

An Important Tool in the Toolkit: Academic Acceleration


**Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank Center for
Gifted Education and Talent Development**

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Presenter



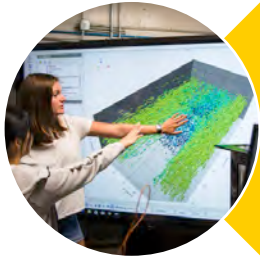
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Acceleration Institute and Research,
Belin-Blank Center

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Acceleration is...



a progression through an educational program



in a **shorter** time



or at a **younger** age than is typical.



Acceleration is...

“...one of the **cornerstones** of exemplary gifted education practices,

with *more research* supporting this intervention than any other in the literature on gifted individuals.”

**National Association for Gifted Children
position statement on acceleration**

Acceleration is...

“...one of the **cornerstones** of exemplary gifted education practices,

with more research supporting this intervention than any other in the literature on gifted individuals.

70 years of research!

**National Association for Gifted Children
position statement on acceleration**

Why Accelerate?

Equity

-all students have the right to learn something new

A better match between a student's abilities & the curriculum

Research supported

Accelerated students do well academically and socially

Low Cost

When should acceleration be considered?

The first intervention for bright, highly capable students.

Consideration of all other interventions (e.g., enrichment; differentiation) should follow after considering accelerative options.

Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska

Forms of Acceleration

Subject-Based Acceleration

Student moves up for one or more subjects, stays in regular grade for others

Grade-Based Acceleration

Moves up a grade to be with older students full-time

Subject Acceleration Examples



**MOVE UP A
GRADE FOR
MATH/SCIENCE**



**ADVANCED
PLACEMENT
COURSES**



**TALENT
SEARCH
PROGRAMS**



**ONLINE
LEARNING**



**INDEPENDENT
STUDY OR
MENTORSHIPS**



**COMPACTED
CURRICULUM**

Grade-Based Acceleration Examples

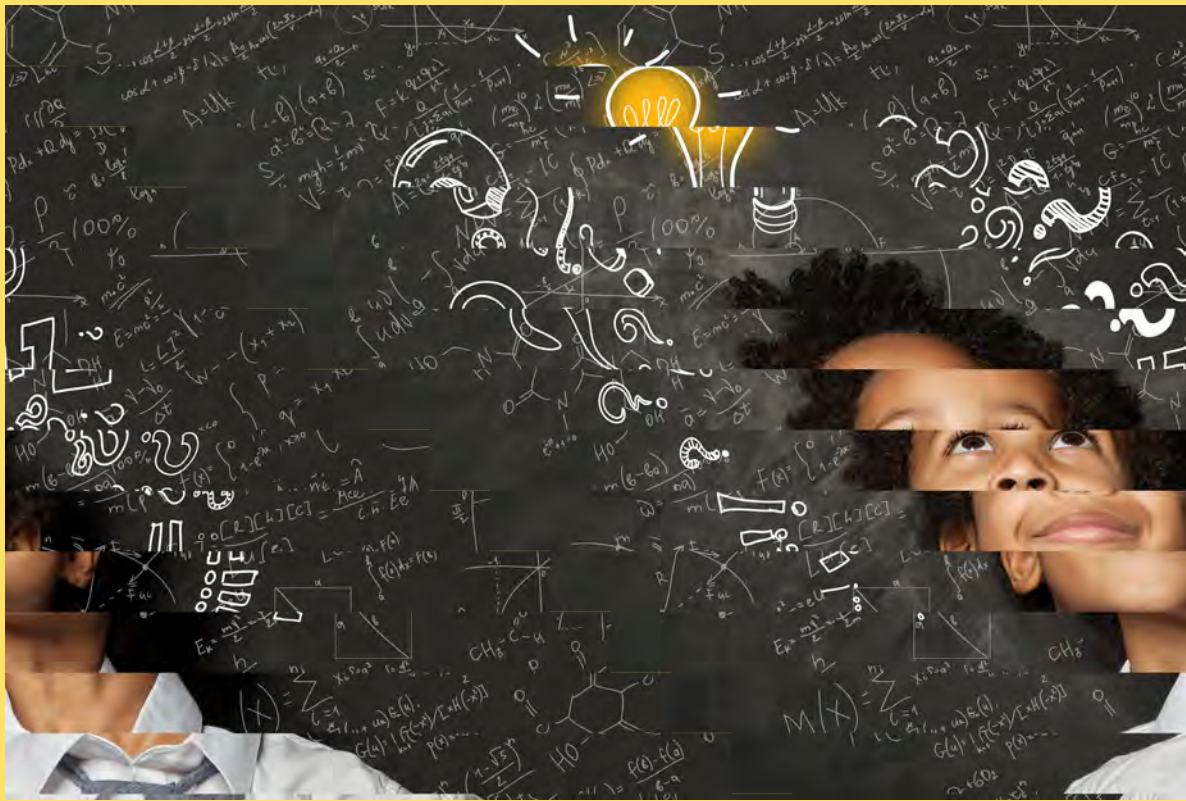
Grade-skipping

Multi-grade
classrooms

Early entrance
to kindergarten/
first grade

Grade
telescoping
(2 years in one)

Early entrance
to college



Myths about Acceleration

Can you think of some?

Myths about Acceleration

- Acceleration is “bad” for students, esp. for social development
- Students will miss something (academic or social)
- People focus on one negative story and ignore research on thousands of students
- Many teachers and administrators did not learn about acceleration in pre-service training
- “Gifted students will make it on their own” without an intervention

- As we will see, the evidence is clear that *acceleration works*.

Acceleration Works: Short-Term Benefits

Accelerated students are more challenged and therefore more engaged in school.

Accelerated students must work harder, learning good “habits of mind”

Academically talented students who enter K or college early do very well compared to their older classmates.

Students accelerating in math and science often continue studying those subjects (no burnout)



Grade skipping works!

“Not only was academic achievement more positive for the grade skipped learners, but also their social adjustment and academic self-esteem were more positive.”

Karen B. Rogers

Acceleration Works: Long-Term Benefits

Acceleration has long-term beneficial effects, both academic and social.

Accelerated students tend to be more ambitious, earning graduate degrees at higher rates.

Students who skipped a grade performed even better when acceleration was accompanied by other educational opportunities

...higher rates of productivity, work in more prestigious occupations, are more successful and earn more money and increase income faster than older, similar ability, non-accelerated peers

Looking back, an overwhelming majority of accelerated students say acceleration was the right decision for them.

Acceleration Supports Students' Social Development

Placed with academic peers with similar interests & intellectual level

Research on social development and academic acceleration is positive overall


2020 Bernstein, Lubinski, & Benbow. Soc/emo concerns are "fruitless"



Where do I find the research?


www.accelerationinstitute.org

Acceleration Institute at the Belin-Blank Center

Menu 

"Had I known just how far ahead I was and how much better things would be, I wouldn't have been nearly so nervous. Sure it was awkward because classmates were perplexed why I left that class after Christmas. But it has been good... maybe not fifth grade, but this year it has been awesome."

Student
[More Stories](#)



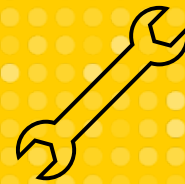
First time here?

