

# Accelerate Online Academy Policies



# Accelerate Online Academy Policies

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# Accelerate Online Academy Policies

## Mission and Vision

### Mission Statement

At Accelerate Online Academy, our mission is to provide all students with an engaging learning experience reflecting each student's uniqueness. Whether taking individual classes or enrolling full-time, Accelerate Online Academy's personalized curriculum aims to ensure each student reaches their academic goals.

### Vision Statement

Accelerate Online Academy will enlist research-based instructional strategies that have been demonstrated to foster success across a wide range of student populations. The curriculum and instruction will be relevant and engaging. It will apply active learning principles that can be adapted to meet the learning needs of a diverse student body, including students who are performing below grade level and advanced students looking for opportunities to extend their learning opportunities. The Academy will provide interactive content that can be adapted to a variety of learning situations, including classroom instruction, self-paced study on home computers, and the use of mobile devices. Learning experiences will be carefully sequenced and scaffolded to help students build upon each of their successes and efficiently grasp new concepts. Accelerate Online Academy will select and train instructors carefully and expect them to monitor student progress and to intervene as needed to ensure students' success.

## General Academic Policies

### Enrollment

There are two types of enrollments in Accelerate Online Academy--part-time and full-time. Full-time students complete all their coursework through the Academy and intend to graduate from the Academy. Part-time students take one or more courses at the Academy but intend to transfer those credits to a home district. The enrollment process varies depending upon the type of enrollment.

When a student registers with Accelerate Online Academy as a fulltime student, he or she completes an application and provides the administration with the following documentation:

### General Information

- Name, Address, Birthdate, etc.

### Proof of age, documented using one of the following:

- Original birth certificate
- Notarized copy of birth certificate
- Valid passport
- Original baptismal certificate indicating the date of birth.
- Copy of the record of baptism – notarized or duly certified and showing the date of birth

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- Notarized statement from parents or another relative indicating the date of birth.
- Prior school records indicating the date of birth.

### **Copy of latest school records**

- Those entering KINDERGARTEN do not require past school records.

### **Copy of IEP or 504 plan, if applicable**

### **English Language Proficiency test results for foreign students**

Those entering Accelerate Academy from home school must provide a formal record of how the student functions academically. Documentation may include standardized test scores, a self-created record of achievement, and activity records or transcripts from other online or private schools. Other documentation deemed suitable by the principal may be acceptable. Please note that all documentation will be verified with the institution or entity providing the information.

Part-time students enroll with the intent to transfer the credit earned to their home district. All part-time students should contact their home district to ensure that transferred credits will be accepted prior to enrolling.

Each full-time student will work with representatives of Accelerate Academy to determine the best course of study for the student, before enrolling in classes.

Part-time students will choose courses during the enrollment process and may begin classes once payment is received. For more information on the enrollment process, students and parents can visit the Academy's website or speak to a help desk representative.

### **Course Duration**

Accelerate Academy's online program offers a great deal of flexibility in start and end dates. These dates are specific to each student and are determined at registration. All coursework must be completed no later than the "end of enrollment date" established during registration. Once a final grade report for a course is issued, students may not submit additional work for that course. Furthermore, no course enrollment period can extend beyond the original end date without an extension request. (See the Extensions section for more information.)

All core curriculum enrollments are equivalent in seat time, with each core semester-long course intended to require 90 hours of class time—not including study and project time.

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We offer the following options for types of courses:

Course Type	Duration	Description
<b>Semester-long flexible course</b>	14-20 weeks	Students enrolled in this type of course can begin at any time but are required to attend the class for a minimum of 14 weeks and a maximum of 20 weeks. Students are expected to work a minimum of 5 hours per week. This course type includes optional synchronous sessions—real-time discussions or meetings with teachers. (Note: AP courses are offered as semester-long calendar courses only.)
<b>Semester-long calendar course (AP Courses Only)</b>	18 weeks	Students enrolled in this type of course share the same start and end date as other students in their cohorts. Students are required to attend an 18-week semester and are expected to work a minimum of 5 hours per week. Synchronous sessions are offered as well as collaborative activities. Extensions are not granted for AP courses.
<b>Condensed semester-long</b>	6 weeks	Students enrolled in a condensed summer session are expected to work a minimum of 11.5 hours per week. Synchronous sessions are offered. (Note: AP courses are offered as semester-long calendar courses only.)

Each Accelerate Education course includes a pacing guide with target due dates to help students manage their coursework. In addition, weekly reports and communication help ensure that students meet their target dates. If any coursework is not completed by the end of the semester, the student receives a zero for each incomplete item, and those zeroes are included in the student's average when final grades are calculated.

## Graduation Requirements (High School)

Each student who is enrolled full-time and plans to graduate from Accelerate Online Academy will follow a formal, written Student Learning Plan (SLP) approved by a guidance counselor. The SLP is developed with input from the student and the student's parents, guardians, or a designated mentor.

To earn a diploma from Accelerate Online Academy, a student must attend at least one full academic year at the Academy with a minimum of 5 credits; he or she must also meet the Academy's minimum graduation requirements and complete a senior project.

Transfer credits will be awarded based on information gathered at the time of transfer from

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student records, course descriptions and syllabi, and any other documentation as requested. Credits earned prior to attending Accelerate Online Academy will not be used to calculate the student's GPA.

