



KIRBY SCHOOL DISTRICT 140

Accelerated Academic Programming Handbook

This handbook is provided for parents and guardians and members of our community as a resource guide for academic acceleration programs in Kirby School District 140

Updated: January, 2020

Illinois Definition of Program Requirements

Illinois Accelerated Placement Act, Public Act 100-0421

Section 14A-17 defines “accelerated placement” as:

1. Placement of a child in an educational setting with curriculum that is usually reserved for children who are older or in higher grades than the child; and,
2. Includes, but is not limited to, the following types of acceleration: early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, acceleration of a child in a single subject, and grade acceleration.

Section 14A-32 requires that each school district develop a policy for accelerated placement that includes or incorporates by reference the following items:

1. A provision indicating that participation in accelerated placement is not limited to those children who have been identified as gifted and talented, but rather is open to all children who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement;
2. A fair and equitable decision-making process that involves multiple persons and includes a student’s parents or guardians;
3. Procedures for notifying parents or guardians of a decision affecting that child’s participation in an accelerated placement program; and,
4. An assessment process that includes multiple valid , reliable indicators.

Section 14A-32 also provides that the adopted policy may include or incorporate, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. Procedure for annually informing the community at large, including parents or guardians, about the accelerated program and the methods used for identification of children eligible for accelerated placement;
2. A process for referral that allows for multiple referrers, including the child’s parents or guardians; licensed education professionals of the child with the written consent of a parent or guardian; a peer, through a licensed education professional who has knowledge of the referred child’s abilities; or, in the case of possible early entrance to school, a preschool educator, pediatrician, or psychologist who knows the child; and,
3. A provision that provides that children participating in an accelerated placement program and their parents or guardians will be provided a written plan detailing the type of acceleration the child will receive and strategies to support the child.

Identification Process

Step 1: Screening

All students in grades K-8 undergo the initial screening process via the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment every school year. Students are tested in two areas: Reading and Math during the fall, winter, and spring. Students who score at the 99th percentile on one or more of the assessments are considered for the second identification step. Kirby School District 140 also recognizes the referrals of parents/guardians, teachers, and outside professionals for consideration of further screening.

Step 2: Collect body of evidence

Parents or guardians will be sent a letter to request permission for further collection of data and review. Information is collected on students from a variety of sources, which may include:

- Teacher Recommendation Form
- CogAT Assessment – *Measure of Reasonable and Problem Solving Skills* (online)
- State standardized test scores – *Achievement*
- Historical locally normed achievement scores – *Achievement*

Step 3: The school's academic acceleration team reviews the body of evidence.

Step 4: Parent/Guardian meeting to share results

If the body of evidence suggests academic acceleration is the best programming option for the student's learning, a parent/guardian meeting is held to share results and to create an academic acceleration plan.

If the body of evidence does not suggest academic acceleration, a parent/guardian meeting is held to discuss findings.

Step 5: Develop the academic acceleration plan

The school team will create an academic acceleration plan that identifies programming goal(s). The plan will include strategies and success indicators related to each goal. A progress meeting will be scheduled with parent/guardian and the team.

Criteria for Identification

Data Summary

In order to be formally identified, a student must have a majority of qualifying evidence generally the 99th percentile or above – from the following categories:

- Cognitive ability (aptitude)
- Achievement

Re-Testing for Identification

To maintain assessment validity, students may have to wait two years for specific re-testing via the CogAT.

For the same purpose of maintaining assessment validity, parent/guardians and students may not view the testing materials described above. Results of these tests will be shared with parent/guardians and student upon request.

Elementary to Middle School Programming

Students who are identified for academic acceleration program in elementary school may be re-evaluated at the end of grade 5 for possible middle school programming.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade

The Illinois legislature passed the Illinois Accelerated Placement Act, Public Act 100-0421, effective July 1, 2018. This act allows Illinois public school districts to provide early access to educational services for kindergarten and first grade students to meet the needs of the highly advanced gifted child.

Children are normally admitted to kindergarten if their 5th birthday is on or before September 1st of that school year, and to first grade if their 6th birthday is on or before September 1st of that school year.

Kirby School District 140 recognizes some children may benefit academically, socially and/or emotionally from accelerating and/or grade skipping. Highly advanced gifted students may be granted early entrance to kindergarten or first grade and accelerated in District academic programs.

The Process

Step 1:

- Kirby School District 140 residency must be established by the parent/guardian. Parent/guardian must also provide the child's birth certificate.

Step 2:

- Parent/guardian fills out the acceleration/grade skipping application.
- Appointment is scheduled for screening (30-90 minutes).
- The child scores at least 90% on assessments of early literacy and/or early numeracy measures.
- The child is assessed using Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3) with scores of 40-60 in the following areas: Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving, Personal-Social.

Step 3:

- An appointment is scheduled for alternate assessments that may include:
 - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)
 - Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI)
 - NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)

Step 4:

- Placement is determined from data results with a majority of results falling at the 99th percentile.
- Parent/guardian meeting is scheduled to discuss results and possible placement options.

Step 5:

- School team will schedule an academic acceleration plan meeting with the parent/guardian.

Transfer and Exit Procedures

Transfer

Transfer students who have been identified and served previously in a gifted or accelerated program will automatically be referred for eligibility screening in the Kirby School District 140 program. Scores provided from required assessments from the student's previous school will be used for possible placement. In the case where scores are not available, assessments will be administered by the KSD 140 team.

Exit Procedure

Students placed in the gifted or accelerated program may be exited when it is determined that it would be in the best interest of the student to discontinue acceleration. A parent/guardian meeting will be held to discuss findings.

In order for a student to be exited, one of the following conditions must be met:

- A parent/guardian requests that the student be removed from the program.
- The teacher, principal or school team recommends the student exit the program following a parent/guardian meeting.
- Grade 5 assessment data indicates the student should not continue in the program for middle school placement.

Kirby School District 140 Acceleration Programs

Elementary

Early Entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade: Students who qualify gain early entrance to the grade level (kindergarten or first grade) before the required birthday cutoff date. Consultation with the gifted facilitator and classroom teacher will occur to provide challenging learning.

Elementary Accelerated Mathematics: Students in grades K-5 are serviced on an identified need, which may include: daily attendance in and out-of-level (grade) class, differentiated support within their classroom setting, or attendance in an accelerated math class.

Elementary English Language Arts: Students who qualify in grades K-5 attend a daily learning workshop model within their classroom setting. Reading and writing materials are provided at the child's interest and instructional level. The use of books clubs, author studies, and writing workshops will be provided in consultation with the reading specialist and gifted facilitator. In some cases, a student may attend an out-of-level workshop provided within another grade level.

Middle School

Middle School Accelerated Mathematics: Services for students who qualify in grades 6-8 may include: daily attendance in a middle school out-of-level (grade) class, grade level differentiation or accelerated high school math.

Middle School English Language Arts: Students who qualify in grades 6-8 attend a daily learning workshop model within their classroom setting. Reading and writing materials are provided at the student's interest and instructional level. Compacting the curriculum and acceleration are primary strategies for support. Book clubs, author studies, writing workshops will be provided. In some cases, a student may attend an out-of-level workshop provided within another grade level.