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## **Acceleration and Enrichment Guidelines**

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### **Enrichment from EC3 through Grade 12**

We believe that every child develops at a different rate educationally, socially and emotionally. All of our educators are trained and skilled in differentiation and proactively adjust content, process, product and the learning environment to accommodate the individual needs of our students. Further, we have a comprehensive Student Support Team (SST), who supports teachers and students in meeting individual needs, both inside and outside the classroom.

In the elementary school, students have a block of time each day called Intervention and Extension (I/E). This is a purposefully designated time when differentiated instruction methods are used to review and deepen content knowledge. No new instruction takes place during this time. Students are flexibly grouped by ability across the grade levels and receive targeted instruction and/or enrichment opportunities depending on individual needs. At the Elementary School level, Professional Learning Community (PLC) and SST meetings occur regularly at all grade levels in order to monitor student progress closely. All of our Elementary Student Support Team specialists assist each grade level during this time so that these groups can be small, focused and purposeful.

Our Middle School and High School Learning Support Team also employs a variety of strategies to help students including support in the classrooms, specialized classes as well as monitored or assisted resource and study classes in order to ensure student success.

Though enrichment through differentiation is both the common and preferred practice at ICS, we also recognize the fact that there are occasions when student needs may be better met in an accelerated learning environment. To provide for this fact, we offer two additional types of acceleration—content based and grade based.

### **Content Based Acceleration from Grade 6 through Grade 10**

This refers to students who remain in the age appropriate grade level with their same age/same grade peers, but attend higher than grade level classes in a particular subject area(s) in lieu of grade-level instruction.

- Content Based Acceleration is only possible from Grades 6 through 10
- Referrals for Content Based Acceleration are accepted for current ICS students who have attended for a minimum of one semester prior to submission of application
- Referrals for Content Based Acceleration are due by 1 November (for second semester) and 1 April (for following school year)
- Content Based Acceleration will occur at the beginning of the academic year, the beginning of the second semester, or at the discretion of the division principal
- Referrals for Content Acceleration can be initiated by any stakeholder of the school; students, parents, teachers, counselors, administrators
- Referrals must be submitted in writing to the appropriate division Principal and/or Enrichment Coordinator
- The “Consent for Evaluation” portion of the referral form must be completed and signed by the student's parent/legal guardian in order to be considered

### **Grade Based Acceleration Eligibility from Grade 2 through Grade 7**

This refers to students who are placed full-time in a higher grade level than is typical for the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in all areas

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of his/her educational program. Only students in grades 2 through 7 may apply for Grade Based Acceleration. In grades 8 to 12, only Content-Based Acceleration is offered, due to students' individual programs and high school graduation requirements.

- Grade Based Acceleration will only occur at the start of the next academic school year in which the application is submitted
- Referrals for Grade Based Acceleration for the following school year are due by 1 April
- Referrals for Grade Based Acceleration can be initiated by any stakeholder of the school: students, parents, teachers, counselors, administrators
- Referrals must be submitted in writing to the student's current school Principal
- The "Consent for Evaluation" portion of the referral form must be completed and signed by the student's parent/legal guardian in order to be considered

### **Acceleration Evidence**

Several of the following attributes are often noted in candidates who are referred for acceleration. In order to be considered for Content or Grade Based Acceleration at ICS, a student must show a multitude of evidence, which demonstrates their aptitude and ability to be successful in advanced studies. The student must also demonstrate that his/her academic needs cannot be met within the current curriculum of that grade level. ICS strongly believes that the majority of students' academic needs can be met with differentiation and enrichment within the regular classroom setting. It is the belief at ICS that Grade-Based Acceleration is considered the least restrictive environment for a small minority of high achieving students only.

### **Eligibility Criteria to be considered for Content Based Acceleration**

- Demonstrates exemplary achievement of grade/course level content in a specific subject area
- Scores in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the MAP, a criterion-referenced achievement test, in reading or math
- Demonstrates exceptionally high levels of social/emotional maturity indicating ability to function at the highest level within the academic and social expectations of the accelerated grade level.
- Displays a high level of perseverance and motivation for learning in a subject area
- Consistently demonstrates mastery of all curriculum standards of that grade-level subject area
- Review of records indicate a history of high performance, self-motivation, and demonstrates all aspects of the ICS Learner Profile

### **Eligibility Criteria to be considered for Grade Based Acceleration**

- Demonstrates exemplary achievement in grade/course level content in Language Arts & Math
- Consistently performs 1 year or more above current grade assignment in Language Arts & Math on a range of formative and summative assessments
- Scores above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on the MAP, a criterion-referenced achievement test in reading and math
- Scores in the "very superior" range on Aptitude and Ability Tests
- Yields a favorable outcome on the IOWA Acceleration Scale
- Demonstrates exceptionally high level of social/emotional maturity indicating ability to function at the highest level within the academic and social expectations of the accelerated grade level.

