Ames™
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Math Acceleration Guidance and Communication Guide

Mission Statement

The Ames Community School District commits to equity and access that empowers every individual to reach their full personal and educational potential

Acceleration Retention, and Deceleration Policy (505.2)

The Ames Community School District is committed to excellence and equity for all students and believes that the best way to achieve these goals is through varied instructional practices, educational opportunities, appropriate resources, and encouragement for all students. The Ames Community School District believes acceleration is a beneficial means to differentiate for students when appropropriate. Acceleration can occur in content acceleration, grade level acceleration, or curriculum compacting. Prior to pursuing acceleration, attempts to meet the students' needs within the classroom through differentiation, pull-out services, and additional challenge exercises should be attempted and documented. If these accommodations are not successful an acceleration form will be completed by the parents, data will be collected, and a team comprised of the parents, building principal, classroom teacher, ELP teacher, Elementary Specialist, and ELP Coordinator will review data and make a final decision. (Adapted from NAGC) Updated 4/2/2018

Definition

Acceleration- The practice of moving a student to a higher course level or grade level to help fulfill the needs of that learner. Acceleration adjusts the pace of instruction to the student's capability, provides an appropriate level of challenge, and adjusts the time necessary for students to complete traditional schooling.

Purpose / Objective of accelerating in Math: The objective in accelerating students in the area of math is to provide students with the appropriate challenge that aids in producing an engaging instructional environment. Additionally, providing opportunities for students to access advanced mathematics courses, which have a research base to success in college (Adelman, 1999), best prepares students for success beyond high school.

Equity Lens: In the spring of 2019 the district conducted an equity audit of Ames Middle School and Ames High School programming. One striking data point from this audit was the disparity in which students of color and students of lower socio-economic status are currently included in upper level courses, including college preparatory and AP math classes. It is one goal of this acceleration work to eliminate barriers that currently result in fewer students of specific demographic groups having access to these courses that are shown to have a significant correlation to post high school success (Dougherty, 2015).

Appeal process: As you will see below, universal screening, the use of multiple data points in successive ways to ensure all eligible students are included, and various models of acceleration will be a part of the overall approach to acceleration in mathematics. Thus, if students are shown not to qualify for these services, there will be no appeal process. As a reminder, all classroom teachers are expected to and prepared to differentiate instruction and to provide challenge activities for students who need challenge but do not currently qualify for acceleration.

What happens if acceleration is no longer a good fit: Despite the use of data to accurately identify students who need acceleration to be appropriately challenged, at times students and parents (or teachers) may feel that the accelerated pace of content is no longer appropriate and is providing undue stress for the student. Please see the guidelines below for information on the process for deceleration or removal from an accelerated course.

Students and parents: In those situations in which students or parents feel the rigor or pace of an accelerated class are no longer appropriate for the child, they will first consult with the teacher to determine what interventions or support may be available to assist the student. If the teacher agrees that a change is appropriate, the teacher will make a recommendation to the building administrator that the student be placed in the appropriate class. This could mean moving from one accelerated class to another (i.e from algebra I to a compacted class) or moving to the appropriate grade level class. If the teacher does not agree, they will outline a plan of support for the student to get the help needed to remain in the class. Ultimately, it will be the decision of the student and parent as to if they remain in the class or choose to decelerate.

Entrance Criteria

The acceleration process outlined below is for the 2021-22 school year. The processes outlined below are designed to seek out students who may benefit from acceleration. Based on the data below families will be provided a recommendation on placement which can be accepted or declined.

Step 1: The first step that will be taken to assess eligibility for acceleration is to review the Measures of Academic Progress assessment (MAP). According to the Northwest Education Association (NWEA) who produces the MAP assessment, A RIT score of **235** indicates readiness for algebra I concepts. The following process will be used in the spring of 2021.

