

Dripping Springs

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Advanced Academics
Parent Information Meeting
Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Dripping Springs

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome & Introductions

DSISD Acceleration Learning Options

Students can advance in multiple ways/paths through Elementary and Middle School:

- 1) **Acceleration:** Students accelerate through the successful completion of credit-by-exams and other criteria (*to be discussed in more detail tonight*)
- 2) **Compacted Math:** Students complete 6th and 7th Grade math during the 6th Grade year, allowing students to take Algebra I for High School credit during the 8th grade year.
 - i) Algebra I taken in 8th Grade is most often offered at the Middle School campus.
 - ii) High School courses taken in Middle School do not count towards a student's GPA.
 - iii) Unintended consequences of accelerating
- 3) **AP/UT OnRamps/ACC/ Course Personalization** at the High School level

Our DSISD Gifted & Talented program is not acceleration; GT is a specialized way of teaching and learning that meets the unique needs of GT learners. GT courses do not earn weighted HS GPA.

Honors/AP/ACC/UT OnRamps

Honors (formerly PAP)	Austin Community College/ACC	UT OnRamps	Advanced Placement
<p>Begin in 6th grade</p> <p>Taken as suggested prerequisites to AP courses, though not required to be in Honors</p> <p>Weighted GPA</p> <p>Often stacked with GT courses at the MS & HS levels</p>	<p>Begins summer after 8th grade</p> <p>Taught by ACC teachers both on DSHS campus and ACC campus, depending on class</p> <p>Students receive one grade. However, the grade is reported from ACC as a letter grade so the highest score that can be earned on the high school transcript is a 95.</p> <p>No exam to determine college credit</p> <p>Weighted GPA equal to Honors</p>	<p>Begin at the HS</p> <p>Taught by DSHS teachers specially trained by UT</p> <p>Students receive both a college grade and a HS grade; at the end of the semester, students determine if they want to accept the credit for the college course</p> <p>No exam to determine college credit</p> <p>Weighted GPA equal to Honors</p>	<p>Begin at the HS</p> <p>Taught by DSHS teachers specially trained by College Board</p> <p>Regulated at the National level through College Board</p> <p>Students take an exam at the end of school year that determines college credit allocation. The AP exam score has no bearing on high school credit.</p> <p>Highest GPA weight, no matter exam score</p>

What is Acceleration?

Credit by Exam or Exam for Acceleration 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 by placing them in a grade or subject course above their current grade level. Students must demonstrate that they have mastered at least 80% of the curriculum one grade level above current grade placement to qualify for acceleration placement consideration.

All forms of acceleration require high academic ability. The student's motivation, social-emotional maturity, interests, and other factors must be considered when making decisions about acceleration. The student whose level of achievement and ability significantly surpasses same age group peers, as well as the student with high ability, but who is not performing well in class are examples of who might be considered for subject-matter or whole-grade acceleration.

Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet all eligibility requirements to register for acceleration assessment:

1. Student is enrolled in a Dripping Springs ISD school.
2. Kindergarten and First grade students must meet the state law age requirements
 - a. 5 years old by September 1 to enroll in Kindergarten
 - b. First Grade: Six years old by September 1st unless a five-year-old student at the beginning of the school year meets the district procedures for initial assignment to Grade 1 rather than Kindergarten.
3. Student must score at least 80% on exams for acceleration.
4. Parent must give permission for student to accelerate.
5. Acceleration Committee must make a formal recommendation for student to accelerate.
 - a. Committee members include but are not limited to: District Administrator, Campus Administrator, Teacher Representative, and other district personnel deemed appropriate.

