

# **Subject-Matter Acceleration Information Packet**

**In Support of BOE Policy/Regulation 2535  
Student Academic Acceleration**

**October 1, 2007**



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# **Subject-Matter Acceleration Information Packet**

## **Rationale**

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.

Research indicates that when students' academic and social needs are not met, the results are boredom and disengagement from school. Closing our eyes to students' educational differences is neither democratic nor helpful.

For these reasons, the Rockwood School District makes subject-matter acceleration\* available for appropriately selected students. For the majority of students, in-class differentiation provides the learning opportunities needed for advanced students to be challenged. This document describes the process for identifying and serving the small percentage of students for whom more aggressive forms of intervention are necessary. The selection process considers the whole student: social, emotional, physical, academic, and intellectual.

\* **NOTE:** The term "acceleration", as used in this document, refers to Subject-Matter Acceleration (where 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).

## **STUDENTS**

### **Policy 2535**

#### **Student Academic Acceleration**

The Board of Education of the Rockwood School District believes it is important to encourage, support, and assist each student to develop academically. Given the range of abilities represented in each Rockwood classroom, it is essential that teachers adapt instruction to meet the wide range of student abilities and skills that exists. In recognition of the diverse needs of students and the benefits associated with instructional adaptations, the Board supports acceleration appropriate to individual students.

## **STUDENTS**

### **Regulation 2535**

#### **Student Academic Acceleration**

Acceleration in the Rockwood School District refers to educational strategies which provide opportunities for students to more rapidly achieve educational goals as described on the next page. Participation in acceleration often is based on individually identified needs and is designed on a case-by-case basis.

The following chart provides examples of acceleration strategies that may be considered in making decisions appropriate to the individual student. For Subject-Matter Acceleration procedures, refer to the steps outlined in this packet. All student assessment data will be factored in a decision. In each instance, the best interest of the student predominates.

## Options Applicable in Grades K-12

<b>Curriculum Compacting</b>	A procedure used to streamline the regular curriculum for students who are capable of mastering it at a faster pace. Pre-testing identifies learning objectives already mastered, and students are allowed to “test out” of certain academic exercises then move on to new material.
<b>Differentiated Instruction</b>	Consistently using a variety of instructional approaches to modify content, process, and/or products in response to learner readiness, interest, and/or learner profile of academically diverse students.
<b>Grade Skipping *</b>	The student is moved ahead of normal grade placement. This may be done during an academic year (e.g. placing a third grader directly into fourth grade, or promoting a third grader to fifth grade).
<b>Individually Paced Instruction</b>	The student is presented with materials that allow him/her to proceed at a self-selected pace.
<b>Subject-Matter Acceleration</b>	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 fourth grader goes to fifth grade for science) or the student works for part of a day on material above grade level for one or more subjects within his/her regular classroom.

\* In accordance with Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations Whole-Grade Skipping in kindergarten is not an option.

## Options Applicable at the Middle School and/or High School Levels

<b>Challenge Program</b>	Available for middle school students who qualify by meeting expectations of an assessment matrix based on academic performance.
<b>Advanced Placement</b>	The student takes a course in high school that prepares him/her for taking an examination that can confer college credit for satisfactory performance.
<b>Distance Learning</b>	An instructional strategy by which technology is used to allow the student to not physically be in the place where the teaching is taking place. Access to the instructor is gained through technology such as the Internet, interactive videoconferencing, and/or satellite.
<b>Dual-Enrollment/Credit</b>	The student is enrolled in course work or summer programs that confer advanced instruction and credit for study (e.g. fast-paced language or math courses offered by universities).
<b>Early Graduation</b>	Graduate from high school in less than four (4) years based upon current District Policy 2525 – Graduation Requirements.
<b>Elective System</b>	The student can select a variety of upper level courses for the purpose of meeting his/her educational goals.