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- Demonstrates a high level of perseverance and motivation for learning
- Exhibits a strong desire to advance a grade level (w/o external pressure)
- School records must show good attendance and no significant health impacts
- Review of records indicate a history of high performance and self-motivation, and demonstrates all aspects of the ICS Learner Profile
- Grade 1 student who are age-appropriate for grade 2 may be considered for acceleration at the discretion of the school.

### **Program Specifics**

- Members of the Child Study Team may include administrators, the student's current teacher, advanced grade level teachers, school psychologist, counselor, an enrichment coordinator, etc. The Child Study Team will review the referral and determine assessments and next steps.
- Evaluation results and recommendations will be shared with parents (and students when appropriate) in a timely manner. Parental input will be considered.
- Final summary of evaluations and recommendations must be signed by a parent or legal guardian, a division Principal, and/or the Head of School
- Parent signature indicates receipt of evaluation and recommendations only
- Appeal of final decision must be made to the Head of School within 10 days of notification
- The decision of the Head of School is FINAL
- ICS reserves the right to revoke and/or modify acceleration placements at any time

Acceleration Agreements are always made on a trial basis and will be reviewed by the Child Study Team within a reasonable time frame to determine success of implementation. Please note that all acceleration placements are dependent on space available. If space is not available, students who are approved for acceleration will be placed at the top of the wait list for the appropriate course or grade level determined. *All accounts, payments and attendance records must be in good standing in order for Content or Grade Based Acceleration to occur.*

### **Possible Outcomes When Applying for Acceleration**

#### **Continued Differentiation**

After careful review of all the evidence, the Child Study Team determines that the student would not be best served by either Content or Grade Based Acceleration.

- In such cases, the Child Study Team will share all findings with the student's current educational instructor(s) to ensure that each teacher is differentiating within the classroom to challenge, enrich and motivate the student.
- Application for Grade-Based Acceleration may only occur once every two years.

#### **Qualified for Content Based Acceleration (Grades 6–10)**

The Child Study Team concludes that the student would benefit best from remaining in the age appropriate grade level with their same age/same grade peers, but would benefit from attending a higher than grade level class in a particular subject area(s) in lieu of grade-level instruction.

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- The content-accelerated placement is carefully monitored by the classroom teacher(s) and the student is supported as needed. The placement is reviewed by the Child Study Team within a reasonable time frame to determine the level of success.

### **Qualified for Grade Based Acceleration (Grades 2–7)**

The Child Study Team determines that it is in the best interest of the student to advance to the grade level that best matches his/her intellectual ability and current level of overall academic functioning.

- When appropriate, a Transition Plan will be developed and monitored by the student's teacher(s) and/or the Enrichment Coordinator. The placement is reviewed by the Child Study Team within a reasonable time frame to determine the level of success.

### **Related Forms**

- Application for Content or Grade Based Acceleration

Student Support Services Supervisor  
Student Support Team Facilitator  
Enrichment Coordinator

Michael Schooler, Elementary Principal  
Susan Piper, School Psychologist  
Susan Ballantyne

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**APPLICATION FOR ACCELERATION**

Date of Referral:		Current Grade Level:	
Student Name:		Current Principal:	
Date of Birth:		Requesting Person(s):	

Student History:			
Reason for Referral:			
Consent for Evaluation(s):	I have read the ICS Acceleration & Enrichment Policy in its entirety. I give my full permission for the Child Study Team to assess my child with any of the assessment tools the team deems necessary and to share the results with all Child Study Team members.		
Parent/Guardian Signature:		Date:	

Please fill out the above portion of this form and sign the Consent for Evaluation(s) section. Attach any relevant documentation (report cards, documentation of previous services, Ed Psych evaluations, etc) and return this form to your child's current principal.

**For Child Study Team Use Only:**

Date Referral was Received:			
Date of Preliminary Child Study Team Meeting:			
Case Manager:			
Results of Assessments/SST Meeting Date/Time:			
Decision of Child Study Team:	Differentiation	Content Based	Grade Based
Review Date:			
Principal Signature:		Date:	