> **Algebra I** - Students entering 7th or 8th grade who scored a **235** or higher on the spring assessment of MAP will be placed in an accelerated algebra I class unless parents request not to be placed in that class. This score takes into account the typical growth of students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in the upper quartiles of the MAP math assessment.
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> **7th grade compacted math** - those students who scored a **230** in the spring assessment of the MAP math test will be placed in an Compacted 7 class unless parents request not to be placed in that class. This score takes into account the typical growth of students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in the upper quartiles of the MAP math assessment.
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> **6th grade compacted math -** Those students who scored a **230** in the spring assessment of the MAP math test will be placed in an Compacted 6 class unless parents request not to be placed in that class.

Step 2: For those students who did not qualify for service based on the MAP assessment, **but who scored within less than one year's discrepancy from the accelerated target cut score,** student ISASP scores will be reviewed to determine eligibility.

> **Algebra I** - Students entering 7th grade who scored **529** or higher scale score on the 2021 ISASP will be placed in an accelerated Algebra I class unless parents request not to be placed in that class. Those students entering 8th who scored **557** or higher scale score on the 2021 ISASP will be placed in an accelerated algebra I class unless parents request not to be placed in that class.

Compacted 7- Students entering 7th who scored **512-528** scale score on the 2021 ISASP will be placed in the compacted 7 class unless parents request not to be placed in that class.

Math Acceleration Process Summary

	2-Year Acceleration (6th Grade Compacted Option)	**2-Year Acceleration (7th Grade Algebra)**	**1-Year Acceleration (Compacted in 7th Grade)**	**1-Year Acceleration (Algebra in 8th Grade)**
Step 1	NWEA MAP RIT score of 230 or higher	NWEA MAP RIT score of 235 or higher	NWEA MAP RIT score of 230-234	NWEA MAP RIT score of 235 or higher
Step 2		ISASP Scale Score of 529 or higher	ISASP Scale Score of 512-528	ISASP Scale Score of 557 or higher

References

Adelman, C. (1999). Answers in the tool box. Academic intensity, attendance patterns and bachelor's degree attainment. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research. Available: www .ed.gov/pubs/toolbox

Dougherty, S, et al (2015). Middle School Math Acceleration and Equitable Access to Eighth-Grade Algebra. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. Available: https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373715576076

Ames Middle School Frequently Asked Questions

Will an accelerated course appear on my child's high school transcript?

Yes, if your child is taking a high school course, the course will appear on their high school transcript and included in their high school GPA.

What if my student struggles in the course?

Students may struggle in accelerated courses, concerns from teachers would occur if a student were to begin scoring in the D and F range. If this is the case a meeting will be held with administration, the math teacher, student, and parents to determine if the student should remain in the course or be removed to allow the student to access a lower level of math curriculum.

My student is 2-years accelerated in math, will they need to continue to fill out each year?
No. The only exception would be a student wishing to accelerate again in the future.

My student is accelerated in Algebra or Geometry, can my student elect to attend AHS for these courses instead of AMS?
No. Middle School students taking these courses must take the course at AMS.

I am not satisfied with the acceleration decision for my child, is there an appeals process?
Not at this time.

Do I need to be in ELP to be accelerated?
No. Any student is eligible for acceleration.

If I am not accelerated will I be removed from ELP?
No. ELP and acceleration are two separate processes and entities, the decision in one process does not have bearing on the other.

Acceleration Process-Elementary School-

K-12 Acceleration Handbook

- Acceleration occurs through the ELP Department at the elementary school level.
- Student scores above the 95% on standardized tests for 2 consecutive years.
- The purpose of acceleration is to prepare students for entry into the middle school prepared to take 6/7 Compacted Math Class.

Acceleration Process-New Students to Ames Middle School

If you are new to the Ames Community School District, we will offer early MAP fall testing to determine an appropriate math placement. If you would like to submit previous standardized testing scores for consideration instead, please reach out to Jeremie Knutson. We will consult that test's norms to find the best match to our cutoff scores based on skills represented.