### Repeated Course Policy

Any student who fails a required course for graduation in a core area must repeat the course at Accelerate Online Academy before the next course in sequence may be taken. Failure in an elective course will not automatically dictate a make-up course. However, the course would have to be repeated if it is a prerequisite for another course the student wishes to take or if the student would not meet the graduation requirements for electives.

The failure is not removed from the record and both grades are used in computing the GPA. Courses in which a grade of 60-69 is earned can also be repeated, but only once, with both the original and new grades included in the cumulative grade-point average. Courses in which a grade of 70 or higher is earned may not be repeated for inclusion in the cumulative grade-point average.

### Total Credits

To earn a diploma, students must complete at least 22 high school credits representing each of the categories listed in the chart below. Each semester-long course represents 0.5 credit. A full-year course (two semesters) is worth 1 credit.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Minimum Requirements</b>
English	4 credits
Math	4 credits
Science*	3 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
Fine Arts	1 credit
Health and Fitness	2 credits
Foreign Language	2 credits
Electives	2.5 credits
Senior Project	0.5 credit
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 credits</b>

*\*must include one year of lab science*

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

To graduate, students must maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or above and a 2.3 GPA in core curriculum courses—courses in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science.

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## Graduation Culminating Project

To graduate, all students must complete a culminating project that requires them to demonstrate essential skills for future success in the workplace or in college, such as reading, writing, speaking, and production or performance. Students will learn about the project upon admission and may complete the project at any time prior to graduation.

## Course Selection

These are the recommended number of credits in each subject area for each high school year. For specific course options in each category, visit our [online course catalog](#).

	<b>FRESHMEN</b>	<b>SOPHOMORES</b>	<b>JUNIORS</b>	<b>SENIORS</b>
	<i>6 credits</i>	<i>6 credits</i>	<i>6 credits</i>	<i>6 credits</i>
ENGLISH	ELA 9	ELA 10	ELA 11 or AP	ELA 12 or AP
MATH	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit
SCIENCE	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit	
SOCIAL STUDIES	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit	
HEALTH & FITNESS	1 credit	1 credit		
FINE ARTS			1 credit	1 credit
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	1 credit	1 credit		
ELECTIVES			1 credit	3 credits
SENIOR PROJECT				Senior Project

## Full-Time Enrollment

Any secondary student (grades 6-12) concurrently enrolled in five courses is considered a full-time student. Any elementary student (grades K-5) concurrently enrolled in four courses is considered full-time. No student may enroll in more than six courses during the traditional semester at the same time. No student may enroll in more than three courses during the condensed summer session.

## Age

Kindergarten students must be five years old by August 31 to enroll. No one is permitted to attend Accelerate Online Academy after the age of nineteen. However, students who reach the age of nineteen during a school year in which they are already enrolled may complete that school year.

## Attendance and Pacing

Academy students are expected to submit work regularly and continuously throughout



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the semester, following the pacing guide for each course. The pacing guide, which can be found within the learning management system, expects students to log in and complete work daily. Other tools such as the Calendar and To Do List are provided to assist with pacing. Teachers have access to student activity data and can easily identify which students have not logged in regularly.

Class attendance at Accelerate Online Academy is a student obligation and responsibility. Attendance is tracked by monitoring the student's pacing goals and completion. When a student logs into his/her courses, this does not demonstrate acceptable daily attendance. Students must progress at least 5% in gradable activities in his/her classes each week to meet attendance requirements. A student who does not progress regularly and shows truancy may not meet the requirements for advancement and graduation.

The Accelerate Online Academy as well as parents/guardians are required to ensure that their children meet school attendance requirements as evidenced by *both*:

- a. Progress in pace of at least 5% in a majority of courses each school week.
- b. Attendance of required benchmark assessments as planned between teacher and student.

### Excused/Legal Absence

Excused or legal absences that produce a lag in student pacing of more than 10% should be reported to the Attendance Secretary via the Attendance Email: [attendance@accelerate-academy.net](mailto:attendance@accelerate-academy.net) within three (3) days of the absence. Absences will be excused for the following reasons (all but illness or death must be reported prior to the absence) and at the discretion of the Administration:

1. Illness: A doctor's excuse note must be sent to the Attendance Secretary and the child's School Counselor.
2. Extreme illness or death of a family member
3. Participation in approved school/co-op activities with prior approval by school administration
4. Medical appointments (with submission of doctor's note upon school request)
5. Legal appointments, such as court appearances, appointments with legal counsel and/or probation officer, probation hearings, etc.
6. Visit to college or technical institutes by juniors or seniors.
7. Educational travel with approval of the principal or other school administrator submitted one week prior to departure.
8. Maternity leave: New mothers are expected to submit work in at least half their

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classes by the third week after birth and in all of their classes by the fourth week. A doctor's release is required for the student. The student is still responsible for completion of all assigned work.

