

REGULATION IKE

Las Cruces Public Schools

Related Entries: IKE, IKF, IKF-R, IKAB, IKAB-R
Responsible Office: Associate Superintendent for Instruction

Placement, Promotion, Acceleration and Retention

I. PURPOSE

To set forth the procedures for placing, promoting, accelerating, and retaining students attending Las Cruces Public Schools.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Academic Improvement Plan (AIP)* is a written document developed by the student AIP team with specific content standards required for a grade level that a student has not achieved and that prescribes intervention programs such as summer school or extended day; and defines parent/guardian and student responsibility.
- B. *Alternative school-district-determined assessment results* is the results obtained from student assessments developed by a local district and conducted at an elementary school level or middle school level.
- C. *Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS)* is a long-range strategic plan designed to promote student success and continuous school improvement.
- D. *Student Assistance Team (SAT)* is a group consisting of, at a minimum, the student's teacher, school administrator, parent/guardian, and when appropriate, counselor.
- E. *Acceleration* is an intervention that moves students through an educational program at rates faster, or at younger ages, than typical. It means matching the level, complexity and pace of the curriculum to the readiness and motivation of the student.
- F. *Categories* are the broadest and most encompassing level of acceleration classification. The two broad *categories* of acceleration are content-based and grade-based. The primary distinguishing feature between content-based acceleration and grade-based acceleration is whether the accelerative intervention shortens the number of years that a student spends in the K-12 system.
- G. *Twice exceptional students* are those students who are gifted as well as exhibiting any number of disorders or disabilities which make the students eligible for special education services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

H. *Profoundly gifted students* are those students who score in excess of 170 IQ.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Access to acceleration is open to all students who demonstrate mastery of curriculum regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, disability status, socioeconomic status, English language proficiency and school building attended.

1. All students have access to acceleration regardless of student populations served, including English Language Learners (ELL), at-risk, low socio-economic status, profoundly gifted and twice exceptional students who are gifted. In addition, not all students identified as gifted may be in need of acceleration. LCPS Advanced Educational Services (AES) teachers should be used as advisors and consulted in design of acceleration services.
2. Referral of a student for acceleration is a separate process from referral to a school's gifted services. A student who is referred for acceleration will not necessarily be part of a school's gifted and talented services because the student may not be identified as being in need of services, or may be in the referral process for gifted services. These same students still may have a need for acceleration regardless of identified status. In addition, not all students identified as gifted may be in need of acceleration.

B. Individuals generally involved in decision-making for acceleration are:

1. Student
2. Parents or guardians
3. Current
4. Receiving teacher(s) - teacher(s) from the next grade
5. School principal
6. School counselor
7. School psychologist
8. Talented and gifted teacher (AES teacher) when the student is in the AES program
9. A representative with expertise in language acquisition when the student is an ELL.
10. A representative with expertise in twice exceptionality when the student is twice exceptional.

11. Any other parties who may have knowledge beneficial to the decision-making process.
- C. The decision-making process shall include the assessment of the student and the plan after the need for acceleration has been determined.
1. The screening procedure shall be applied equitably and systematically to all referred students.
 2. If the student expresses that he/she is not interested in acceleration, then the process should not proceed further. The possibility of consideration for referral for acceleration can be revisited at a later date, for example, the upcoming semester or school year, as appropriate. (See Item 4 below)
 3. Students scoring at or above predetermined levels, such as the 95th percentile, on regularly administered state norm referenced tests should be automatically referred for consideration for acceleration. The student's score profile, rather than the composite score, should be considered, so as not to bias the procedure against students who have an uneven pattern of scores and who are likely candidates for subject matter acceleration.
 4. Ideally, a student will be assessed for acceleration in the spring, and if recommended, participate in appropriate transition activities prior to placement in the advanced grade or content at the beginning of the next school year. The needs of the student should dictate when acceleration decisions are considered. Local practices should determine how many days prior to the start of the school year or second semester an acceleration referral and evaluation should be made.
 5. As part of the information-gathering process, the student under consideration for acceleration shall be consulted, depending on the student's age and willingness to participate. (The student should not participate in the child study team's discussion of the student.)
 6. In the data-gathering process, consideration for acceleration **should not** be based on any single data source, but should include information gathered from multiple data sources. Examples of assessments can be found in the LCPS Academic Evaluation Master List (See Appendix B). This list includes subjective, objective, and anecdotal assessment options, which are listed according to academic level. The Acceleration Data Point Checklist (See Appendix C) should be used to ensure that multiple data sources have been used in addressing the student's needs.
 7. Once the need for acceleration has been determined, a comprehensive written plan shall be developed and provided to the parents or legal guardian(s) of the student. This plan will include the student's present level of performance, type(s) of services provided and how those services

are measured. (Note: Acceleration is open to all students, including students who are gifted.)