## Who Should Be Subject-Matter Accelerated?

All acceleration requires high academic ability. The student's motivation, social-emotional maturity, and interests must also be considered. Some examples of students who might be considered for subject-matter acceleration include:

- The student whose level of achievement and ability significantly surpasses same age group peers.
- The student with high ability but who is not performing well in class.

## Procedures for Subject-Specific Matter Acceleration Consideration

### **Step 1:**

Parents, teachers, administrators, or students may initiate subject-matter acceleration consideration by submitting a *Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration* form. This packet (*Subject-Matter Acceleration Information Packet*) and the accompanying *Acceleration Resource Packet* should be reviewed before considering acceleration. These items can be obtained on the District's webpage at <http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/gifted/index.htm>. Forms and packets are also available from each school secretary. Once the *Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration* form is completed it should be submitted to the building principal. A copy of the *Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration* form will be sent to the school counselor.

The building principal reviews the *Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration* form.

Every attempt will be made to have a decision within 30 school days of receipt of the *Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration* form.

The District will consider up to two Subject-Matter Acceleration requests per subject per student during the student's enrollment in the district.

### **Step 2:**

The following items are critical to successful subject-matter acceleration. The building principal will check the following items:

1. Whether the student is part of the District's gifted program.
2. Whether the student indicates that he/she is interested in receiving accelerated subject-matter.
3. Whether the student currently has a sibling in the same grade (i.e. a twin).
4. Whether the student would be accelerated into the same grade as (or higher grade than) a sibling.

If any of the above three items apply to the student this information will be taken into strong consideration by the *Acceleration Study Team*.

A discussion with the student regarding the possibility of subject-matter acceleration will take place. This discussion, led by the school counselor, will be to gain the student's perspective.

### **Step 3:**

The building principal will gather data from school records, parents, teachers and the student. (If this Subject Acceleration request follows a grade skipping request, refer to forms already completed.) The data gathered should contain information about the student's school history, academic ability, achievement, and aptitude. Additional academic information can be gathered from the curriculum coordinator or their designee to assess specific subject matter academic achievement. The building principal will record background information on the *Subject Acceleration Data Collection and Decision-Making(SA-DC&DM)* form found on page 11 of this packet.

### **Step 4:**

An *Acceleration Study Team* meeting will be scheduled by the building principal for the purpose of assessing the student's suitability for subject-matter acceleration. Possible team members may include: the building principal, current teacher(s), potential receiving teacher(s), school counselor, curriculum coordinator(s)/directors, and others as requested by the building principal (i.e., parents, acceleration resource teacher). The *Acceleration Study Team* will review the information gathered by the building principal and add any additional data.

If the decision is made to consider subject-matter acceleration, proceed to Step 5.

If the decision is made not to consider subject-matter acceleration, proceed to Step 6.

### **Step 5:**

#### **For Students Being Considered for Subject-Matter Acceleration**

If the decision of Step 4 is to consider subject-matter acceleration, the *Acceleration Study Team* should discuss and create a plan keeping in mind the following points:

Acceleration should take place at natural transition points.

Accelerated students should be placed with the high ability students in the new class.

An effort should be made to combine students who have been accelerated.

Within 6 to 8 weeks following the subject-matter acceleration, the building principal will contact parents and the teacher(s) to review the student's progress. If the student is progressing, the current plan continues. If there is concern, the *Acceleration Study Team* will meet to make the necessary modifications to the plan.

All decisions will be recorded and filed in the student's cumulative (confidential) file at the building level.

During the last quarter of each school year, the building principal will work with his/her building staff and other desired personnel as needed to determine the best placement for students who have been or are being subject-matter accelerated for the coming year.

A meeting between the current teacher(s) and the receiving teacher(s) will take place and student progress and strategies will be shared.

