

Heath City School District

Parent Guide for the Identification of and Services for Children Who are Gifted



Heath City Schools, Gifted Services
Mrs. Kelly Holbrook, Assistant Superintendent
107 Lancaster Drive
Heath, OH 43056
Phone: 740.238.7110
Fax: 740.238.7053

I. Gifted Defined

Gifted students in Ohio are defined in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 3324.01 as “those who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to other of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of ORC Section 3324.03.

II. Heath City Schools Board Gifted Policy

In accordance with the belief that all children are entitled to education commensurate with their particular needs, children in the District who are gifted are provided opportunities to progress as their abilities permit. The Board believes that these children require services beyond those offered in regular school programs in order to realize their potential contribution to themselves and society.

Children who are gifted are identified by professionally qualified persons using a variety of assessment procedures. The Board encourages efforts to provide services for the children who are gifted as an integral part of the total kindergarten through grade 12 program.

Identification

The District follows the identification eligibility criteria as specified in State law.

1. The District identifies children of the District, in grades kindergarten through twelve, as gifted children who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment, as identified under State law. Accordingly, a child can be identified as exhibiting:
 - A. superior cognitive ability
 - B. specific academic ability in one or more of the following content areas:
 - 1) mathematics
 - 2) science
 - 3) reading, writing, or a combination of these skills
 - 4) social studies
 - C. Creative Thinking Ability
 - D. Visual or Performing Arts Ability such as drawing, painting, sculpting, music, dance, drama.

2. The District uses only those instruments approved by the Ohio Department of Education for screening, assessment, and identification of children who are gifted.

District Plan for Identifying Gifted Students

The District adopts and submits to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) a plan for the screening, assessment and identification of children who are gifted. Any revisions to the District plan will be submitted to ODE for approval. The identification plan shall include the following:

1. the criteria and methods used to screen and select children for further assessment who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment in one of the gifted areas;
2. the sources of assessment data used to select children for further testing and an explanation to parents of the multiple assessment instruments required to identify children who are gifted;
3. an explanation for parents of the methods used to ensure equal access to screening and further assessment by all District children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, children from low socio-economic background, children with disabilities, and children for whom English is a second language;
4. the process of notifying parents regarding all policies and procedures concerning the screening, assessment and identification of children who are gifted;
5. an opportunity for parents/guardians to appeal any decision about the results of any screening procedure or assessment, the scheduling of children for assessment, or the placement of a student in any program or for receipt of services;
6. procedures for the assessment of children who transfer into the District;
7. at least two opportunities a year for assessment in the case of children requesting assessment or recommended for assessment by teachers, parents, or other children and
8. an explanation that the District accepts scores on assessment instruments approved for use by ODE that are provided by other school districts and trained personnel outside of the District.

The District's plan may provide for contracting with any qualified public or private service provider for screening or assessment services under the plan. Gifted education coordinators provide the District with assistance in placing students, designing services, consulting on strategic planning, evaluating services on an ongoing basis and eliciting input from parents and staff.

District Plan for Services

The District adopts and submits to ODE a plan for a continuum of services that may be offered to students who are gifted.

1. The District ensures equal opportunity for all children identified as gifted to receive any or all services offered by the District;
2. The District implements a procedure for withdrawal of children from District gifted programs or services and for reassessment of children;
3. The District implements a procedure for resolving disputes with regard to identification and placement decisions;
4. Any District gifted education services are delivered in accordance with State law.
5. The District informs parents of the contents of this policy as required by State law.

District Plan for Services

The District provides gifted services based on the student's area (s) of identification and individual needs and is guided by a written education plan (WEP). The WEP, which is provided to parents of gifted students and educators responsible for providing gifted education services, includes a description of the services to be provided, including goals for the student in each service specified, methods for evaluating progress toward achieving the goals specified and methods and schedule for reporting progress to students. The WEP also specifies staff members responsible for providing that specific services are delivered, policies regarding the waiver of assignments and the scheduling of tests missed while participating in any gifted services provided outside the general classroom and a date by which the WEP will be reviewed for possible revision.

