



United Community Center Schools - Grade-Level Acceleration Policy

The United Community Center Schools (UCC) are committed to providing equitable and rigorous learning opportunities that meet the diverse academic needs of our students. Grade level acceleration is one option within our continuum of academic supports to address the needs of students demonstrating advanced learning abilities beyond their current grade level. This policy ensures that acceleration decisions are made thoughtfully, collaboratively, and with the student's long-term well-being in mind.

Grade-Level Acceleration Eligibility Criteria:

To be considered for grade level acceleration, a student must meet multiple criteria, including but not limited to:

1. Academic Readiness

- Consistently performs well above grade level in core academic subjects
- Demonstrates mastery of current grade-level standards - *mastery of 90% of grade level content*
- Has recent performance on district/state assessments at an advanced level - *98th percentile or above*

2. Cognitive and Developmental Readiness

- Strong problem-solving, reasoning, and critical thinking skills - *IQ in the 95th percentile or above*
- Demonstrated independence and motivation for learning

3. Social-Emotional and Behavioral Maturity

- Displays age-appropriate emotional regulation and self-advocacy
- Strong peer relationships and adaptability to new environments

4. Attendance and Work Habits

- Regular school attendance - *95% or higher attendance average*
- Responsible work habits and consistent academic effort

I. Grade-Level Acceleration Referral Process

- A. When a student exhibits evidence of unusually high potential and unusually rapid progress through the established curriculum, in one or more subjects, staff should extend curriculum experiences for that student.
- B. Upon extending curriculum experiences for a student, a staff member or a parent/guardian may refer the student for acceleration by notifying the principal in writing of the request and the reason(s) for the request before the end of the second parent-teacher conference (in the Spring) of the current academic year.
- C. All referrals for acceleration shall be directed to the building principal.
- D. A limit of one acceleration referral per student, per academic year will be allowed. A minimum of nine months must elapse between requests of consecutive academic years.
- E. The building principal shall review the referral information and determine if any additional information (including parent/guardian consent) is needed to initiate the process.



II. Grade-Level Acceleration Procedures

- A. Upon receipt of the referral form, the building principal shall review the acceleration requirements with parent/guardian and initiate a support meeting.
 - a. The support meeting shall include teachers familiar with the student, school psychologist, parent/guardian and the student (when appropriate). The group shall review the referral information, curriculum and other assessments, anecdotal records/notes, classroom work and learning behaviors.
 - b. Information may be requested, gathered and reviewed from any other educational setting the student has had outside of the UCC Schools. Parents/guardians will provide a signed release of records to accomplish this portion of the review.
 - c. All the information reviewed and discussed shall be documented in an acceleration report for the student's record by the school psychologist.
 - d. The review for purposes of the acceleration determination shall be conducted in accordance with the school's subject or grade acceleration criteria.
- B. If the results from the support meeting indicate additional information is needed to determine whether the student meets subject or grade acceleration criteria, designated personnel shall make arrangements to proctor the required assessments in the grade level or subject(s) with consent from the parent/guardians. Should the parent/guardian not provide consent for assessment, the school may determine that insufficient information exists to make the acceleration determination which may lead to the request being denied.
- C. Upon reviewing the information in accordance with the school's established acceleration criteria, if the results of the review indicate that acceleration in grade level, or one or more subjects is recommended, the building principal will provide a summary and recommendation.
 - a. The parent shall be notified in writing by the school of the Principal's determination.
 - b. If the acceleration recommendation is approved, formal consent of the parent/guardian will be obtained, before programming begins.
- D. Upon reviewing the results of the acceleration criteria and it is determined that acceleration is not recommended in the grade level or one or more subjects, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing by the school principal or a member of the support team.

III. Subject-Area Acceleration Procedures

Students referred for subject acceleration will be assessed on intellectual functioning, academic skill levels, aptitude and social-emotional development/maturity. As outlined below, multiple and varied criteria will serve as a basis from which students will be accelerated.

