

ACCELERATION

WHAT, WHY AND HOW



WHAT IS ACCELERATION?

- Pressey, 1949 defined acceleration as “progress thorough an education program at rates faster or at ages younger than conventional”
- In A Nation Deceived, 2004, Coangelo, Assouline and Gross describe acceleration as “...appropriate educational planning. It means matching the level and complexity of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student”
- NAGC has developed a position paper on Acceleration
<https://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Position%20Statement/Acceleration%20Position%20Statement.pdf>

WHY ACCELERATE



WHY USE ACCELERATION?

- A large body of research shows that ***when implemented correctly*** this is a very effective strategy to increase students' learning
- Decreases boredom and frustration in students who are ready for acceleration
- Students find greater friendship and more social acceptance with new peers instead of age-level peers
- Is often a cost effective way to program

ACCELERATION IN COLORADO

- Colorado Revised Statutes 2019 22-7-1013 (2.5)(a) states:

Each local education provider shall review its procedures concerning academic acceleration for students. Academic acceleration allows a student to progress through an education program at a rate faster or at ages younger than the student's peers.



ECEA RULES IN COLORADO

- 12.02(2)(h) Programming
-Programming components, options, and strategies shall include, but need not be limited to:

12.02(2)(h)(i)(C) Support in differentiated instruction and methods (e.g., acceleration, cluster grouping and higher order thinking skills);

HOW TO ACCELERATE



PROCEDURES TO CONSIDER ACCORDING TO COLORADO STATUTE 22-7-1013

- (I) The process for referral for academic acceleration and procedures that ensure the fair, objective, and systematic evaluation of the students referred;
- (II) A decision-making process for accelerated placement that involves multiple persons, including a student's parents, rather than a sole decision-maker;
- (III) Guidelines for the practice of academic acceleration, including the categories, forms, and types of academic acceleration and the award of credit;
- (IV) Guidelines for preventing nonacademic barriers to the use of acceleration as an educational intervention; and
- (V) An appeals process for decisions related to academic acceleration, as well as a process for evaluating the academic acceleration procedures and its effectiveness in successfully accelerating students.

BEST PRACTICES IN ACCELERATION



- (I) The process for referral for academic acceleration and procedures that ensure the **fair, objective, and systematic** evaluation of the students referred
- Access to referral is open to all students
 - Acceleration procedures should serve all populations grades K-12 including ELL students, low socio-economic, profoundly gifted, twice-exceptional – some populations may need special attention when discussing appropriate educational interventions
 - Use of appropriate assessments for cognitive, social-emotional and developmental domains including collection of information from teachers and parents and guardians
 - Includes use of above grade level testing

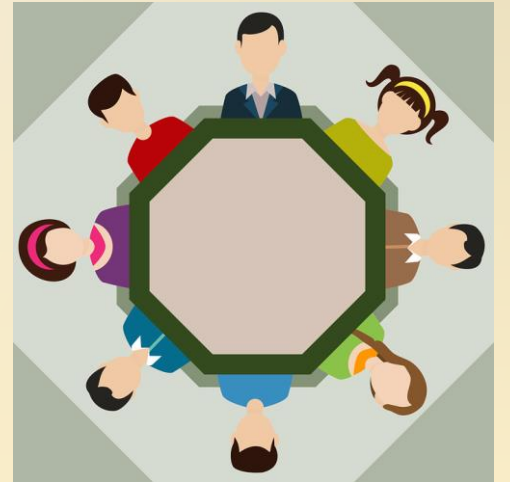
Given this consideration brainstorm appropriate tools for this procedure and record them on the note catcher.

BEST PRACTICES IN ACCELERATION

(II) A decision-making process for accelerated placement that involves **multiple persons**, including a student's parents, rather than a sole decision-maker;

- Written consent from parents or legal guardian(s) to evaluate for possible acceleration
- Comprehensive evaluation from professionals in the districts
- Parents and legal guardians should be informed of the evaluation results in a timely manner (within 10 days is recommended)

- Who would be part of this process in your district?



