

A Nation Deceived:

How Schools Hold Back America’s Brightest Students

| Point | Counterpoint |
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| The school doesn’t think the child is ready to be accelerated. Safe is better than sorry. | Doing nothing is not the same as “do no harm.” |
| We have several smart students—how do we know that this child is different? | Tools and instruments are available to help determine which students will better benefit from acceleration. Closing our eyes to children’s educational differences is neither democratic nor helpful. |
| There’s absolutely no proof that moving students ahead will help them academically or socially. | Evidence indicates that when children’s academic and social needs are not met, the result is boredom and disengagement from school. |
| How can we be sure that they will be OK socially with older kids when they have trouble making friends with their age mates? | Accelerating selected students can save years of loneliness and social isolation for students who don’t “fit in” with age mates and long to have friends who share similar interests. |
| Acceleration is for the wealthy. | Talent cuts across all demographics: ethnicity, gender, geography, and economics. Acceleration is most beneficial to students who come from families of modest means because parents who are wealthy are able to provide challenging, accelerative opportunities for their children. |

Some Types of Acceleration

- Early Admission to Kindergarten and/or First Grade
- Grade-Skipping
- Subject-Matter Acceleration
- Curriculum Compacting
- Telescoping Curriculum
- Correspondence Courses
- Advanced Placement Courses
- Concurrent/Dual Enrollment

What Do Accelerated Students Contribute to Society?

The myth says that students who skip will rarely fit into society, but the reality shows that those very students tend to lead American society to greater heights.

Martin Luther King, Jr., the leader of the Civil Rights Movement and the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, graduated from high school at 15. The poet, **T. S. Eliot**, who received the Nobel Prize in Literature, was accelerated. U. S. Supreme Court Justice **Sandra Day O’Connor** graduated from high school at 16. When great leaders reach society early, everyone benefits . . . acceleration is not just an issue for one isolated gifted child, underchallenged in the classroom. It’s about many thousands of children and the future of America

What Teachers Can Do

- Recognize gifted children by using formal measures (tests) and informal observations.
- Provide new challenges in the classroom as well as out of the classroom.
- Inform parents about acceleration options throughout the child’s academic career.
- Minimize teaching students what they already know.
- Make school a positive experience for all students . . . including the brightest.

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Both volumes can be downloaded at www.nationdeceived.org

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We have attempted to present the issues associated with the practice of acceleration in its many forms.

We want to re-emphasize our respect for educators who are trying to make the best decisions for their students.

Volumes I and II of this report provide educators and parents with considerable information about acceleration.

We hope this information will be a useful guide in their conversations as well as their decisions about educational programming for bright students.

We believe this issue is essential for the progress of our nation.

Together, we can create the best opportunities for all our children.

We hope America's educators will choose not to hold back our brightest students.