Whole Grade vs. Single Subject Acceleration

Whole Grade Acceleration:

- Student must score 80% on each content exam one year above current grade placement (Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies).
- If a student fails to achieve an 80% on one of the exams, testing stops, and the student does not qualify for acceleration.
- If a student scores 80% on all four exams, the Campus Acceleration Committee reviews assessment data, parent and teacher surveys, SEL rubrics, literacy and mathematics screeners//progress monitoring assessments as applicable per grade level (e.g., CIRCLE, TX-KEA, TPRI/Tejas Lee, MAP) and other academic data to determine if a formal recommendation for whole grade acceleration will be made.
- Earliest students can be assessed: Entering Kindergarten

Single Subject Acceleration:

- Student must score 80% on designated content exam one year above current grade placement.
- If a student fails to achieve an 80% on the exam, the student does not qualify for acceleration.
- If a student scores 80% or above on a single-subject exam, the Campus Acceleration Committee reviews assessment data, parent and teacher surveys, SEL rubrics, literacy and mathematics screeners//progress monitoring assessments as applicable per grade level (e.g., CIRCLE, TX-KEA, TPRI/Tejas Lee, MAP) and other academic data to determine if a formal recommendation for single-subject acceleration will be made.
- If a student completes all four core single-subject exams and meets the 80% or above mastery requirement on all of them, whole grade acceleration will be considered.
- Earliest students can be assessed: 2nd semester of Kindergarten school year

Characteristics of Students Ready to Accelerate

1. Demonstrates exceptionally high achievement in subject area(s)
2. Demonstrates mastery of subject level materials assessment at least one year ahead of current grade placement
 - a. Mastery is 80% or above on the assessment at least one grade level above current grade placement for the accelerated course or grade level
3. Demonstrates a desire to subject accelerate without parental pressure
4. Social emotional maturity
5. Academic motivation
6. Persistence/Grit
7. An intense interest in the specific academic area
8. Strong independent study skills

Process for Acceleration Testing

1. Parents or guardians determine if acceleration would be appropriate for their student. Parents are encouraged to seek input from their child's teacher prior to making this decision.



Process for Acceleration Testing

2. Parent or guardian completes and submits the electronic Parent Referral for Single Academic Subject or Whole Grade Acceleration.
 - a. Form must be completed, electronically signed by parent/guardian, and submitted to the Acceleration Coordinator by the posted registration deadline.

[Referral forms](#)



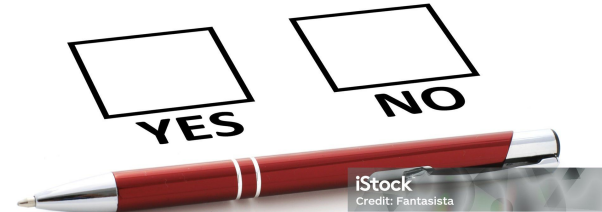
Process for Acceleration Testing

3. Exams administration and student data acquisition
 - a. Exams are ordered from the UT-Austin High School CBE Department and administered during the district's posted assessment window.
 - b. Additional student data is gathered for students who achieve 80% or more on the credit-by-exam for acceleration consideration. This data may include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Parent and teacher evaluations
 - ii. Literacy and mathematics screeners/progress monitoring assessments as applicable per grade level (e.g., CIRCLE, TX-KEA, TPRI/Tejas Lee, MAP)
 - iii. Student Social Emotional Learning Evaluations completed by parent and teacher
 - iv. Academic Records



Process for Acceleration Testing

4. Campus Acceleration Committee meets to review and make recommendations.



5. Approval/Denial is communicated to parent/guardians.

Registration Deadlines & Testing Windows:

Acceleration Credit by Exam Registration Deadline	Whole-Grade Acceleration for Current Elementary Students (Kindergarten-5th Gr.)	Single-Subject Acceleration for Current Elementary Students (Kindergarten-5th Gr.)	Testing Dates for Current Secondary Students (6th-12th Gr.)
Tuesday, October 31, 2023	Nov. 13th - Dec. 1, 2023 <i>during the school day</i>	N/A	Saturday, November 11, 2023
Friday, January 26, 2024	MATH Saturday., Feb. 24, 2024 ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS Saturday., Mar. 2, 2024 SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES Feb. 26 - Mar. 8, 2024 <i>(during the school day)</i>	MATH Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024 ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS Saturday., Mar. 2, 2024 SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES Feb. 26 - Mar. 8, 2024 <i>(during the school day)</i>	Saturday, March 2, 2024
Friday, May 3, 2024	June 3-18, 2024 <i>(Monday through Thursday)</i>	June 3-18, 2024 <i>(Monday through Thursday)</i>	June 3-18, 2024 <i>(Monday through Thursday)</i>
Friday, June 14, 2024	July 15-July 25, 2024 <i>(Monday through Thursday)</i>	N/A	July 15-July 25, 2024 <i>(Monday through Thursday)</i>

*If a student is unable to attend testing during the posted dates, parents must notify the Acceleration Coordinator to cancel testing. If an exam has already been ordered, parents will be responsible for cost incurred from any canceled or missed exams. Exams will not be administered outside of the posted district testing windows.