[Parents](#) [Educators](#) [Policymakers](#) [Researchers](#)

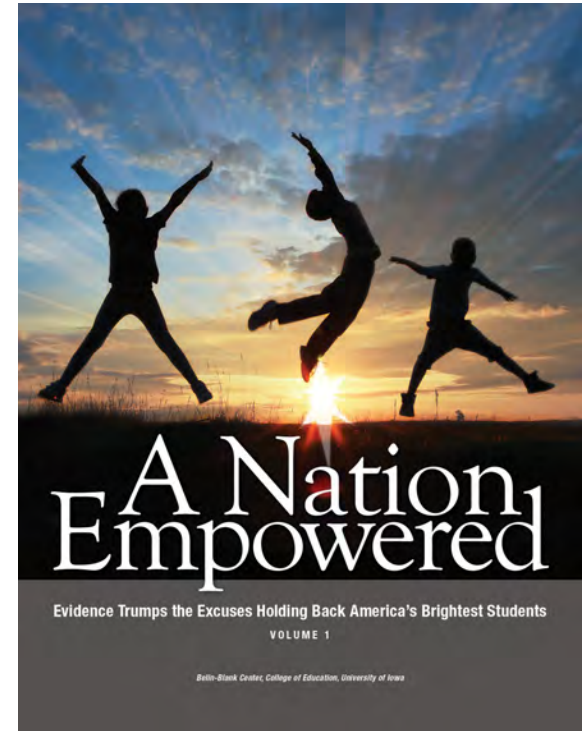
Resources



More Tools for Acceleration



A Nation Empowered



→ Free download

→ Volume 1: Stories of acceleration

→ Volume 2: The research

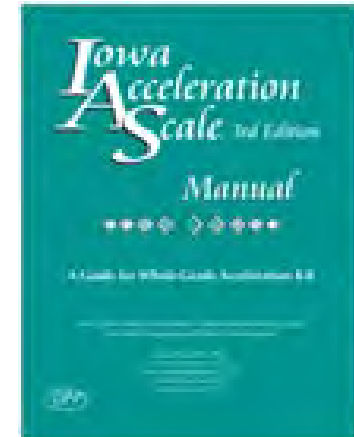
→ www.nationempowered.org

***Iowa Acceleration Scale* (3rd edition, 2009)**

Authors: Susan Assouline, Ph.D.
Nicholas Colangelo, Ph.D.
Ann Lupkowski-Shoplik, Ph.D.
Jonathan Lipscomb, B.A.
Leslie Forstadt, B.A.

Available from Gifted Unlimited

Paper and pencil survey to assist with
acceleration decisions



Required by the state of Ohio for grade-skipping decisions



Integrated Acceleration System

A new (2021) tool designed to assist educators and families through the decision-making process about acceleration

IOWA

Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education & Talent Development

The *Integrated Acceleration System* focuses on 4 forms of acceleration:



Grade Skip

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

[Learn More!](#)



Early Entrance to Kindergarten

A child starts school at a younger age than typical.

[Coming Soon](#)



Subject Acceleration

A student needs additional challenge in a particular subject area.

[Coming Soon](#)



