

**Program Guidelines**

Flexible Pacing (Acceleration) – Flexible pacing is an essential component of gifted education. It is defined as any provision that places students at an appropriate instructional level, creating the best possible program for student achievement and instruction, and allowing them to move forward in the curriculum as they achieve mastery of content and skills. Flexible pacing becomes more specialized for students identified as needing individualized programming services. Some examples of flexible pacing include:

1. **Grade Advancement** - The student is moved ahead of normal grade placement in all academic areas, after the student demonstrates mastery of content skills and the ability to transfer these skills and knowledge to other content areas and to real-life situations. A decision to have a student advance a grade would include guidance and consultation with last year's teacher(s), the teacher(s) the student will be having, counselor(s), administrator(s), other staff members, parents, and student.
2. **Credit by Examination** - The student must receive high school course credit upon successful completion of an examination.
3. **Early Entrance** - The student is admitted to school prior to the age specified by the District for normal entry.
4. **Self-Paced Instruction** - The student is presented with materials by an instructional staff member that allows him/her to proceed at a self-selected pace.
5. **Correspondence Courses** - The student may take high school or college courses by mail or through distance learning course presentation. Credit may be assigned through successful completion of the course.
6. **Extra-Load** - The student is allowed to take a greater number of classes than a normal load.
7. **Dual Credit Courses** - The student may take a course in middle school or high school that can confer high school, college, or vocational credit upon satisfactory performance.
  - The teacher must be licensed to teach the subject and credit level.

- The credit cannot replace a credit required for graduation (core credit subjects only).
  - The credit is entered on the student's transcript.
8. For middle school students who take high school or high school equivalent courses during their middle school years, criteria as defined in board policy 345.41 will be followed.
  9. Subject-Matter Acceleration - The student is placed for a part of a day with students at more advanced grade levels for one or more subjects without being assigned to a higher grade (e.g. a fifth grader going to sixth grade science instruction).

Programming - Integrated and differentiated programming begins in the regular classroom. The options become more specialized for students who require programming beyond the regular classroom, as well as those who need individualized services. Some examples of programming options are as follows:

1. Regular Classroom Differentiation - Many of the students identified as gifted will have their needs (educational, social, emotional, psychological) met in the regular classroom. The classroom teacher has the major responsibility of working with students. Means of integrating and differentiating within the regular classroom include:
  - a. Enrichment - Strategies or materials which supplement standard grade work (i.e. productive, complex thinking, learning concepts, and generalizations).
  - b. Curriculum Modification - Providing curricular activities that are qualitatively different from the regular curriculum so that gifted students are not required to do "more of the same" which they already know. This includes changing the content (emphasis on concepts and generalizations rather than on specific facts), emphasizing the process (e.g. higher level thinking, creativity, problem solving, and research skills) and varying the products or outcomes (a means by which students communicate the reconceptualization of existing information orally, visually, kinesthetically, and in writing).
  - c. Instructional Strategies - The use of various instructional strategies, techniques and models.
  - d. Compacting Curriculum - Modifying or "streamlining" the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of previously mastered material and to provide time for appropriate enrichment and/or acceleration activities while ensuring

mastery of basic skills.

- e. *Cluster Ability Grouping* - The flexible grouping and regrouping of students is based on their level of skill mastery (i.e. reading and math flex groups). Teachers could team teach, share expertise in teaching, and split responsibilities (while one teacher works with a large group, others can be planning or working with individuals or small groups).
  - f. *Learning Centers* - Providing quality learning activities which encourage higher level thinking skills and/or provide enrichment or acceleration. These activities are used with an individual or small groups of students while the remainder of the class is involved in large group instruction. Learning centers vary assignments and/or provide enrichment opportunities.
  - g. *Continuous Progress* - Continuous progress is provided through the quality mastery of basics, curriculum modification, enrichment and acceleration.
2. *Special Group Programming Beyond the Regular Classroom* - Identified students can learn more quickly and in greater depth. These students are in need of learning experiences which replace the regular classroom offerings with related but suitably advanced and enriched educational pursuits. Most of these activities require a special grouping of students with common interests and/or abilities. These groups provide the opportunity for gifted learners to spend time together under the guidance of a professional. Some examples of specific group programming beyond the regular classroom are as follows:
- a. *Pull-Out Classes* - Gifted students are provided an opportunity for enhanced educational programming outside the regular classroom.
  - b. *Honor Classes* - Honor classes allow clusters of gifted students to work on specific disciplines with advanced instruction. Honors classes function in depth, faster pacing and address higher level thought processes to a greater degree.
  - c. *Co-Curricular/Extra-Curricular and Activities/Contests/Competitions* - These include opportunities for students to participate in activities that relate to their particular talent or interest. Examples include: Academic Decathlon, Mock Trial, Debate, Swing Choir, Science Fair, etc.
  - d. *Summer Programs* - Summer program gifted classes provide students the opportunity to study challenging subject matter and to advance at a pace appropriate to their abilities. The classes are demanding and especially

designed to match the student's intellectual requirements, academic needs, and developing potential.

3. Individualized Services - Identified students having extraordinary needs, particularly accelerated students, may require a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). The educational program will match the learning opportunities to the student's educational needs.

A DEP will be developed for identified students. This multi-year plan will identify and outline the continuous programming options designed to accommodate specific student needs.

Program options include, but are not limited to:

- Independent Study Courses
- Youth Options
- Correspondence Courses
- Dual-Credit Courses
- On-line Courses
- Extra Load - The student is taking a great number of courses than normal.
- Mentorships - A one-on-one relationship between a student and practicing professional who provides advanced training and experiences.
- Supervised Work Experience

**Legal References:** Sections 118.33, 118.35, and 120.02(1)(t), Wisconsin Statutes  
PI 8.01 (2)(t), Wisconsin Administrative Code

**Cross Reference:** 345.41 Acceleration Policy

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