## **Step 6**

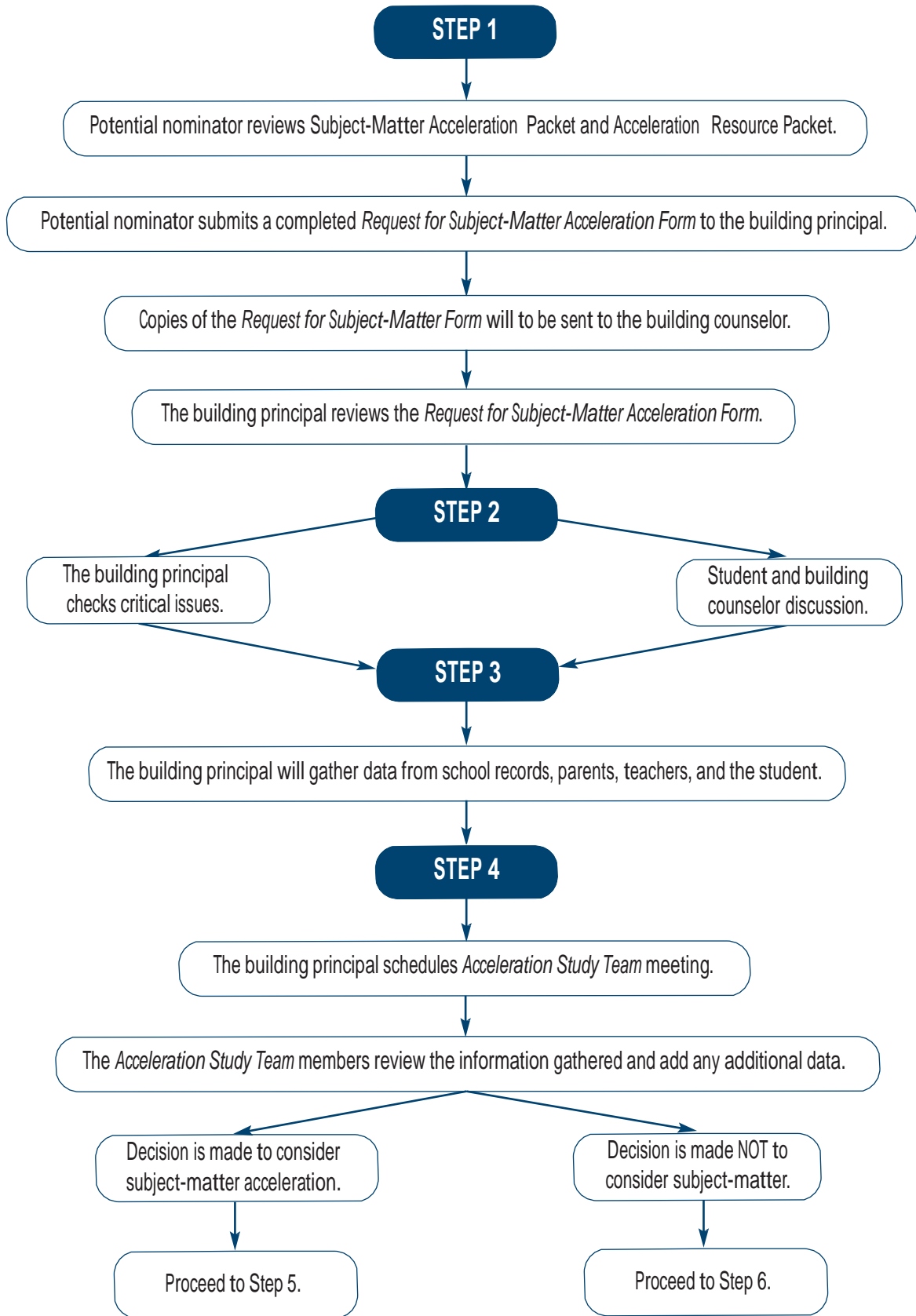
### **For Students NOT Being Considered for Subject-Matter Acceleration**

If the decision of Step 4 is not to consider subject-matter acceleration the *Acceleration Study Team* should discuss and plan a challenging program to include opportunities for differentiation and/or enrichment.

