

BELIN-BLANK

From *A Nation Deceived* to *A Nation Empowered*: Acceleration and Gifted Students

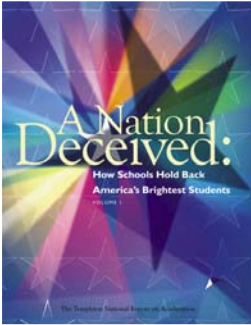
September 2015
Ann Lupkowski Shoplik, Ph.D.,
Administrator, Acceleration Institute
Belin-Blank Center for Gifted and
Talented Education

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Acceleration is the
best-researched, yet most
under-utilized educational
option available for
gifted students.

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The backstory: 2004



- The paradox:
Policy and practice were not aligned with research.
- Students with the strongest needs **least likely to receive the correct** intervention.
- Although well-intentioned, the **reasoning underlying this paradox is false.**
- The focus of *Nation Deceived* was to **start the conversation** and dispel the myths.

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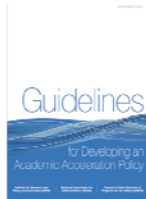
Myths/Excuses (from Volume 1, *A Nation Deceived*)

- Teachers lack familiarity
- Confidence in the value of the intervention is low
- This intervention runs counter to personal beliefs (concerns about equity, etc.)
- Age trumps aptitude
- It will lower the self-esteem of the student or other students
- It's bad to push kids
- They will have trouble making friends
- It's not fair to the other kids in a classroom

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Before Nation Deceived we were in reaction mode. Since Nation Deceived, we have:

- Increased awareness about forms and types of acceleration (20 types!)
- Established the **Acceleration Institute** (formerly Research and Policy on Acceleration; IRPA) at the Univ of Iowa: www.accelerationinstitute.org
- Developed *Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy*
- Translated Nation Deceived volume 1 into 10 Languages



Since Nation Deceived (cont'd)

- Revised the *Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS)* -- 2009
- Developed new decision-making tools for single-subject acceleration: **IDEAL Solutions**
- Presented at numerous conferences and offered multiple workshops
- Hosted summits on acceleration



None of this would have been possible without private philanthropy

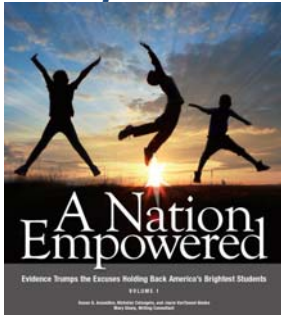
20 different types of acceleration

- Early admission to K
- Early admission to first grade
- Grade-Skipping
- Continuous progress
- Self-paced instruction
- Subject-matter acceleration
- Combined classes
- Curriculum compacting
- Telescoping curriculum
- Mentoring
- Extracurricular programs
- Distance learning courses
- Dual enrollment
- Advanced Placement
- International Baccalaureate program
- Accelerated/Honors HS or STEM Residential HS
- Credit by examination
- Early entrance to MS, HS, or college
- Early graduation from high school or college
- Acceleration in college

What was the impact of A Nation Deceived?

- **4 million visitors to the website**
- **150,000 copies of the report downloaded**
- **60,000 print copies distributed**

From *Deception to Empowerment*



Evidence Trumps the Excuses Holding Back America's Brightest Students

Editors:
Susan G. Assouline,
Nicholas Colangelo,
Joyce VanTassel-Baska, &
Ann Lupkowski-Shoplik
Published April 2015

www.nationempowered.org

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Big picture: What can we learn from *A Nation Empowered*?

- Acceleration works. An extensive research base supports acceleration
- Methods have been developed to evaluate candidates for acceleration systematically and guide educators through the process
- Acceleration can be provided in many ways, including content acceleration, grade-skipping, and dual enrollment. Acceleration can be tailored to individual students' needs.

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What can we learn from *A Nation Empowered*? (Continued)

- 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 & stimulation
- Resources for making decisions are available in *Nation Empowered* and at www.accelerationinstitute.org

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We're on Twitter!

All students deserve to learn something new each day, and if academically talented students desire to be accelerated and are ready for it, the long-term evidence clearly supports the intervention.

