How to Meet Gifted Students’ Needs

MANY OPTIONS

You know from Gifted 101 that acceleration means moving through the curriculum at a more rapid pace or younger age than is typical. A student might:

- Enter Kindergarten or 1st grade early
- Dual-enroll in high school and college
- Graduate early from high school
- Skip a grade
- Move ahead in a specific subject area
- Receive curriculum compacting
- Participate in extracurricular programs
- Move ahead in a specific subject area
- Enroll in distance learning
- Take AP, IB, and/or honors courses

It’s important to note that the policies and culture of many schools may resist acceleration, despite the research supporting it (see nationempowered.org).

Creating an acceleration policy is a crucial first step to ensuring all students have access to curriculum that fits their needs.

Check out the free publication, Developing Academic Acceleration Policies, new from the Belin-Blank Center and NAGC!

ACCELERATIONINSTITUTE.ORG

Visit the Acceleration Institute website for an extensive list of the various types of acceleration.

A CLOSER LOOK

Let’s take a closer look at some of the many options for challenging bright students.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES

Offer college-level work to students before they graduate from high school.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)

A specialized, academically challenging educational program offered by authorized schools.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Students receive instruction in a manner that does not require them to be on-site in a traditional classroom.

Many academic competitions are available to academically talented students. Some do not require travel.

COMPETITIONS

Students take a course at one level and receive concurrent credit for a parallel course at a higher level.

For example, a student may take algebra at the middle school and earn credit at both the middle school and high school level.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Students receive instruction in a manner that does not require them to be on-site in a traditional classroom.

Courses may take place online or by mail and offer opportunities not available in the local school.

Visit the Acceleration Institute website for a list of these opportunities.

GRADE-SKIPPING

Students may move ahead to a higher grade or enter kindergarten, 1st grade, or college early.

One of the tools used to help make an informed decision about grade skipping is the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS). The IAS assesses educators and parents in making decisions about a grade skip or early entrance to kindergarten or first grade.

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For example, a student may take algebra at the middle school and earn credit at both the middle school and high school level.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES

Offer college-level work to students before they graduate from high school.

Provide students with challenging work for which they also may earn college credit.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)

A specialized, academically challenging educational program offered by authorized schools.

Students participating in this program may receive advanced standing at selected universities.

Competitions

Many academic competitions are available to academically talented students. Some do not require travel.

They allow students to polish their skills in a specific area, meet other like-minded students, and receive recognition.

Visit the Acceleration Institute website for a list of competitions.

Enter Kindergarten or 1st grade early

Dual-enroll in high school and college

Graduate early from high school

Skip a grade

Move ahead in a specific subject area

Receive curriculum compacting

Participate in extracurricular programs

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Enroll in distance learning

Take AP, IB, and/or honors courses

Want to learn more about acceleration and meeting the needs of high-ability students? Visit accelerationinstitute.org

Or become qualified to teach AP courses (and others) at the AP Teacher Training Institute. Visit beinblank.org/aptti

Sources and Useful Links:


