



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM

APC026

Acceleration of Learners JK to 9

DATE OF ISSUE: January 28, 2003
Revised: January 2009

MEMO TO: Principals; Vice Principals; Planning and Priorities

FROM: Director of Education

PURPOSE

To provide a framework for principals and school staffs to make decisions about the acceleration of learners.

REFERENCES

Sharing Our Journey, (WCDSB) 2002
Guide to the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1-8, 1998
Ontario Secondary Schools (OSS) Grades 9-12, 1999
APC 022 Elementary School Policy for Assessment, Evaluation, Grading & Reporting Grades 1-8 (WCDSB) 2006
APC 017 Secondary School Guideline for Assessment, Evaluation, Grading & Reporting Grades 9-12 (WCDSB) 2007
APC 006 Promotion and Retention of Learners JK to 9 (WCDSB) 2006
Student Services Handbook (Assessment and Programs sections) (WCDSB) Revised 2008
APO012 Transportation Policy, 2003

COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

It is the practice of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board that students of the same age be grouped together in classrooms, regardless of the grade level expectations within individual programs as outlined on the students Individual Education Plan (IEP). In rare circumstances, based on a student's strengths and needs, acceleration will be considered.

- In all cases where acceleration is being considered, the primary concern must be the best interests of the learner (academic, emotional, social)
- In all cases where consideration is being given to acceleration, the parent/guardian and principal must play a major role
- In all cases, the student is currently on an IEP and has met the board criteria for giftedness (assessment results from a CCAT at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas or a psychological report indicating overall cognitive ability at the 98th percentile on a WISC)

Acceleration, in the educational setting, is a process of completing curriculum at a faster rate than what is typically expected. This can take the form of:

Full-grade acceleration whereby the student has demonstrated competency in all the required curriculum expectations for the grade above his/her current grade (e.g. student is in grade 4 and demonstrates all the competencies for grade 5 and may be considered for acceleration to grade 6).

Subject/course acceleration whereby the student has demonstrated competency in all the required curriculum expectations for a particular subject above his/her current grade (e.g. student is in grade 4 and demonstrates all the competencies for grade 4 Mathematics and may be considered for acceleration to grade 5 Mathematics).

PROCEDURES FOR FULL GRADE ACCELERATION IN ELEMENTARY GRADES

Students entering the system from a home schooling program will enter the grade corresponding to their age. The year of birth determines the grade level placement of the student.

Acceleration will not occur from preschool or prior to grade 3.

Acceleration is a school-level decision based on the needs of the child with the approval of the school superintendent.

When considering acceleration, refer to the process outlined in the chart “Overview of Special Education Process” (see Appendix A).

Assessment Criteria

1. **Academic Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to demonstrate Level 4 achievement in all measures of the Ministry curriculum expectations for Language Arts and Mathematics. This will be determined by the In-school Team using current WCDSB and Ministry of Education assessment, evaluation and reporting tools:

Primary:

- BLAM (Balanced Literacy Assessment Measures)
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP
- Grade 2 – CAT-3

Junior:

- BLAM (Balanced Literacy Assessment Measures)
- Grade 3 EQAO
- Grade 4 CCAT (Composite score at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas which must include the Verbal battery)
- Grade 5 – CAT-3
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP

Intermediate:

- BLAM (Balanced Literacy Assessment Measures)
- Grade 6 EQAO
- Grade 7 CAT - 3
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP

2. **Educational Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to have an educational assessment completed. This will be determined, by the In-school Team using current WCDSB tools:

Mandatory tools:

- Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) (*Composite score at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas which must include the Verbal battery*)

OR

- A current (within the last 2 years) Psychoeducational Assessment where a student demonstrates an overall score at or above the 98th percentile on a WISC

AND

- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement II (KTEA-II)

Optional tools:

- KeyMath-Revised
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – IV (PPVT-IV)

3. **Emotional-Social Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to have demonstrated the affective skills and social skills that will enable them to interact appropriately with older peers. A "*Checklist for Emotional-Social Characteristics for Acceleration*" is completed and the original is filed in the OSR (see Appendix B).

Communication and Decision-making

1. Any decision regarding acceleration must be a collaborative one involving the In-school Team (Principal and appropriate teachers), parent/guardian, student and school superintendent, and must be documented in the IEP on the Consultation page.
2. The "*Acceleration Checklist*" for Primary, Junior and Intermediate grades is completed and filed in the OSR (see Appendix C).
3. If the final decision is to accelerate, the principal will confirm with the parent/guardian in writing using "*Sample Parent Letter for Full-Grade Acceleration*" (see Appendix D). The original copy will be filed in the OSR.
4. If consensus between parent/guardian and school personnel is not reached, a final decision will be sought in consultation with the appropriate school superintendent. A copy of the decision will be filed in the OSR.

PROCEDURES FOR FULL GRADE ACCELERATION FROM ELEMENTARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL Grade 7 to 9 or From Grade 8 to 9 (Semester II)

Acceleration of students into any secondary school program will be strictly limited to WCDSB secondary schools. Grade 9 is a mandatory year for all students. *Therefore acceleration from grade 8 to grade 10 will not be an option.*

Acceleration is a school-level decision based on the needs of the child with the approval of the school superintendent.

When considering acceleration, refer to the process outlined in the chart “Overview of Special Education Process” (see Appendix A)

Assessment Criteria

1. **Academic Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration into any secondary school program, the student needs to demonstrate Level 4 achievement in all measures of the Ministry curriculum expectations for Language Arts and Mathematics. This will be determined by the In-school Team using current WCDSB and Ministry of Education assessment, evaluation and reporting tools:

- Grade 5 CAT-3
- Grade 6 EQAO
- Grade 7 CAT-3
- OCA
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP

2. **Educational Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to have an educational assessment completed. This will be determined, by the In-school Team using current WCDSB tools:

Mandatory tools:

- Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) (*Composite score at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas which must include the Verbal battery*)

OR

- A current (within the last 2 years) Psychoeducational Assessment where a students demonstrates an overall score at or above the 98th percentile on a WISC

AND

- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement II (KTEA-II)

Optional tools:

- KeyMath-Revised
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – IV (PPVT-IV)

3. **Emotional-Social Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration into any secondary school program, the student needs to have demonstrated the affective skills and social skills that will enable them to interact appropriately with older peers. A “*Checklist for Emotional-Social Characteristics for Acceleration*” is completed and the original is filed in the OSR (see Appendix B). An interview with the student to obtain their perspective is advisable.

Communication and Decision-making

It is imperative that timelines be adhered to and the secondary school option sheet be completed. Consideration

for acceleration to secondary should ***begin in the student's grade 7 year*** as course selection must be determined during the Elementary/Secondary Transition Meetings held before the end of March each year.

1. Any decision regarding acceleration must be a collaborative one involving the In-school Team (principal and appropriate teachers), parent/guardian, student and school superintendent, and must be documented in the IEP on the Consultation page.
2. The "Acceleration Checklist for Elementary Students to Secondary School" is completed and filed in the OSR. (see Appendix F)
3. If the final decision is to accelerate, the principal will confirm with the parent/guardian in writing using the "Sample Parent Letter for Full Grade Acceleration" (see Appendix D). The original copy will be filed in the OSR.
4. If consensus between parent/guardian and school personnel is not reached, a final decision will be sought in consultation with the appropriate school superintendent. A copy of the decision will be filed in the OSR.

PROCEDURES for SUBJECT ACCELERATION in Grade 3, Junior grades and Grade 7

It is possible for students to accelerate in specific subjects (versus full-grade) beginning in Grade 3, junior grades and Grade 7 (i.e. mathematics and/or language arts). If subject acceleration is determined appropriate, the guidelines for full-grade acceleration are to be followed.

Acceleration is a school-level decision based on the needs of the child with the approval of the school superintendent.

When considering acceleration, refer to the process outlined in the chart “Overview of Special Education Process” (see Appendix A).

Acceleration will not occur from preschool or **prior to grade 3.**

Assessment Criteria

1. **Academic Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to have achieved Level 4 in all measures of the Ministry curriculum expectations for Language Arts and Mathematics. This will be determined by the In-school Team using current WCDSB and Ministry of Education assessment, evaluation and reporting tools:

Primary:

- BLAM (Balanced Literacy Assessment Measures)
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP
- Grade 2 – CAT-3

Junior:

- BLAM (Balanced Literacy Assessment Measures)
- Grade 3 EQAO
- Grade 4 CCAT (Composite score at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas and correspondence to the area of acceleration e.g. Quantitative Battery for Mathematics)
- Grade 5 – CAT-3
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP

Intermediate:

- BLAM (Balanced Literacy Assessment Measures)
- Grade 6 EQAO
- Grade 7 CAT - 3
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student’s IEP

2. **Educational Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to have an educational assessment completed. This will be determined, by the In-school Team using current WCDSB tools:

Mandatory tools:

- Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) (*Composite score at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas which must include the Verbal battery*)

OR

- A current (within the last 2 years) Psychoeducational Assessment where a students demonstrates an overall score at or above the 98th percentile on a WISC

AND

- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement II (KTEA-II)

Optional tools:

- KeyMath-Revised
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – IV (PPVT-IV)

3. **Emotional-Social Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration in the elementary grades, the student needs to have demonstrated the affective skills and social skills that will enable them to interact appropriately with older peers. A “*Checklist for Emotional-Social Characteristics for Acceleration*” is completed and the original is filed in the OSR (see Appendix B).