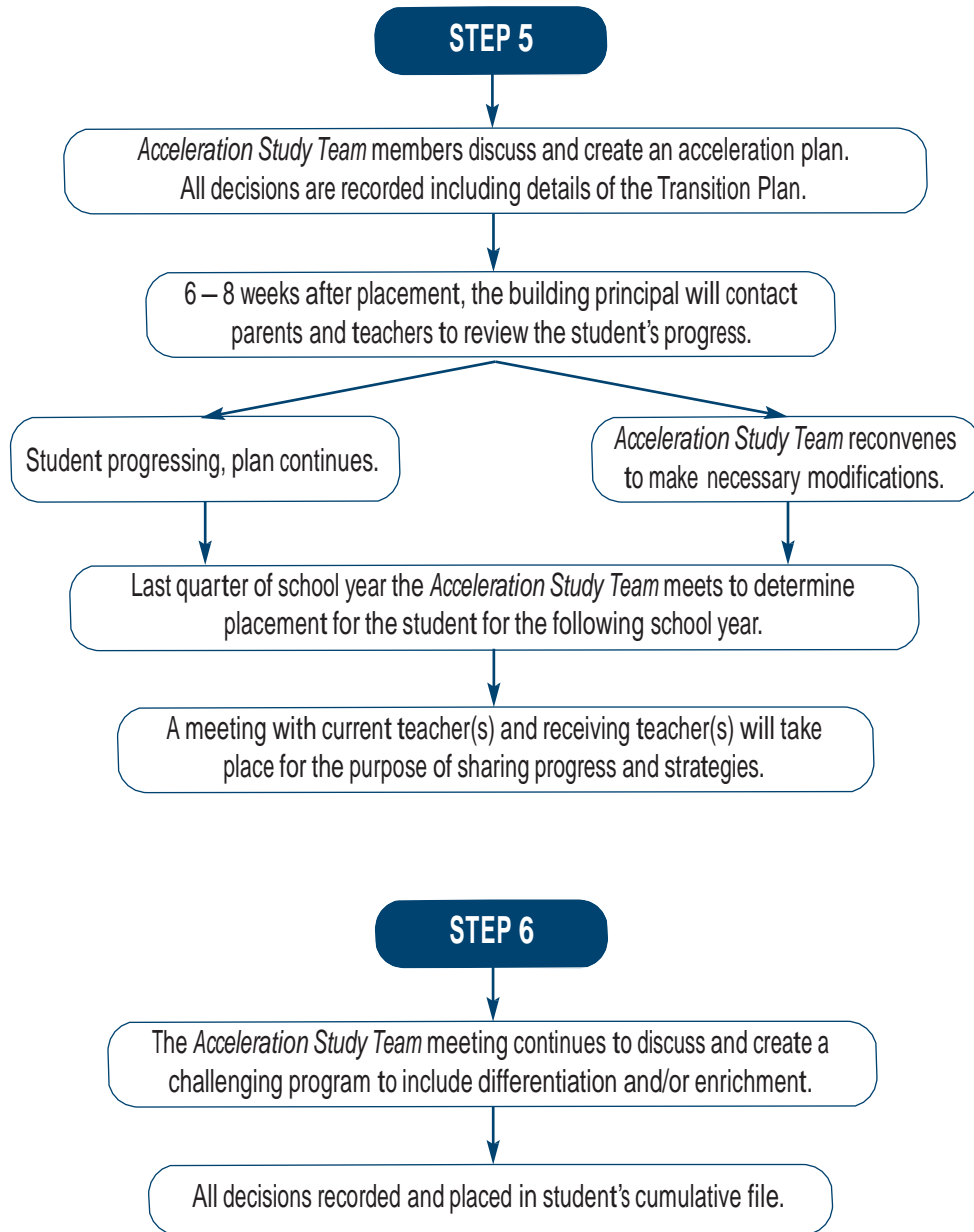
All decisions will be recorded, referred to, and built on in the event of subsequent meetings and will be filed in the student's cumulative (confidential) file at the building level.

NOTE: If the nominator does not agree with the decisions of the building principal they may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or Superintendent designee.