Gifted Education Personnel

Gifted education instruction is provided by teachers by grade level in accordance with the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC). Gifted education instruction is offered during the regular school day and may be provided in large or small groups and/or individually in a variety of settings. The depth, breadth and pace of instruction based on the appropriate content areas may be differentiated. Where differentiated instruction is provided in a regular classroom, the teacher is either licensed in gifted education or has received professional development and ongoing assistance from a gifted education intervention specialist or gifted education coordinator.

Annual Report and Accountability

1. The District submits, as required, a gifted annual report to the ODE.
2. The District submits, as required, a gifted education data audit to ODE.

The Superintendent/designee implements all policies and procedures in accordance with laws, rules and regulations and follows the OAC rules regarding gifted education.

III. Identification Process

The Heath City School District uses a four-part approach to screen students who perform or show potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment in the area of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creativity, and visual and/or performing arts.

STAGE I: Pre-Assessment

The pre-assessment part of the process involves gathering student data from a variety of sources including teacher, parent, and peer nominations, grades, group test scores, portfolios, observations, review of student records, and outstanding products or performances. All students are included in the pre-assessment process. By using the pre-assessment process, the District ensures equal access to screening and further assessment by all District students, including culturally diverse, those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, those with disabilities and those for whom English is a second language.



STAGE II: Screening

The screening stage examines the data gathered from the pre-assessment stage and adds the use of the Renaissance Learning STAR assessment as a screener in reading and math. The STAR screener is given to all students in the District at least two times per year in grades K - 11.

District determined cut-off scores that move students from the screening stage to the assessment stage are lower than the scores necessary for identification. This approach insures that no potentially gifted student goes unidentified. This process aims to *include*, rather than *exclude*, students in the screening pool for identification. District determined cut-off scores are noted next to each test that is used for screening. The District cut-off score is lower than the state identification score. Parents must be notified within 30 days of receipt of reviewing the results of the screening.

Assessment and reassessment is an ongoing process in the Heath City School District. Whole-grade screening for superior cognitive identification is done in 2nd and 5th grades using the InView- A Measure of Cognitive Abilities assessment. Whole-grade screening for specific academic identification (math and reading) using the Terra Nova test will be completed in 2nd grade. Whole-grade screening for specific academic identification in math using the Terra Nova test will be completed in 5th grade. Whole-grade screening for specific academic identification in reading using the Star Diagnostic Reading test will be completed in 3rd through 8th grades. All referrals received from the pre-assessment stage for potential identification in creativity and/or visual/performing arts are automatically considered using the appropriate instruments/exhibits.



STAGE III: Assessment

Assessment is administered by a licensed or certified gifted coordinator or school psychologist. Heath City Schools may contract with a qualified public or private service provider to administer the assessment services. Once the assessment has been completed, the data obtained through all stages of identification and evaluation are analyzed, and the identification decision is made.

Heath City Schools accepts scores on assessment instruments approved by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), including those given by other school districts or by appropriately trained personnel outside of the District.



STAGE IV: Identification, Additional Assessments, or Does Not Qualify

Identification: Students who meet the state criteria for giftedness (ORC 3324.03) are identified at the end of the entire screening and assessment process. The student's educational needs and services are determined at that point.

Additional Assessments: When the results fall below the state criteria for identification but at or above the District score, additional assessments may be given to the student.

Does Not Qualify: The student is not identified if s/he fails to meet the state criteria for identification. Parents are notified within 30 days of receipt of any assessment results.

IV. Special Populations

The Heath City School District makes every attempt to identify gifted students from diverse backgrounds. Students who are from culturally diverse backgrounds, English Language Learners (ELL) students, economically disadvantaged students, homeless students, disabled students, students with physical or sensory disabilities and any other student who may have special circumstances will not be excluded from potential gifted identification in any manner.

Assessment instruments and conditions shall be used that are appropriate for each student. For example, an ELL student may be assessed using a nonverbal assessment instrument. If necessary, translators shall be secured for students who need that accommodation. Only tests that are valid for special populations shall be used for students from diverse backgrounds. All tests used must be on the current Chart of Approved Gifted Identification/Screening Instruments from ODE.

