

Holt Public Schools Enrichment and Acceleration Information

Holt Public Schools seeks to find innovative ways to inspire and educate all children. To ensure the needs of all students are met, we will utilize an acceleration process, which is divided into grade level bands.



Holt Public Schools Vision Statement

Innovate: We innovate to solve complex problems.

We acknowledge that students come to school with a wide variety of experiences, skill sets, content knowledge, and expectations. We work to use **innovative** thinking, technology, resources, and solutions to develop our educational processes in such a way that all students have opportunities for authentic problem solving and applications of knowledge. Rather than view school in a traditional manner, we seek to view school as a vital part of student pathways to finding a career that is both fulfilling and successful. The educational foundation students receive at Holt Public Schools will afford them opportunities to practice the types of skills that will be applicable throughout their lives. We also recognize that sometimes solving complex problems means being meta-aware of the learning process and the complexity that comes with learning abstract and nuanced material. To think innovatively requires us, students and teachers alike, to recognize that learning is meant to be both difficult and rewarding, often at different times for different students. We want to ensure we have processes to support students when the learning is difficult and to celebrate with them when they find it rewarding. We are willing to take risks with our thinking to grow our ability to problem solve.

Educate: We educate to achieve our goals.

To reach **educational** goals, students need different supports at different times, as well as acknowledgement of the goals they seek to achieve. We recognize that achieving goals is important, and that the journey of growth toward accomplishing those goals is particularly valuable. The learning process focuses on both providing supports to students who need a different pace regarding instruction, as well as recognizes how important it is that initial instruction be as robust and impactful as possible. We begin with a strong foundation of instruction with clear goals, and we respond with appropriate measures to ensure all students are given opportunities to illustrate proficiency on these goals, either due to more instruction, more reflection time, or more collaborative energy.

Inspire: We inspire efficacy to make a positive impact on the world.

We seek to **inspire** in our students a strong disposition regarding their ability to achieve and make a positive impact on their community. A part of this process is supporting their educational journey through multiple opportunities to illustrate their growth and consider their areas of interest. Students see academic struggle as a pathway of growth which will strengthen their ability to persevere on their own pathway towards a career and lifelong contributions to society.

Learning Experiences

Holt Public Schools recognizes there are times when some students desire experiences that enhance the learning beyond their typical grade level instruction. Below are some options regarding these experiences within and beyond the school day in Holt Public Schools.

Within HPS

- Grades 9-12, please refer to the [Holt High School Course Guide](#) for information regarding honors and AP courses and application processes. Extracurricular opportunities are listed in the [high school student handbook](#)
- Grades K – 8 opportunities include early entrance to kindergarten, single-subject acceleration, and whole grade acceleration. Extracurricular activities are offered at various levels. Check with your school for specific offerings.

External to HPS

- Beginning in 7th grade, students can enroll in Michigan State University's CHAMPS (accelerated math) program and/or their ISHALL (accelerated English) program.
- Students in 11th and 12th grades may choose to dual enroll or participate in Lansing Community College's Early College program.

At all times, Holt Public Schools strives to provide these experiences for students within the Holt system. If you are considering options external to Holt, please speak to a counselor, principal or teacher regarding the options.

9th – 12th Grade Testing Out Policy

The state of Michigan publishes the [High School Course/Credit Content Expectations](#) and Guidelines outlining the graduation requirements. Students have the opportunity to [test out](#) of a course for credit.

Test out assessments are rigorous to adequately and accurately assess the scope and nature of the course. This is to ensure a student is sufficiently prepared to move onto the next course and be successful. These assessments measure a student's performance on the High School Course/Credit Content Expectations and Guidelines in a thorough manner equal to that of the course requirements. The assessment may be a written assessment and/or exhibition of mastery through the use of a portfolio, performance, paper, project, or presentation. A test out opportunity is available for any course offered during the current school year.