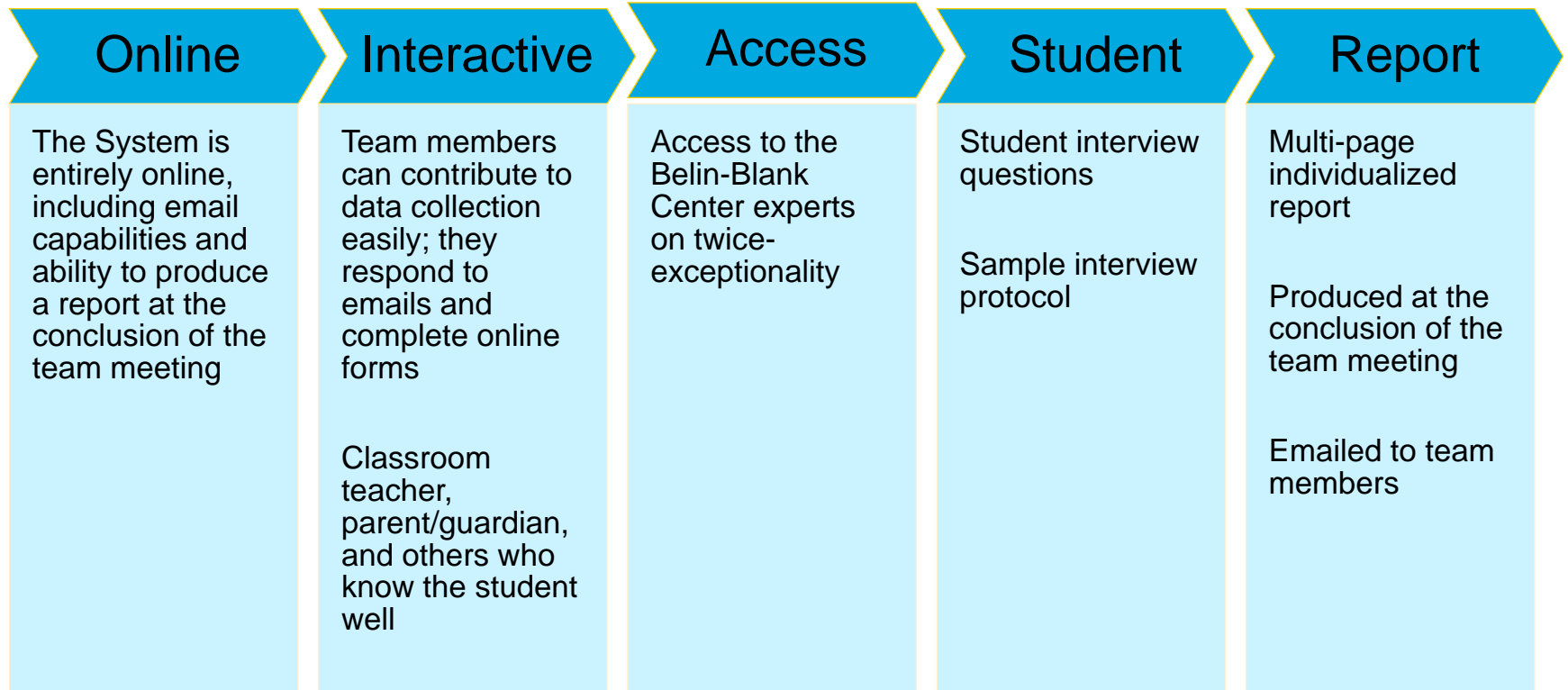
Early Entrance to College

A student begins college a year or more early.

[Coming Soon](#)

→ The experts from the Belin-Blank Center are available to assist with acceleration questions for students who are twice-exceptional

The Integrated Acceleration System



Building the Case for: Luisa TestStudent Modules

A. Getting Ready	Go	✓
B. Build Your Team	Go	✓
C. Demographics and Related Student Information	Go	✓
D. School Information	Go	✓
E. Student Answers	Go	✓
F. Current Grade Level Performance	Go	✓
G. General School Ability (IQ) Test Results	Go	✓
H. Indicators of Performance in the Next Grade	Go	✓
I. The Meeting	Go	✓
J. The Report	Go	⊘

The *Integrated Acceleration System* Survey includes items addressing...

Student's performance in school

Friendships

Motivation

Physical development (small and large motor skills, size)

Student's attitude about being challenged in school

Communication between parent/school

Student's ability, aptitude, and achievement

Acceleration Meeting Agenda (sample)

- Review information previously provided
- Discuss important questions.
 - For example:
 - Questions/hesitation expressed by student
 - Social/emotional aspects
- Answer additional questions as a group, come to consensus
- Review information
- Produce and review report and recommendations
- Develop plan for transition to the accelerated grade

