

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

The University of Iowa College of Education



# RESEARCH, POLICY, and PRACTICE

Through the Activities of The Institute for  
Research and Policy on Acceleration (IRPA)

Susan Assouline

The Wallace Research Symposium  
May 2010



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*Nurturing Potential* | *Inspiring Excellence*

# Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration (IRPA)

Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education

[www.accelerationinstitute.org](http://www.accelerationinstitute.org)

## *Areas of emphasis*

- A resource for K-12 educators
- A clearinghouse for research and policy information
- A system for conducting research on acceleration



# Research: Surveys



# Acceleration Survey

## Purpose

- Assess the attitudes held by administrators, classroom teachers, and gifted and talented (GT) teachers/coordinators.
- Assess the beliefs these groups ascribe to others with whom they interact when making decisions about acceleration.
- Collect additional information, e.g., impediments to acceleration



# Acceleration Survey

## Method & Procedures

Online recruitment and participation

20 question survey

10-15 minutes to complete the survey

## Participants

43 administrators

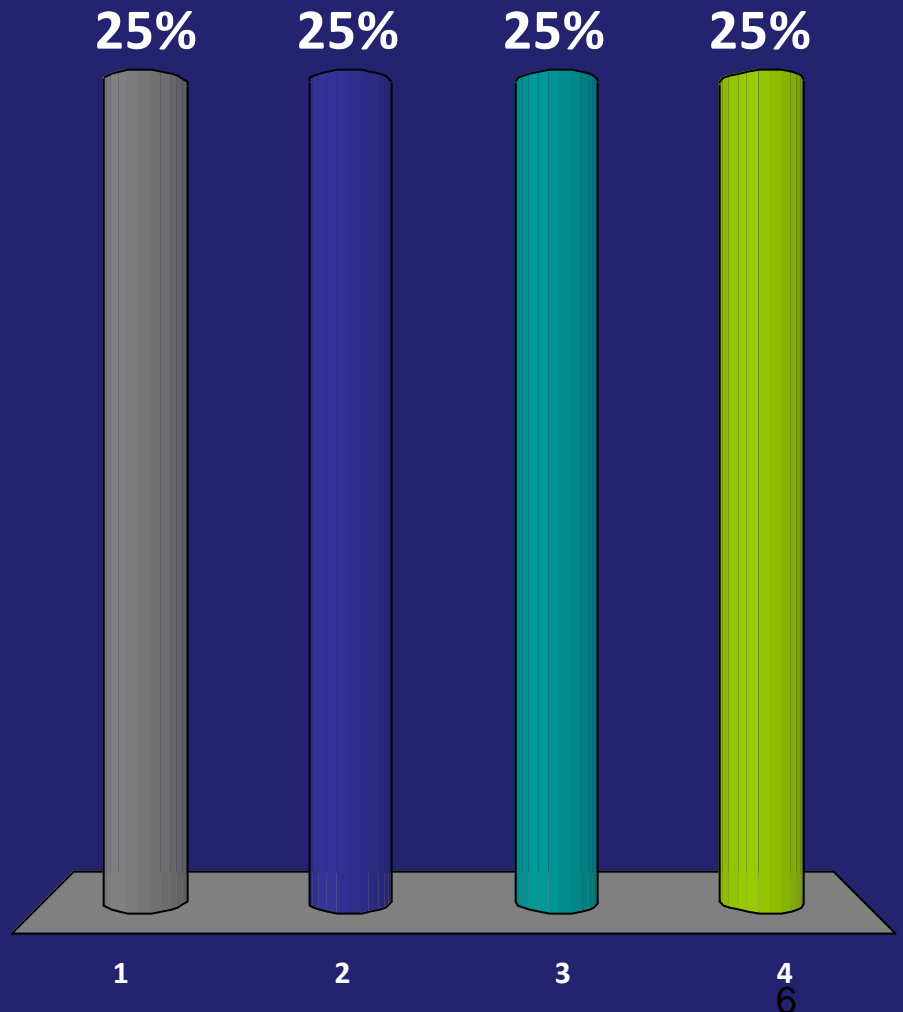
82 regular classroom teachers

334 public school GT teachers or coordinators



# Please indicate your position

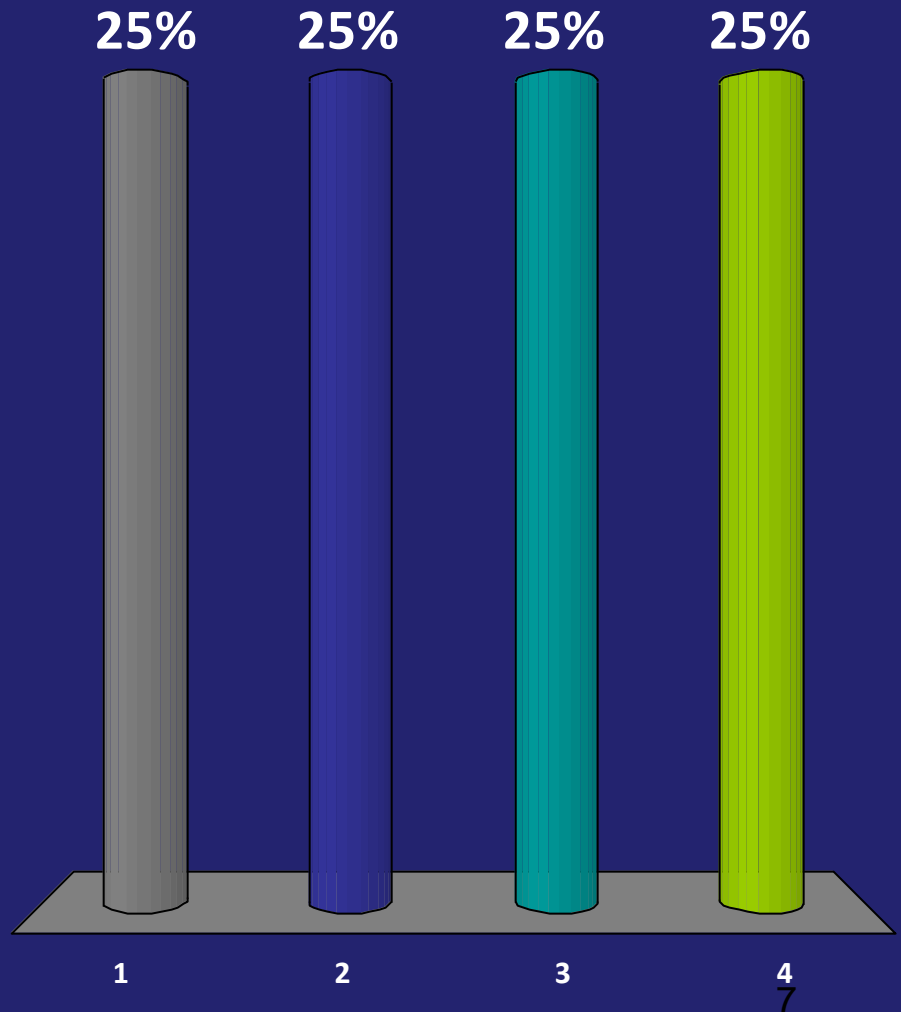
1. K-12 Administrators
2. K-12 regular classroom teachers
3. K-12 GT teacher or coordinators
4. University faculty or administrator



Answer Now

# What is your attitude towards acceleration?

1. Positive
2. Mixed
3. Negative
4. No Opinion



## Acceleration Survey Results

*What are your own attitudes about acceleration?*

A majority of the participants reported positive attitudes about acceleration.