A student may attempt to test out of a course only once. Should the student not meet the threshold for testing out on the assessment, they will be expected to enroll in the course as usual to receive credit. Students may not attempt to test out of a class in which they are currently enrolled at the time of the test. Students must test out of a course during the offered testing out window prior to enrolling in the course. Testing out of a course does not guarantee the student a seat in the next sequential course during the current or subsequent semester. Once credit is

granted by testing out, a student may not receive credit for a lower course in that course sequence.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that by successfully testing out of a course, a student will miss experiences that deepen content knowledge and opportunities to develop higher level thinking skills and perseverance, which are nurtured by daily contact with an instructor.

An [application](#) to test out is required. This application can also be found online by visiting the Curriculum Office's website. Applications are due for submission by the date indicated on the website. Testing out is offered during the month of May. The specific test out date(s) will be communicated to the student and parent/guardian and are at the discretion of administration.

Due to the fact that the test out is designed to give credit for the measurement of prior knowledge, the High School Course/Credit Content Expectations and Guidelines will be the guide for students who seek review prior to the test. Holt High School will not provide books or study materials.

Students must attain a grade of not less than 78% on the assessment(s) to test out of a course. Students will receive credit toward graduation if they meet this threshold, but those credits will not be included in a computation of grade point average for any purpose.

Exams are used for placement purposes only, not as a diagnostic tool. Scores and exams will not be distributed to students or families for their review.

5th – 8th Grade Testing Out Policy

Acceleration at this level usually takes one of two forms, single-subject or whole-grade acceleration.

For Single-subject acceleration, students are in classes with older peers for part of the day or stay with their peers but receive materials and content from higher grades. This can happen in one or more content areas. At these grade levels, the student moves to the higher-level class for instruction. Transportation will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

For whole-grade acceleration, a student is moved to a grade-level placement ahead of chronological-age peers for all subjects. This typically happens prior to the start of a school year.

Referral process

Students who might be candidates for either type of acceleration can be referred to their current school administrator by any source, including but not limited to the student, teachers, administrators, school psychologists, school counselors, and parents. The person referring would need to complete [an application](#), also found on the [Curriculum Office website](#).

Once a student is referred, the screening process consists of an encompassing review of the student in three areas:

1. Achievement

Current achievement data will vary based on grade-level of the student. This could include: screener data, subject assessments (unit, exam) demonstrating proficiency on grade level content standards, and the most recent state proficiency exams. Students should score in the top 5% of students or receive an “advanced” standing on national or state assessments (for example screeners or state tests). Students should consistently score in the advanced level (Level 4’s and/or 90% or higher) on classroom unit or chapter assessments and final exams.

In addition, students who want to accelerate by testing out of a subject or whole grade at these levels will have to complete a comprehensive test on the content the student would not be in a classroom for. (For example, if the student wants to test out of 7th grade math, they would need to take the tests to show they have the content knowledge of the 7th grade mathematics.) The process is the same as the high school test out process, except that the student would need to earn no lower than an 85% on the test overall, and at grades 7-8 no lower than 85% on each semester test (or an equivalent Advanced score on all standards assessed). At the 7-8 level, should a student want to test out of a mathematics course, the student also needs to earn no less than 85% on the algebra-related questions. For students wanting to test out of a first-year modern language course, since this is a high school course, the high school test out process would be followed. All tests are administered in May and scheduled for 2 days (one day per exam).

Holt Public Schools will provide no curricular materials or study guides to prepare students for these tests, as the assumption is the student is asking to test out because they have already gained the knowledge from the course by other means. [Content expectations](#) by grade level are available through the Michigan Department of Education. Additional information, explanations, sample problems, and tutorials can be found at a variety of websites such as [Khan Academy](#), [IXL](#), and [math.com](#).

2. Performance: students should exhibit behaviors beyond that of their peers in areas such as synthesis, application, analysis, perseverance, generalizing, critical thinking, and justification. Evidence of these attributes can be reported by the student’s teacher, observed by a member of the evaluation committee, and/or observed in student work samples. The social and behavior development of the student should be considered as well. If the student will be doing a single-subject acceleration and receiving materials from the next grade level, the student should be able to effectively work independently.
3. Motivation/Student Interest: the application submitted gathers feedback from the parent/guardian and/or student about their desire to seek more challenging learning situations.