The Power of the Process

Gathering

Gathering the appropriate information and making an informed decision

Trusting

Trusting the participants who provide information

Empowering

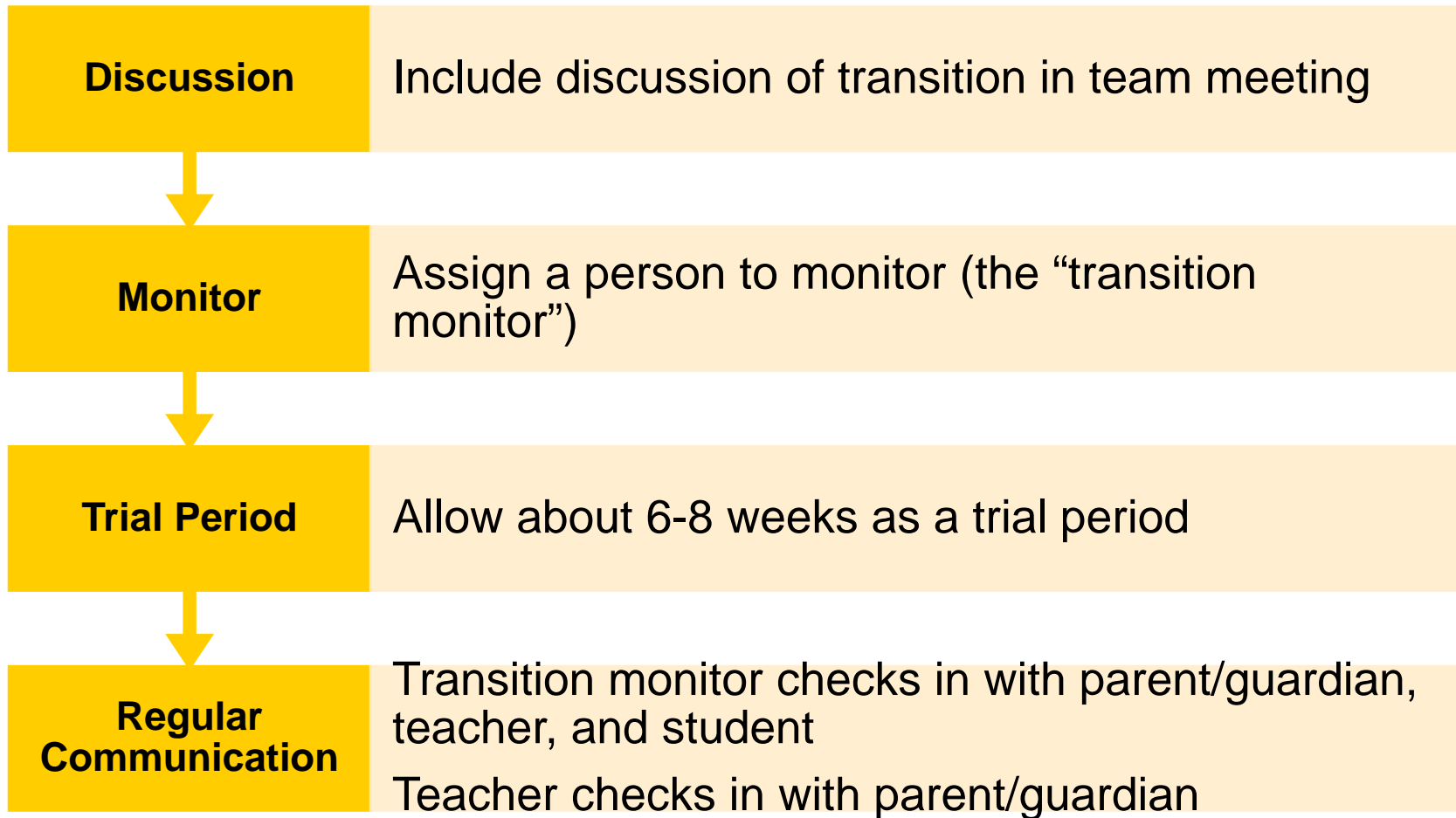
Empowering the team members

Documenting

The *Integrated Acceleration System* produces a written report.

Team develops a written *Plan for Transition to the Accelerated Grade*

Transition Procedures: Pointers



Would you like to receive updates about the Integrated Acceleration System?