How can my child prepare for an exam?

DSISD administers The University of Texas-High School acceleration exams. The University of Texas-High School has study guides available for their exams. These study guides are linked to the [DSISD Grade and Subject Acceleration](#) web page. They can also be accessed on the [University of Texas-High School Credit-by-Exam Study Guide](#) web page.

These study guides cover exam structure, content, and requirements. Parents and students are responsible for reviewing the UT Study Guide for specific exams being taken. Note: Some exams have external resources (e.g., novels, books) to read in advance of the exam.

DSISD does not provide textbooks or instructional materials for acceleration exams.

FAQs

Which grade-level study guide should my child review?

Credit-by-exams for acceleration and their accompanying study guide are based on the enrolled grade level for the next school year.

Example: A 4th grade student who would like to accelerate in math will register for and take the 5th grade math credit by exam. Therefore, the student will review the 5th grade math CBE study guide.



FAQs

Who pays for the credit by exams?

- Dripping Springs ISD pays for the credit-by-exams for all students.
- Parents will be responsible for the cost of a credit-by-exam if the exam is not cancelled in writing prior to the placement of the exam order. Parents must email Dr. Rhonda Whitman, rhonda.whitman@dsisdtx.us, to cancel the exam a minimum of three weeks prior to the exam date.



FAQs

Can my student be considered for acceleration if they score below 80% on an acceleration exam?

- No. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the qualifying score for exams for acceleration to 80% and DSISD cannot make exceptions for students who score below this level of mastery.



FAQs

What is the exam order for whole grade acceleration?

Exam 1: Social Studies

Exam 2: Science

Exam 3: Math

Exam 4: English/Language Arts

If a student is registered for whole-grade acceleration, he/she must score an 80% or above on the first exam to continue to the second exam. Likewise, the 80% or above mastery requirement must be met to continue to each of the other exams (#3 and #4).



FAQs

Can I register my child for whole-grade and single-subject credit-by exams?

If you would like your child to be considered for whole-grade acceleration but would also like to have the option to single-subject accelerate if the whole-grade acceleration criteria is not met, select Single-subject Testing and then select all four core subject tests (English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) to be taken.



FAQs

What does a single subject acceleration for an elementary school “look like” for the child?

- Students who accelerate to an elementary grade-level subject (Grades 1 through 5) will participate in the above-grade-level subject on the elementary campus.
- Students who accelerate to a middle school grade-level subject will participate in the above-grade-level subject on the middle school campus.
 - DSES students are bussed to/from Dripping Springs Middle School
 - CSES and RSES students are bussed to/from Sycamore Springs Middle School.
 - SSES students walk next door to Sycamore Springs Middle School.
 - WSES students walk next door to Dripping Springs Middle School.



FAQs

Are the exams online or paper tests?

- Kindergarten through 3rd grade exams are paper exams.
- 4th grade and above exams are online tests unless a local ARD or 504 committee has approved a paper exam ([STAAR guidelines for special administration of online exams](#) are used for CBEs.)
- Students taking a 4th grade or above exam during the Summer testing window may take the exam in-person or at home via the UTHS Remote Proctoring system.



FAQs

How long are the credit-by-exams?

The allowed time frame varies from three hours to three hours and 20 minutes, depending on the grade level and subject. The number of questions and allowed time frame are noted on page 1 of the study guides provided by UTHS.



FAQs

Can the exam be read to my student?

