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# District Guidelines

## Exam for Acceleration (EA)



*After reading these guidelines, please see your child's counselor to initiate the Exam for Acceleration Application.*

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# Definition & Purpose

## **Kindergarten Acceleration:**

Students who will be six years old on or before December 31 of the kindergarten eligible year are eligible for kindergarten acceleration. If the student meets the testing criteria, he/she will advance to the first grade. Please see [Frisco ISD Kindergarten Acceleration](#) on the District Assessment page for additional information.

***Credit by Exam (CBE) and Exam for Acceleration (EA) are terms that are occasionally used interchangeably, but they are not utilized for the same purpose.***

## **Credit by Exam (CBE):**

Utilized to earn credit for a course, when a student has had prior instruction, and under the following conditions:

1. The student is enrolling in the District from a non accredited school;
2. The student has failed a subject or course; or
3. The student has earned a passing grade in a subject or course but has failed to earn credit because of excessive absences

Students must demonstrate mastery of 70% or higher on a CBE to earn credit.

## **Exam for Acceleration (EA):**

Provides an opportunity to earn grade level or course credit in which no prior formal instruction was completed. The EA is designed for a very small percentage of learners who have both the academic and emotional need to advance a course. Exam for Acceleration is not designed for grade level recovery when a student is retained in a previous grade level. Students must demonstrate mastery of 80% or higher on an EA to earn credit.

The only students who should take an EA for acceleration are those who display an extremely advanced level of understanding of the learning objectives assessed on the EA which will be the grade level/course above the grade level/course in which your child is currently enrolled.

Exam for Acceleration (without prior instruction) is available to first through fifth grade students who wish to test for advancement to the next grade level and sixth through twelfth grade students who wish to test for advancement in a course. Examinations are criterion-referenced tests from Texas Tech University, University of Texas, or other testing instruments approved by the Superintendent or designee. Students are encouraged to review the course study guide on the university website. Frisco ISD will not provide review or study materials for Exams for Acceleration.

- [Texas Tech University](#)
- [University of Texas](#)

### **Elementary Acceleration**

A district shall accelerate a student in grades 1-5 one grade level if the student meets the following requirements:

- A. The student scores 80 percent or above on a criterion referenced test for the grade level to be skipped in each of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
- B. A district representative recommends that the student be accelerated; and
- C. The student's parent or guardian gives written approval of the acceleration.

### **Secondary Acceleration**

A student in any of Grades 6-12 must be given credit for an academic subject in which he or she has had no prior instruction if the student scores:

- A. a three or higher on a College Board advanced placement examination that has been approved by the school district board of trustees for the applicable course;
- B. a scaled score of 50 or higher on an examination administered through the College-Level Examination Program and approved by the school district board of trustees for the applicable course; or
- C. 80% on any other criterion-referenced test approved by the school district board of trustees for the applicable course.

## **Eligibility to Register for EA Assessments**

- Only students currently enrolled at a Frisco ISD campus are eligible to apply for Exam for Acceleration assessments.
- Students may earn credit for acceleration without prior instruction in the subject area or grade level being tested (EHDC Legal). This policy provides acceleration without prior instruction by grade level in grades K-5 or course credit at the secondary level (grades 6 through 12).
- Frisco ISD students are only eligible to apply for exams for acceleration for a grade level or course for which all prerequisites have been met and in the order of the district's usual course sequence.
  - A student may take an exam for acceleration for the next course/grade level during Window D if he or she is projected to meet the end of the year passing requirement for the current course/grade level.
  - Middle school students will not be allowed to register for high school exams for acceleration until middle school curriculum course requirements have been met.
- Parents who wish to have their child take an EA must contact their child's counselor and complete the FISD EA online application process by the deadline posted on the district website. Or, while it is not encouraged, the Frisco ISD Board does allow parents to request Exam for Acceleration testing outside of Frisco ISD.
  - Approved institutions are limited to UTHS and Texas Tech.