9. Religious holidays observed by bona fide religious groups.

### Unexcused/Illegal Absences

Any absence that produces a lag in student pacing of more than 10% that is not deemed legal or excused will be documented as unexcused/illegal. A valid excuse must be provided to the school upon date of return from an absence. Failure to do so will result in specific consequences, as outlined below and at the discretion of the Administration:

1. Should a student fail to log in to their course within their first week of enrollment, the Accelerate Teacher will email the student and designated mentor to notify them of absence. If the student continues to not log in after one week, the principal will be notified, and an email will be sent to the parent and student regarding absence. If the student has not logged in during their third week, they will be withdrawn from the course. No refund will be granted, and the course will be designated WF for the final grade.
2. After the first log in, if a student fails to log in for five consecutive days, the Accelerate Teacher will email the student to request that a log in be made. If no log in is made within five days of communication, the Accelerate Teacher will then email the student and designated mentor to ensure the student logs in. After another five days, the principal will be notified, and an email will be sent to the parent and student regarding absence and the student will be put on written warning. If the student has not logged in during their third week, they will be withdrawn from the course. No refund will be granted, and the course will be designated WF for the final grade.
3. If a student falls more than 10% behind in their pacing goal, the Accelerate Teacher will email the student and designated mentor to warn of lack of progress and absence. If no progress is made within five days of communication, the Accelerate Teacher will notify the student and the designated mentor. After another five days, the Accelerate Teacher will notify the principal. An email will be sent to the parent and student regarding absence and the student will be given a written warning. If the student continues to make no progress after three consecutive weeks, they will be withdrawn from the course. No refund will be granted, and the course will be designated WF for the final grade.
4. After 3 weeks' worth of attempts are made by Accelerate staff to communicate with a student and/or parent regarding enrollment and there is no returned communication, the student will be withdrawn from the course. No refund will be granted, and the course will be designated WF for the final grade.

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## Extensions

A course extension—a change to the student’s end of enrollment date—may be granted after a request from the student’s parent or designated mentor. Such extensions are granted for extenuating circumstances only and at the discretion of Accelerate Academy's administration.

Extenuating circumstances include personal issues or events that prevent a student from completing schoolwork. The Academy’s definition of “extenuating circumstances” is strictly limited to the following:

- Bereavement (due to the death of a close relative or significant other)
- Serious short-term illness or accident
- Worsening of a long-term chronic health problem
- Other exceptional circumstances (such as a natural disaster, severe weather, military service of a family member or civil unrest).

The following situations are **NOT** considered extenuating circumstances that qualify for an extension:

- A student claims to have a medical problem, but has no evidence or documentation, such as a doctor’s note.
- The Academy has already adjusted a student’s deadlines once, in response to a short- or long-term medical problem.
- A student provides documentation for a medical issue, but the document does not include a time frame for resolving the issue.
- Events or circumstances which a reasonable person would have been able to foresee and plan to avoid or work around.
- Minor illnesses for which someone would not normally take sick leave.
- Holidays, festivals, or private celebrations (including weddings).
- Problems with computers, printers, or network facilities.
- A student’s failure to back up work or manage his or her time effectively.

When an extension is granted, the following rules apply:

- At least 50% of a student’s work must be completed before requesting an extension. Students are expected to work consistently and to make adequate progress with regular logins and progression during enrollment.
- Extension requests must be made **prior** to the student’s original end date.
- If the course requirements are not met by the end of the extension, a final grade will be issued based on work completed, with zeroes entered for work not completed.
- Fees may be charged for approved extensions.
- To request an extension, a student should complete the [Extension Request Form](#).

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## Assignment Reset

To ensure academic integrity, course assignments are set to allow one attempt by each student. Students can request an assignment reset if there are technical glitches or special circumstances. These kinds of requests must be submitted by email to the course teacher.

If a student is unable to complete a lesson successfully (by earning a score of 70% or higher), a highly qualified online teacher will provide intervention. Resets for reasons other than technical issues will be allowed at the discretion of the teacher. Resets will not be granted to allow the student to receive a higher grade.

## Academic Integrity

Accelerate Online Academy takes academic integrity very seriously; we believe that any form of cheating defeats the purpose of learning and harms students. The goal of the Academy's academic integrity policy is to ensure that enrolled students learn the material presented and earn a grade that accurately reflects their knowledge and academic progress.

The [International Center for Academic Integrity](#) defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: **honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage**. Based on these core values, Accelerate Online Academy believes that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- misrepresenting one's knowledge through acts of cheating.
- plagiarism—using words, ideas, or work products attributable to another person or source without attributing those elements to the source.
- obtaining information about assessment questions (including quizzes and exams) before completing the assessments
- submitting blank assignments purposefully to gain additional time for completion.
- using unauthorized notes or outside materials during quizzes and exams
- turning in previously submitted work in response to projects or writing assignments, including those created by the student in other classes or previous attempts at the same course.

Teachers at Accelerate Online Academy use several anti-cheating tools to verify the authenticity of student work. Any student caught violating the Academy's academic integrity policies will be subject to disciplinary action, and the student's parent or guardian will be notified of the infraction. Repeated infractions may result in the student failing the course.

Consequences for academic dishonesty will increase if and as the behavior escalates:

- For a first offense, a student will be allowed to redo the assignment after meeting with the teacher regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.
- For the second offense, the student will receive a zero on the assignment with no option to redo the work. The teacher will email the student's mentor and/or parent.
- After a third offense, the student will be referred to the administration to determine final steps.

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## Course Drop Policy

Students may change their course enrollment (drop classes) up to fourteen days after the scheduled student start date. If a course is dropped within this time frame, Accelerate will refund 100% of any course fees. A withdrawal notification must be received in writing by Accelerate before the 14-day grace period ends. After fourteen days, the student will be considered enrolled in the course for the semester; the student will be assigned grade in the course, and the enrollment fee is non-refundable.