- A. The student will be administered an IQ test, or comparable, by the school psychologist. To be considered for subject level acceleration, the results must be at the 95th percentile, or higher.
- B. The school counselor will provide a recommendation regarding whether the student's social/emotional maturity supports the level where acceleration is requested.
- C. The student's current classroom teacher(s) will provide a recommendation regarding whether the student's work habits, study skills and social/emotional maturity support the level where acceleration is requested, as well as how acceleration may benefit the child in the long term.



- D. The student must have academic scores at the **98th percentile, or higher, on state assessment and other evaluation tools**. These scores correspond with the subject in which acceleration is requested.
- E. The student must master **90% of the grade level curriculum** for the subject recommended to be accelerated that would otherwise be missed due to acceleration, as measured by unit assessments.
- F. The student must demonstrate readiness for acceleration in terms of academic capacity and social/emotional maturity.
- G. Upon receiving a recommendation for acceleration decision from the school, parent/guardian must consent that the student be accelerated, including a release of liability of the school from the decision.

IV. Grade-Level Acceleration Criteria

Students referred for grade acceleration will be assessed on intellectual functioning, academic skill levels, aptitude and social-emotional development/maturity. As outlined below, multiple and varied criteria will serve as a basis from which students will be accelerated.

- A. The student will be administered an IQ test or comparable by the school psychologist. To be considered for subject level acceleration, the results must be at the **95th percentile, or higher**.
- B. The school counselor will provide a recommendation regarding whether the student's social/emotional maturity supports the level where acceleration is requested.
- C. The student's current classroom teacher(s) will provide a recommendation regarding whether the student's work habits, study skills and social/emotional maturity support the level where acceleration is requested, as well as how acceleration may benefit the child in the long term.
- D. The student must have academic scores at the **98th percentile or higher**, on state assessment and other evaluation tools. These scores correspond with the subject in which acceleration is requested.
- E. The student must master **90% of the grade level curriculum** for the subject recommended to be accelerated that would otherwise be missed due to acceleration, as measured by unit assessments.
- F. The student must demonstrate readiness for acceleration in terms of academic capacity and social/emotional maturity.
- G. Upon receiving a decision for grade level acceleration from the school, parent/guardian must consent that the student be accelerated, including a release of liability of the school from the decision.

V. Grade Level Acceleration Implementation, Evaluation and Appeal Process

- A. Each student who is accelerated for subject(s) or an entire grade level shall be granted a 45 day interim period to demonstrate appropriate progress in the placement. If, during the interim period, school officials determine that the student's placement needs to be reviewed, the principal may make a recommendation for a placement revision. The support team, which includes the current classroom teacher(s), parent/guardian, school counselor and principal will review the recommendation and make a final determination of the child's placement.
- B. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the support team to the Chief Academic Officer within five (5) business days of the determination.
 - a. The parent/guardian shall file an appeal letter with the Chief Academic Officer identifying the reasons for the disagreement with the placement team's decision.



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- b. The Chief Academic Officer shall provide a written response to the parent/guardian within 10 business days of the date of receipt of the appeal decision. This response shall indicate if the school has granted or denied the appeal and reasons for such a determination.
 - c. The decision of the Chief Academic Officer shall be final.
- C. If the parent/guardian's request for acceleration has been denied, they are encouraged to work with the School staff to monitor the progress of the student for any other enrichment possibilities or acceleration in future years.

Equity and Inclusion Statement: *UCC is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, language background, socioeconomic status, or disability status, have equitable access to academic acceleration and enrichment opportunities.*



Grade-Level Acceleration Recommendation Form

Student Name:		Grade:	Please S... ▾		Date:	📅 Date
Teacher Name:		Class:			Date of Birth:	
Student Preferred Language	Please Select ▾	Primary Language Spoken at Home			Please Select ▾	
Current Additional Supports & Programs <i>What is being provided at present to differentiate instruction to meet this students' accelerated learning needs?</i>						
Acceleration Criteria to be Reviewed:		<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive & Developmental Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Social Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent School Attendance & Work Habits <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Staff Recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Parental/Guardian Recommendation				
<i>*Acceleration should only be considered if all of the criteria above have been fully considered and assessed*</i>						
Dates of Parent Discussion: <i>List all times acceleration was discussed as a possibility with the student's family</i>						
Reason(s) for Recommendation of Acceleration: <i>List all relevant reasons to consider accelerating the students</i>						
How will acceleration help this student and benefit their long term academic and personal success?						