- Counselor approval is still needed. Parents should submit an [Approval Request for Independent Administration of Exam for Acceleration](#) form (<http://bit.ly/IndepEA>) by the district's published application close dates.
  - In this case, the parent is responsible for the cost of testing, and all requirements outlined in TAC 74.24 as well as our own district guidelines must be followed.
  - Without documented approval, campuses have the right to not accept the scores.
  - Proof of approval, all costs of the tests, and registration for the correct tests are all the responsibility of the parent.
- All acceleration attempts must occur during [district approved testing windows](#).
  - Students may only accelerate in one course per subject per testing window. (Example: a 6th grade math assessment and a 7th grade math assessment cannot be taken in the same testing window)
  - A student can only take a specific EA once during any given testing window (retests are not allowed during the same window an exam was first taken).
  - If a student attempts but does not pass an EA, the student may be eligible to apply for a retest. If it is determined that the student is eligible, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the application to retest is requested and approved by the deadlines posted on the district's testing website: <https://www.friscoisd.org/departments/testing/acceleration-credit-by-exam>
  - ***A student may not attempt to earn credit by examination without prior instruction for a specific course or grade level more than twice.***
  - If a student fails to earn credit for a specific course or grade level before the beginning of the school year in which the student would ordinarily be required to enroll in that course or grade level in accordance with the school district's prescribed course sequence, the student must satisfactorily complete the course or grade level to receive credit.
    - Exams for Acceleration are not offered for courses in which students are currently enrolled and receiving prior instruction. During mid-year windows, such as November and January, students would not be able to receive adequate instruction to gain credit in the subsequent course.
    - The mid-year windows are used for one-semester courses and world languages.
  - Once an Exam for Acceleration has been passed, it may not be taken again.
  - Students enrolled in Math 7 or Math 7 Advanced who wish to take the Algebra I EA (and accelerate through Algebra I) will need to show mastery of 8<sup>th</sup> grade TEKS as well as Algebra I TEKS. **Enrollment in and successful completion of the Math 7 Advanced course does not satisfy the prerequisite of Math 8 for purposes of EA testing.** Therefore, those students will need to take the Math 8 EA during the Spring testing window (Window D). Students who score 80% or better on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade math EA will then need to take an Algebra I EA during the summer testing window (Window A). **Students are strongly discouraged from accelerating through Algebra I.**

# Additional Considerations

- Transportation- As a middle school student your child may need to attend the high school in order to take his/her next course. Transportation to and from the high school is the parent's responsibility.
- Master schedule- We cannot guarantee the alignment between the middle school and high school master schedules. Your child may be limited in the times and formats (e.g., online, distance learning, etc...) in which the class is offered.
- Social maturity – When advancing a course, your child's social and emotional maturity may not match the maturity level of the other students in the course.
- Student desire- A student should have the desire and drive to accelerate and maintain the workload of the higher level class.
- Teacher/counselor recommendation- Teachers and counselors see your student on a daily basis and may be able to provide additional information regarding whether or not acceleration would be appropriate.
- Course opportunities later in high school- In some situations, accelerating now may put your child in a position where he/she is limited in course options as a high school junior or senior. Make sure you are clear on the ultimate goal of acceleration.
- High school courses taken in middle school are averaged into a child's high school grade point average (GPA) which does impact class ranking.
- Exam for Acceleration testing that would provide a student the opportunity to double accelerate should be given careful consideration. Double acceleration is only appropriate for a small number of students.

