

## Students

Series 500

Policy Title: Acceleration-Regulation

Code No. 505.2-R

### **Initiation**

Referral for acceleration is accessible to all students in the MCSD and the process is separate from the district's Elementary Enrichment and Extended Learning Programs. The referral process is initiated through the building administrator or designee by means of a **District Acceleration Request Form** (Exhibit A). The referral process may be initiated by an administrator, classroom teacher, Extended Learning Program teacher, counselor, parent, guardian, legal custodian, school support staff, or student.

### **Data Collection**

Upon receiving a completed written request for acceleration, the building administrator will assign a case manager who will facilitate the data collection. Case managers may include, but are not limited to, a classroom teacher, XLP teacher, school support staff, or counselor. The case manager will gather data using a comprehensive evaluation tool such as the Iowa Acceleration Scale and may include the following: record review, student portfolio/work review, screening of critical factors affecting acceleration, assessments of ability, assessments of aptitude, student interviews, parent/guardian interviews, and/or teacher ratings or checklists.

### **Initial Acceleration Committee Meeting**

The acceleration team will include representatives of the school and family and may include, but are not limited to, parents/guardians, student, building administrator, classroom teacher, XLP teacher, counselor, English Language Learner teacher, and/or school support staff. The findings of the comprehensive data collection will be shared and discussed. If deemed appropriate, acceleration options including both whole-grade and content-based options will be discussed and evaluated by the committee. Consideration will be given to the long-range ramifications of the proposed acceleration to the student's K-12 programming and an outlined plan developed for each proposal. Members of the committee will be assigned tasks for any needed follow-up and fact gathering and a Determination of Services Meeting will be scheduled.

### **Determination of Services Meeting**

The acceleration team will reconvene with any potential receiving building administrators or designees along with any potential receiving teachers in attendance. Follow-up information will be shared and any questions will be discussed. The team, which may include the student, will determine which type of acceleration, if any, is appropriate to meet the needs of the student. A **Personalized Education Plan for Accelerated Services** (Exhibit B) will be developed and a timeline for delivery of services will be outlined. A copy of the **Acceleration Report: Whole Grade** (Exhibit C) or **Acceleration Report: Single Subject** (Exhibit D), along with the **District Acceleration Request Form**, will be placed in the student's cumulative folder. If the acceleration committee does not recommend acceleration at this time, the requesting party can initiate the referral process after the student completes at least one additional semester/term.

## **Appeal Process**

If the parents/guardians or any member of the acceleration team, disagree with the acceleration team recommendation, they may appeal the decision to the Director of Instruction.

## **Marshalltown High School Acceleration**

### **Placement by Exam/Demonstration of Mastery for High School Course Credit**

Student qualifications for request of acceleration by exam or mastery:

- The student should rank in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or better in the appropriate content area on a standardized test (i.e. Iowa Assessments, etc.). Reading scores will be considered in the case of Social Studies acceleration.
- The student should have earned an A in the most recent course of a similar content area.
- Students not meeting the above criteria may be considered on a case-by-case basis using alternative assessments.

Procedures:

- The student along with his/her parent, guardian, or legal custodian must submit the **District Acceleration Request Form** to the principal to pursue this acceleration option. This request must be made by December 1<sup>st</sup> for second semester classes or April 15<sup>th</sup> for fall semester classes.

- The principal or designee will inform the student and parent, guardian, or legal custodian as to the receipt of their request. If the student application is accepted, the student will be informed of the date of the examination or other demonstration of mastery.
- The examination will be given during teacher workdays at the beginning of the academic year and during semester tests at the end of the first and second semester or on an agreed upon date.
- Upon request to the building administrator, a list of standards, benchmarks, and objectives covered on the examination or mastery demonstration will be made available to students interested in pursuing this acceleration option. The text and/or course syllabi may also be provided.

### **Determination of Credit through Examination or Demonstration of Mastery**

- Each content area will require different methods of assessment for students to demonstrate mastery and achievement for each particular course. These assessments will be developed by the appropriate MHS academic department and may include, but are not limited to, semester exams, writing portfolios, research projects, lab techniques/demonstrations, and speeches.
- In order to receive course credit and/or be allowed to accelerate to the next level course, the student will demonstrate 90% mastery or better.
- A committee of teachers representing each department will review the respective assessments and will inform the student and the building principal of the outcome.

- Upon demonstrating mastery, the student will receive a grade of “P” on his or her transcript and the appropriate unit of credit for the course.
- Upon demonstration of mastery, a Determination of Services Meeting will occur. The acceleration team will develop a **Personal Education Plan for Accelerated Services** determining the best course of action for the student’s future academic career in Marshalltown. This may include, but is not limited to, enrollment in advanced MHS courses, college-level online or correspondence courses, independent studies, and early entrance into college. High school graduation requirements may be adjusted for these exceptional students based on their **Personal Education Plan for Accelerated Services**.
- Appeal process: If the parent/guardian/legal custodian, student, or a member of the acceleration team has a dissenting opinion concerning the granting of credit or acceleration recommendation made by the committee, an appeal may be made to the Director of Instruction.

## **Definitions<sup>1</sup>**

Category 1: **Content-based acceleration** provides students with advanced content, skills, or understandings before the expected age or grade level (Southern & Jones, 2004). Students typically remain with peers of the same age and grade. Content-based acceleration can also refer to allowing a student to work on higher grade level instruction in their regular classrooms in lieu of grade-level instruction.

### Forms of content-based acceleration offered in MCSD

- Single-subject acceleration
- Curriculum compacting
- Concurrent/dual enrollment
- Correspondence courses
- Credit by examination or demonstration of mastery
- Mentoring
- Extracurricular programs
- Advanced Placement

Category 2: **Grade-based acceleration** typically shortens the number of years a student spends in the PreK-12 system. In practice, a student is placed on a full-time basis in a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age for purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities (Rogers, 2004; Southern & Jones, 2004).

### Forms of grade-based acceleration offered in MCDS

- Whole-grade acceleration
- Continuous progress
- Self-paced instruction
- Telescoping curriculum
- Combined classes

- Early entrance into middle school, high school, college
- Early graduation

<sup>1</sup> ***Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy.*** Institute for Research Policy and Policy on Acceleration, National Association for Gifted Children, Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted. November, 2009.

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