#NationEmpowered

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What's an effect size?

$$\frac{M_{\text{experimental group gain}} - M_{\text{comparison group gain}}}{SD_{\text{pooled}}}$$

It allows us to compare the results of many different research studies in a standardized manner.

Interpretation:

.20 = small/negligible
 .50 = medium
 .80 = large

Another interpretation:

An effect size of .30 would suggest the grade equivalent improvement in a given outcome for one group of about **three additional months** of achievement of the experimental group over the control group

Some interesting findings

Interpretation: 0.20 = small/negligible; 0.50 = medium; 0.80 = large
 (All of these report academic effects)

Compacted curriculum:	+0.20
Concurrent/dual enrollment:	+0.41
Single subject acceleration	+0.42
Summer university courses	+0.43
AP Courses:	+0.60
Radical Acceleration:	+0.61
Grade skipping:	+0.67
Accelerated/honors HS classes:	+0.69
Computer online courses:	+0.72
Saturday classes on univ. campus	+1.56

Effect Sizes

	Subject-Based Acceleration	Grade-Based Acceleration
Summary Academic Effects (all grades)*	+0.51	+0.50
Summary Socialization Effects (all grades)	+0.16	+0.23
Summary Psychological Effects (all grades)	+0.24	+0.34
*These students gained an additional	5.1 months over comparison grp	5.0 months over comparison group

Academic acceleration produces notable academic gains for students with gifts and talents, regardless of the category of acceleration or actual acceleration option provided.

- #NationEmpowered

Alternatives have less support

- Enrichment (.20)
- Pull-out Resource (.20)
- **Classroom Differentiation (.25)**
- Independent Projects
- Cooperative Learning
- Special-topic Projects
- Field Trips
- Competitions
- Some students' needs **can** be met by these approaches
- Anything that helps is a plus
- But, for high ability students **none of these approaches** has produced the compelling research evidence of acceleration.

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Emerging trends in the past decade shaped *A Nation Empowered*

- Twice-exceptionality
- Core curriculum
- Diverse populations
- STEM
- Professional Development
- International impact
- Specialized schools, such as state residential STEM schools
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- Early entrance to college
- Bridging the disconnect between in-school programming and out-of-school

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Twice-exceptionality

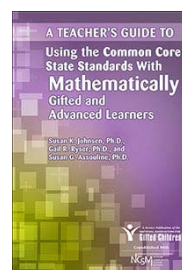
- New chapter that reflects much of the research conducted over the past decade, especially as it concerns Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and acceleration
- For more resources, see www.belinblank.org/clinic



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Core Curriculum

- This is a big topic!
 - It also includes curriculum and assessment
- As a field, our biggest concern is that it is still not rigorous enough
- How could it be?
 - The standards are strong, but they were not developed with the gifted student in mind.



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Making Decisions about Whole-Grade Acceleration

- **Iowa Acceleration Scale**

- Developmental factors
- Interpersonal Skills
- Attitude & support of student, parent, school
- Critical issues for grade skipping (attitude of student, level of ability, grade level of siblings)



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It is not unusual to find students who are highly able in one area but not in other areas

- Extreme discrepancies among abilities are much more common among the most able children than among average ability children (Lohman, Gambrell, and Lakin, 2008)
- WHEN COMPOSITE SCORES ARE USED, we might not identify students who are extraordinarily talented in an academic area.
- These students might benefit from accelerated coursework in their strength area.

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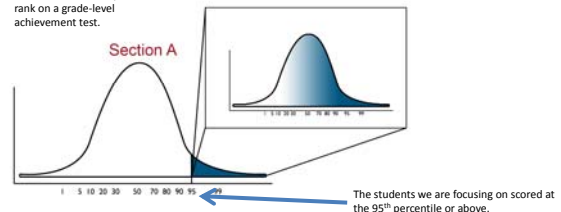
Content-Based Acceleration

- For students who:
 - Demonstrated academic ability in one or more academic areas
 - Are not recommended for whole-grade acceleration
- Benefits students with uneven academic profiles who need acceleration in the area of their strength
- May have already skipped a grade but need additional acceleration in extreme strength area

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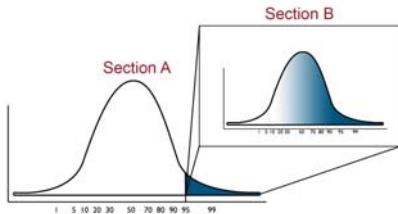
Above-level testing differentiates “talented” students from “exceptionally talented” students

Section A shows the percentile rank on a grade-level achievement test.