## Middle School Students

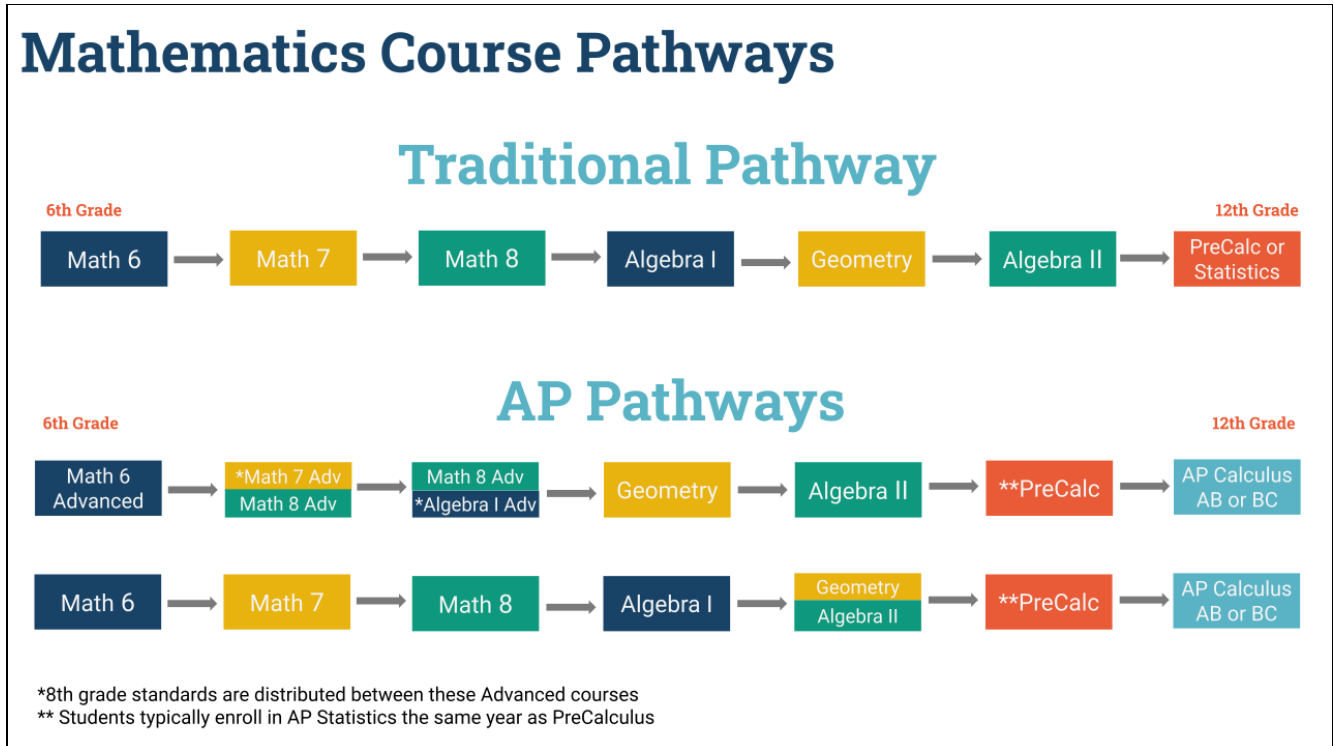
Students in 6-8th grade may take exams for acceleration and earn course credit per Frisco ISD Board policy EHDC (LEGAL).

At the middle school level, students who accelerate in math beyond Algebra 2, 8th Integrated Language Arts, 8th Science, or 8th US History will be required to take the next course in the district's prescribed course sequence at the high school campus or in an online format\*\* from the TX-Virtual School Network, University of Texas, or Texas Tech during the school day. Frisco ISD will select the online course. Students may only take the accelerated course at the high school campus if scheduling permits and the student is able to provide his/her own transportation. To accommodate the A/B day schedule at the high school, a student may take an additional course at the high school to balance the accelerated course, but that course may only be a high school credited course that is offered at the middle school. Currently, the only course options would be Spanish I and Health.

\*\*Students taking an accelerated course in an online format will be provided a class period during the school day and will be expected to work on the course during that period. A proctor will supervise the students and assist with any technical issues. Please see the Frisco ISD Academic Guide and Course Catalog for information on how unweighted GPA and weighted GPA will be impacted. Keep in mind that for the purpose of course grade weights, most online courses are considered on-level/Tier I.

### Middle School Math Information

Students are strongly discouraged from accelerating through Algebra I. There are multiple pathways for students to accelerate at other times that do not create potential gaps in an incredibly foundational course. Taking the Algebra I course (rather than testing out) allows students to fully comprehend and further build upon strong foundations in middle school math. Sitting for the year-long Algebra I course paves the road for a deep understanding of future high school math content. If the student feels strongly that they need to complete AP Calculus prior to senior year, it is recommended that Geometry be the chosen course for acceleration testing rather than Algebra I.