# Subject-Matter Acceleration Procedure • Rockwood School District



## Subject-Matter Acceleration Procedure • Rockwood School District



**Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration**  
**TO BE COMPLETED BY CURRENT CLASSROOM TEACHER OR TEAM**

The Rockwood School District is committed to academic and personal success for every student. This includes providing education with high academic standards and rigor which will promote the maximum academic, social-emotional, and physical development of each student.

Acceleration is an educational intervention that moves students through an education program at a significantly faster pace or at a younger than typical age. Prior to completing this form, please read the *Subject-Matter Acceleration Information Packet and Acceleration Resource Packet*.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grade Placement: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher/Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject Area Requested for Acceleration:** \_\_\_\_\_

Give specific examples of how this student functions at significantly higher level than students of the same age. Please continue on a separate piece of paper if needed.

Document the differentiation that has been utilized to accommodate this student's needs. Please check all that apply.

Applicable Yes No	Differentiation	Length of Implementation	Successful Yes No	Applicable Yes No	Differentiation	Length of Implementation	Successful Yes No
	Change pace/depth				Curriculum Compacting		
	Learning Centers				Higher level questioning		
	Learning Contracts				Independent Research		
	Enrichment Opportunities				Tiered Assignments		
	Differentiated Assessments				Student Choice		
	Open-ended Assignments				Other		

Name of Person(s) Submitting Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Relation to Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form to the Building Principal.

# Request for Subject-Matter Acceleration

## TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

The Rockwood School District is committed to academic and personal success for every student. This includes providing education with high academic standards and rigor which will promote the maximum academic, social-emotional, and physical development of each student.

Acceleration is an educational intervention that moves students through an education program at a significantly faster pace or at a younger than typical age. Prior to completing this form, please read the *Subject-Matter Acceleration Information Packet and Acceleration Resource Packet*.

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Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grade Placement: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher/Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Area Requested for Acceleration: \_\_\_\_\_

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On a separate piece of paper, give specific examples that you have observed of how your child functions at a significantly higher level in the subject area requested for acceleration. In your narrative describe each of the following:

1. Academic performance
2. Ability to apply, analyze, and evaluate ideas at an advanced level
3. Ability to work independently
4. Ability to think creatively
5. Motivation to work on advanced material

Name of Person(s) Submitting Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Relation to Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form to the Building Principal.

**ROCKWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**SUBJECT ACCELERATION**  
DATA COLLECTION AND DECISION-MAKING FORM

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual Submitting Request \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to Student \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject Area (Primary Area) \_\_\_\_\_ (Secondary Area, Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**PART I: CRITICAL ISSUES**

- Student is in gifted program
- Student expresses interest in subject acceleration
- Sibling is currently in same grade
- Sibling will be in same level if subject accelerated

Comments:

**PART II: SCHOOL & ACADEMIC FACTORS**

**1. INTELLIGENCE TEST RESULTS (include summary report)**

- Clearly indicates need for acceleration
- Partially indicates need for acceleration
- No need for acceleration indicated
- Information is not available

**2. SUBJECT AREA ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS (include current & past year  
MAP, SAT-10, Other standardized achievement test results)**

- Clearly indicates need for acceleration
- Partially indicates need for acceleration
- No need for acceleration indicated
- Information is not available

**3. SUBJECT AREA FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT (include report)**

- Clearly indicates need for acceleration
- Partially indicates need for acceleration
- No need for acceleration indicated
- Information is not available

**4. TEACHER ASSESSMENTS (include recent assessments)**

- Clearly indicates need for acceleration
- Partially indicates need for acceleration
- No need for acceleration indicated
- Information is not available

5. REQUEST FOR SUBJECT ACCELERATION FORM  
(attach completed Teacher Form)

- Clearly indicates need for acceleration
- Partially indicates need for acceleration
- No need for acceleration indicated
- Information is not available

6. OTHER DATA AND/OR INFORMATION PERTINENT TO DECISION  
(eg., Parent Grade Skipping Request Form, work samples, observations, informal feedback from student, etc.)