*Note: If both semesters (A and B) of a course have been purchased at the same time using the reduced cost, Semester B of that course will not be refunded unless the student withdraws from Semester A within the 14-day time period.*

## Instruction

Accelerate Online Academy Instructors meet the United States' Department of Education's Highly Qualified Teacher requirements.

All Accelerate Online Academy teachers must have:

- a bachelor's degree
- full state certification or licensure
- experience teaching in the subject area assigned.

A student enrolled in Accelerate Academy has access to frequent instructor-initiated interaction. As a student completes course assignments, the teacher provides individualized feedback on the student's performance as well as suggestions for future success. This feedback happens asynchronously within the learning management system (LMS).

Students are encouraged to interact with their instructors in real time during the course as well. Real-time interaction between the student and the teacher may occur for a number of reasons. One-on-one sessions conducted by phone, video chat, text chat, or email occur on an as-needed basis for individual tutoring and remediation. Teachers also offer synchronous sessions to students to cover specific content. Between the asynchronous and synchronous feedback and interaction, students are connecting with their instructor daily.

## Assessment Feedback

Course assessments are graded by a highly qualified teacher, by our computer system, or through a combination of computerized scoring and manual grading by a teacher. Thirty to fifty percent of the assessments in a course are graded manually by the teacher—the exact percentage varies by course. Computer-scored assessments are graded as soon as the student completes them; students may use tools in the learning management system to check their progress immediately, and at any time.

When teachers grade assessments, they provide feedback using commenting features and/or PDF markup tools. The assessment with feedback included is then returned to the student

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through the learning management system (LMS). For synchronous assessments, such as benchmark tests or oral assessments, the student receives feedback in real time, and the teacher also records feedback with the LMS gradebook. The student may then refer to the feedback as needed. Teachers may also use the LMS gradebook to provide more general feedback, using the "comments" section of each assignment. All feedback is captured and stored within Accelerate Academy's LMS, and this information remains accessible to the student even after the enrollment period has ended.

### Course Grading

Teachers at Accelerate Academy are expected to deliver a grade within 72 business hours of receiving an assignment. If a student submits multiple assignments at once, the time allowed for grading increases by the additional number of assignments times 72. (Teachers need adequate time to provide the kind of rich, thoughtful, and thorough feedback that helps students grow academically.) A Manager of Instruction ensures prompt assessment turn-around-times by monitoring the course gradebooks.

### Grading Scale

All grades are reported numerically, and students will receive a percentage score in their final grade report. The grading scale used at Accelerate Online Academy when calculating GPA is:

Percentage	Grade Point	Honors Grade Point	AP Grade Point
100	4	4.5	5
94 - 100	4	4.5	5
90 - 93	3.7	4.2	4.7
87 - 89	3.3	3.8	4.3
83 - 86	3	3.5	4
80 - 82	2.7	3.2	3.7
77 - 79	2.3	2.8	3.3
73 - 76	2	2.5	3
70 - 72	1.7	2.2	2.7
67 - 69	1.3	1.8	2.3
60 - 66	1	1.5	2
0 - 59	0	0	0

### Grade Point Average Calculation

The method for calculating a student's grade point average (GPA) depends on the academic rigor of the course. AP courses receive more weight when computing GPA. Accelerate Online Academy uses the following GPA calculation:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{sum (weighted grade point * credit value)}}{\text{credits earned}}$$

The following items are not included in the calculation of a student's GPA:

- WF (Withdraw Fail)

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- Grades transferred from another school.

## Materials

For a list of required materials for our courses, please see the [online course catalog](#). Each course description has a list of required materials for that course.

## Progress Reports

Each week, the student and the student's parent or guardian will receive an email detailing the student's recent progress within the course(s). At any time, students, parents, or guardians may seek clarification from a teacher regarding their student's progress to ask for help addressing questions or concerns.

## Honor Roll

The designation of *First Honors* is awarded to any full-time student who earns a semester average of 93, with no grade below 90. *Second Honors* is awarded to full-time students who earn an average of 88, with no grade below 85. A "W" (withdraw) in any subject eliminates a student from either honor roll. A withdrawal is considered a failure until it is rectified.

## Final Grades

Final grades are available 72 hours after a student completes 100% of a course unless multiple assignments are submitted at the end of a semester. In that case, since teachers need adequate time to grade and provide thorough feedback, final grade reports will be delayed.

## Grade Appeal

A student may appeal the *final* grade for a course if:

- The student believes the final grade does not accurately reflect his or her work in a course.
- The student can demonstrate that an inappropriate grade was assigned because of clerical or technical error.

Students may not appeal grades for individual assignments or assessments—only for the final grade in a course. To submit an appeal, the student must be able to substantiate a claim that his or her final grade represents unfair treatment due to arbitrary grading practices, prejudice, and/or error. (These will be considered the only legitimate grounds appealing a grade.) In the absence of compelling reasons like these, the grade assigned by the instructor is to be considered final.

Students should take these steps to appeal a final grade:

1. Review the final grade with the instructor.
2. Send a written grade appeal to [appeal@accelerate-academy.net](mailto:appeal@accelerate-academy.net) within 30 days of completing the course.
3. Within 30 days, the principal will notify the student by email of the appeal's

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outcome.