D. The forms/ways of acceleration fall into one of two categories: Subject-Based Acceleration (Item 1 below) or Grade-Based Acceleration (Item 2 below).

1. Subject-Based Acceleration provides students with advanced content, skills or knowledge before the expected age or grade level.
 - a. Self-Paced Instruction is when an advanced student, within the parameters of a specific written contract, works on self-paced activities of greater complexity and depth than his/her classroom peers.
 - b. Curriculum Compacting occurs when a student is pre-assessed to determine whether grade-level proficiency in a specific academic area has been achieved. With the time saved, the student then engages in advanced curriculum in the same time slot.
 - c. Dual Enrollment allows advanced students to enroll in higher-level coursework when proficiency at grade level has been demonstrated.
 - d. Mentoring/Internships/Career Co-Operative is available for advanced students, within the parameters of a specific written contract. It allows a student to work with an approved professional in the community to gain insight and experience about a specific career. This may include, but is not limited to participation in the LCPS EXCEL or Job Shadowing programs.
 - e. Advanced Placement (AP) courses are provided, as early as the middle school years, in which the advanced student may enroll and take AP exams, gaining high school and possible advanced university course credit based on the examination score.
 - f. Online Curriculum. Students now have the opportunity at all four LCPS high schools to access courses via online courseware. Online instruction provides access to quality curriculum that supports traditional learning models. The online curriculum enables students to achieve success, learn at an individualized level, and benefit from an instructional experience and pace that meets their unique needs. This model is used almost exclusively at San Andres High School, and in alternative classrooms at Las Cruces, Mayfield and Oñate high schools. Online courses must be pre-approved by the school district.
 - g. Distance Learning. All New Mexico students have a unique opportunity to access coursework completely online. IDEAL-NM provides core, elective, and AP courses to students enrolled in schools that cannot address all individuals' course needs. A true distance course is fully supported by an instructor "at the other end," which

distinguishes it from a traditional correspondence course. In LCPS schools, the student is provided with additional “live” support. This model, based on researched best practices, helps students find success in this rapidly growing alternative.

2. Grade-Based Acceleration typically shortens the number of years a student spends in grades K-12. In practice, a student is placed in a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, on a full-time basis for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Grade-based acceleration is commonly known as "grade skipping," but it can include other means to shorten the number of years a student remains in the K-12 school system. (Note: For secondary acceleration, a student still must meet LCPS and state guidelines. See LCPS Policy IKF: Graduation/Credit Requirements.)
 - a. Whole-grade acceleration occurs when a student has completed a grade level and skips a full grade level and is placed two grades ahead at the beginning of the following school year. For example, a first grader, who has completed first grade is placed in a third-grade classroom (rather than a second-grade classroom) on a full-time basis at the beginning of the next school year.
 - b. Another type of whole-grade acceleration occurs when a student completes the fall semester of a school year and is placed in the next grade level at the beginning of the spring semester of the same school year. For example, a fifth-grade student completes the fall semester of his/her fifth-grade year and is placed in the sixth grade at the start of the second semester of the same school year.
 - c. Grade telescoping takes place when a group of advanced students is accelerated through more than one year's curriculum in a year in all academic areas. For example, three years' curriculum are completed in two years' time, or, at the high school level, four years are completed in three years' time. The student fulfills credit requirements and graduates early. (See LCPS Regulation IKF-R: Graduation/Credit Requirements.)
 - d. There are multiple ways that students can enter college early: 1) An advanced student is granted a diploma after spending only five semesters in high school by accumulating credits on an accelerated basis through "dual credit" coursework taken while in middle school and by satisfying some high school graduation requirements by completing "educational options" rather than traditional courses. The student then enrolls in college as a full-time student at age 16. Some students skip middle school and, after finishing high school, enter college at a younger-than-typical age; and 2) A student leaves high school without the traditional diploma, earns a General Education

Diploma (GED), and enters a full-time university degree program.