- Clearly indicates need for acceleration
- Partially indicates need for acceleration
- No need for acceleration indicated
- Information is not available

SUMMARY (PARTS I & II):

PART III: RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation:

Implementation Plan For Subject Acceleration, including Timeline:

Monitoring Student Progress -- Dates, Process, Person Responsible:

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Name:

Relationship/Position:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

*Place copy of completed form in student's file.*

## Glossary of Terms for Acceleration and Gifted Education

<b>Acceleration</b>	Used when a student demonstrates competencies, knowledge, abilities, and/or skills which exceed that which is outlined in the planned course curriculum for his/her chronological age or grade placement level. This can be demonstrated in the classroom or by pre or diagnostic tests in the skill areas.
<b>Achievement Tests</b>	A test that measures what students have learned or have been taught in a specific content area relative to the expected achievement of average students. Example: Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).
<b>Advanced Placement (AP)</b>	The student takes a course in high school that prepares him/her for taking an examination that can confer college credit for satisfactory performance. AP courses are high level/high rigor courses whose syllabus is dictated by the college board. Some universities may award college credit for high scores on AP exams.
<b>Challenge Program</b>	The student qualifies by meeting expectations of an assessment matrix based on academic performance at the middle school level.
<b>Cluster Grouping</b>	Assigning students of the same grade level who have been identified as gifted to a small instructional group within a class of otherwise heterogeneously grouped students.
<b>Curriculum Compacting</b>	A procedure used to streamline the regular curriculum for students who are capable of mastering it at a faster pace. Pre-testing identifies learning objectives already mastered, and students are allowed to “test out” of certain academic exercises and move on to new material.
<b>Differentiated Instruction</b>	Consistently using a variety of instructional approaches to modify content, process, and/or products in response to learner readiness, interest, and/or learner profile of academically diverse students.
<b>Distance Learning</b>	An instructional strategy by which technology is used to allow the student to not physically be in the place where the teaching is taking place. Access to the instructor is gained through technology such as the Internet, interactive videoconferencing and satellite.
<b>Dual Credit</b>	The student is enrolled in college level courses that confer both high school and college credit.
<b>Dual-Enrollment Programs</b>	The student is enrolled in course work or summer programs that confer advanced instruction and credit for study (e.g., fast-paced language or math courses offered by universities). Some programs confer only college credit. Other programs confer both high school and college credit (dual credit).

<b>Early Graduation</b>	Graduate from high school in less than four (4) years based upon current District Policy 2525 – Graduation Requirements.
<b>Elective System</b>	The student can select a variety of upper level courses for the purpose of meeting his/her educational goals.
<b>Grade Skipping (Whole Grade Acceleration)</b>	The student is moved ahead of normal grade placement. This may be done during an academic year (e.g., placing a third grader directly into fourth grade, or promoting a third grader to fifth grade).
<b>Honors Courses</b>	Courses offered in high school for high achievers. These are usually planned to motivate the intellectually gifted learner. In these courses, the content is broader, the curriculum is accelerated, and the instructor is carefully selected.
<b>Individually Paced Instruction (Independent Study)</b>	The student is presented with materials that allow him/her to proceed at a self-selected pace.
<b>Intelligence Quotient (IQ)</b>	Measure of a person’s cognitive ability that compares mental age and actual age.
<b>Learning Style</b>	Describes a preferred mode of learning. There are several learning style theories which attempt to correlate the traits of learners with teaching methods in order to promote optimum learning situations.
<b>Pull-out Program</b>	A part-time program where gifted students and/or special needs students leave the regular classroom for a limited time to attend specialized classes with an instructor other than the classroom teacher.
<b>Subject-Matter Acceleration</b>	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 fourth grader going to fifth grade for science).
<b>Underachiever</b>	A student who has a discrepancy between their performance and their potential and/or ability to perform at a much higher level as indicated by their standardized test scores.