The information from the three areas is passed on to an acceleration evaluation committee. The administrator of the student’s current grade level convenes a team that includes: an administrator, a representative from the Curriculum Office, parents or guardians, current teacher, a teacher from

the next grade (or instructional coach that works with that grade level content), school psychologist or counselor, and the student (optional). The team reviews the data, discusses what the student's coursework looks like up to graduation as a result of the acceleration, and makes a final decision regarding acceleration and determines next steps. An acceleration implementation plan is created that includes a summary of the data used, the group's recommendation, and the subsequent outline of courses up to graduation from HPS. The document is signed by present parties, and copies are given to the parents and entered into the student's CA-60.

K-4th Grade Acceleration

Acceleration at this level usually takes one of three forms:

1. Early entrance to kindergarten (a type of whole-grade acceleration): students enter kindergarten prior to the minimum age requirement for the state policy. State of Michigan's [school code](#) requires students to be at least 5 years of age on September 1 of the school year of enrollment. Students with a 5th birthday later than September 1 could sign an age waiver to being kindergarten as long as they turn 5 by December 1. HPS offers a transitional kindergarten option.
2. Whole-grade acceleration after kindergarten: a student is moved to a grade-level placement ahead of chronological-age peers. This typically happens prior to the start of a school year.
3. Single-subject acceleration: students are in classes with older peers for part of the day or stay with their peers but receive materials for content from higher-grade placements. This can happen in one or more content areas.

Students who might be candidates for acceleration can be referred to a school administrator by any source, including but not limited to the student, teachers, administrators, school psychologists, school counselors, and parents. The person doing the referring would need to complete [an application](#), also found on the [Curriculum Office website](#).

Once a student is referred, the screening process consists of an encompassing review of the student in three areas:

1. Achievement: current achievement data will vary based on grade-level of the student. This could include: screener data, subject assessments (unit, exam) demonstrating proficiency on grade level content standards, and the most recent state proficiency exams. Students should score in the top 5% of students or receive an "advanced" standing on national or state assessments (for example screeners or state tests). Students should consistently score in the advanced level (Level 4's and/or 90% or higher) on classroom unit or chapter assessments and final exams.

In addition, students who want to accelerate by omitting curriculum (i.e. testing out of a subject or whole grade) at these levels will have to complete a comprehensive test on the content the student would not be in a classroom for. The student should earn 85% or

greater (or an equivalent Advanced score on all standards assessed) on this assessment to be considered proficient in the material in order to omit the content from their K-12 learning experience.

Holt Public Schools will provide no curricular materials or study guides to prepare students for these tests, as the assumption is the student is asking to test out because they have already gained the knowledge from the course by other means. Content expectations by grade level are available through the Michigan Department of Education. Additional information, explanations, sample problems, and tutorials can be found at a variety of websites such as [Khan Academy](#), [IXL](#), and [math.com](#).

2. Performance: students should exhibit behaviors beyond that of their peers in areas such as independent reading, problem solving, advanced vocabulary, writing fluency. Evidence of these attributes can be reported by the student's teacher, observed by a member of the evaluation committee, or observed in student work samples. The social and behavior development of the student should be considered as well. If the student will be doing a single-subject acceleration and receiving materials from the next grade level, the student should be able to effectively work independently.
3. Motivation/Student Interest: the application submitted gathers feedback from the parent/guardian and/or student about their desire to seek more challenging learning situations.

The information from the three areas is passed on to an acceleration evaluation committee. The administrator of the student's current grade level convenes a team that includes: administrator, representative from the Curriculum Office, parents or guardians, current teacher, a teacher from the next grade (or instructional coach that works with that grade level content), school psychologist or counselor, and the student (optional). The team reviews the data, discusses what the student's coursework looks like up to graduation as a result of the acceleration, and makes a final decision regarding acceleration and determines next steps. An acceleration implementation plan is drawn up that includes a summary of the data used, the group's recommendation, and the subsequent outline of courses up to graduation from HPS. The document is signed by present parties, and copies are given to the parents and entered into the student's CA-60.

Provided the student stays with their grade level peers but receives material from a higher grade, a 30-day transition period may be appropriate, during which, should the student, parents, or teacher feel the student is not being successful, the student returns to normal Tier1/2 instruction without penalty.