Current School Year Data for Consideration of Grade-Level Acceleration

IQ Testing and Assessment - *must score at the 95th percentile or higher*

IQ Assessment Name	Date of Assessment	Score / %ile	Result

School Counselor Assessment - *counselor must assess social & emotional maturity*

School Counselor Name	
Date of Assessment	
Summary of Assessment	

Teacher Recommendation - *teacher must provide assessment of all skills listed below*

Teacher Name	
Work Habits	
Study Skills	
Social Maturity	
Emotional Maturity	
Academic Skills Demonstrated	

NWEA MAP Assessment Data - *must score at the 98th percentile or higher*

	FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Assessment Area	Score	%ile	Score	%ile	Score	%ile
Reading						
Mathematics						

Current School Year Attendance Data - Current as of __ / __ / __

Total Days Absent	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences	Tardies	Days Present %



Early Literacy Screener Data - aimswebPLUS Assessments - OR -Other Academic Assessment Data

	FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Assessment Type	%ile	Acc	%ile	Acc	%ile	Acc
Overall Composite						

Academic Quarterly Grades - must demonstrate mastery of 90% of grade level curriculum

Academic Subject	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Reading				
Mathematics				
Writing				
Social Studies				
Science				

Classroom Differentiation: *List all current opportunities for differentiation and challenge that have been provided at the classroom level, and the results of these interventions.*

Additional Specific Information: *List any additional information that should be considered regarding this student.*



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Date Parent Notified of Recommendation to Accelerate Student: _____

Signature of Individual Recommending Acceleration

Date

Signature of Principal

Receipt Date



Release of Liability and Parent Consent for Grade Acceleration

Grade-level acceleration, while beneficial for some, can pose risks like social and emotional adjustment difficulties, potential academic struggles, and challenges related to maturity. While research suggests acceleration can positively impact academic achievement and well-being, it's crucial to consider individual factors like social maturity and academic readiness.

- **Social and Emotional Adjustment:** Accelerated students may face challenges fitting in with older classmates, potentially leading to social isolation, bullying, or difficulty forming friendships. They may also struggle with social cues and interactions expected at a higher grade level.
- **Academic Challenges:** While initially excelling, some accelerated students may find it difficult to maintain their academic performance in a more challenging environment. They may struggle with the increased workload or find it harder to keep up with the pace of instruction.
- **Maturity Disparities:** Accelerated students might be younger than their classmates, leading to potential differences in social, emotional, and physical maturity. This can affect their ability to participate in age-appropriate activities like sports or social events.
- **Long-term Concerns:** While research generally supports acceleration, some studies highlight potential concerns about social-emotional development, particularly during the transition to higher grades. However, other research suggests these concerns are often unfounded and that accelerated students adjust well in the long run.
- **Limited Opportunities:** Skipping grades can impact participation in certain extracurricular activities, especially those based on age/grade, such as athletics, music, strings, band, or other extracurricular programs.

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment:

By signing this form, I, the parent/guardian of the above-named student, confirm the following:

1. I have participated in the review and discussion of the academic acceleration recommendation.
2. I understand the academic, social, and emotional implications associated with grade acceleration.
3. I have been provided the opportunity to ask questions, review assessment data, and understand the support services that may or may not be available to my child following acceleration.
4. I voluntarily consent to have my child placed in a higher grade level for the upcoming academic year.

Release of Liability:

In consideration of the decision to accelerate my child to a higher grade level, I hereby release and hold harmless the **United Community Center Schools**, its **Board of Directors, administrators, teachers, staff**, and **affiliates** from any and all liability, claims, or causes of action, known or unknown, which may arise as a result of this placement decision.

I understand that academic acceleration is not guaranteed to result in improved academic performance, social adjustment, or emotional well-being. I accept full responsibility for this decision in partnership with the school and acknowledge that any necessary reevaluation of placement may be discussed at a later time, should concerns arise.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Administrator Signature: _____ Date: _____