- Students taking a 1st Grade exam will have the questions and answer choices read aloud to them unless their parents notify the Acceleration Coordinator in writing that they do not want the exam read aloud to the student.
- Students taking a 2nd or 3rd grade exam for acceleration independently read the exam but can request assistance with difficult words, as needed, in the questions or answer choices.
- Students who have “oral administration” as a documented accommodation on an IEP or 504 plan will have the exam read aloud to them no matter the grade level.



FAQs

If my child has accommodations through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan, will those accommodations be available for a credit-by-exam?

Yes, accommodations documented in an IEP or 504 plan will be available for a credit-by-exam.

Examples

- Oral administration
- One-on-one administration
- Extended time for assignments and exams



FAQs

My student took an acceleration exam this past year, can they take it again?

- Students may take credit-by-exams for acceleration every school year they are enrolled in DSISD.
- Students may take each grade/subject/course exam twice but only once during a testing window.

For example, if a student takes an exam during the 2nd-semester testing window and does not successfully meet the required mastery level of 80% or above, the exam may be taken again during the June testing window.



FAQs

Who proctors the credit by exams?

Dripping Springs ISD employees proctor the exams. Each proctor is specifically trained to give the UTHS credit-by exams. Additionally, they receive training for administering exams with accommodations if applicable.



FAQs

What happens if my student accelerates and is not being successful?

Elementary & Middle School

Students may return to their enrolled grade level/course if it is determined it is in the best interest of the student, unless the student has met the [district's grade-promotion requirements](#). If the promotion requirements have been met but the student's parents would like the student to be repeat the above-grade level course, they must follow the [retention process](#) as outlined in the DSISD Student Handbook.

High School: Once the 80% or above mastery requirement has been met and course credit has been awarded, the student must move to the next course in the subject sequence.



FAQs

How does acceleration affect the STAAR tests my student must take?

Students who are accelerated must take the STAAR test in the grade they are accelerated to if a STAAR test is given for that grade and subject. If there is not a STAAR test for the grade and subject they accelerate to, but there is for their grade classification, the student must take the STAAR test for the subject in their current grade classification.

Example: 3rd Grade Student accelerated to 4th grade in math

- Takes 3rd Grade Reading STAAR
- Takes 4th Grade Math STAAR

Example: 5th Grade Student accelerated to 6th grade in science

- Takes 5th Grade Reading, Math, and Science STAAR
- Note: The student is accelerated in science and took the 5th grade Science STAAR when they were in 4th grade, but the student is required to take the 5th grade Science STAAR again since science is tested in their current grade classification and there isn't a Science STAAR in 6th grade.



FAQs

When can incoming 2024-2025 Kindergarteners take the credit-by-exams for whole-grade acceleration to 1st Grade?

If a student is enrolled in DSISD as a PreK student during the 2023-2024 school year, he/she can take the whole-grade acceleration exams during the Spring or Summer testing window.

New-to-DSISD students must be officially enrolled in DSISD before they can take the whole-grade acceleration exams. Therefore, they will be tested in mid-July to mid-August.



Possible Acceleration Scenarios

Student 1: Accelerated in one subject, one grade level above the student's enrolled grade level.

Student 2: Accelerated in one subject, more than one grade level above the student's enrolled grade level.

Student 3: Accelerated in two or more subjects, all one grade level above the student's enrolled grade level.

Things to consider:

- The Middle Schools & High School follow an A/B day schedule; the Elementary Schools do not. Therefore, accelerating requires schedule flexibility.
- Accelerated students will be in upper-grade-level classes with students of an advanced maturity, social-emotional developmental stage, etc.
- Students who take a Middle School or High School course that does not have a corresponding STAAR exam will take the STAAR exam for their enrolled grade level.
- Bussing of Elementary school students to the Middle Schools and Middle School students to Dripping Springs High School is not a guarantee.
- Tutorials with their teacher are rarely an option for accelerated students.
- Limited Math/ELA courses available to students during their senior year.
- **Middle School & High School:** If the 80% or above mastery requirement is received on a credit by exam for acceleration, the credit by exam score is the grade recorded on the student's transcript. For High School students, it will also be included in the student's GPA calculation if the course is one that is a GPA-included course. Questions regarding GPA should be directed to the student's appointed High School counselor.

QUESTIONS???

Have questions or need more information?

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