

## Evaluation for Whole Grade Acceleration

The role of the acceleration evaluation committee is critical in determining the need for, and most appropriate and available learning environment for acceleration candidates. Typically chaired by the building principal or gifted coordinator, the committee members often include the gifted coordinator/specialist, school counselor and/or school psychologist, an administrator, a current teacher, a teacher at the proposed level, and a parent/guardian. Initial meetings might include only school personnel, and a parent/guardian should be included in subsequent meetings. The recommendation to offer, deny or postpone acceleration is made following a comprehensive assessment that includes careful consideration of the student’s academic, social and emotional needs.

### Sample Acceleration Review Process for Whole-Grade Acceleration

<b>Steps for Acceleration Review</b>	<b>Action Steps for Acceleration Review</b>
Referral	Parent/guardian or school staff complete a referral for evaluation that includes a description of how the student’s advanced ability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. Some parents (such as those who speak English as a second language) may need a staff member’s assistance with completing the request.
Consent	Written consent for student evaluation is obtained from the parent/guardian.
Acceleration Committee: Initial Discussion	The principal or designee convenes an acceleration evaluation committee with at least the following: gifted coordinator/ specialist, school counselor and/or school psychologist, current principal, a current teacher, and a teacher at the proposed level. The committee will review the request to determine whether acceleration may improve student placement. If the committee finds the request is defensible, the committee will recommend a comprehensive evaluation. If further evaluation is not indicated, the committee may choose to recommend consideration for other forms of acceleration.
Notification	Upon notification of the committee’s decision to pursue or deny the need for further evaluation, the parent/guardian may accept or appeal the committee’s decision.
Consent	Written permission from a parent/guardian to evaluate the student for acceleration within 30 days is obtained.

<b>Steps for Acceleration Review</b>	<b>Action Steps for Acceleration Review</b>
Evaluation	A comprehensive evaluation conducted using the <i>Iowa Acceleration Scale</i> , is used to gather data in five categories: (1) academic ability, aptitude, and achievement; (2) school and academic factors; (3) developmental factors; (4) interpersonal skills; and (5) attitude and support.
Pre-Meeting Activities	Acceleration committee members meet in small groups, as needed, to learn about acceleration, to discuss potential placements, and to answer questions.
Acceleration Committee: Decision-Making Meeting	The committee, including the parents, meets to review the results of the evaluation and may choose to recommend, deny, or postpone whole grade acceleration. They may decide that content acceleration is most appropriate, or they may recommend other forms of acceleration for consideration.
Notification	The committee will create a written report for the student’s file.
The Decision: Whole Grade Acceleration Not Recommended	<p>If whole grade acceleration is not recommended, the notification will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate student placement and accelerative opportunities</li> <li>• identification of the school counselor and other staff able to support instructional, social and emotional needs; and</li> <li>• information on student enrichment opportunities and parent/guardian resources;</li> <li>• an appeals process</li> </ul>
The Decision: Whole Grade Acceleration Recommended	<p>The whole grade acceleration recommendation will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• student placement;</li> <li>• an appropriate transition period*;</li> <li>• the designation of the school counselor and other staff responsible for overseeing the transition;</li> <li>• ongoing counseling opportunities;</li> <li>• a plan for communication with parents/guardians, and school staff;</li> <li>• strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting to include addressing any gaps in knowledge or skill;</li> <li>• information on student enrichment opportunities and parent/guardian resources;</li> <li>• the student is coded as “accelerated” for reporting purposes and will take required state assessments for the course/grade level at which instruction is delivered</li> </ul>

**Sample policy recommendation:**

A student may only be removed from the acceleration setting after the stated transition time following a student conference with a counselor, a written request from a parent/guardian and the signature of the classroom teacher.