

# Queen Anne's County Public Schools



Preparing World-Class Students Through Everyday Excellence

## **Guidelines & Procedures for Academic Acceleration**

**Subject Matter & Whole-Grade Acceleration**

**Office of Gifted Education  
202 Chesterfield Ave. Centreville, MD 21617  
410-758-2403 x 124**

The Queen Anne's County Board of Education is committed to ensuring that all students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards. Accordingly, academic achievement and acceleration are based on the degree of success the individual student has demonstrated in the school system's educational program. Acceleration is the movement of a student out of a normal progression to an advanced grade based on academic performance.

1. Decisions regarding grade/course acceleration will be made by the school based Acceleration Team consisting of the principal, central office instructional supervisor, school counselor, and/or school psychologist, and key school-based personnel.
2. Decisions will be based on an in-depth evaluation of the student's readiness for, and potential to benefit from, grade/course acceleration. If accelerated, the child should continue to perform at advanced levels in the accelerated grade.
3. There will be a comprehensive evaluation of one or more of the following: academic readiness (as assessed by the Academic Dean, Teacher Specialist, Reading Specialist, and/or the Math Specialist, etc.), student's intellectual functioning, and social-emotional maturity (as assessed by a School Psychologist and/or School Counselor). Consideration may also be given to the student's health and motor development.
  - a. Assessments will be administered solely for acceleration in a **Queen Anne's County public school** in the following manner:
    - i. Conducted during one or two sessions
    - ii. Administered in English only
    - iii. Administered by a trained examiner
  - b. Assessments conducted by Queen Anne's County Public Schools personnel are the only assessments that will be considered for the purpose of acceleration. No other reports or assessments will be considered.

### **Grade Level Acceleration Procedures / Assessments:**

1. The parent<sup>1</sup> must submit a **written request** for grade level/course acceleration to the **home school administrator** by April 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year.
  - a. The written request for acceleration must be in the form of a letter. Verbal or electronic communication will not be accepted. The written request should include the following information:
    - Name of the child
    - Child's date of birth
    - Grade
    - Name, address, and phone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
    - Reason for request

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<sup>1</sup> Parent is defined as the biological or adoptive parent, legal guardian, or person acting in the absence of the parent or guardian.

2. **Within 10 business days** following the receipt of a written request for acceleration, an initial conference will be scheduled with the school based Acceleration Team in order to:
  - a. **Review current academic records / performance**
  - b. **Decide whether to continue with academic testing**
3. If acceleration is still requested following the conference, academic testing will be scheduled by the home school. The academic assessments should occur **within 10 days** of the initial conference.
  - a. A child will be required to:
    - i. Demonstrate sufficient skills for the appropriate grade to be entered. As an example, the child should demonstrate achievement *at or above* the second semester for the grade level they would be entering in reading, writing, and math:
      1. Score 80% or higher on the mid-year math benchmark assessment of the grade level with which you are seeking acceleration,
      2. Read and comprehend at a mid-year level on an informal reading inventory for the grade level you are seeking acceleration; and
      3. Write proficiently at the grade level with which you are seeking acceleration.
  - b. Following the administration of the academic assessments, a written report of the results will be generated by the individuals administering the assessments and mailed to the parents within 10 business days of the assessment.
  - c. The parent may request a meeting with the school administrator to discuss the academic assessment results. The school administrator may request the examiners, Teacher Specialist/Academic Dean, and/or the Gifted Learning Supervisor to be present during the meeting.
4. If the child meets the requirements as outlined by academic testing, then the school will schedule an assessment of intellectual functioning to be completed within 45 business days.
  - a. The School Psychologist will contact the parent to obtain permission to assess in order to determine the child's IQ.
  - b. In order to qualify for acceleration, the child should have a level of mental development two standard deviations above the mean for the normative sample of the test instrument being used. The following assessments are examples of acceptable test instruments: Wechsler Intellectual Scales for Children (WISC-IV); Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (RIAS); Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales (SB-V); CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) or other individually administered assessment of cognitive/intellectual abilities with acceptable validity, and reliability. The most current edition of the assessment instrument should be used.
5. In addition to qualifying academically and intellectually, the student should demonstrate social and emotional maturity. Adequate health and motor development is necessary as well.
  - a. **Social & Emotional:** The student should be free of any serious adjustment problems and demonstrate a desire to learn. Candidates would be those who readily adapted to school experiences and other group activities. The team should determine that the student does