BEST PRACTICES IN ACCELERATION

- (III) Guidelines for the practice of academic acceleration, including the categories, forms, and types of academic acceleration and the award of credit;
 - A comprehensive written plan should be developed and a copy of it provided to student's parents or legal guardians.
 - Includes monitored transition process
 - Provisions for alternative placement or modification of the acceleration plan after the transition process time
 - Recording of information about the process for each student

CATEGORIES AND TYPES OF ACCELERATION

- Grade-based Acceleration
 - Early entrance to school – in Colorado, Early Access for gifted students
 - Whole-grade acceleration (grade skipping) – some students may need this intervention more than once
 - Early entrance into college



WHEN TO ACCELERATE A FULL GRADE

- Beginning of a school year
- Within a school not when students are transitioning buildings (e.g. in a K-5 system, skip from grade 3 to 5, not from 4-6)
- Best in grades K-7: during very early elementary least disruptive to child's social life because relationships are just beginning to form: in high school other programming options exist

WHEN NOT TO ACCELERATE A FULL-GRADE

From the Iowa Acceleration Scale

- When student has a sibling in the new grade level
- When tested ability is less than one standard deviation above the mean
- When student expresses a desire to NOT be accelerated
- When student is strongly involved in athletics and being a year younger would have a heavy impact on the student's performance



CATEGORIES AND TYPES OF ACCELERATION

- Content-based Acceleration
 - Single-subject acceleration
 - Curriculum compacting
 - Concurrent or dual enrollment
 - Credit by examination or prior experience
 - Advanced Placement (AP)
 - International Baccalaureate (IB)

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING GUIDE The Compactor		
Prepared by: Joseph G. Penzulli Linda M. Smith		
NAME _____	AGE _____	TEACHER(S) _____
Individual Conference Dates And Persons Participating In Planning Of IEP		
SCHOOL _____	GRADE _____	PARENT(S) _____
CURRICULUM AREAS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPACTING Provide a brief description of basic material to be covered during this marking period and the assessment information or evidence that suggests the need for compacting.	PROCEDURES FOR COMPACTING BASIC MATERIAL Describe activities that will be used to guarantee proficiency in basic curricular areas.	ACCELERATION AND/OR ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES Describe activities that will be used to provide advanced level learning experiences in each area of the regular curriculum.

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BEST PRACTICES IN ACCELERATION

- (III) Guidelines for the practice of academic acceleration, including the categories, forms, and types of academic acceleration and the award of credit;
 - A comprehensive written plan should be developed and a copy of it provided to student's parents or legal guardians.
 - Includes monitored transition process
 - Provisions for alternative placement or modification of the acceleration plan after the transition process time
 - Recording of information about the process for each student
 - Review the 20 kinds of academic acceleration and put a check by the ones available in your district.
 - List forms your district has and will need to create for this process.
 - Where will the student's acceleration process information be recorded?

BEST PRACTICES IN ACCELERATION

- (IV) Guidelines for preventing nonacademic barriers to the use of acceleration as an educational intervention
- What can you think of as possible barriers in your district?
- How can these be accounted for in your procedure?



POSSIBLE BARRIERS TO ACCELERATION

- Absolute age requirements
- Curriculum requirements tied to specific-grade levels
- Prerequisites for courses
- Academic testing policies
- Impacts on school funding
- Access to extracurricular opportunities – sports, arts events, academic competitions
- Credit concerns
- Determination of class rank
- Reporting procedures in cumulative records
- Misinformation about acceleration



BEST PRACTICES IN ACCELERATION

(V) An appeals process for decisions related to academic acceleration, as well as a process for evaluating the academic acceleration procedures and its effectiveness in successfully accelerating students.

- Provisions for an appeal process
- Regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the procedure

Does your district have an appeals process already that would cover acceleration decisions? How would evaluation effectiveness of the acceleration procedures be done? What questions would be asked? What data would need to be collected? By whom?



GRADE-BASED AND CONTENT-BASED

- Compare the two policy checklists. Note patterns of similarities and differences.
- Does your district need separate procedures for grade-based acceleration and content-based acceleration or can one procedure cover both kinds?

EXAMPLES

- Now that you have created a list of elements that the district needs to include in its policy – review the examples from Uncompaghre BOCES and Illinois and add any new ideas you think would be useful to your district.

NEXT STEPS

- With others in your district write an acceleration procedure that would benefit your districts' students.
- Do we want a follow-up session to compare results?