Communication and Decision-making

1. Any decision regarding acceleration must be a collaborative one involving the In-school Team (principal and appropriate teachers), parent/guardian, student and school superintendent, and must be documented in the IEP on the Consultation page.
2. The “*Acceleration Checklist*” for Grade 3, Junior and Intermediate grades is completed and filed in the OSR (see Appendix C).
3. If the final decision is to accelerate, the principal will confirm with the parent/guardian in writing using “*Sample Parent Letter for Subject Acceleration*” (see Appendix E). The original copy will be filed in the OSR.
4. If consensus between parent/guardian and school personnel is not reached, a final decision will be sought in consultation with the appropriate school superintendent. A copy of the decision will be filed in the OSR.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS COMPLETING GRADE 9 CREDIT(S) AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Due to the nature of the grade 9 subject expectations, it is ideal for the student to take grade 9 courses for credit at the secondary school. If subject acceleration is determined appropriate, the guidelines for full-grade acceleration are to be followed.

Acceleration is a school-level decision with the support of the school superintendent. It is based on the needs of the child and the ability of the elementary school to implement the programming.

When considering acceleration, refer to the process outlined in the chart “Overview of Special Education Process” (see Appendix A).

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS COMPLETING GRADE 9 CREDIT(S) AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The same process for subject acceleration needs to be followed for students accelerating by **1 or 2 subjects** as for students who participate in full-grade acceleration. Enrollment in secondary school courses is dependent on availability and the elementary school must be able to provide appropriate timetabling to meet the needs for all students.

Assessment Criteria

1. **Academic Assessment:** In order to consider subject acceleration into any secondary school program, the student needs to have achieved Level 4 in all measures of the Ministry curriculum expectations for Language Arts and/or Mathematics. This will be determined by the In-school Team using current WCDSB and Ministry of Education assessment, evaluation and reporting tools:

- Grade 6 EQAO
- Grade 7 CAT - 3
- Academic performance (report card) related to expectations in the student's IEP
- OCA

2. **Educational Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration into any secondary school program, the student needs to have an educational assessment completed. This will be determined by the In-school Team using tools:

Mandatory tools:

- Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) (*Composite score at or above the 98th percentile in a minimum of 2 areas which must include the Verbal battery*)

OR

- A current (within the last 2 years) Psychoeducational Assessment where a students demonstrates an overall score at or above the 98th percentile on a WISC

AND

- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement II (KTEA-II)

Optional tools:

- KeyMath-Revised
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – IV (PPVT-IV)

3. **Emotional-Social Assessment:** In order to consider acceleration into any secondary school program, the student needs to have demonstrated the affective skills and social skills that will enable them to interact appropriately with older peers. A "*Checklist for Emotional-Social Characteristics for Acceleration*" is completed and the original is filed in the OSR (see Appendix B).

Communication and Decision-making

*It is imperative that timelines be adhered to and the secondary school option sheet be completed. Consideration for acceleration to secondary should **begin in the student's grade 7 year** as course selection must be determined during the Elementary/Secondary Transition Meetings held before the end of March each year.*

1. Any decision regarding acceleration must be a collaborative one involving principal, parent/guardian, the student, elementary personnel (Classroom teacher and Special Education teacher) and secondary personnel (Guidance Department, Special Education Department), and must be documented in the IEP on the Consultation page.

2. The “*Acceleration Checklist for Elementary Students to Secondary School*” is completed and the original copied is filed in the OSR (see Appendix F).
3. If the decision is to accelerate is confirmed at the elementary/secondary transition meeting, the elementary principal will formalize communication with the parent/guardian in writing using the “*Sample Parent Letter for Subject Acceleration*” (see Appendix E). The original copy will be filed in the OSR.
4. The principal or designate at the secondary school will be contacted and will pre-register the student. The student will be included on a class list and attendance sheet at the secondary school for the registered course of study.
5. The program page of the student’s IEP documenting the accelerated course will be the responsibility of the elementary home school.
6. Once the course of study begins, the principal of the secondary school assumes responsibility for evaluating the student’s achievement and for granting and recording credits (OSS 5.3.2). A secondary school report card will be issued for those subjects the student is taking at the secondary school.
7. The student may participate in the Grade 9 EQAO Assessment at the secondary school if the student is taking Grade 9 mathematics. Portions of the Grade 9 EQAO Assessment are currently serving as part of the student’s final summative assessment.
8. Transportation to the secondary school is the primary responsibility of the student’s parent/guardian. However, where the distance warrants, bus transportation costs will be covered as per the Transportation Policy.
9. If consensus between parent/guardian and school personnel is not reached, a final decision will be sought in consultation with the appropriate school superintendent. A copy of the decision will be filed in the OSR.

It is recommended that sections of the Grade 9 academic courses (i.e. Mathematics and English) should be grouped together at the beginning or end of each day, of each semester, at all secondary schools, to accommodate the elementary student’s schedule.

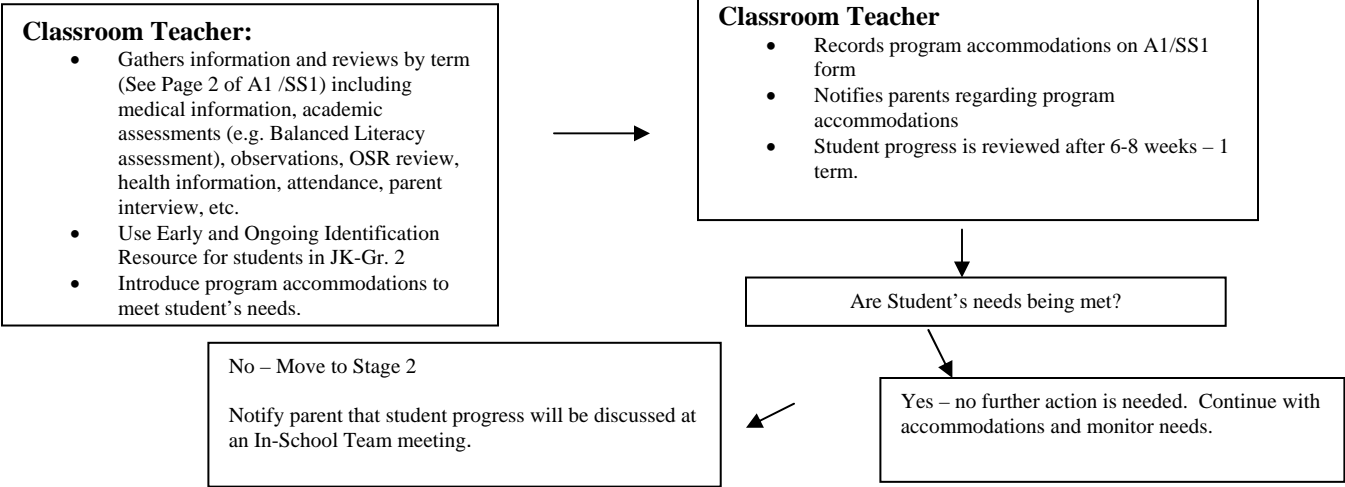


Overview of Special Education Process

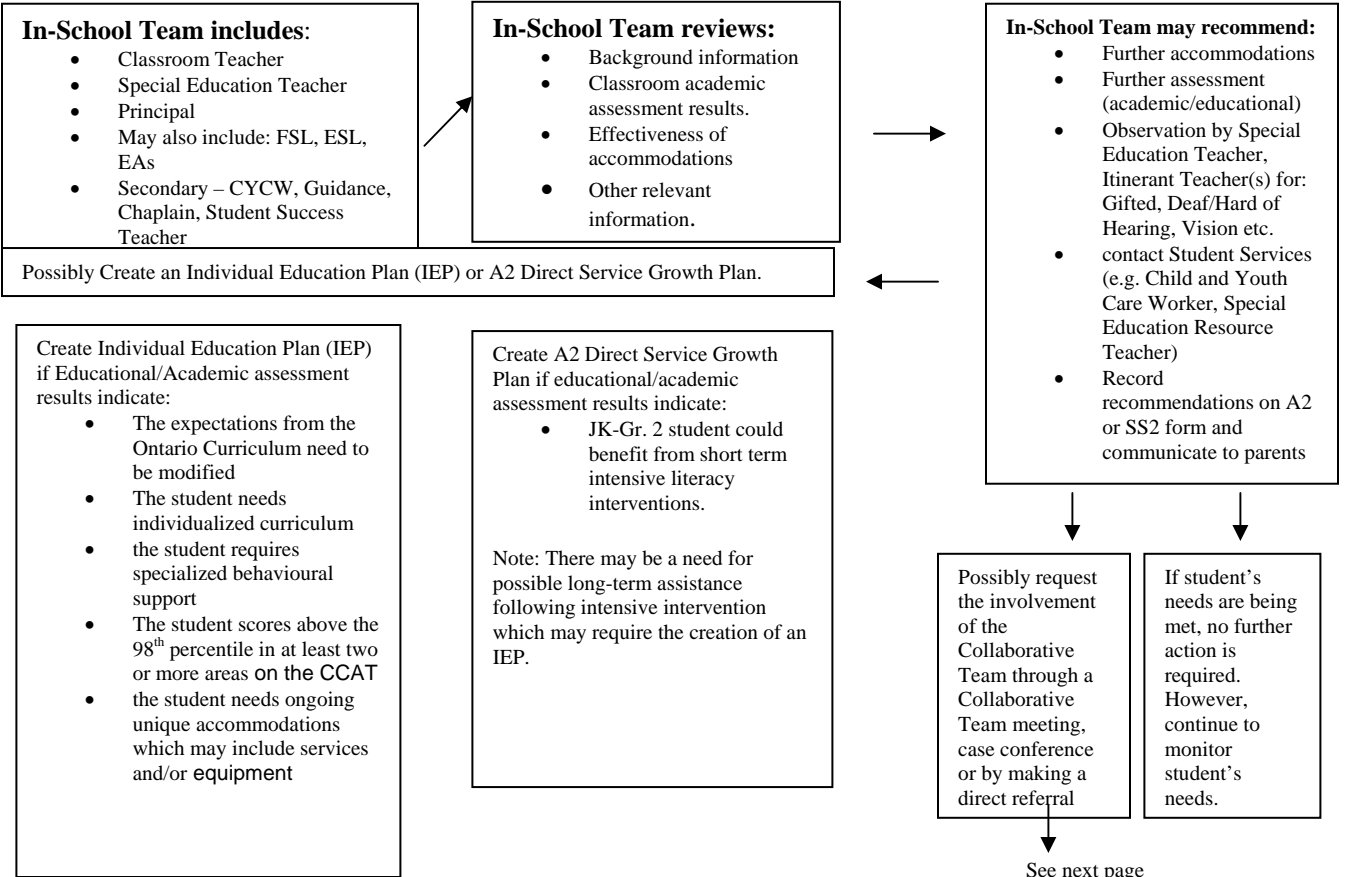
Appendix A

Teacher/Parent concern about Student

Stage 1: Classroom Intervention



Stage 2: Referral to In-School Team



Overview of Special Education Process

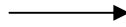
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Stage 3: Referral to Collaborative Team

Consider whether preliminary activities (e.g. A1/SS1, A2/SS2 completion, Educational Assessment prior to request for Psych referral) have been completed.

Collaborative Team includes:

- Psychoeducational Consultant
- Social Worker
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Special Education Resource Teacher
- Child and Youth Care Worker
- Attendance Counsellor
- Itinerant Teachers



Collaborative Team may recommend:

- Further involvement by individual team members
- Further program accommodations/modifications
- Development or revision of Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Record recommendations/actions on A3 or SS2 form and communicate to parents

PROCESS

STEP ONE: Initial Collaborative Team meeting in the fall

- Principal obtains Collaborative Team Consent Form (available on StaffNet) for students to be discussed and possible access to OSR by Collaborative Team personnel (per PHIPPA Legislation). The SERT will coordinate meeting dates for this initial meeting with the school Principals.
- The school staff will complete a Meeting Agenda Organizer and will send to all team members 3 days prior to the meeting
- Roles, discipline referral processes and discussion of specific student issues will be undertaken at this initial meeting.
- School lists of students for potential referrals (SLP and /or Psych Ed) may be reviewed
- all collaborative team members will be involved in the meetings with their assigned schools.



STEP TWO: Subsequent Meetings throughout the School Year

- through the In-school Team process, schools will determine the need for additional involvement of some, or all, Collaborative Team members by making direct referrals
- Schools may then contact specific team members directly to arrange for service according to their mandate
- Collaborative team members may take student information to Internal Collaborative Team Meeting for discussion, suggestions, consultation, etc.