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Above-level testing differentiates “talented” students from “exceptionally talented” students.



Section B shows how the above-level test “spreads out” the scores of the academically talented students. Some students earn low scores, most earn average scores, and some earn high scores.

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Determine readiness for acceleration in STEM

- www.idealsolutionsstem.com



Comprehensive descriptions for readiness for advanced math and science curriculum that are related to the interpretation of scores from standardized tests.

Recommendations are aligned with national standards.

Designed to be used by educators and parents.

Reports are detailed and comprehensive and provide an extensive listing of resources. We’ve investigated the options for you!

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How do we identify students for content-based acceleration?

- Grade-level achievement test subtest scores $\geq 95^{\text{th}}$ %ile (ITBS, Terra Nova, etc.)
- Can use profile scores on CogAT
- Proficiency-based testing. Can use end-of-year and end-of-chapter tests.
- Above-level testing
- Teacher ratings/observation
- Child study team recommended for these decisions as well

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Above-level testing

- There's no special secret:
 - Use 2 grade levels above
 - Can use locally-available standardized test, such as *Iowa Assessments* (ITBS), *Terra Nova*
- Student may participate in Elementary Student Talent Search (Explore testing) through Belin-Blank Center in 3rd – 6th grades
- In-School Testing can be established with the Belin-Blank Center
- Online option: Pilot-testing I-Excel

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Advantages of Subject-Matter (Content Based) Acceleration in Math

- Regular classroom teacher does not have to search for materials for the advanced student, because that student is removed during math class
- It is more likely that the student will be grouped with intellectual peers
- Student receives credit for work completed
- Student is appropriately challenged and therefore remains interested in mathematics

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Disadvantages of Subject-Matter Acceleration in Math

- The pace may still be too slow
- If only one year of acceleration, there may be little new content
- Long-term planning is essential, so the student does not "run out" of mathematics before graduating from high school.
- Student may not receive credit for high school math done before enrolling in high school.

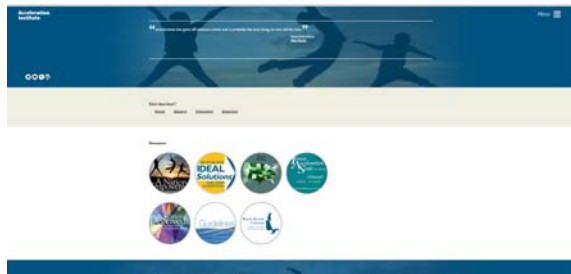
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Resources provided by the Belin-Blank Center, Univ of Iowa

- In-School Testing (new online test, I-Excel, www.I-Excel.org)
- Talent Search
- IDEAL Solutions
- Online Advanced Placement courses plus other courses

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www.accelerationinstitute.org



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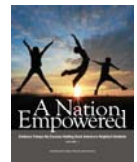
- **First Time Here?**
 - Parents -Educators -Policymakers -Researchers
- **Resources**
 - *A Nation Empowered* (paperback book and eBooks for purchase, free pdf also available)
 - *A Nation Deceived* (free download)
 - IDEAL Solutions for STEM Acceleration (content accel)
 - *Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy* (free download)
 - *Iowa Acceleration Scale*
 - Personal stories about experiences with acceleration
 - Acceleration practices and policies **in each state**
 - Relevant research

Professional Development

- An **online** graduate course on academic acceleration is being offered (fall 2015) through the University of Iowa College of Education. This course will be offered again!
- www.belinblank.org/courses (Follow link to “Schedule” on the right to see the list of courses)

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Thank you for your commitment to
empowering our gifted students!

10% discount on purchasing A Nation Empowered.
Coupon code: Empower1516. Limited time.
www.nationempowered.org

Questions?
Ann-Shoplik@uiowa.edu
Twitter: @AnnShoplik

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