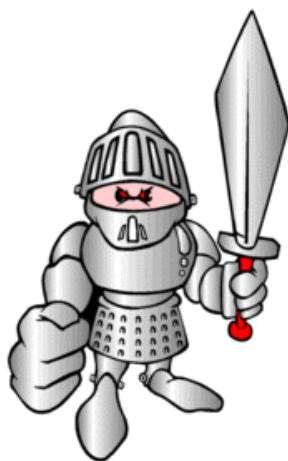


Bradley Elementary School District 61



Accelerated Program

Updated Spring 2019

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Policy on Academic Acceleration and Early Entrance to Kindergarten and First Grade

In accordance with the Accelerated Placement Act (Public Act 100-0421) the Bradley School District 61 Board of Education has established the following policy and procedures that provide opportunities for early entrance to kindergarten and first grade, opportunities for accelerating a student in a single subject area, and opportunities for “whole grade” acceleration.

This policy describes the process that shall be used for evaluating students for possible accelerated placement and identifying students who should be granted early admission to kindergarten and first grade, accelerated in one or more individual subject areas, and promoted to a higher grade level than their same-age peers.

Accelerated Placement Act:

105 ILCS 5/Art. 14A heading Article 14A. Gifted and Talented Children And Children Eligible

Effective Date July 1, 2018

Illinois definition of gifted and talented children: "For the purposes of this Article, 'gifted and talented children' means children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other children and youth of their age, experience, and environment. A child shall be considered gifted and talented in any area of aptitude, and, specifically, in language arts and mathematics, by performing in the top 5% locally in that area of aptitude."

105 ILCS 5/14A-20105 ILCS 5/14A-20

School Board Policy

6:130 - Program for the Gifted

The Superintendent or designee shall implement an education program for gifted and talented learners. If the State Superintendent of Education issues a Request for Proposals because sufficient State funding is available to support local programs of gifted education, the Superintendent or designee shall inform the Board concerning the feasibility and advisability of developing a “plan for gifted education” that would qualify for State funding.

Eligibility to participate in the gifted program shall not be conditioned upon race, religion, sex, disability, or any factor other than the student’s identification as gifted or talented.

In order to allow the School Board to monitor this policy, the Superintendent or designee shall report at least annually on the status of the District’s gifted program.

LEGAL REF.:

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 227.

ADOPTED: September 16, 2010

Participation

Participation in acceleration placement is open to all children who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from acceleration placement.

Referral

- Any student who is enrolled in the district may be referred by a teacher, administrator, gifted education specialist, guidance counselor, school psychologist, or parent or legal guardian of the student to the principal of his or her school for evaluation for possible accelerated placement.
- Referrals will be reviewed by the evaluation committee twice a year
 - End of September
 - End of February
- **Any student who has not been enrolled in the district must be referred by an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, a pediatrician, or psychologist who knows the child.**

Evaluation Process

-The building principal (or his or her designee) of the referred student's school shall obtain written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement. The district shall evaluate all students who are referred for evaluation and whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have granted permission to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement.

-A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within 90 calendar days of the committee's meeting. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

-A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the superintendent within 30 calendar 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 thirty days of receiving the appeal. The superintendent's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again the following school year if he or she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

Evaluation Committee

The principal (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student. This committee shall be comprised of the following:

- A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school;
- A current teacher of the referred student (with the exception of transfer students making this request over summer and students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten);
- A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated

- A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student;
- The school district's psychologist
- The RtI Coordinator (for referrals involving early entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade)
- The school district's Director of Curriculum
- The other building principals in the district may participate on the committee as well

Early Entrance to Kindergarten and First Grade

Bradley School District 61 follows Illinois School Code, which specifies that to enter kindergarten, children must be five years of age by September 1 of their kindergarten year and six years of age by September 1 of their first-grade year. However, the Accelerated Placement Act of 2017(Public Act 100-0421) requires that we have a process that allows for early entrance into Kindergarten and First Grade for students that demonstrate readiness.

