

Acceleration and Early High School Graduation

Parent Handbook

Perry Local Schools

4325 Manchester Avenue, Perry, Ohio 44081

Telephone: 440-259-3881

Fax: 440-259-3607

Philosophy

In accordance with the belief that all children are entitled to an education commensurate with their particular needs, students who can exceed the grade-level indicators and benchmarks set forth in the standards must be afforded the opportunity and be encouraged to do so.

The Board of Education believes that such students often require access to advanced curriculum in order to realize their potential contribution to themselves and society. All children learn and experience success given time and opportunity, but the degree to which academic content standards are met and the time it takes to reach the standards vary from student to student. The Board believes that all students, including advanced learners, should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential. For many advanced learners, this can best be achieved by affording them access to curriculum, learning environments and instructional interventions more commonly provided to older peers.

This parent handbook describes the process that is used for evaluating students for possible accelerated placement and identifying students who should be granted early admission to kindergarten, accelerated in one or more individual subject areas, promoted to a higher grade level than their same-age peers and granted early graduation from high school.

Referrals and Evaluations

Any student residing in the District may be referred by a teacher, administrator, gifted education specialist, guidance counselor, school psychologist or a parent or legal guardian of the student to the principal of his/her school for evaluation for possible accelerated placement. A student may refer himself/herself or a peer through a district staff member who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities.

Referral forms for evaluation for possible early entrance, whole-grade acceleration, individual subject acceleration and early high school graduation are made available to District staff and parents at each school building. Our policy and referral forms are also available on our district website. (www.perry-lake.k12.oh.us)

The principal of each school building or his/her designee solicits referrals of students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement annually, and ensures that all staff he/she supervises are aware of procedures for referring students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement.

The principal or his/her designee of the referred student's school obtains written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement. The District evaluates all students who are referred for evaluation and whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have granted permission to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement.

For additional information contact: Director of Student Services
4325 Manchester Avenue
Perry, OH 44081

Phone: (440) 259-9393 Fax: (440) 259-3607

Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement 60 or more days prior to the start of the school year are evaluated in advance of the start of the school year so that the child may be placed in the accelerated placement on the first day of school. Children who are referred for possible accelerated placement 60 or more days prior to the start of the second semester are evaluated for possible accelerated placement at the start of the second semester. In all other cases, evaluations of a referred child are scheduled at the student's principal's discretion and placed in the accelerated setting(s) at the time recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee – if the committee determines the child should be accelerated.

A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student is notified, in writing, of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the student's principal. This notification includes instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the Superintendent within 30 days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent/ or designee (Director of Pupil Services) reviews the appeal and notifies the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his/her final decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision is final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he/she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as describe in the board policy for acceleration.

Acceleration Evaluation Committee

The referred student's principal or his/her designee convenes an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student.

This committee is comprised of the following:

- a principal or assistant principal from the child's current building;
- a current teacher of the referred student (with the exception of students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten);
- a teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated (with the exception of students referred for possible early graduation from high school);
- a parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student and
- the Director of Student Services, If the Director of Student Services is not available, the school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration may be substituted.

The acceleration evaluation committee conducts a fair and thorough evaluation of the student. Students considered for whole-grade are evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

Students considered for individual subject acceleration are evaluated using a variety of data sources, including measures of achievement based on state academic content standards (in subjects for which the state had approved content standards) and consideration of the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement. The acceleration evaluation committee will utilize the IOWA scales for Acceleration as tool to assist in analysis of the student data and qualifications for acceleration. The committee considers the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

Students referred for possible early high school graduation are evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on state academic content standards and successful completion of state-mandated graduation requirements. The committee considers the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

The acceleration evaluation committee issues a written decision to the principal and the student's parent or legal guardian, based on the outcome of the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the committee, a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student is determined by a majority vote of the committee membership.

The Written Acceleration Plan

The acceleration evaluation committee develops a written acceleration plan (WAP) for students who are whole-grade accelerated or accelerated in one or more individual subject areas. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student are provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan.

The written acceleration plan specifies:

- placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
- strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
- requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable) and
- an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for grade-level accelerated students and students accelerated in individual content areas.

For students the acceleration evaluation committee recommends for early high school graduation, the committee develops a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete graduation requirements on an accelerated basis. This may include the provision of educational options in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-06(G), waiving District prerequisite requirements that exceed those required by the state and early promotion to sophomore (or higher) status to allow the student to take the state mandated test requirements.

The acceleration evaluation committee designates a school staff member to ensure successful implementation of the written acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the acceleration setting.

Accelerated Placement

The acceleration evaluation committee specifies an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for grade-level accelerated students and students accelerated in individual subject areas.

At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request, in writing, that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal removes the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.

At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request, in writing, an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal directs the acceleration committee to consider other accelerative options and issue a decision within 30 days of receiving the request from the parent or legal guardian. If the student is placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan is revised accordingly, and a new transition period is specified.

At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement becomes permanent. The student's records are modified accordingly and the acceleration implementation plan becomes part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

- Parents can easily access the *Early Learning Content Standards* as well as the subject specific *Academic Content Standards* for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies on the *Ohio Department of Education* website.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?page=2&TopicRelationID=463>

Readiness for Acceleration

What are some factors to think about when considering acceleration?

The decision to accelerate should take into account the student's academic, physical and social maturity. In general, the following guidelines should apply:

1. The student should be performing several grades above age level. When grade skipping is being considered, performance should be advanced in several subject areas.
2. The student should be socially and emotionally mature, able to adjust to new settings, and more mature peers.
3. In considering grade skipping, the student's size should be considered only to the extent that competitive sports may be viewed as important.
4. The student should be eager to move forward in school. He or she may be bored and unchallenged with the current curriculum and school setting.

[National Association for Gifted Children](#)

Acceleration Policy/Planning Committee:

Dr. Jack Thompson, Superintendent
Dr. Betty Jo Malchesky, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mrs. Amy Harker, Student Services Director
Mrs. Jodi Poremba, Perry Primary School Principal
Mrs. Shelley Pulling, Perry Intermediate School Principal
Dr. Scott Hunt, Perry Middle School Principal
Mr. Robert Knisely, Perry High School Principal
Mrs. Maureen Kovach, EMIS coordinator
Mrs. Diane Pietrzak, School Psychologist