Acceleration:
Making Informed Decisions

Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented
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It all began with this letter:

[Handwritten text]

Dear Mrs. Steven and Mr. Jurgenson,

I find that the work I'm being given is very easy. Most of it is too easy. Most of it I know so I do the work catch on and I have to wait for the others to catch on. The grade I'd like to go to most would be college. But since I can't, could I have something more challenging. Say for instance I could go to any grade. I want as long as it's in carpenter or Shannon I like to try. In 5th grade I don't I but it would be nice to go there and see what it's like. I don't care if I leave Shannon cause I really don't have any thing really important or true friends that I'd miss.

Sincerely, Jodi.
Acceleration is...

progression through an educational program in a shorter time

or at a younger age than is typical.
Acceleration should be the first intervention for bright, highly capable students. All other interventions (e.g., enrichment) should follow.
A Nation Empowered: Evidence Trumps the Excuses Holding Back America’s Brightest Students

- Acceleration works: An extensive research base supports acceleration

- Methods have been developed to evaluate candidates for acceleration systematically and to guide educators through the process.

- There are at least 20 different forms of acceleration. Acceleration can be tailored to individual students’ needs.

www.nationempowered.org
Forms of Acceleration
Acceleration Options: Two Broad Categories

Grade-based acceleration
- Do not remain with same-age peers
- Shortens amount of time in K-12 schooling
- Social and emotional aspects *may* need more consideration than with content-based acceleration

Content-based acceleration
- Stay with same-grade peers for most of the day
- Receive advanced content in one or more subjects before expected grade level
Grade-Based Forms

- Early-entrance to Kindergarten
- Early-admission to 1st grade
- Grade Skipping (Whole-Grade)
- Early-entrance to middle-school; high school; or college
Readiness for Whole-Grade Acceleration: Iowa Acceleration Scale

This is not a test; it is a tool to help guide the decision-making process.
The IAS Form

Ten Sections

- General Information
- Critical Items
- School History
- Assessment of Ability, Aptitude, and Achievement
- School and Academic Factors
- Developmental Factors
- Interpersonal Skills
- Attitude and Support
Nuts and Bolts

• Become informed
• Prepare your team
• Provide Information
• Collect all profile information
• Talk with the student

• Schedule the meeting
• Preplan other options
• Select a receiving teacher
• Follow-up with parents, teachers, and student

Also: Recognize that there are a few caveats to the process!
Acceleration: Content-Based Forms

- Subject acceleration
- Distance learning courses
- Combined classes
- Credit by exam
- Self-paced instruction
- Acceleration in college
- Concurrent/dual enrollment
- Continuous progress
- Advanced Placement
- Telescoping
- Extracurricular programs
- Mentorships
- International Baccalaureate
- Computer-based classes
- Accelerated high school or high school on a college campus
Effect Sizes (from Rogers’ chapter in *A Nation Empowered*)

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<th>Summary Academic Effects (all grades)*</th>
<th>Subject-Based Acceleration</th>
<th>Grade-Based Acceleration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+0.24</td>
<td>+0.34</td>
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</table>

*These students gained an additional

| 5.1 months over comparison group | 5.0 months over comparison group |
What else can we learn from *A Nation Empowered*?

- Acceleration supports the *social/emotional* development of gifted students by placing them with other like-minded students.

- Acceleration is an inexpensive option.

- Acceleration supports the *continuous academic development* of students by providing academic challenges and stimulation.
Above-Level Testing

- Give a test developed for older students to younger, bright students
- Raises the “ceiling” and extends the yardstick
- Discovers exceptionally talented students
- Helps us to tailor educational opportunities to the students
Developing Academic Acceleration Policies:
Whole Grade, Early Entrance & Single Subject

Published in 2018

www.accelerationinstitute.org/policies

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**Grade Skip**
A student moves to a grade that best matches ability rather than age.

**Early Entrance to Kindergarten**
A child starts school at a younger age than typical.

**Subject Acceleration**
A student needs additional challenge in a particular subject area.

**Early Entrance to College**
A student begins college a year or more early.
www.accelerationinstitute.org
Over 50,000 subject-based accelerated students and over 2,800 grade-based accelerated students and their comparison groups.

How many more cases do we need before we will accept the evidence??

Data reported in Karen Rogers chapter in A Nation Empowered (2015)
Resources for Families

- [www.accelerationinstitute.org/parents.aspx](http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/parents.aspx)

- NAGC Tip Sheet for Parents on acceleration: [https://tinyurl.com/NAGCaccel](https://tinyurl.com/NAGCaccel)
Connect with us!

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