→ Sign up here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SignUpAcceleration>

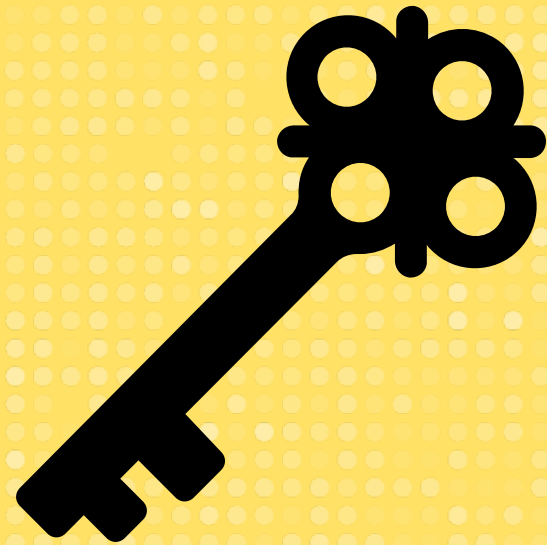


Training
video and
upcoming
webinars
about the
*Integrated
Acceleration
System*

<https://tinyurl.com/accelerationwebinar>

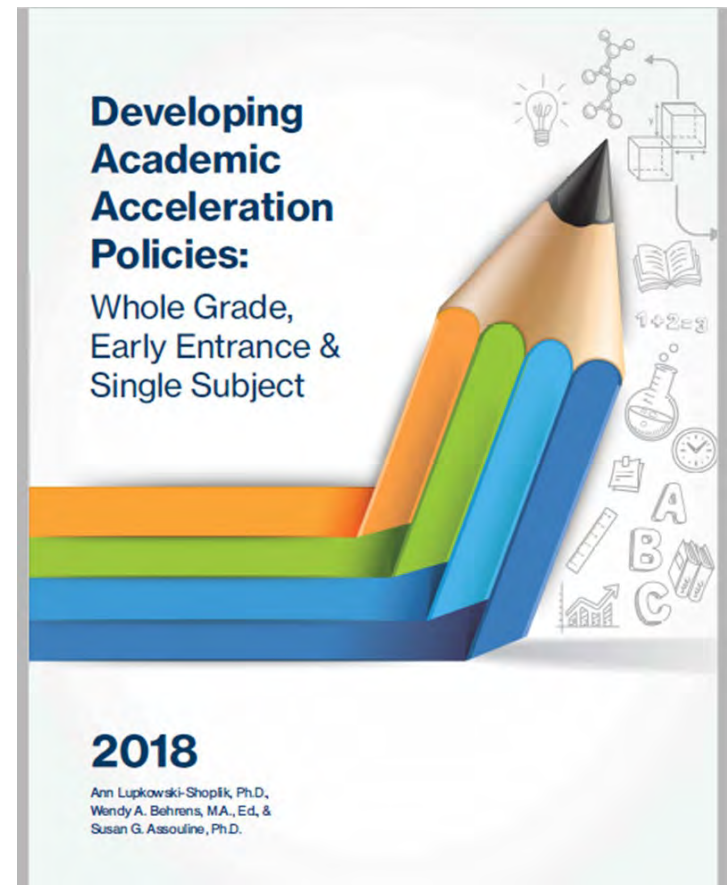


Acceleration Policies: Key to Equity



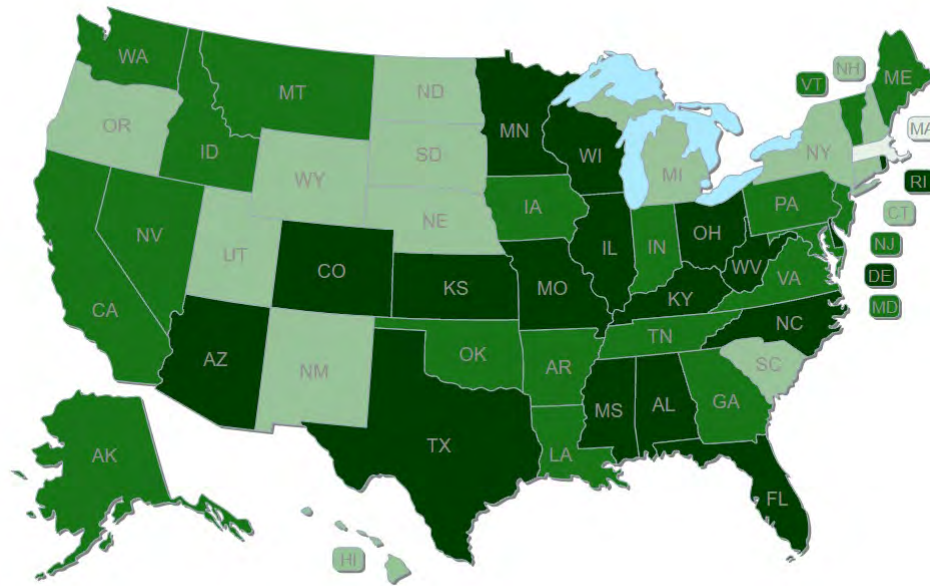
Developing Academic Acceleration Policies

- Checklists for developing policies:
 - Whole grade acceleration
 - Subject acceleration
 - Early entrance to kindergarten or first grade
- Authors:
 - Ann Lupkowski-Shoplik
 - Wendy A. Behrens
 - Susan G. Assouline
- Online. Free.
- Sample policies on the website
 - www.accelerationinstitute.org/guidelines



State Policy information on the Acceleration Institute website

<https://tinyurl.com/StateAccelPolicy>





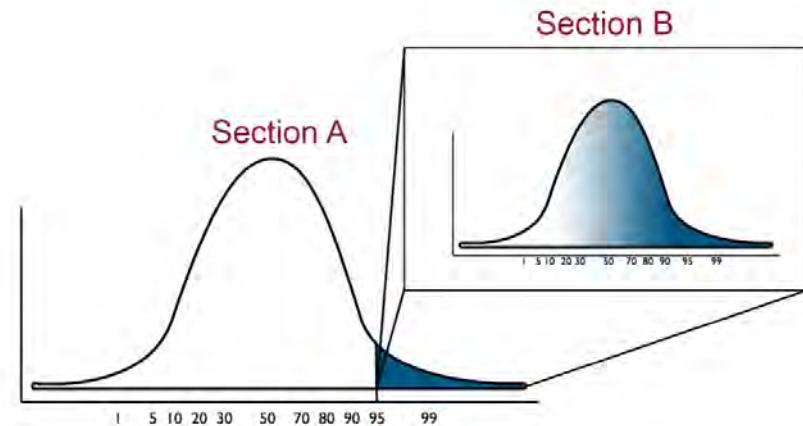

College of Education

Belin-Blank Center

**An important catalyst for work on
academic acceleration**

IOWA

Above-Level Testing: Discovering High-Ability Students



- www.belinblank.org/testing
- www.i-excel.org
- 4th – 6th graders take I-Excel
- 7th-9th graders take ACT
- <https://tinyurl.com/GiftedBestKeptSecret>

Resources for Educators & Families

NAGC Tip Sheet for Parents on acceleration:
<https://tinyurl.com/NAGCaccel>

NAGC Position Statement on Acceleration
<https://tinyurl.com/NAGCaccelerate>

Hoagies Gifted blog hop:
<https://tinyurl.com/HoagiesAcceleration>

Davidson Institute: Search “acceleration”

We teach a whole course on academic acceleration

Academic Acceleration (PSQF:4123)

Usually meets in the summer

Entirely online, asynchronous

For more info, email:

acceleration@belinblank.org





NATIONAL
CENTER
FOR
RESEARCH
ON
GIFTED
EDUCATION

*Is your school interested in
doing acceleration better?*

NCRGE is seeking schools serving
grades 2-5 interested in ***FREE
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES*** and *assistance
in making acceleration
decisions.*



ncrge.uconn.edu/acceleration

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