**Saydel Academic Acceleration Policy**

1. **PURPOSE**—In accordance with *Iowa State Policy* *257.44* (*“Gifted and talented children”* are those children who are identified as possessing outstanding abilities and who are capable of high performance. Gifted and talented children are children who require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program), the Saydel Community School District believes that acceleration is an appropriate and effective intervention for select highly able students who have demonstrated cognitive abilities beyond what is typical of their chronological age cohorts in one or more academic areas. This policy describes the process that the Saydel Community School District shall use to evaluate and identify students for possible academic acceleration.
2. **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**—In accordance with *Saydel Board Policy 102*, Saydel Community School District will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of: race, creed**,** color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, marital status, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. In addition, the Extended Learning Program will not discriminate against students will differing English language proficiency.
3. **DEFINITION OF ACCELERATION—**Any modification of the regular instructional program that enables a student to progress more rapidly and to complete a program in less time or at an earlier age than is traditional.

**Acceleration Options:**

Early entrance to school—*(Iowa State Policy 282.3* prohibits students from entering kindergarten before age 5.) Students may be admitted to first grade at age 5 if they have completed a kindergarten program elsewhere or if they demonstrate a need for first grade coursework. Students admitted to first grade before age 6 who have not completed a kindergarten program elsewhere shall be evaluated by a team using the Iowa Acceleration Scale.

Grade Skipping/Full Grade Acceleration—Students who demonstrate a need for more rigorous and relevant coursework shall be accelerated using the Iowa Acceleration Scale to be full grade accelerated.

Although many parents and teachers have concerns regarding whole grade acceleration practices, extensive research has consistently found that not only do exceptionally gifted students benefit academically and socially through the process of full grade acceleration, but this process is also the most efficient method of meeting their particular academic needs. For further information on this subject, parents/teachers should consult *A Nation Deceived* which can be obtained online from the Belin Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa.

Content/Subject Acceleration—Students who demonstrate a need for more rigorous and relevant coursework in one or more subject areas may be accelerated using an end of course assessment. Students may move up a grade level to work on individual subject matter, or may be accelerated within their classroom with differentiated lessons. The EXPLORE test will be administered to all students in 5th-6th grade in order to screen for accelerative needs in specific content areas.

Curriculum Compacting—Classroom teachers should pretest identified students and assess the students’ previously acquired skills. Instruction should be focused on mastery of deficient areas only, which will reduce time spent on drill and review. Curriculum compacting may sometimes take place during RtI at the elementary level.

Dual Enrollment—Students may attend classes in more than one building level during the school year (example, middle school students could be subject matter accelerated in the high school building). Students may receive high school credit for the courses taken if they are concurrently enrolled.

Post-secondary Enrollment Option—Students who have exhausted all coursework offered at Saydel may enroll at a local accredited college for credit.

Credit by Examination—Advanced students (K-8) may demonstrate proficiency in a specific course by completing an end of unit or end of course assessment. Students who pass the end of unit/course assessment with a score of 85% or better may progress to the next unit/course of study.

Advanced Placement—Students may take courses with advanced or accelerated coursework, in order to test out of or receive credit by examination by the College Board.

1. **PROCEDURES**

Referral Process

1. Any student enrolled in the Saydel Community School District may be considered for whole-grade or content acceleration. This process may be initiated by the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), a staff member, or administrator.
2. Copies of this policy shall be made public and available to the district staff and parents/guardians at each school building.
3. The principal of the referred student’s school shall obtain written permission from the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) to evaluate the child for possible acceleration. The district shall evaluate all students referred for accelerated placement whose parent(s)/guardian(s) have granted consent.
4. After permission is received a designee in the district shall gather data on the student using the Iowa Acceleration Scale.
5. Once data is gathered, the acceleration team (Principal, current teacher or teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s) and building ELP coordinator) shall be called to review the information and to discuss the child’s potential for acceleration.
6. A meeting shall be held with parent(s)/guardian(s) to explain the process for determining the outcome. If this child is to be accelerated, then the parents must sign a permission form.
7. Prior to the meeting with parents, the acceleration team should have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for implementing the acceleration for the child. The building ELP coordinator shall oversee the implementation and yearly review of the student’s PEP. The ELP coordinator shall be responsible for providing guidance to the student for both short and long-term needs.

Evaluation Process

The Saydel Community School District will use an evaluation instrument called The Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition (IAS) in order to guide the process of evaluating a student for full grade acceleration. The scale directs a team in gathering and objectively evaluating multiple data points and information regarding a student to systematically guide accelerative decision-making.

The IAS includes:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***General student information:*** | **Possible Measurement Tools** | ***Critical items:*** | **Possible Measurement Tools** |
| Student academic history | Historical grades | Assessment of ability | CogAT/ OLSAT |
| Assessment of achievement | Iowa Assessment Scores / MAP Scores | Assessment of aptitude | EXPLORE/ ACT/ SAT  Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test |
| Developmental factors | Kingore Observation Inventory | School/academic factors | Self-Inventory |
| Interpersonal skills | Student Interview and/or Portfolio | School/parental attitude and support | Parent/Guardian Survey and Conference |

The acceleration committee shall make a decision for one of the following:

* 1. Single subject acceleration
  2. Whole grade acceleration
  3. Acceleration is not recommended

Follow-up:

1. Acceleration shall be done on a trial basis for four weeks after the decision to accelerate has been made in the case of whole-grade acceleration and content area acceleration.
2. At any time during the trial period, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the student shall be removed without repercussions from the current placement.
3. The ELP coordinator shall be the case manager for the accelerated student.
4. Within one month after the acceleration begins, the acceleration team will meet to assess the student’s intellectual, social and emotional progress. This group will discuss and recommend continuance or discontinuance of the acceleration.

Appeal Process:

Appeals must be made in writing to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of the parent(s)/guardian(s) receiving the results of the evaluation. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the appeal and notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of his/her decision within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent or his/her designee's decision will be final.