V. Retesting

The Heath City School District aims in its identification process to not exclude students from identification. Occasionally, another assessment instrument is used when the results from the second testing are still inconclusive. All parents, at any time, may have an outside trained examiner test a child using instruments approved by ODE, at the parents' expense.

Children who have requested assessment or who have been recommended for assessment by teachers, parents, or other children are provided at least two opportunities a year for assessment. Once a student has been identified, that identification is permanent. An identified student will only be re-tested using an individual assessment in order to determine eligibility for services. Per parent request, a student who has been individually tested who meets the re-assessment criteria will be re-assessed.

To discuss retesting, please contact Gifted Services at the Licking County ESC (740-349-6084) or the Assistant Superintendent (740-238-7110).

VI. Appeal Procedure

An appeal by the parent and/or guardian is the reconsideration of the results of any part of the identification process which would include:

- Screening procedure or assessment instrument which results in identification
- The scheduling of a student for assessment
- The placement of a student for services
- Receipt of services

Parents should submit a letter to the Gifted Services Coordinator outlining the nature of the concern. The Gifted Services Coordinator will convene a meeting with the parent, which may include other school personnel. A written final decision will be issued within 30 days of the appeal and include the reasons for that decision. Letters can be mailed to:

**Heath City Schools, Gifted Coordinator
107 Lancaster Drive
Heath, OH 43056**

VII. Transfer Students

Any student transferring into the District will be assessed within 90 days of the transfer at the request of the parent. This request can be made in writing to either the building principal or gifted services coordinator. The Gifted Services Coordinator shall send the parent and/or guardian a referral and permission to test paperwork. Parents and/or guardians of transfer students who are assessed will receive results within 30 days of receipt and review of assessment results.

If a student was previously identified in Ohio or another state, parents and/or guardians need to contact the building principal where they are enrolling. Once a student has been identified in Ohio, there is no need to re-identify a student. Parents and/or guardians are encouraged to share past Written Education Plans (WEP) and other pertinent records with the building principal. The Heath City School District accepts outside testing data that follows ORC 3324.01-.07. Parents and/or guardians who have any questions about the transferring of a student to the Heath City School District should call the Gifted Services Coordinator at 740-349-6084.

VIII. Assessment Instruments Used by the Heath City School District for Gifted Identification

The Heath City School District only uses assessment instruments (tests) for screening and identification approved by ODE. To ensure that the test results accurately reflect each student's aptitude or achievement level, tests have also been included that will allow for appropriate screening and identification of students from minority or disadvantaged populations, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language.

The following tests are used in this District for screening and identification. Our District also acknowledges the standard error of measurement (SEM) on these tests in generating eligibility scores. Initial identification must be based on an identification instrument result no older than 24 months.

SUPERIOR COGNITIVE ABILITY

Within the preceding 24 months, the child has:

- scored 2 standard deviations above the mean (minus the standard error of measurement), on either an approved individual standardized intelligence test administered by a licensed psychologist or on an approved standardized group intelligence test,
- performed at or above the 95th percentile on the composite battery of an approved, nationally normed achievement test or,
- attained an approved score on one or more above-grade level standardized, nationally normed approved tests.

Instruments used in determining Superior Cognitive Ability:

Instrument Name	Grade Administered	Screening Score	Identification Score
Woodcock-Johnson (IV) Test of Cognitive Abilities	K – 12	125	127
Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test Third Edition (NNAT3)	K - 12	123	125 (Grade 5) 126 (Grades K-4, 6-8, 10) 127 (Grades 9, 11-12)
InView Ability Tests	2 and 5	125	128
Cognitive Abilities Test, Forms 7, 8	K – 12	125	127 (Grade K) 128 (Grades 1-2) 127 (Grade 3) 128 (Grades 4-6) 127 (Grades 7–12)

SPECIFIC ACADEMIC ABILITY

Within the preceding 24 months, the child has:

- performed at or above the 95th percentile at the national level on an approved individual standardized achievement test of specific academic ability in that field (mathematics, science, reading, writing or a combination of both, or social studies),
- performed at or above the 95th percentile at the national level on an approved group standardized achievement test of specific academic ability in that field.