## Transcripts

Accelerate Online Academy sends transcripts by mail or email to any institution requesting such information. Transcripts can be requested through our online [Transcript Request Form](#). It is the policy of Accelerate Online Academy not to send any transcripts if the student's tuition or fees are not paid in full.

Please note that official transcripts can only be sent to educational institutions and personnel. We cannot send official transcripts, other than final graduate transcripts, directly to students or families.

## Transcript Revision Policy

A student may request a revision of an official transcript if:

- The student has received notification of a change of grade based on an appeal.\*
- There is a documented discrepancy between electronic records of final grades in the learning management system and the official transcript.
- There is evidence of an error in GPA calculation.

The student shall email Accelerate Online Academy at [transcripts@accelerate-academy.net](mailto:transcripts@accelerate-academy.net) including "Request for Transcript Revision: Student Name" in the subject line. Include the student's name and contact information including mailing address, phone number, and email address. State clearly the reason for the request for revision as well as include evidence of the error or discrepancy or provide documentation of successful grade appeal.

Upon receipt of the request for revision of the transcript, the Accelerate Online Academy Principal and the Director will review and notify the student of the result of the request within 30 days. If the request for revision is approved, an updated copy of the transcript can be requested using the online [Transcript Request Form](#).

*\*Students may not request a revision of an official transcript for a grade dispute without first filing a grade appeal. Only when a student receives notification of a grade change will a transcript revision request be accepted for that purpose.*

## Internet Safety & Respect

### Cyber Bullying

**Accelerate Academy prohibits harassment, intimidation, and bullying by any means.**

Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to, electronic, written, verbal, or physical acts, either direct or indirect, when such intentional electronic, verbal, written or physical acts physically harm, substantially interfere with a student's education, threaten the overall



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educational environment and/or substantially disrupt the operation of the school.

Accelerate Academy also prohibits harassment, intimidation, and bullying based upon race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, marital status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, or sensory disability.

Examples of behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Sending mean or threatening messages to a classmate via email, IM (instant messaging), or text messages.
- Spreading rumors about classmates through email, IM, or text messages.
- Creating a website or social networking page that targets another student.
- Sharing fake or embarrassing photos or videos of classmates with others via a cell phone or the Web.
- Stealing a classmate's login and password to send mean or embarrassing messages from his or her account.

Accelerate Academy reserves the right to discipline any student for actions that are intended to have a harmful effect on another student or other individual as well as actions that adversely affect the safety and well-being of a student or other individual associated with the school.

**Students are expected to:**

- Treat each other respectfully, in person and online.
- Refuse to cyber bully or let others be cyber bullied.
- Refuse to participate in or encourage any form of cyber bullying.
- Report cyber bullying to a parent, teacher, or administrator as soon as they become aware of it.

### Netiquette and Online Communication

*Netiquette* is network etiquette and includes the do's and don'ts of online communication as well as guidelines for good cyberspace behavior. Communication online may occur through discussions, blogs, texts, chats, emails, or online synchronous sessions. Communication helps build relationships between teachers and students and among students and therefore is essential to the success of all students.

**In their communications with teachers and other students, students are expected to:**

- Be concise and to the point.
- Use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Avoid attaching unnecessary files.
- Avoid sending messages using all CAPS (All CAPS is like shouting).
- Review (reread) messages before sending them and make any necessary corrections.
- Include meaningful language to describe the topic of the message in subject lines.
- Include all necessary details so that the recipient of the message understands what you are trying to communicate.

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- Avoid abbreviations and emoticons.
- Avoid profanities or obscenities in any communications.
- Respond to teacher communications in a timely manner (within 24 hours).

Violations of these rules will result in a reprimand from the administrator or teacher. Once cautioned about email netiquette, a student will be required to correct email messages and resend. Further violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use Accelerate Online Academy's information technology resources.

### Technology Use Policy

Accelerate Academy's information technology resources, including the learning management system, are provided for educational purposes. Adherence to the Technology Use Policy outlined below is necessary for continued access to the school's resources. For a complete list of current technical requirements for Accelerate Online Academy coursework, please visit our website at [http://www.accelerate.academy/tech\\_requirements.html](http://www.accelerate.academy/tech_requirements.html).

#### Students are expected to:

- Respect and protect the privacy of others.
  - Use only assigned accounts.
  - Refrain from using or copying passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
  - Refrain from distributing private information about others or themselves.
- Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.
  - Observe all network security practices, as posted.
  - Report security risks or violations to a teacher or network administrator.
  - Refrain from destroying or damaging data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission of the owner.
  - Conserve, protect, and share these resources with other students and Internet users.
  - Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
  - Avoid infringing on copyrights (which includes making illegal copies of music, games, or movies).
  - Avoid plagiarism.
- Respect and practice the principles of community.
  - Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
  - Report threatening or discomfoting materials to a teacher or mentor.
  - Refrain from accessing, transmitting, copying, or creating material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
  - Refrain from accessing, transmitting, copying, or creating material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
  - Avoid using any other Academy resources to further other acts that are criminal or to violate the school's code of conduct.
  - Avoid sending spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.

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- Refrain from buying, selling, advertising, or otherwise conducting business using school resources, unless approved as a school project.

## Consequences for Violation

Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources.

