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**LIBERTY UNION-THURSTON LOCAL  
DISTRICT**

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**A Parent's Guide to Acceleration**



## **Legislation Governing Early Entrance**

Acceleration is the Law (House Bill 79 amended to House Bill 66 – June 30, 2006). Please refer to the [State of Ohio's Model Student Acceleration Policy](#) for more information.

According to Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3324.10, Academic acceleration is when a school or district places a student in a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age for the purpose of providing the student access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Public school districts are required to have policies for evaluating students referred for academic acceleration.

In July 2007, the Liberty Union-Thurston Board of Education adopted policies related to entrance to school and academic acceleration (JEB-E, JEBA)

## **Types of Acceleration**

There are many types of acceleration, including, but not limited to the examples below.

**Whole Grade Acceleration:** This type of acceleration occurs when a student moves ahead an entire grade level. This is commonly referred to as "skipping a grade."

Examples include:

- A second grade student advancing to the fourth grade the following school year.
- Admitting a student who is not age-eligible to attend kindergarten a year early to school. This is often referred to as early entrance. To learn more about early entrance to kindergarten and first grade, please visit the Ohio Department of Education's Office for Early Learning and School Readiness webpage for kindergarten.

**Subject Acceleration:** This type of acceleration occurs when a student moves ahead a grade level in one or more subject areas but retains his or her overall grade level.

Examples include:

- A seventh grade student advancing to ninth grade reading.
- A student completing third, fourth, and fifth grade math in two school years.

Early Graduation: This type of acceleration occurs when a student meets the requirements for graduation in less than four academic years and graduates high school early in order to pursue post-secondary education.

## **Research on Acceleration**

Acceleration may be appropriate for many advanced students, including those not identified as gifted. Research shows, when appropriately implemented, acceleration does not have a negative social-emotional impact on accelerated students. For more information regarding acceleration and research related to acceleration please visit the following national organizations:

- [Acceleration Institute](#)
- [National Association for Gifted Children's \(NAGC\) Gifted Education Strategies - Acceleration](#)
- [NAGC's Parent TIP Sheet on Acceleration](#)
- [NAGC's Position Statement on Acceleration](#)
- [Duke Talent Identification Program \(Duke TIP\) - Academic Acceleration](#)
- [Johns Hopkins, the Center for Talent Youth - Topical Research Series: Acceleration](#)
- [Davidson Institute - Educational Options: Acceleration](#)

## **Applying for Acceleration**

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for Acceleration, please obtain an information/application packet from the District's website. The referral form is online under the Student Services- Gifted Tab on the Liberty Union District page at <https://www.libertyunion.org/TalentedGifted.aspx>  
You may also pick up a form at the school building.
- Once the application has been completed, it needs to be returned to the Director of Student Services before June 1st in the year for which admission is being requested. **Note:** All Acceleration applications must be submitted no later than 60 calendar days prior to the first day of school in order to be processed. No applications will be considered after this date.
- The Director of Student Services or designee will coordinate the evaluation process. A school psychologist or designee will administer the assessments. The

evaluation will be completed within 45 business days from receipt of the completed packet.

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### **How will my child be evaluated for Acceleration?**

- Acceleration evaluations are completed in the spring.
- Once an application has been received, parents will be called to schedule an individual cognitive ability test for their child at the district office.
- Students who score at least one standard deviation above the mean on cognitive ability tests (score of 115) will then move on to academic achievement testing
- Students who score below 115 on the cognitive ability test, will not be recommended to continue with the academic achievement testing, and will not be endorsed for acceleration
- If the student is referred for *early entrance to kindergarten* or *whole-grade acceleration*, the committee will use the information from the evaluation, as well as other information about the student's social and emotional development, to complete the Iowa Acceleration Scale. Currently, the only acceleration assessment process approved by ODE for evaluating candidates for whole grade acceleration in grades K-8 is the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS), Third Edition.
- If the student is referred for *single subject acceleration*, the committee will use a single subject acceleration tool, such as the GCCO acceleration tool. This tool is similar to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, but is specifically designed for single subject referrals.
- For successful candidates, a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) shall be completed prior to the accelerated setting. The WAP describes the transition plan and supports for the successful implementation of an acceleration. After the successful completion of the transition period established in the WAP, an acceleration becomes a permanent placement
- A parent or legal guardian of the referred child may appeal in writing the decision to the Superintendent within 30 days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his or her final decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

Liberty Union-Thurston uses educationally-accepted standardized tests, which is required by the Ohio Department of Education. The following instruments are most commonly used:

Intelligence tests:

- *Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI)*
- *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fifth Edition*
- *Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAt)*
- ***Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Third Edition***

Achievement tests:

- *Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement*
  - *Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement*
  - *Iowa Test of Basic Skills*
  - *iReady*
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## **Timeline for Acceleration**

- Deadline for Acceleration applications: **June 1**
- Deadline for completion of evaluations: **45 school calendar days after submission of application**
- Results of evaluations can take between 30 to 60 days

**Note:** All Acceleration applications must be submitted no later than 60 calendar days prior to the first day of school in order to be processed. No applications will be considered after this date.

Please return the completed application, information sheet and consent form to:  
**Director of Student Services, 1108 S. Main St., Baltimore, OH 43105**