Instruments used in determining Specific Academic Ability:

Instrument Name	Grade Administered	Screening Score	Identification Score
Star Reading Diagnostic	3-8	93 rd Percentile	95 th Percentile
The ACT	11	93 rd Percentile	95 th Percentile
The Iowa Assessments	1 - 12	93 rd Percentile	95 th Percentile
Terra Nova Achievement Tests	2 and 5	93 rd Percentile	95 th Percentile
Woodcock Johnson IV Tests of Achievement	K - 12	93 rd Percentile	95 th Percentile

VISUAL OR PERFORMING ARTS ABILITY

A child shall be identified as exhibiting “visual or performing arts ability” superior to that of children of similar age if the child has done both of the following:

- Demonstrated to a trained individual through a display of work, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, superior ability in a visual or performing arts area; and
- Exhibited to a trained individual sufficient performance, as established by the department of education, on an approved checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area. These areas are drawing, painting, sculpting, music, dance and drama.
 - Note: ODE’s Handbooks for Identification of Students Who Are Gifted in the Visual and Performing Arts shall be used during the identification process in this category. Only experts in the potential field for identification may assess portfolios and/or performances to ensure quality in identifying superior ability in the particular arts area(s).

Instrument Name	Grade Administered	Screening Score	Identification Score
Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS)	K - 12	Artistic Criteria: 59 – 60 Musical Criteria: 37 – 38 Dramatic Criteria: 54 – 56	Artistic Criteria: 61 or above Musical Criteria: 39 or above Dramatic Criteria: 57 or above
The Gifted Rating Scale (GRS)	K-8	Artistic Criteria: 60-65	Artistic Criteria: 66 or above
Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales, 2 nd Edition (GATES-2), Visual	9 - 12	Dance Criteria: 90 – 110	Dance Criteria: 111 or above
ODE Ohio Checklist of Artistic Behavior- Dance	9 – 12 and Ages 14 and older	Dance Criteria: 29 - 31	Dance Criteria: 32 - 35

CREATIVE THINKING ABILITY

Instrument Name	Grade Administered	Screening Score	Identification Score
Woodcock-Johnson (WJIV), Test of Cognitive Abilities	K – 12	125	112
Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test 3 rd Edition (NNAT3)	K - 12	123	109 (Grade 5) 110 (Grade K-4, 6-8, 10) 111 (Grades 9, 11-12)
InView Cognitive Ability Assessment	2 and 5	125	112
Cognitive Abilities Test, 7 th Ed.	K – 5	125	111 (Grades K – 2) 112 (Grades 3-12)

Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students, 3 rd Edition (SRBCSS)	K - 12	48-50	51 or above
The Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) Creativity Scales	K - 8	60-65	66 or above
Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)	K-12	110-119	120 or above

A child shall be identified as exhibiting “creative thinking ability” superior to children of a similar age, if within the previous twenty-four months, the child scored one standard deviation above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on an approved individual or group intelligence test and also did either of the following:

- Attained a sufficient score, as established by the department of education, on an approved individual or group test of creative ability; or
- Exhibited sufficient performance, as established by the department of education, on an approved checklist by a trained individual of creative behaviors.
 - Note: The behavior checklist for creativity should be completed by someone who is well acquainted with the student being evaluated.

IX. Service Plan

The District ensures equal opportunity for all students identified as gifted to receive services offered by the District. Service placement criteria shall be consistently applied as specified in the screening and identification criteria. The same services will be consistently offered at each grade level and all buildings at those grade levels to all qualifying children. The criteria used may not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, disability status, first language or socio-economic status. Placement for District services shall match the service criteria used in determining eligibility. The Heath City School District acknowledges that gifted students have diverse needs and aims to offer a continuum of services as appropriate for students.

All gifted services in the Heath City School District shall be delivered in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code. Districts are required to identify gifted students. However, school districts are not required to provide gifted education services. Currently, the state provides school districts with partial funding for identifying gifted students and employing or contracting gifted education staff. The Heath City School District strives to offer a continuum of services to serve the diverse needs of gifted students within the available resources.

