

Adopted: November 13, 2011

513.1 ACCELERATION POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for accelerating students using whole grade acceleration to meet the needs of students. The philosophy of SRMCS is to provide individualized instruction that best meets the needs of all students prior to considering, developing and implementing an individual acceleration plan. SRMCS must also keep in mind that SRMCS students will be transferring to schools that do not offer individualized instruction.

2. General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of SRMCS to have several alternatives to meet the individual needs of students which may include:

- a. Continuous Progress- The student is given content progressively as prior content is completed and mastered. The practice is accelerative when the student's progress exceeds the performance of chronological peers in rate and level;
- b. Self Paced Instruction – The student proceeds through learning and instructional activities at a self-selected pace. Self-paced instruction is a sub-type of continuous progress acceleration;
- c. Mixed-Aged Classrooms – While not, in and of itself, a practice designed for acceleration, this placement does allow younger students to interact academically and socially with older students; and,
- d. Subject Matter Acceleration-This practice allows students to be placed in lessons with older students and use of higher level instructional activities on a continuous progress basis.

These alternative strategies are available to all students. If these interventions still don't meet the needs of the student, then acceleration should be considered.

3. Process

- a. The process for considering a student for acceleration may be initiated by a teacher, the parent, legal guardian or the director.

- b. The director should interview the student's teacher(s) and parent(s) or guardian(s) to determine if the process should continue.
- c. The director (or his or her designee) shall obtain written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement.
- d. Evaluations of a referred child shall be scheduled at the school's director's discretion and placement in the accelerated setting will be at the time recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee-if the committee determines the child should be accelerated. All children who will not be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten shall be evaluated for possible acceleration if referred by an educator within the school, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

4. Acceleration Evaluation Committee

a. Composition

- i. The school's director (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate learning environment for the referred student. This committee shall be comprised of the following:
 - 1. The school's director;
 - 2. The current lead teacher of the student;
 - 3. A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated(with the exception of students referred to possible early admission to sixth grade or above);
 - 4. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by the parent or legal guardian of the referred student; and,
 - 5. The school psychologist.
- ii. The acceleration evaluation committee shall conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the student. The evaluation will follow the format recommended by the Iowa Acceleration Scale.
 - 1. General information;
 - 2. Critical items as follow:
 - a. The student's (measured by IQ) is in the 98th percentile or achievement is at least two grade levels above current grade level and (measured IQ) is in the 95th percentile or above.
 - b. The student would not be accelerated into the same grade (or higher grade) as a sibling.

- c. The student does not presently have a sibling in the same grade.
 - d. The student does not object to whole grade acceleration.
 - 3. School History;
 - 4. Evaluation of student ability, aptitude, and achievement;
 - 5. School and Academic Factors;
 - 6. Developmental Factors;
 - 7. Interpersonal Skills;
 - 8. Attitude and Support.
 - iii. The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision to the director and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the committee, a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student will be determined by a majority vote of the committee membership.
 - iv. The acceleration evaluation committee shall develop a written acceleration plan for the student who will be admitted to kindergarten early or have whole grade acceleration. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student shall be provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan. The written acceleration plan shall specify:
 - 1. Placement of the student in an accelerated setting; and
 - 2. An appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten or grade-level acceleration.
- 5. Accelerated Placement
 - a. The acceleration evaluation committee shall specify an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement or for early entrants to kindergarten.
 - i. 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 the accelerated placement in such cases, the director shall remove the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.
 - b. At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.