## Supervision and Monitoring

School and network administrators and their authorized employees monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and that they conform to the school's IT policies. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions and will furnish evidence of any crime to law enforcement.

## Anti-Discrimination Policy

Accelerate Academy provide equal opportunities for all students and does not unlawfully discriminate against any person based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, religious creed, color, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, or disability in the educational student programs or activities which it operates and does not tolerate any such discrimination.

## Terms

For purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined:

- **Complaint** - A problem, dispute, or disagreement regarding discrimination, which cannot be resolved informally. The complaint procedure may be used by any complainant who feels aggrieved or who feels that there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of any policy, procedure, or practice.
- **Complainant** - Any person filing a complaint.
- **Respondent** - The employee allegedly committing the discriminatory act or omission.
- **EEO** - The employee designated to coordinate the Board's effort to comply with and carry out its responsibility for nondiscrimination.
- **Day** - Any calendar day excluding Saturday, Sunday, and holidays.

## Issuing a Complaint

Complaints alleging violations of this policy shall be made to Accelerate Academy or the Equal Employment Office (EEO). Any person, student or employee who believes that he or she has suffered unlawful discrimination or harassment shall immediately report the incident(s) to his or her Teacher, Mentor, or Principal.

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A written filing shall start the formal complaint procedure or oral complaint as set forth below within sixty (60) days of the alleged discriminatory act. Accelerate Academy shall be responsible for making a thorough investigation of the matter and making recommendations for remedial or affirmative action.

All information gathered will remain confidential until the conclusion of the investigation. An alleged victim of employment discrimination who does not file a complaint may request that all records relating to the allegation of employment discrimination be designated confidential and exempt from public disclosure.

## **Step 1**

The complainant shall present the matter in writing or orally, stating:

- The nature of the problem.
- The date, time, and location of the alleged discrimination.
- The people involved.
- Efforts, if any, and results to solve the problem prior to filing the written complaint.

The EEO shall provide the respondent with a copy of the complaint. Within ten days of the receipt of the complaint, the EEO shall notify the complainant, respondent, and the immediate supervisor, in writing of the recommendation for resolving the matter. If the complaint is resolved and no further action is requested in writing or orally within five days of receipt of the Step 1 recommendation, the matter shall be considered closed.

## **Step 2**

The complainant may in writing or orally to the EEO request a conference within five days of receipt of the Step 1 recommendation. This conference shall be held within ten days after the receipt of the written/oral request. The following shall attend:

- The Administrator or designee.
- The complainant.
- EEO.
- The immediate supervisor or designee.
- A person mutually agreed upon by the respondent and the EEO.

Within five days following the conference, the Administrator or designee shall notify the complainant and respondent in writing by hand delivery or certified mail the recommendation for resolving the matter.

## **Step 3**

The complainant may in writing or orally to the Administrator request a hearing before the Board within five days after receipt of the Step 2 recommendation. After receipt of such a request, a hearing shall be scheduled as soon as possible. The complainant and respondent may at their expense have legal representation for this hearing. Within ten days following the hearing, the Chair of the Board shall notify the complainant and respondent in writing by hand delivery or certified mail the Board's recommendation for resolving the

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matter. Extension of any time limits prior to a request for hearing being filed may be granted by the EEO only for circumstances beyond the control of the complainant or the respondent. No person shall retaliate or in any way discriminate against any person for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation of a complaint. The complainant maintains the right to utilize other appropriate legal or administrative remedies available.

### Accommodations

Special education law, or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), defines the legal rights of private school students to publicly funded special education services. Specifically, it states that a private institution student does not have the same legal rights to special education services as a special education student in public school.

For any student at Accelerate Online Academy with an Instructional Education Plan (IEP), accommodation will be made to the best of the Academy's ability. Copies of a student's IEP will be collected upon enrollment and remain private within the data of the Academy. The Academy does not conduct special education testing nor create IEP plans. For more information on how the Academy can support your special education student, please contact [IEP@accelerate-academy.net](mailto:IEP@accelerate-academy.net).

Public school districts are given a small amount of money each year by the federal government to fund **Instructional Education Plans (IEP)** for special education students who attend private settings. Public school districts are required to meet with the administrators of private institutions in their area and discuss what services they will provide. The amount varies from year to year. For more information, visit [IDEA](#).

Be sure to advocate for your children and be retested every three years. Every IEP/504 student should be retested during their junior year for those accommodations to follow the student in any post-graduate educational setting.

# Accelerate Online Academy Policies

## Code of Ethics

Accelerate Education expects a high code of ethics for all members of its educational learning community. This learning community includes faculty, staff, parents, learning coaches, students, and others participating in the education of our students.

### Core Principles

Accelerate Education employees must acknowledge and accept all responsibilities stated in the Code of Ethics, so they can apply them to create an environment that fosters trust, integrity, competence, and accountability. Therefore, all members of the Accelerate Education learning community are expected to:

1. Be truthful and honest.
2. Treat all people with respect.
3. Be accountable for their actions.
4. Appreciate the worth and rights of others.
5. Show kindness and consideration to everyone.
6. Embrace with understanding the differences in all cultures.
7. Obey all laws and regulations.
8. Work in cooperation with others to protect and improve the Accelerate Online community.