Services in the Heath City School District shall be consistent, based on individual ability scores. Students who qualify as Superior Cognitive based on group achievement scores shall be offered opportunities for individual ability assessment in order to qualify for services. Students who previously qualified as Superior Cognitive based on achievement scores shall continue to qualify for services until graduation.

SPECIFIC ACADEMIC

Kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12):

The Heath City School District seeks to identify students who have specific academic ability in math, science, reading, and/or social studies. The Gifted Services staff may serve as a resource for general education teachers for the purpose of helping meet the needs of children with specific academic identification; however, no direct on-going services are offered. A child who has an aptitude in a specific subject area that is consistently superior can profit from differentiated instruction and may need subject acceleration.

CREATIVE THINKING ABILITY AND VISUAL/PERFORMING ARTS ABILITY

Kindergarten through twelve grade (K-12):

The Heath City School District seeks to identify students in both creative thinking ability and visual/performing arts. While we do not offer specific services for these areas, gifted services specialists do try to assist parents and students who have been identified with educational options or information about special programs specific to a child's identification area.

A CONTINUUM OF SETTINGS AND SERVICES

Grade	Services That May Be Provided
K – 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster grouping per student needs based on available data• Early entrance to Kindergarten/1st grade if appropriate (Written Acceleration Plans for those who qualify)• Targeted instruction in the general education setting
3 – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster grouping per student needs based on available data• Targeted instruction in the general education setting• Accelerated Courses in Mathematics (Grades 5 & 6)
6 – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced courses offered and high school credit courses available• Cluster grouping per student needs based on available data• Targeted instruction in the general education setting• College Credit Plus
9 – 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honors/AP/Advanced courses• College Credit Plus and other dual enrollment opportunities• Internship opportunities and other educational options• Cluster grouping per student needs based on available data• Targeted instruction in the general education setting
All Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whole grade or single subject acceleration

X. Written Education Plan (WEP)

A gifted service is a service that conforms to the Operating Standards. Students who are served must have Written Education Plans (WEP). They are also reported to the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) as receiving gifted services. The WEP documents adjustments made to the curriculum in his/her area(s) of identification. Ohio's Academic Content Standards (and Ohio Core) recognize that students develop at different rates and clearly state that if they can exceed grade level indicators, they must be afforded the opportunity to do so. This gives teachers the flexibility to modify or differentiate instruction for students in which the

- level is advanced to ensure challenge,
- pace is adjusted to accommodate faster learning rates,
- complexity requires students to analyze or integrate several ideas, and
- depth encourages students to explore a topic in more thoughtful detail.

WEP progress is shared with parents periodically during the school year, typically at conferences. It is important to note that the WEP is not an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and does not follow procedures as outlined in federal law for special education.

Homework Waiver Procedures:

In the event a student is out of the regular classroom for an enrichment opportunity, the student shall only be responsible for major concepts and tests missed in the classroom. The Gifted Intervention Specialist shall work cooperatively regarding communication about assignments and/or tests to insure student success in both the classroom and participation in enrichment services.

PARTICIPATION/ADJUSTING OR WITHDRAWING FROM SERVICES

Although a child is identified as gifted, the decision to participate in any gifted service option always remains with the parent and/or guardian. Once a child has been identified, notification for services is sent to the parent and/or guardian. If a parent and/or guardian wishes to decline services for their child(ren), s/he should contact the Gifted Services Coordinator at 740-522-7110. If at any time a parent wishes to withdraw his or her child(ren) from gifted services, the request should be made in writing to the Gifted Services Coordinator at:

Heath City Schools Gifted Coordinator
107 Lancaster Drive
Heath, OH 43056

XI. Heath City Schools Board Acceleration Policies

The Board recognizes that all students learn and progress at different rates and that the time it takes to reach academic standards varies among students. The Board believes students should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential and that the practice of educational

acceleration is used to match appropriate learning opportunities with student abilities. The goals of acceleration are to adjust the pace of instruction to the student's capabilities, provide an appropriate level of challenge by removing the barriers to accessing appropriately challenging curriculum and to reduce the time period necessary for students to complete traditional schooling.

The District uses acceleration strategies in four academic areas.