If you want your child to earn Algebra I credit in middle school, **your child does not need to take an Exam for Acceleration**. Instead, register your child for the following course path in middle school:

- In 6th grade, your student should take Math 6 or Math 6 Advanced.
- In 7th grade, your student should take Math 7 Advanced.
- In 8th grade, your student will be eligible to take Algebra I Advanced.

Acceleration through Algebra I for Math 7 or Math 7 Advanced students is considered double acceleration and is strongly discouraged. In order to double accelerate, **both Math 7 as well as Math 7**

**Advanced students must demonstrate mastery of 8<sup>th</sup> grade TEKS on a Math 8 EA before attempting the Algebra I EA.** Enrollment in and successful completion of the Math 7 Advanced course does not satisfy the prerequisite of Math 8 for purposes of EA testing. By the end of the year, Math 7 Advanced students will have mastered only half of the Grade 8 standards through instruction in the course. The remainder of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade standards are embedded in Frisco ISD's Algebra I Advanced course. **Students wishing to take the Algebra I EA (and accelerate through Algebra I) will need to take the Math 8 EA during the Spring testing window (Window D). Students who score 80% or better on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade math EA will then need to take an Algebra I EA during the summer testing window (Window A).**

## Awarding Credit

The EA's purpose is not to inform parents about a student's academic performance or progress. An EA will not provide information regarding objectives or skills missed. Knowing a score or how many questions a student missed on an exam for acceleration does not help in guiding instruction. Frisco ISD assesses students throughout the year with a variety of formative and summative assessments that provide parents with information regarding how a student is performing academically.

**If an Exam for Acceleration is passed, your child will be accelerated.** If you do not want your student to accelerate or are not sure you want him/her to accelerate, your child should not take an EA.

Students must demonstrate mastery of 80% or higher on an EA to earn credit. Some high school credit exams are two part exams. Beginning with 2022 Window D (in preparation for the 2022-23 school year) if a student scores below 80% on one part of a two-part Exam for Acceleration (EA), but meets standard on the other part of the exam for the same course, a student may gain credit for the course if they "average pass" the EA. To average pass, the averages of the two parts' scores must be at or above 80%. Exam scores from parts one and two taken within one window must average to 80% or above to earn full credit. If an average score of 80% is not obtained within the testing window, both parts will need to be re-taken. Partial course credit (e.g. individual semester credit) will not be awarded for a year-long course.

After successful completion of a CBE or an EA taken for high school credit, the numerical score earned will be posted to the student's high school transcript and the student will earn high school credit. The transcribed credit will not be calculated into the student's grade point average (GPA) for ranking purposes. For middle school courses, the student's CBE or EA numerical score will be documented in the student's permanent academic record. Scores not meeting the passing standard will be documented in the student's high school transcript or middle school permanent record as "NG."

## Payment

While there is no charge to parents when students take an EA, there is a cost to the district for both the test and the proctor who monitors the exam as it is given. Therefore, please carefully consider availability during the testing window before completing the application and gather input from

educators and/or counselors to determine whether or not acceleration is in the best interest of the student.

Students who register for an examination and do not take the exam will be required to pay for the cost of procuring the examination, including charges for shipping and handling. This can cost up to \$75.

While it is not encouraged, parents may choose to waive the cost-free option and request Exam for Acceleration testing outside of Frisco ISD using the [Approval Request for Independent Administration of Exam for Acceleration](#) form. With this option, proof of district approval, all costs of the tests, and registration for the correct tests are all the responsibility of the parent. Without documented approval from the district prior to testing, campuses have the right to not accept scores provided by parents from outside testing institutions.

## Important Dates

All acceleration attempts must occur during district approved test windows. Please see the [Frisco ISD Testing - Exam for Acceleration Site](#) for testing dates as well as application open and close dates.

**Placement in a new grade or year-long course will only occur at the start of a school year. Mid-year acceleration is not allowed; therefore, Window B and Window C testing is reserved for one-semester high school courses only.**