### Interpersonal Relationships

Accelerate Education requires that all employees interact with other staff members, students, and the adults who support student learning, with the following traits:

1. Honesty – All staff must conduct all school matters with honesty, avoiding any form of misrepresentation, falsification, deception, or cheating.
2. Integrity – All staff must establish an atmosphere that encourages honesty and moreover discourages all forms of dishonesty.
3. Equity – All staff will be fair, open-minded, and impartial.
4. Respect – All staff will treat staff, students and the adults who support student learning with respect.

### Interacting with Students

To ensure all Accelerate Education staff interact properly with our students, we have the following policies in place:

1. Accelerate Education employees shall not engage with any conduct intended to unjustly influence student performance on tests or exams.
2. All staff shall not engage in any conduct that could be interpreted as abusive, exploitative, or otherwise improper. Dating relationships between students and staff are strictly prohibited.
3. Accelerate Education recognizes the sensitivity around student data and personnel files.

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Staff are strictly prohibited from using or disclosing confidential, private, or sensitive information.

## Compliance and Enforcement

All Accelerate Education staff shall uphold the policies stated in the Code of Ethics. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary actions including suspension or termination as well as referral to the appropriate authorities.

## FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Accelerate Online Academy takes student privacy very seriously and has developed several policies to ensure privacy.

## Right to Inspect and Review and to Consent to Release

Parents, legal guardians, and individuals acting as a parent or guardian in the absence of the student's parent/guardian of students under the age of eighteen have the right to access their child's education records and to authorize the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in education records to any third party. Students who have turned 18 years of age, or who are attending a post-secondary institution and are no longer students at Accelerate Online Academy, are "eligible students" and have the right to authorize disclosure of that information to any third party. If a student currently enrolled in the Academy has reached 18 years of age but is still claimed as a "dependent" under the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 152, by the parents, the parents or guardian continue to have the right to inspect and review their student's records, but they no longer have the authority to authorize release of such records.

## When Content is not needed for the Academy to Disclose Information

A student's education record may be disclosed by the Academy without consent of a parent/eligible student whenever permitted or required by law, such as, but not limited to:

### 1. School Officials

To "School Officials" when there is a legitimate educational interest. A School Official is: Any administrator, certified staff member, or support staff member (including health, medical, safety and security staff) employed by the Academy.

A contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom the Academy has outsourced services or functions, such as, but not limited to, an attorney, auditor, cloud storage provider, consultant, expert witness, hearing officer, investigator, insurer/insurance company adjuster, investigator, or any other claims representative, medical providers or consultants, or counselors/therapists, provided that the person is performing a service or function for which

## Accelerate Online Academy Policies

the Academy would otherwise use employees, is under the direct control of the Academy with respect to the use and maintenance of education records, and is subject to FERPA requirements governing the use and re-disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records;

A person serving on a committee appointed by the administration, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or other review committee.

A School Official has a “legitimate educational interest” when the official needs such information to fulfill his or her professional, contractual, or other responsibilities for the Academy.

Reasonable methods shall be in place to ensure that School Officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests. Employees who access, or allow others to access, education records that they do not have a legitimate interest in accessing, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **2. Other Schools**

To officials of other public or private schools or post-secondary institutions in which a student seeks/intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, upon request of that school. Education records provided to any private or public elementary school or secondary school shall include disciplinary records involving any suspension or expulsion and may include discipline records for conduct that posed a significant risk to the safety or well-being of that student, other students, or other members of the school community.

The first official transcript and/or record will be sent free of charge. Each additional copy will cost \$5. Written requests can be made in writing from the Academy's website.

### **3. Subpoenas and Court Orders**

In compliance with judicial order, or pursuant to any lawfully issued subpoena, upon condition that parents and the students are notified of all such orders or subpoenas in advance of the compliance therewith by the Academy. However, when a parent is a party to a court proceeding involving child abuse and neglect or dependency matters, and the order is issued in the context of that proceeding, additional notice to the parent by the Academy is not required. In addition, notice will not be given to parents in situations where the Academy is directed by the issuing authority not to disclose the existence or contents of the subpoena.

### **4. Foster Care**

To an agency caseworker or other representative of a state or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who has the right to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student.

### **5. Litigation Between Academy and Student/Parent**

To the court in any legal action by a parent or student against the Academy, or by the Academy against a parent or student, when necessary to either defend itself or proceed with a legal action as plaintiff.



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## **6. Health or Safety Emergency**

To appropriate parties when knowledge of the information is necessary in the judgment of the Academy to protect the health or safety of the student or any other person.

## **7. Studies**

To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the Academy for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, and improving instruction, if there is a written agreement and such studies are conducted in such a manner that each meet the requirements of applicable law.

## **8. Audit or Evaluation**

To certain federal and state officials when needed to audit or enforce legal conditions related to a federally or state-supported education program or to enforce or to comply with the federal legal requirements that relate to those programs.

## **9. Accrediting Organizations**

To accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting function.

## **10. Parents and Students**

To any "parent", as defined by FERPA, of a student who has not reached age 18, or to the student. For students who have turned 18, disclosure may be made to a parent without the consent of the student if the student remains a "dependent" of the parent as defined under the Internal Revenue Code.

## **11. When Allowed or Required by State Law**

To state and local officials or authorities to whom such information is specifically allowed or required to be reported pursuant to state law and concerns the juvenile justice system and its ability to effectively serve the student whose records are released and, where required, written certification is provided by the officials or authorities that the information will not be disclosed to any other party except as provided under state law.