1. Whole-grade acceleration: The practice of assigning a student on a full-time basis to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.
2. Individual subject acceleration: The practice of assigning a student to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas.
3. Early Entrance to Kindergarten (EEK): The practice of admitting a student to kindergarten who has not reached the typical age at which students are admitted to kindergarten, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.
4. Early high school graduation: The practice of facilitating completion of the high school program in fewer than four years, for the purpose of providing earlier than typical access to postsecondary educational opportunities.

Referrals for students to be evaluated and assessed should be made to the building principal. Students referred and having parental permission are tested using a variety of assessments. The assessments are reviewed by an acceleration evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate and available learning environment for the students.

The committee issues a written recommendation to the building principal and the students' parents. Parents have the right to appeal the committee's recommendation to the Superintendent/designee.

The committee develops a written acceleration plan for any student who is admitted early to kindergarten, offered whole-grade acceleration in one or more individual subject areas. The parents of the student are provided with a copy of the written plan.

The Board directs the administration to follow the guidelines established by the Ohio Department of Education's model acceleration policy.

XII. Acceleration Service Plan

Sometimes a student may need more than what is currently offered in the classroom. If this is the case, typically the parent and/or teachers confer, and then a referral requesting an acceleration conference is completed by District personnel. Parents may also call the building principal to discuss acceleration issues.

Whole-grade and subject acceleration is thoughtfully considered by the acceleration team on a case-by-case basis. ***The Iowa Acceleration Scale (3rd ed.)*** is used as a tool to guide acceleration teams on appropriate placement for whole grade acceleration. A modified Iowa Acceleration Scale by GCCO is used to guide subject accelerations.

The need for whole-grade acceleration is rare. The Heath City School District may have one or two whole-grade accelerations in a given academic year, which includes Early Entrance to Kindergarten. Early Entrance to Kindergarten candidates may follow the Licking County Educational Service Center's policy.

Subject acceleration is typically needed in math more than the other subjects. For students needing subject acceleration which requires a placement in another building, transportation shall be provided from the student's home school to the school in which service is being delivered. For example, a 5th grade student at an elementary school may need to take a math class at another building. Transportation would be provided to the other building and back to the home elementary school in order for that student to receive services.

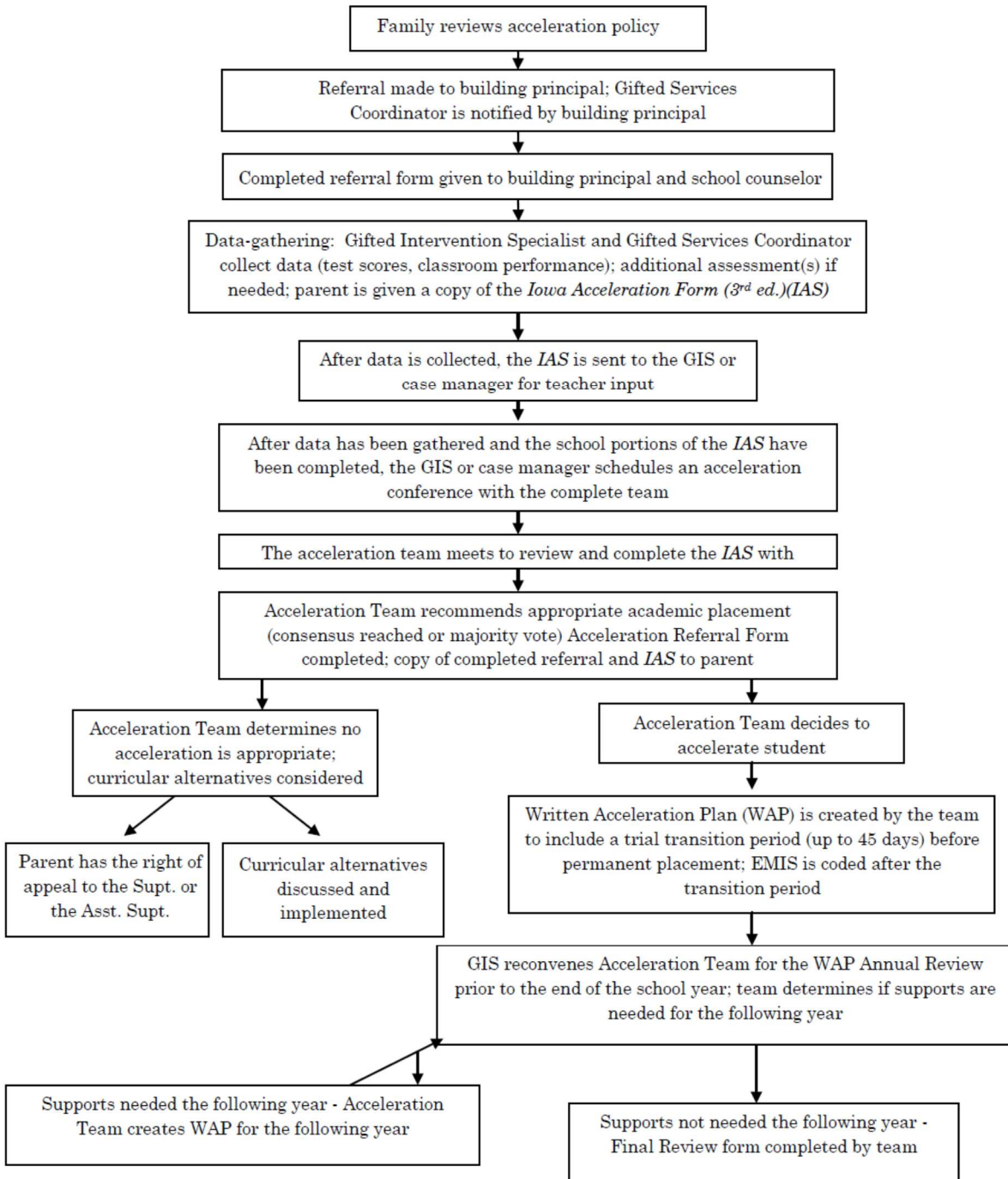
WHO MIGHT NEED ACCELERATION?

