



# HICKORY CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*"First we Love them, then we teach them."*

Ms. Bethany Groves, *Principal*  
Jim Roberts, *Assistant Principal*

Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options are available through flexible grouping, enriched curriculum, whole grade or single subject acceleration, and may include virtual options.

## **Whole Grade Acceleration**

Acceleration is the skipping of a grade, or part of a grade, based on exceptionally high achievement by a student. Acceleration may be considered when the student has outstanding abilities and skills, social and emotional maturity, above grade level performance in reading and math, and meets other district criteria. Parents should carefully consider the following:

- Accelerated coursework grades become a part of your student's permanent record.
- Your student will still be responsible for mastering all standards in their current grade level and also will be required to take their current grade level FSA testing (grades 3-5).
- Parental involvement in the entire process of accelerated coursework is necessary for student success.
- Your student should have excellent study skills, be self-motivated, and be able to work independently.
- Acceleration in early grades will result in your student being younger than classmates. This can become a problem for social and emotional development, as well as athletic competition in later years.

Parents who may be interested in completing the application for the acceleration process should consult with their child's teacher, counselor and the school principal. Consistent with school board rules and in accordance with state statute 1012.28 (5) F.S., the Superintendent has designated the principal of the school as the final authority in the placement of students in programs or classes.

Acceleration does not supersede the initial placement age criteria as specified in Florida Statute 1003.21:

- For Kindergarten, the student must be 5 years old on or before September 1 of the school year
- For First Grade, the student must be 6 years old on or before September 1 of the school year

## **Course Acceleration**

Students in grades four or five, who earn a level 4 or 5 on the FSA in reading and math, may be eligible for course acceleration after demonstrating mastery of the current grade level standards. When a student is accelerated, there is no guarantee that the entire foundation curriculum has been mastered. This is particularly critical in math and science since topics are presented only once, rather than being repeated year after year. The parent should carefully consider the full academic and social ramifications of acceleration. The parent may confer with the teachers, counselor, and principal to determine if single

subject acceleration may be appropriate for the individual student based on the student's academic history, teacher recommendation and ability to work independently. Consistent with school board rules and in accordance with state statute 1012.28 (5) F.S., the Superintendent has designated the principal of the school as the final authority in the placement of students in programs or classes.

Fourth grade students who earn a level 4 or level 5 on the FSA in reading or math and who meet district criteria may be eligible for single subject acceleration to a fifth grade level course. If they also meet the district criteria for fifth grade course acceleration, they may be eligible to take a sixth grade level course. Middle school courses are accessible only through Florida Virtual School and may be completed at home or at school.

Fifth grade students who earn a level 4 or level 5 in reading and meet district acceleration criteria may accelerate to an advanced middle school language arts, science or social studies course; Fifth Grade students who earn a level 4 or level 5 in math and meet district criteria may advance to middle school Advanced Math I. As stated above, middle school courses are accessible only through virtual school and may be completed at home or at school. Approval by the Director of Instructional Services and the Director of Guidance and Choice is required.

For additional information on acceleration options, please contact your school counselor or see the Elementary School Student Progression Plan on the District website at:  
<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/depts/cs/spp>.