## **12. Audit or Evaluation of Educational Program**

To permitted state and federal officials to audit or evaluate educational programs or for enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements which relate to those educational programs.

## **13. When Disclosure is of "Directory Information"**

"Directory information" is information from a student's education record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. "Directory Information" **MAY** be, but is not required to be, disclosed by the Academy without the consent of the parent or eligible student. The following items are designated by Accelerate Online Academy as "Directory Information":

- Student's name
- Photographs - including use of student photographs in Academy's publications, on

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Academy's social media and the Academy's website, and release of yearbook photo upon request by news media.

- Video/film of student when filmed by Academy for educational purposes or for promotional use, and film by news media.
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Date student enrolled/disenrolled in Academy, enrollment status, and grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports.
- Degrees, honors, and awards received.
- The most recent school or school district attended prior to Accelerate Online Academy
- Class lists

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Academy does not designate as "Directory Information" any of the above items when and if the Academy determines, in its sole discretion, that the circumstances are such that disclosure of the information could pose a risk to student safety or well-being or has the potential to be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy by the parent or student if disclosure was allowed.

"Directory Information" may, in the discretion of the Academy, be disclosed in circumstances such as but not limited to:

- Academy publications, such as newsletters, calendars, newspapers, event programs, communications, announcements, and news releases
- Academy websites, digital publications, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Print, television, and broadcast media
- Honor roll and other school achievements, awards, and recognitions
- Programs/playbills showing a student's role in a school activity or production.
- Yearbooks and class photos
- Graduation programs/school programs
- Disclosure to outside organizations, such as but not limited to, those that provide school-related products and services, such as yearbooks, class rings etc.
- Military recruiters and institutions of higher education for 11th and 12th grade students to the extent required by law.
- Organizations that operate solely to support the Academy, such as community clubs, booster clubs and support groups.

Lists of student names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses will not be disclosed by the Academy to political candidates or elected office holders, political parties, or any person or organization involved with a political issue or issue related to the qualification, passage, or defeat of a ballot question. Such information will not be disclosed to commercial entities (other than for school-related purposes), nor will it be provided to any non-profit or non-commercial organization, company, or group, other than groups that operate solely to support the Academy, or as required or permitted by law, such as to military recruiters.

"Directory Information" will not be disclosed where to do so would have the effect of disclosing

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non-directory information.

## **Right to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information (Opt-Out)**

Parents and eligible students have the right to opt-out of disclosure of "Directory Information," subject to the requirements and limitations of FERPA, state law, and the procedures contained in any regulation(s) to this policy.

Opt-Out forms are effective for the school year in which they are submitted. "Directory Information" will not be disclosed prior to the return date indicated on the Opt-Out form.

Opting out of disclosure may not be used to impede routine classroom communications and interactions. For instance, opting-out does not prevent the Academy from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose the student's name, school e-mail address, or electronic identifier on school grounds, in class, or at a school-sponsored activity, and does not prevent the Academy from requiring a student to maintain and present upon request a student ID card.

The Academy may disclose "Directory Information" about students no longer enrolled in the Accelerate Online Academy without providing notice as otherwise required and without providing an additional opt-out opportunity. However, if an opt-out request was in place as of the last day of the student's enrollment, the opt-out request will continue in effect and the Directory Information will not be disclosed.

## **Verification of Identify and Right to Access Records**

Reasonable methods and safeguards shall be used to identify and authenticate the identity of parents, eligible students, school officials, and any other persons who request access to educational record information.

## **Record of Requests for Access**

The Academy shall maintain accurate records of requests for disclosure of information from or access to a student's records as required by law.

## **Annual Notification of FERPA Rights**

Parents and eligible students shall be notified annually as required by law of their rights under FERPA.

## **Education Record Information of Deceased Students**

"Directory Information" may be disclosed by the Academy regarding a student who is deceased, unless an opt-out request was in place as of the last day of the student's enrollment, in which case the opt-out request will continue to be in effect. The Academy will disclose education record information other than "Directory Information" of a deceased student only if consent is

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given in writing by the personal representative or other legally authorized representative of the deceased student's estate, or if some other exception in FERPA permits or requires disclosure. If a personal representative or other legally authorized representative has not yet been appointed or is no longer functioning in that capacity, consent must be given by the student's parent, or, if married at the time of death, by the deceased student's widow/widower or by a child of the student provided the child is age 18 or older.

### Concerns, Questions or Complaints

If you have a complaint or a concern or question about any of the above rights, we encourage you to first contact and discuss it with Accelerate Online Academy's administrators. Our hope is to provide answers to whatever questions or concerns that you have.

You also have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Accelerate Online Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

## Contacts

### Technical Support

To create a ticket, visit our ticketing system at <https://support.accelerate.education>. There you can create a login and follow the progress of any issues or questions that you may have, while maintaining a record of all issues submitted. Phone support is available 8 am to 8 pm EST Monday through Friday.

Phone: 866-716-0880 Toll Free

### Teacher Support

Teachers will provide contact information upon enrollment. We have a support hotline available from 8 am to 8 pm EST at 866-716-0880.

### Enrollment Support

Email: [enroll@accelerate-ed.com](mailto:enroll@accelerate-ed.com)  
Phone: 866-716-0880 Toll Free