District 61 has specific criteria and procedures for considering parent requests for early entrance. The decision for a child to enter school early can have a profound effect on his or her academic and social performance for the remainder of the child's school career. The goal is to ensure that children are not frustrated by the challenges of the instructional programs and the effect that early placement might have.

Criteria for Eligibility:

Kindergarten

- The child must have a referral from a pediatrician, psychologist, and/or preschool teacher that knows the child.
- The child's fifth birthday falls between September 2 and December 31st, as documented by a certified copy of the birth certificate. A referral must be provided after September 2. Special circumstances will be reviewed in case by case basis.
- The child demonstrates age-appropriate social and emotional development as determined by a standardized assessment such as the Brigance Inventory of Early Development III.
- The child attains a score of 120 or above on an intelligence test administered by District 61.

- The use of the following tools, along with observation will be utilized to determine decisions: a cognitive assessment such as the Wechsler Preschool or Primary School of Intelligence (WPPSI) and/ Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children and the IOWA Acceleration Scale in addition to Star360 and Review360.

First Grade

- The child must have a referral from a pediatrician, psychologist, and/or preschool teacher that knows the child.
- The child's sixth birthday falls between September 2 and December 31st, as documented by a certified copy of the birth certificate. *A referral must be provided after September 2. Special circumstances will be reviewed case by case.*
- The child has successfully completed education through kindergarten at an educational facility recognized by the State of Illinois.
- The child demonstrates age-appropriate social and emotional development as determined by a standardized assessment such as the Brigance Inventory of Early Development III.
- The child attains a score of 120 or above on an intelligence test administered by District 61.
- The use of the following tools, along with observation will be utilized to determine decisions: a cognitive assessment such as the Wechsler Preschool or Primary School of Intelligence (WPPSI) and/ Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children and the IOWA Acceleration Scale in addition to Star360 and Review360.

Requesting Entrance to Kindergarten and First Grade

- Between March 1 and May 15, parents meet with the building administrator and school psychologist of the school the child will attend to discuss the child's early entrance potential.
- Following this discussion, if parents wish to continue this process, they will be given the necessary Early Entrance Application form to complete.
- Parents return the completed forms along with a certified copy of the child's birth certificate to the principal by June 1st.

- The testing will occur during an individual session with the school psychologist in early August. Results of the assessment will determine whether or not the screening process should continue at a date later in the month.
- After the screening and testing, parents will be invited to a conference. Members of the early entrance team (psychologist, classroom teacher, and classroom teacher from receiving grade) and the building administrator will provide information regarding the child's performance during the screening, review the test results, and give parents a written summary of the screening.
- The decision about early entrance eligibility will be made by the early entrance team. This decision is final.
- Children who are accepted for early entrance will be enrolled on a probationary basis. *The school staff will assess each child's initial adjustment to school during the first twenty school days. If a child's adjustment is not satisfactory, the building administrator will request that the child enroll when the child meets the state's enrollment age requirement for the appropriate grade level. If it is determined that the child's adjustment is satisfactory, the child shall remain eligible for the early entrance program.*

Accelerating a Single Subject Area

Bradley School District 61 uses Star360 as the tool for guiding this decision. This is a tool (not a single test) that will be employed when accelerating a single subject area (ELA/Math). If other sources of data are needed, including but not limited to grades, attendance, and measures of achievement based on state academic content standards, the committee shall consider this information. Additionally, the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement will be considered. The committee shall recognize the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

Criteria for Eligibility:

East-Grades K-2:

- The student must be recommended by the teacher with classroom data, including Star360 and Review360 data.
- In reviewing an individual subject, using Star360 data, a student shall be in the 95th percentile as compared to national norms. This group can be expanded to include local norms.

- Kindergarten students must take Star360 Reading and Math, instead of Star Early Literacy.