STEP THREE: Possible Outcomes such as Referral to Collaborative Team Members

Case Conference:

- Not all outcomes from meetings with student services Collaborative Team staff will require a case conference
- Case conferences, when necessary, arranged with appropriate Collaborative Team members and In-school Team (SET, CRT, Principal); OSR is available, and Collaborative Team consent must be signed
- Case conferences may be arranged in blocks to enable more than one student to be discussed. School notifies parents of outcomes using A3/ SS2
- Programming recommendations are made
- Student requires additional team involvement by other team members such as SERT, SLP, Psych Services, SW, CYCW
- Individual team members follow up with school regarding obtaining consent and/or provide parents with appropriate consent (e.g. observation, on-going consultation, assessment)



CHECKLIST FOR EMOTIONAL – SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR ACCELERATION

Appendix B

Characteristics	Never/ Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always/ Consistently
Cooperation and Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperates with others in group situations • Understands the point of view of others • Collaborates and synthesizes ideas • Confident expressing opinions and ideas • Comfortable with older students and adults 				
Problem Solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes problems independently • Develops a variety of solutions • Analyzes solutions • Combines solutions • Implements solutions • Exercises self-correction and judgment 				
Persistence and Motivation for Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a high degree of motivation • Task committed • Conscientious • Excellent work habits • Self-directed • Goal oriented • Productive, effective, proficient worker • Able to work independently • Requires little instruction from teacher • Adapts readily to new situation 				
Readiness for Acceleration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student eager to accelerate/advance • Risk-taker • Open to ideas and situations 				

Completed by: Classroom Teacher

Date

Completed by: Special Education Teacher

Date

Copies of all documentation to be placed in O.S.R



ACCELERATION CHECKLIST FOR PRIMARY, JUNIOR AND INTERMEDIATE GRADES

Appendix C

Student Name: _____ School: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____ Accelerating to Grade: _____

Expected Date for Acceleration: _____

TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED
Letter to parents/guardian on intention to proceed with the process of acceleration	Elementary Principal	
IEP updated	Special Education Teacher & Classroom Teacher and any other appropriate Elementary Personnel	
Educational Assessment (must include CCAT)	Special Education Teacher	
Academic Assessment	Classroom Teacher	
Approval of school superintendent	Elementary Principal	
Permission from parents to proceed with acceleration	Elementary Principal	

Completed by: Special Education Teacher

Date

Copies of all documentation to be placed in O.S.R

Sample Parent Letter for Full-Grade Acceleration

Appendix D



Dear _____

This letter is to confirm that the decision made on _____
(date)

was to provide (or not provide) _____ with full-grade acceleration into
name of student

grade

Your signature on this form will indicate your agreement with this decision.

Principal Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Copies of all documentation to be placed in O.S.R

Sample Parent Letter for Subject Acceleration

Appendix E



Dear _____

This letter is to confirm that the decision made on _____
(date)

was to provide (or not provide) _____ with the following Grade _____ subject(s)
name of student

acceleration.

List subject (s): _____

at _____
name of elementary or secondary school where subject(s) will be studied

Your signature on this form will indicate your agreement with this decision.

Principal Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Copies of all documentation to be placed in O.S.R



**ACCELERATION CHECKLIST
FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL
FULL-GRADE OR SUBJECT ACCELERATION OR COMPLETION OF GRADE 9 CREDIT(S)
AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Appendix F

Student Name: _____

School: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____ Accelerating to Grade: _____

Expected Date for Acceleration: _____

TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED
Communicate to parents/guardian an intention to proceed with the process of acceleration	Elementary Principal	
IEP developed and updated (Transition Plan – if necessary)	Special Education Teacher & Classroom Teacher and any other appropriate Elementary Personnel	
Assessment Information (Academic, Educational, Emotional/Social)	Special Education Teacher Classroom Teacher	
Approval of school superintendent	Elementary Principal	
Parent Letter for Acceleration	Elementary Principal	
Contact Secondary School Principal or Designate	Elementary Principal	
Secondary Registration and Guidance Forms	Collaboration of Student, Parents, Special Education Teacher, Classroom Teacher, Principal, Secondary School Guidance and Special Education Departments	
Transition Meeting	Elementary Principal Special Education Teacher	

Completed by: Special Education Teacher _____

_____ Date

Copies of all documentation to be placed in O.S.R.