

Standards for Grade and Subject Acceleration



Grades Kindergarten through Eight

Johnston County Public Schools offers grade and subject acceleration to meet the needs of K-8 students who demonstrate extraordinary levels of academic ability and maturity.

Review and Approval Process

Teachers or parents/guardians interested in recommending grade or subject acceleration for a student should contact the school administrator prior to gathering any documentation. School personnel will counsel the parent/guardian regarding the review and approval process and potential future impact on a child of a grade or subject acceleration determination.

Following counseling, teacher(s) or other school staff should gather available information pertinent to a student's potential grade promotion or subject acceleration, including but not limited to the following:

- BOG/EOG/EOC data
- Available standardized assessment data, including district benchmark data
- Accepted assessment tool data
- Observable student behavior
- Portfolio of student work (reading, math and writing)
- Qualitative data (interviews, questionnaires, inventories, etc.)

Parents/Guardians of students who have never enrolled in JCPS will have to provide, in addition to the information noted above, a portfolio of specific information to help with the decision-making process. This portfolio must include work samples (reading, math, and writing) that indicate a child's need for acceleration and at least two letters of recommendation from non-relative adults who have knowledge of the child's academic performance, social and emotional maturity, and motivation and interest in pursuing grade or subject acceleration, in addition to the information listed below.

The Principal establishes a Problem Solving Team for the purpose of reviewing the available above-listed information which should include the following:

- School administrator
- Guidance Counselor
- Teacher from the target grade/subject area for which acceleration is under review
- Other principal designee trained in gifted education

The Problem Solving Team will utilize the Iowa Acceleration Scales (IAS) instrument to assist in reviewing the information noted above and determining whether the principal should accelerate a student by grade or subject. This tool provides a uniform procedure for reviewing potential need for formal acceleration and ensures holistic evaluations of a student, from multiple perspectives. The IAS includes the following sections:

- I. General Information
- II. School History
- III. Critical Items
- IV. Assessment of Ability
- V. Assessment of Aptitude
- VI. Assessment of Achievement

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- VII. School and Academic Factors (Motivation)
- VIII. Developmental Factors (Physical)
- IX. Interpersonal Skills (Social)
- X. Attitude and Support (Interest)

The Problem Solving Team will review the information as described above and make a recommendation to the principal. The principal will communicate the final decision regarding grade or subject acceleration to the parent/guardian within five school days of receiving the Problem Solving Team's recommendation.

Consistent with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-288(a), the principal shall have final authority to determine a student's grade placement.

Grade Acceleration for Grades Kindergarten through Eight Problem Solving Team Considerations

Characteristics/Behaviors which may indicate a student's need for grade acceleration include the following:

- Demonstrate academic and social function at least two years beyond their peers
- Work well independently and within groups in a demanding school environment
- Follow verbal and written instructions accurately
- Possess an eagerness to learn and excitement about new school experiences
- Display a thirst for knowledge, consequently requiring new and challenging learning situations on a consistent basis

Differentiated Portfolio - Classroom Performance Indicators (May include, but not limited to)

- Accepted assessment tool - Scores above highest level for assigned grade
- Lexile Score - Two or more grade levels above present grade
- Scores of 90 or higher on common assessments
- Writing samples - Exemplary status for the grade to be skipped
- Work samples - Two or more grade levels above the current grade with high level of accuracy in all core subject areas; assignments at the highest tiers of differentiation
- Student scores consistently in the top percent in all core subject areas: reading, writing, language, mathematics, social studies, and science

Single Subject Acceleration for Grades Kindergarten through Eight

The Problem Solving Team will consider the same indicators within the Iowa Acceleration Scale used for grade acceleration. However, in assessing whether formal subject acceleration is appropriate for a student, the team shall afford significant weight to data relative to the subject through which the student might accelerate with greater significance.