West- Grades 3-5:

- The student must be recommended by the teacher with classroom data, including Star360 and Review360 data. Ratings must be proficient on all subdomains.
- In reviewing an individual subject, using Star360 data, a student shall be in the 95th percentile as compared to national norms. This group can be expanded to include local norms.

Central Grades 6-8:

- The student must be recommended by the teacher with classroom data, including Star360 and Review360 data. Ratings must be proficient on all subdomains.
- In reviewing an individual subject, using Star360 data, a student shall be in the 95th percentile as compared to national norms. This group can be expanded to include local norms.

Whole Grade Acceleration

Bradley School District 61 will utilize Star360 and Review360 as the tools for guiding this decision. Additional measures of achievement include a cognitive assessment, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark, and the IOWA Acceleration Scale. If other sources of data are needed, including but not limited to grades, attendance, and measures of achievement based on state academic content standards, the committee shall consider this information. Additionally, the student’s maturity and desire for accelerated placement will be considered. The committee shall recognize the student’s own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

Criteria for Eligibility:

East- Grades K-2:

- The student must be referred by the teacher with classroom data, including Star360 and Review360 data.
- In reviewing an individual subject, using Star360 data, a student shall be in the 95th percentile as compared to national norms. This group can be expanded to include local norms.
- Kindergarten students must take Star360 Reading and Math, instead of Star Early Literacy.

West- Grades 3-5:

- The student must be recommended by the teacher with classroom data, including Star360 and Review360 data. Ratings must be proficient on all subdomains.
- In reviewing an individual subject, using Star360 data, a student shall be in the 95th percentile as compared to national norms. This group can be expanded to include local norms.

Central Grades 6-8:

- The student must be recommended by the teacher with classroom data, including Star360 and Review360 data. Ratings must be proficient on all subdomains.
- In reviewing an individual subject, using Star360 data, a student shall be in the 95th percentile as compared to national norms. This group can be expanded to include local norms.

What is the Accelerated Program?

Accelerated placement is not limited to those children who have been identified as gifted and talented, but rather is open to all children who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement.

Students must qualify based on the Accelerated Program Candidate Rubric. Bradley West (Grades 3-5) utilizes a small group structure, whereas Bradley Central (Grades 6-8) is a departmentalized structure.

Mission

To provide flexible and innovative teaching and learning environments where students have the opportunity to acquire deeper content knowledge, to accelerate academic achievement and to cultivate responsibility for learning.

Accelerated Program Objectives

- Common Core Standards will be addressed focusing on English Language Arts and Math.
- Enrichment opportunities will be afforded to develop and improve individual academic achievement by increasing capacity for learning and providing access to a well-rounded education.
- The knowledge and skills to make decisions and be a responsible member of the learning community will be provided to students.

Student Expectations

- Students will use time wisely and work to their full potential.
- Students will apply knowledge of disciplines to produce work that reflects individuality and creativity, demonstrating an outstanding work ethic.
- Students will take initiative, be accountable, and contribute to a positive learning environment.

Identification Process (District-Wide)

The intent of the screening process is to identify students who demonstrate a high level of performance. The total district population is considered at the end of each school year, for the following year.

The Accelerated Program Candidate Rubric measures the following areas:

- Standard-Based Data
- Percentile Rank Average (90th or above): Last four Star360 Scores in Reading and Math to include the spring score of the previous school year.
- Work Habit Categories/Teacher Recommendation

Students who qualify will receive a letter from the building administrator indicating that they have been identified for the program.

Program and Curriculum Design

The program is designed to provide an array of learning opportunities that help students realize their potential, instill a desire to learn and encourage scholastic rigor. The curriculum in the Accelerated Program is differentiated from that of other students performing on grade level.

Differentiation includes:

- Lessons designed based on students' learning styles.
- Groupings of students by shared interest, topic, or ability for assignments.
- Students' learning assessed using formative assessments.
- A safe and supportive environment created and managed.
- Continual assessment and adjustment to lesson content to meet students' needs.