- E. Intervention programs, academic improvement programs and promotion policies shall be aligned with district assessment and the state required assessment results.
- F. The board of education will approve school district-developed intervention programs and academic improvement programs to provide special instructional assistance to students in grades one through eight who fail to meet mandated grade-level performance standards.
 - 1. The cost of intervention programs and academic improvement programs shall be borne by the school district.
 - 2. Intervention programs and academic improvement programs shall be incorporated into the school district's EPSS and filed with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED).
- G. The cost of summer and extended day intervention programs and academic improvement programs offered in grades nine through 12 shall be borne by the parent; however, where parents are determined to be indigent according to guidelines established by NMPED, the school district shall bear those costs.
- H. Diagnosis of weaknesses identified by a student's academic achievement may serve as criteria in assessing the need for remedial programs or retention.
- I. A parent shall be notified by the school no later than the end of the second grading period that his/her child is failing to make satisfactory progress, and a conference consisting of the parent and the teacher shall be held to discuss possible intervention programs available to assist the student in attaining mandated grade level performance standards.
 - 1. Specific academic deficiencies and intervention strategies shall be explained to the student's parent and a written plan developed containing timelines, academic expectations, and the measurements to be used to verify that a student has overcome his/her academic deficiencies.
 - 2. Intervention programs and academic improvement programs include tutoring, extended day or week programs, summer programs and other research-based models for student improvement.
- J. At the end of grades one through seven, three options are available, depending upon a student's academic progress:
 - 1. The student has made adequate academic progress and shall enter the next higher grade; or

2. The student has not made adequate academic progress and shall participate in the required level of intervention. Upon certification by the school district that the student has made adequate progress, he/she shall enter the next higher grade; or
 3. The student has not made adequate academic progress upon completion of the prescribed intervention program, and upon the recommendation of the teacher and principal, shall either be:
 - a. Retained in the same grade for no more than one school year with an AIP developed by the SAT in order to meet adequate academic progress; or
 - b. Placed in the next grade level if the parent/guardian refuses to allow his/her child to be retained pursuant to paragraph (a) above.
 - i. In this case, the parent shall sign a waiver indicating his/her desire that the student be placed in the next grade with an AIP designed to address specific academic deficiencies.
 - ii. The AIP shall be developed by the student SAT outlining timelines and monitoring activities to ensure progress toward overcoming those academic deficiencies.
 - iii. Students failing to make adequate academic progress at the end of that year shall then be retained in the same grade for no more than one year. This decision is not refutable by parents/guardians.
- K. At the end of the eighth grade, a student who fails to make adequate academic progress shall:
1. Be retained in the eighth grade for no more than one school year to overcome academic deficiencies; or
 2. If the student SAT team determines that retention of the student in the eighth grade will not assist the student to overcome academic deficiencies, the team shall design a high school graduation plan to meet the student's needs for entry into the workforce or a post-secondary educational institution.
- L. If a student is retained in the eighth grade, the student SAT team shall develop a specific AIP that clearly delineates the student's academic deficiencies and prescribes a specific intervention plan to address those academic deficiencies.
- M. Any student who fails to attain academic proficiency in the state's content standards for two successive school years shall be referred to the student SAT team for placement in an intervention plan as structured by the school district. Intervention plans shall be filed at the student's home school.

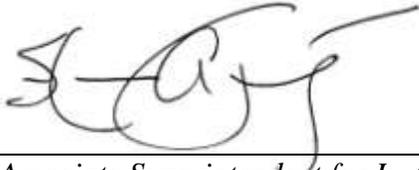
N. Promotion and retention decisions affecting a student enrolled in special education shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the Individual Educational Plan established for that student.

IV. ACCELERATION GUIDANCE MANUAL

For additional information and guidelines on LCPS acceleration practices, see the most current version of the LCPS Academic Acceleration Guidance Manual (Appendices A, B, C and D below).

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Legal Reference: 22-2C-6 NMSA 1978



Associate Superintendent for Instruction

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Date Approved

Appendix A

References

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- Southern, T., and Jones, E, 2004. *Types of Acceleration: Dimensions and Issues*. Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students, Volume II, page 5.

Appendix B

[LCPS Academic Evaluation Master List](#)

Appendix C

[Acceleration Data Point Checklist](#)

Appendix D

[Individualized Acceleration Learning Plan](#)