- not feel unduly pressured by the parents. The parents, as well as the child, must be in favor of grade/course acceleration.
- b. Physical: The student should have sufficient gross and fine motor skills to be able to adapt to class and playground activities.
6. Following the administration of the intellectual functioning assessments, a meeting between the school based Acceleration Team and the parent will be scheduled to discuss the assessment results and share the acceleration decision.
    - a. This meeting should be scheduled within 10 business days of the conclusion of intellectual functioning testing.
    - b. The School Psychologist will mail a report to the parents outlining the results of the intellectual testing 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting.
    - c. A written report regarding grade acceleration will be shared with the parent at this meeting.
  7. All cases of acceleration will be on an initial trial basis for a period of six weeks. Following the six-week trial period, all involved parties will meet and consider information related to the child's ability to function successfully at the accelerated grade level / course as reflected through observation and documentation made by members of the evaluation team and classroom teacher.
    - a. If the team agrees the child is functioning satisfactorily, the child will remain in the accelerated placement.
    - b. If the team agrees that the child is not functioning satisfactorily, then the team will place the child in the appropriate educational setting.

## Appeal Process

1. A parent may appeal the acceleration decision made by the school in accordance with the following process. All appeals must be in writing; **no verbal or electronic communications will be accepted.**
2. Appeal to the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services.
  - A decision by the home school to deny acceleration under these guidelines may be appealed to the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services.
  - The appeal must be made in writing and filed with the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services **within fifteen (15) calendar days** of the date of the notice of acceleration denial.
  - The appeal should be mailed to:  
Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services  
Queen Anne's County Public Schools  
202 Chesterfield Avenue  
Centreville, Maryland 21204
  - The Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services and/or his/her designee, will review the facts of the case and issue a decision in writing within 10 business days of receiving the appeal.
3. Appeal to the Superintendent
  - If the appeal is denied or the party is not satisfied with the decision rendered by the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services, he/she may further appeal that decision by filing an appeal with the Superintendent.
  - The appeal must be made in writing and filed with the Superintendent **within ten (10) business days** of the date of the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services' decision.
  - The appeal shall be mailed to:  
Office of the Superintendent  
Queen Anne's County Public Schools  
202 Chesterfield Avenue  
Centreville, Maryland 21617
  - The Superintendent, or his/her designee, will review the facts of the case and issue a decision in writing within two weeks of receiving the appeal.
4. Appeal to the Board of Education
  - A decision of the Superintendent, or his/her designee, regarding the denial of acceleration may be appealed to the Board of Education of Queen Anne's County.
  - The appeal must be made in writing and filed with the Board **within thirty (30) calendar days** of the date of the Superintendent's decision.
  - The appeal shall be mailed to:  
President of the Board of Education of Queen Anne's County  
Queen Anne's County Public Schools  
202 Chesterfield Avenue

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. *How do I apply for grade acceleration for my child?*

Parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a written request for grade acceleration to the principal of the school that serves the home address (home school) of parent(s)/guardian(s) residing in Queen Anne's County. The letter of request must include the following:

- Name of the Child
- Child's date of birth
- Name, address, and phone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Reason for request

2. *When can I apply for grade acceleration for my child?*

Letters of request will be accepted until April 15 for the next school year.

3. *What determines whether or not my child is recommended for grade acceleration?*

The child is given three content assessments to determine if IQ testing should be completed by the School Psychologist. Your child must have an IQ of 130 or above for grade acceleration. These scores are a predictor that your child, if accelerated, will continue throughout his/her school career as an advanced student.

4. *When will my child be tested and how do I find out the results of the testing?*

- A conference in person or by phone with the school based Acceleration Team will be scheduled within 10 business days of the receipt of the written request for grade acceleration.
- Unless other arrangements are mutually agreed upon, testing will be conducted at the home school within 10 business days of the conference with the administrator.
- Within 10 business days of completion of academic testing, a written recommendation regarding grade acceleration will be sent to the home.
- The parent/guardian may request a conference to discuss the results of the testing.

5. *In what areas will my child be tested?*

- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics
- IQ standardized testing (if applicable)

6. *Can I prepare my child for the test?*

No preparation is needed for the assessment.

7. *Can my child take the test a second time?*

The assessment is only administered one time to each child.

8. *How long will the test take?*

Children respond differently to testing. In order for short breaks to be taken by the child, plan for approximately two hours.

9. ***My child's first language is not English, but I still want him/her tested. What can I do?***

The assessment is only administered in English. This should be discussed at the conference with the school administrator.

10. ***I just moved to Queen Anne's County and the date has passed for grade acceleration. Can I send a letter of request now?***

Under certain conditions, a parent(s)/guardian(s) who moves into Queen Anne's County after the April 15, 2018 deadline may request grade acceleration. In order for a request to be considered, the request must be made by no later than the first day of school for the 2018-2019 school year.

If you have further questions, please contact, Rob Watkins, Supervisor of Instruction – Mathematics and Gifted Services at [robert.watkins@qacps.org](mailto:robert.watkins@qacps.org) or 410-758-2403, ext. 124.