- A child with high cognitive ability. The higher the IQ, the greater the need to adjust the curriculum. For example, a student who has an IQ of 145 may need an enriched curriculum, intensive curriculum modifications or even whole-grade acceleration.
- A child in any grade who already has mastered the curriculum.
- A student strong in math (or another subject) who typically finishes work quickly and consistently performs at the top of his/her class.
- A student who always finishes work early and the teacher can no longer modify the curriculum without simply using concepts from the next grade level.
- A student strong in reading who typically reads books well above grade level and who quickly reads class material. The student finishes class reading well before other students and possesses strong comprehension skills.

All acceleration requests for the beginning of the school year are due **August 1**.

Acceleration Process

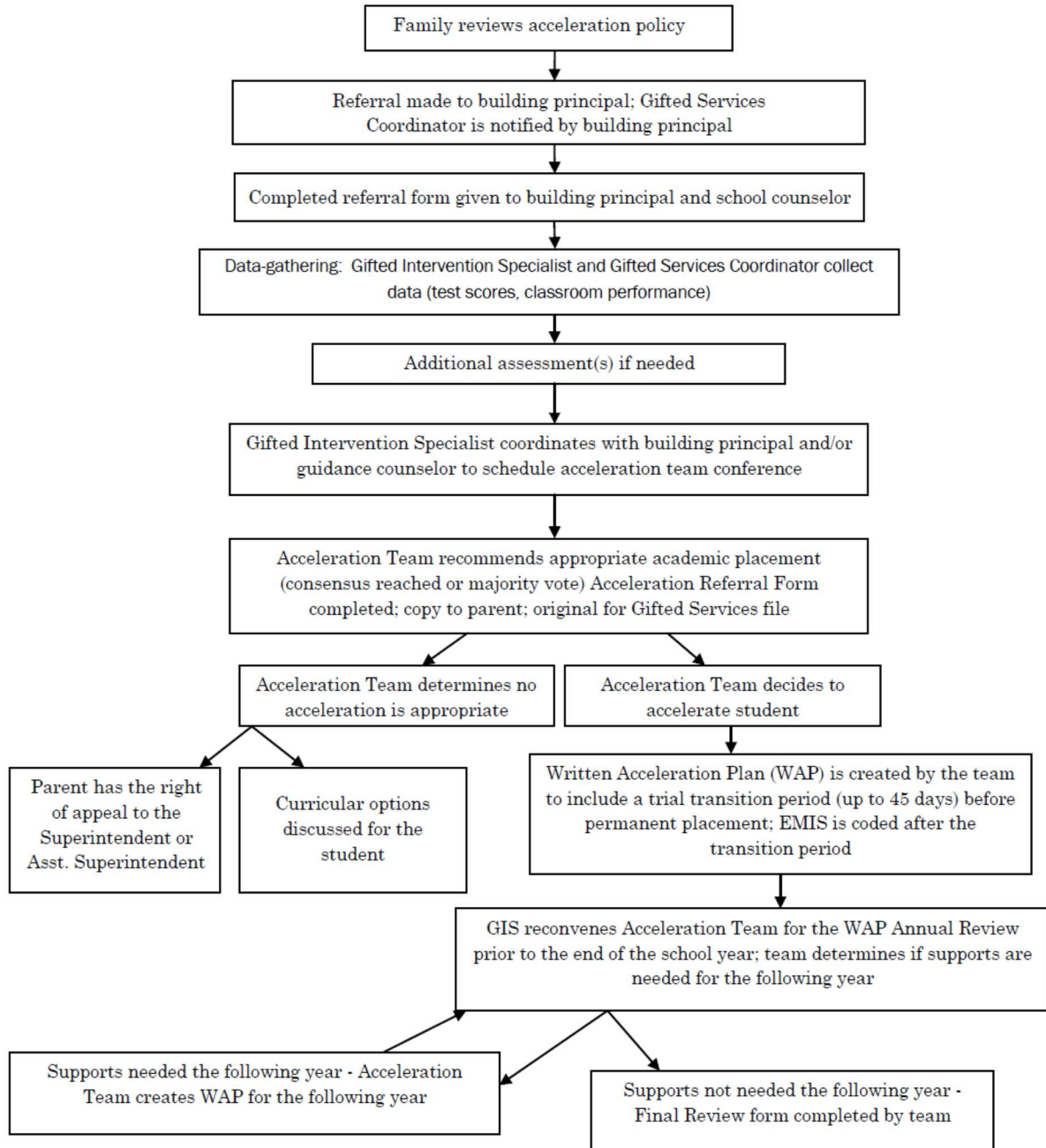
(Whole-Grade Acceleration)



All acceleration requests for the beginning of the school year are due **August 1**.

Acceleration Process

(Subject Acceleration)



EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN POLICY

State law establishes minimum age requirements for admission to kindergarten. A child who does not meet the age requirements for admittance to kindergarten or first grade, but who will be five or six years old, respectively, prior to January 1 of the school year in which admission is requested, shall be evaluated for early admittance in accordance with District policy upon referral by the child's parent or guardian, an educator employed by the District, a preschool educator who knows the child or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Following an evaluation in accordance with such a referral, the Board decides whether to admit the child.

If a child, for whom admission to kindergarten or first grade is requested, will not be five or six years of age, respectively, prior to January 1 of the school year in which admission is requested, the child is admitted only in accordance with the District's acceleration policy adopted under State law.

EARLY ENTRANCE

The practice of admitting a student to kindergarten or first grade who has not yet reached the typical age at which students are admitted to kindergarten or first grade for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities is referred to as Early Entrance.

A parent may request early entrance to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the District's kindergarten entrance date (Sept. 30) and before January 1. Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the District, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

Any parent who is interested in having his or her child considered for Early Entrance should contact the building principal for an application. Early Entrance evaluation is completed in the late winter/early spring concurrently with kindergarten enrollment.

ODE has on its web site (<http://education.ohio.gov/>) a checklist for kindergarten readiness. When looking at whether early entrance is appropriate for a child, the same readiness guidelines should be considered.

Students who are viable candidates for Early Entrance to Kindergarten are expected to be developmentally "on track" with the typical kindergarten student. Early Entrance to Kindergarten testing will occur at the Licking County Educational Service Center. The district will follow the LCESC policy, which may include ability and academic testing,