may also be considered. In this situation, other criteria listed below should be met at a high standard.
  - Academic need based on 2 documented strategies (each strategy should be implemented for 4 weeks) tried in the regular classroom.
  - High achievement in current grade level in all academic areas, especially in reading, math, and writing.
  - Evidence of social/emotional and academic maturity: student is motivated, persistent, and seeks depth in learning.
  - If the student has special needs, those needs will be taken into consideration to determine the best placement for the student.
  - A desire to accelerate without pressure from parents.
2. A meeting is held with parents and Acceleration Committee to discuss the recommendation.

## Part 4: Recommendation Procedures

If grade acceleration is recommended:

- If parents choose to proceed with acceleration, they should submit their request in writing.

- A plan for class placement and transition considerations will be developed. Follow up meetings will be scheduled as needed.
- If placement in the advanced grade is necessary within the school year, it should occur at a natural transition time.
- Acceleration is on a trial basis (6 weeks recommended).
- Acceleration Committee will document acceleration in student's cumulative file.

If acceleration is not recommended:

- If the Acceleration Committee determines the placement is not appropriate, a meeting with the parents will be arranged to determine the appropriate course of action.
- Recommendations for appropriate education plans in current grade will be developed as necessary.
- Classroom teacher and/or Acceleration Committee will monitor student progress.
- Parents may appeal the Committee's decision by writing a letter of request for further consideration to the principal. The principal will work with the Acceleration Committee to review this request.

**Adopted by the NCS Board of Directors, April 18, 2018**