

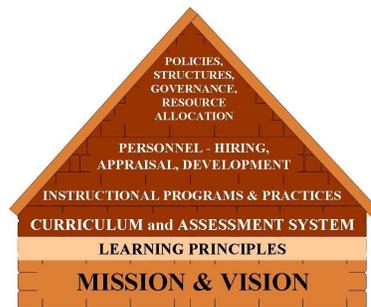


# Acceleration Guidelines And Procedures

## **MISSION**

### ***Our Purpose***

***The mission of the Parkway School District is to ensure ALL students are capable, curious, confident and caring learners who understand and respond to the challenges of an ever-changing world.***



## Acceleration in the Parkway School District

### Beliefs and Guidelines

The Parkway School District serves a broad continuum of learners, and believes in providing high level core curriculum and classroom instruction through challenging, creative and enriched learning experiences for all students. By defined intent, its mission is: “to ensure all students are capable, confident and curious learners who understand and respond to the challenges of an ever-changing world.” Research and accompanying national guidelines provides Parkway an additional framework to confidently move forward through a carefully stated and planned process to make appropriate acceleration decisions for our students in a consistent and uniform fashion; thus ensuring the mission is fulfilled for those students whose needs may be different than the general population. Therefore, upon occasion, in order to customize the educational experience for some students, it becomes necessary to accelerate the process. The ensuing policy was developed to provide a consistent set of procedures to follow for making decisions relative to **acceleration**.

Many high-ability students possess “unique academic, cognitive and social needs.” (Guidelines). The clear reality is that this group is one of the most **underserved** groups in the nation. Acceleration is an “empirically validated educational intervention for high ability students (Colangelo, Assouline, and Gross, 2004). The research “consistently demonstrates the academic benefits to some students and allows the conclusion that most students are not negatively affected in the social-emotional domains (Guidelines). “Accelerated students feel academically challenged and socially accepted, and they do not fall prey to the boredom that plagues many highly capable students who are forced to follow the curriculum for their age-peers.” (A Nation Deceived).

The National Association for Gifted Children established criteria of “Exemplary Standards” for gifted education programming to provide appropriate learning experiences for gifted children. The standards that particularly address acceleration are as follows:

***2.2E Documentation of instruction for assessing levels of learning and accelerated rates of learning should demonstrate plans for gifted learners based on specific needs of individual learners.***

***3.0E When warranted, continual opportunities for curricular acceleration should be provided in gifted learners’ areas of strength and interest while allowing a sufficient ceiling for optimal learning.***

***4.0E Possibilities for partial or full acceleration of content and grade levels should be***

**available to any student presenting such needs.**

Therefore, the following components will be addressed in the acceleration guidelines:

1. Access: All students K-12 should have access to a referral for consideration of acceleration (see referral process). The guidelines shall be applied equitably and systematically to students referred for acceleration. A district acceleration committee with members across the district will be formed and will oversee all referrals for consideration.
2. Guidelines for implementation: Categories, types and forms of acceleration are grade-based and content-based, with specific forms outlined (e.g. telescoping, curriculum compacting, and types (when appropriate) are part of the acceleration guidelines. See Acceleration information below.
3. Administrative Oversight: A district team will oversee all aspects of acceleration occurring in the Parkway School District (opportunities, tracking of participants, their forms and types of acceleration, and recognition for participation in accelerated opportunities).
4. An appeals process will be in place during all steps of the acceleration process.
5. The guidelines will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis to determine its effectiveness. The guidelines will be reviewed by the district Acceleration Committee.

### **Definition of Acceleration Terminology**

**Acceleration** – (by definition) *Progress through an education program at rates faster or at ages younger than conventional.*

**Academic Mentoring** – *A student is paired with an academic mentor who provides advanced or more rapid paced instruction.*

**Compacting curriculum** – *After showing a level of proficiency in the basic curriculum (on a pre-assessment, end of course assessment or common assessment), a student can then be allowed to exchange instructional time for other learning experiences.*

**Concurrent/Dual enrollment** – *Most often refers to high school students taking college courses, often for college credit. Dual enrollment is viewed as providing high school students benefits such as greater access to a wider range of rigorous academic and technical courses.*

**Content-based / Subject matter acceleration** – *This type of acceleration allows students to be placed in class with older peers for a part of the day in one or more content areas. The student may be either physically moving to a high-level class for instruction (i.e. a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader moving to a 5<sup>th</sup> grade communication arts class), or using higher-level curricular or study materials in their regular classroom.*

**Continuous progress** – *This type of acceleration allows students to be given content progressively as prior content is completed and mastered. The practice is accelerative when student's progress exceeds the performance of chronological peers in rate and level. Provisions*

*for sequenced materials may or may not be with the discretion of the teacher or within the control of the student.*

**Correspondence courses** – *Distance education, or distance learning, is a field of education that focuses on the pedagogy, technology, and instructional system designs that aim to deliver education to students who are not physically "on site".*

**Early entrance into college** – *Some colleges will allow younger students to take a course or two if the student meets the criteria. Others will allow the high school age student to become matriculated, often based on their SAT or ACT scores and previous academic achievement.*

**Grade-based acceleration** – *This type of acceleration typically shortens the number of years a student spends in the K-12 system by such mechanisms as early admission to school, whole grade acceleration, early graduation, and others.*

**On-line courses** – *A course taken over the Internet that may be provided by a college or other educational provider.*

**Self-paced instruction** – *Students proceed through learning and instructional activities at a self-selected pace. Self-paced instruction is a sub-type of continuous progress acceleration. Self-paced instruction is distinguishable from the more general continuous progress in that the student has control over all pacing decisions.*

**Subject Matter Acceleration** – *Students are placed in classes with older peers for a part of the day (or with materials from higher grade placement) in one or more content areas.*

**Telescoping curriculum** – *Telescoping is when a student or group of students is allowed to complete several years of the school's curriculum in less time. For example, Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 are completed in a total of three, rather than four years. In a 'telescoped' curriculum, material is not necessarily 'skipped' but students move more speedily through all material. In this way the needs of one or a number of gifted and high potential students may be met by eliminating repetition and considerably increasing the pace of instruction.*

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION FOR ACCELERATION**

**Step 1:** Parents, teachers, administrators or students may initiate the process of consideration for acceleration by completing the [Student Acceleration Referral Form](http://www.tinyurl.com/2018acceleration) online ([www.tinyurl.com/2018acceleration](http://www.tinyurl.com/2018acceleration)) This form will allow the initiator an opportunity to describe the type of acceleration being requested and the interventions that have already occurred for the student. The guidelines and forms are available on the district website or from the counselors and gifted specialists.

**Step 2:** The school counselor, in concert with the gifted specialist, will assemble data from teachers, parents, the student, and school records.

The school counselor, in concert with the gifted specialist, will schedule a meeting with the Acceleration team for the purpose of evaluating the suitability of acceleration for a particular student. Potential team members should include: parents, a school principal, current teachers, gifted specialist, appropriate Curriculum Coordinators, and Gifted Coordinator.

Clearly, discussions with the student are essential in determining if this represents the appropriate strategy for him/her.

**Step 3:** A recommendation will be made for appropriate placement.

If whole grade or content area acceleration is not deemed appropriate, the team will discuss and plan the most effective alternative.

If whole grade acceleration is recommended, the team will notify the Assistant Superintendent. The recommendation is sent to the Superintendent for final approval.

Finally, the team will determine a follow-up plan to assure the success of the student through monitoring. Parents will be informed of this plan and progress.

Acceleration and credit considerations: In general, high school credit is granted to students only when they complete a course taught by a high school-certified teacher at a Parkway high school. However, the acceleration committee, in concert with the appropriate middle school and high school principals, may accommodate individual requests from students requesting high school credit after completing an accelerated course at the middle school (if the course is taught by a high school -certified teacher).

## **BOARD POLICY AND GUIDELINES Related to Acceleration**

### **Board Policy and Guidelines, Groupings for Instruction**

**Number: IIA.BP**

**Status: Active**

**Legal, Adopted March 12, 2008**

Believing that students wish to experience academic, social, and personal success, the Board of Education of the Parkway School District recognizes the importance of meeting the learning needs of every student as effectively as possible.

The board believes that certain learning needs are met in whole class, heterogeneous groups that provide for exchange among students of diverse views and abilities. The board also recognizes there are various methods and structures for meeting the needs of students.

Further, the board believes that the learning needs of secondary students should be met in a variety of ways: through differentiated course levels and instruction, through advanced courses based on interest and talent, through special assignments and seminars, through independent study, through tutorials and conferencing. Students should be recommended for course placement on the basis of a collection of data such as test scores, school records, demonstrated competencies, recommendations by teachers, counselors, and principals, and advocacy by parents.

In all cases, grouping will remain flexible and will be reviewed periodically so that every student experiences the most appropriate learning environment.

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SUPERSEDES: 11/15/00, 6/20/91 and IHA

### **Board Policy and Guidelines, Grouping for Instruction - Guidelines**

**Number: IIA.G**

**Status Active**

**Legal, Last Reviewed March 12, 2008**

1. If a student desires placement or differentiated assignment other than that recommended by the staff, the parent and student should request the change and confer with the counselor and teachers involved to complete a process of review.
2. The review process should include clarification of the prerequisites, expectations, and responsibilities for success in the class being considered, as well as a review of data used for placement recommendation.
3. If the student, parent, teacher and counselor believe that the student has the skills and motivation necessary for success, the student should be given an opportunity for the requested placement.
4. If the placement issue is not resolved by consensus, the student may:
  - a. remain in the original placement and direct an appeal to the principal or the principal's designee, or
  - b. be assigned to the desired placement after the parent and student have signed a statement that they have understood the expectations and accepted the responsibilities for success in the desired class.

At the center of any decision should be student's motivation and desire for academic, social, and personal success.

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REVIEWED: March 12, 2008

**Board Policy and Guidelines, Promotion and Retention**

**Number: IKE.BP**

**Status: Active**

**Legal, 167.645 RSMo, Adopted October 24, 2007**

The Board of Education believes it is important to encourage, support and assist each student to develop academically in a growth pattern harmonious with his/her physical, emotional, and social development.

There may be exceptions to the allotted time for students to progress through the six-year elementary school (K-5) curriculum. In arriving at a decision of acceleration or retention of a student, the combined views of the student, parents, teachers, principal, nurse and counselor are taken into consideration. All student assessment data, including measures of reading achievement, will be important factors in a decision.

In accordance with Senate Bill 319, the Parkway School District is required to retain students in grade four who are reading more than one grade level below current grade placement. At the secondary level acceleration or retention in a grade level is based upon the units of credits accumulated.

In each instance, K-12, the best interest of the student predominates.

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SUPESEDES: IKE, 01/09/02, 8/16/00 and 9/21/89

CROSS REFERENCE: IKAA, Student Assessment

