

### **Acceleration**

The Gifted Services philosophy provides and maintains supports to enhance the cognitive growth and affective development of students with gifted needs. The District will offer appropriate services, educational opportunities, and differentiated curricula for students who demonstrate high performance capability in specific academic fields and/or in intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership areas.

One of the District's priorities is to provide rigor and challenge in order to meet individual student needs. Access to appropriate services will occur equitably throughout the District to actively support children from all backgrounds.

Continuous progress acceleration should be the primary vehicle for meeting gifted needs. When multiple criteria within a body of evidence indicate exceptional need, acceleration may be considered.

The following types of acceleration are available:

- Continuous Progress
- Early Entrance
- Subject Matter Acceleration
- Whole Grade Acceleration

The superintendent (or designee) will develop and publish guidelines for implementing this policy.

Any student or parent who believes that an acceleration option has been inappropriately denied may appeal that decision through the appropriate channel, beginning with the school principal and proceeding to the superintendent or designee. The Board of Education serves as the final arbiter of disagreements regarding students' educational program.

Adopted: July 17, 2006  
Revised: September 14, 2009  
Revised: July 18, 2016  
Revised: June 13, 2022

## DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

### **Implementation Guidelines Board Policy 6204: Acceleration**

Among the service options available for students demonstrating high capability within the Dubuque Community School District, a number involve acceleration in one form or another. These acceleration options include:

- Continuous Progress at Grade Level  
In continuous progress acceleration, students who can demonstrate mastery of grade level curriculum through multiple data sources in a body of evidence and have opportunities to engage in instruction and activities which more appropriately meet their instructional needs. Schools are encouraged to use clustering with students' with gifted needs to facilitate the use of this model. Continuous progress acceleration is the primary vehicle for meeting the needs of gifted students in the district.
- Early Entrance  
Students may enter first grade, middle school, high school, and college earlier than expected. Early entrance is an acceleration option for exceptionally able students. The district will use the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* to help guide the school team and parents in making early entrance decisions in grades 1-8.
- Subject Matter Acceleration  
Subject matter acceleration occurs when a student is placed for a part of the day with students at more advanced grade levels for instruction in one or more subject areas without being assigned to the higher grade level.
- Whole Grade Acceleration  
When other programming opportunities are insufficient to meet the instructional needs of exceptionally able students, whole grade acceleration, or movement ahead of regular grade placement, will be considered. Decisions regarding whole grade acceleration will be made in accordance with district administrative guidelines and must be governed by the best interests of the child.

The following pages describe specific criteria and processes for the above options. These criteria and processes will be reviewed annually by district staff. It is the intent of the district to provide all students with rigorous instruction. The following guidelines outline the data that will be utilized to inform our discussion about the proper placement of a student; however, if a student meets a majority of the measurements, and parent/guardian input is such that they believe that their student possesses the motivation, work ethic and desire to be successful in an accelerated program, the student will be given an opportunity to be placed in that program. Any proposed changes will be presented to the superintendent at trimester and, if approved, take effect at an approved upon time.

## **Continuous Progress in PreK-5 Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies**

### **Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced readiness in academic content areas will receive differentiated instruction.

### **Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator and other appropriate staff, will implement current best practices.

**To determine gifted needs, multiple data points meeting criteria in the components are analyzed as a body of evidence as listed below:**

- Ability Screening Data
- Standardized Testing Data
- Norm-Referenced Scale of Gifted Characteristics
- Classroom Performance and Observation (indicating performance at least two grade levels above current grade placement)
- Records and data gathered through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Continuous Progress in PreK-5 Visual and Performing Arts**

### **Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced ability in visual and performing arts, will receive differentiated content and instruction within their grade level.

### **Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator and other appropriate staff, will select from current best practices.

**To determine gifted needs, multiple data points meeting criteria in the components are analyzed as a body of evidence as listed below:**

- Ability Screening Data
- Norm-Referenced Scale of Gifted Characteristics
- Classroom Performance and Observation (indicating performance at least two grade levels above current grade placement)
- Records and data gathered through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process
- Parent/guardian input and support

**Continuous Progress in 6-8**  
**Language Arts, Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and Social Studies**

**Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced readiness in language arts, science, visual and performing arts, and social studies will receive differentiated instruction within their grade level.

**Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator and, will select current best practices.

**To determine gifted needs, multiple data points meeting criteria in the components  
Are analyzed as a body of evidence as listed below:**

- Standardized Testing Data
- Classroom Performance and Observation
- Records and data gathered through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

**Continuous Progress in 9-12**  
**Language Arts, Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and Social Studies**

**Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced readiness in language arts, science, visual and performing arts, social studies, will receive differentiated instruction.

**Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator and, will select current best practices.

**To determine gifted needs, multiple data points meeting criteria in the components are analyzed as a body of evidence as listed below:**

- Standardized Testing Data
- Classroom Performance and Observation
- Records and data gathered through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process
- Parent/Guardian input and support
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Early Entrance to College**

### **Description**

Students who have completed Dubuque Community School District graduation requirements may be eligible for enrollment in college.

### **Process**

Students meet with the Guidance Counselor to fill out early graduation forms, preferably the semester before the early graduation date.

These forms will also need to be signed by parents/guardians and returned to the Guidance Counselor for the Assistant Principal's approval.

These forms then are filed in the main office.

### **Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- Completed graduation requirements
- Counselor input and support
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Subject Matter Acceleration ~~K-12~~ Math**

### **Description**

Students who demonstrate exceptional advanced readiness in mathematics may be subject-accelerated. Multiple criteria are used to determine when a student's needs cannot be met in the grade level mathematics classroom.

### **Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator, will use multiple criteria to determine needs for possible acceleration. The determination process begins with analyzing achievement data to assess performance of current grade-level content. If there is a consistent pattern of high achievement, ability data is then gathered to assess mathematical reasoning, logic, and critical thinking. Through further aptitude testing, it is determined if the student is an advanced learner whose needs can be met within the grade-level classroom or if the student may benefit from accelerated instruction.

A team will meet to share data and discuss service options. The team may include the following members:

- Parents/Guardians
- Principal
- GT Facilitator
- Present Teacher
- Receiving Teacher
- Counselor(s)
- GT District Consultant
- District Math Supervisor

### **Essential Criteria in Subject Acceleration Determinations:**

- Consistent pattern of at or above the 95th percentile on standardized achievement tests
- 98<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on ability testing
- 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on aptitude testing
- Student and parent/guardian input and support



## **Whole Grade Acceleration and Early Entrance (First Grade, Middle School and High School)**

### **Description**

A small number of students have instructional needs that cannot be met in the grade-level classroom. When this occurs, whole-grade acceleration or early entrance, (movement ahead of normal grade placement) is an option.

### **Process**

A request for whole-grade acceleration may originate with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), counselor(s), gifted & talented (GT) facilitator, gifted & talented district consultant, and/or principal. It is the responsibility of the GT facilitator to coordinate home/school communication and to initiate the following steps.

1. Inform the present school team of the request.
  - Principal
  - Present Teachers
  - Counselor(s)
  - GT District Consultant
2. Meet as a team to share data about the student being considered.
3. Meet with parents/guardians to discuss this possible service option and outline process. Share latest research on acceleration.
4. After parents/guardians have read the information and if they wish to proceed, schedule the administration of the individual ability test, achievement, and aptitude testing.
5. Once all testing is completed, gather the following expanded team to complete and interpret the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS):
  - Parents/Guardians
  - Principal
  - GT Facilitator
  - Present Teachers
  - Receiving Teachers
  - Counselor(s)
  - GT District Consultant
6. If whole-grade acceleration is determined to best meet the need of the student, the team should plan the following:
  - Implementation of the plan
  - Transitioning
  - Monitoring and counseling support
7. If whole-grade acceleration is not determined to best meet the need of the student or chosen by the student/parents/guardians, alternative accommodations should be planned. Options will be selected from current best practices.

### **Essential Criteria in Whole Grade Acceleration Determinations:**

- 46-80 total points on the Iowa Acceleration Scale
- Parent/Guardian and student support