Administrators: 77% positive

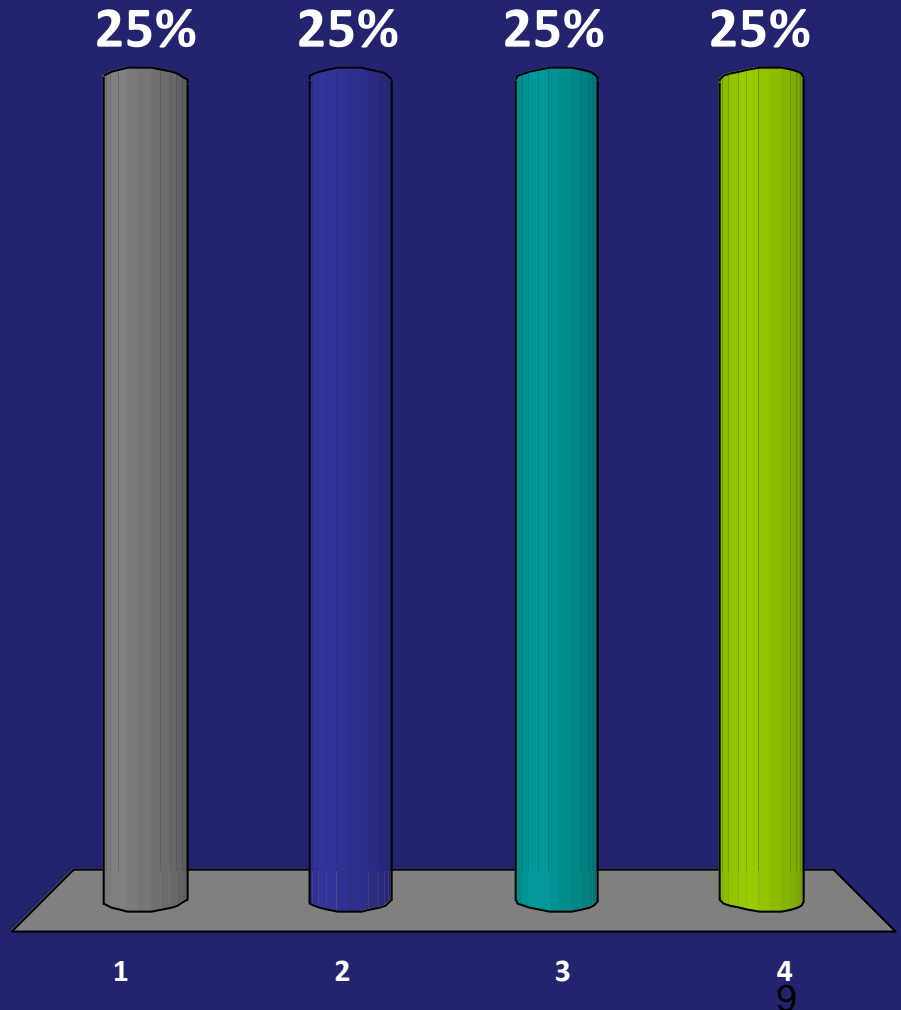
Teachers: 80% positive

GT teachers: 87% positive



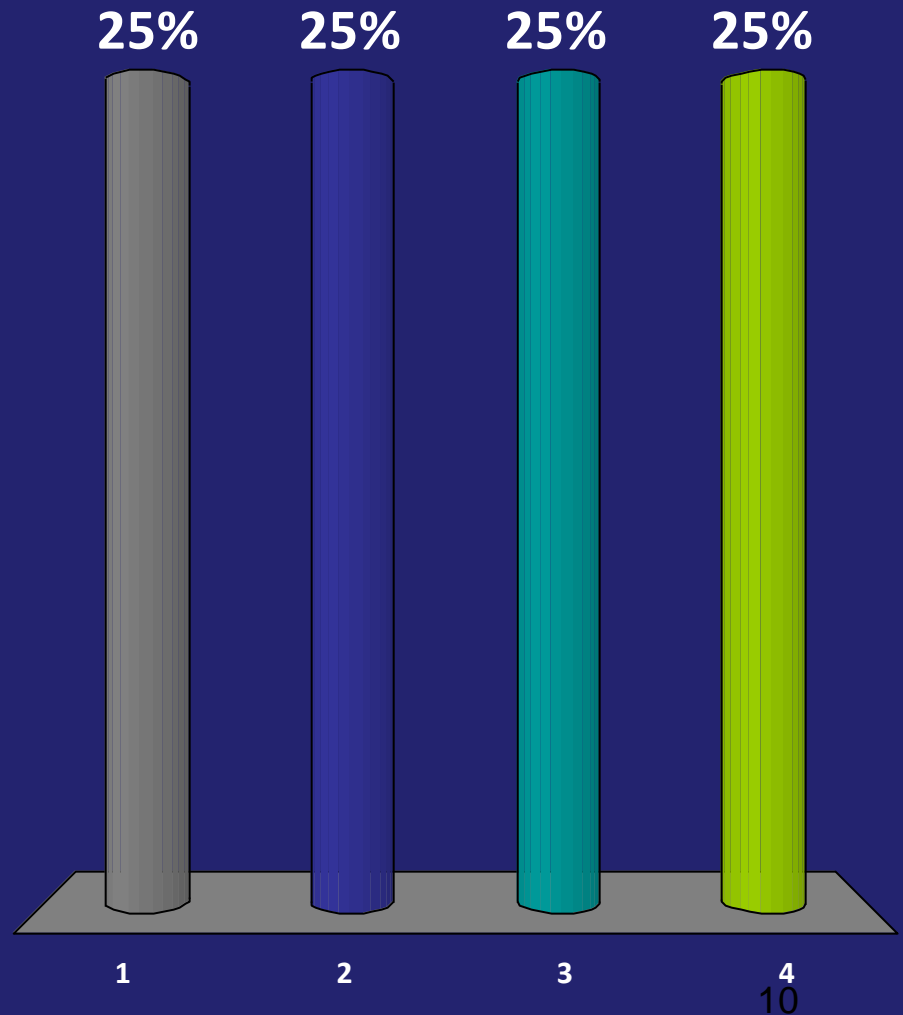
# In general, what is the attitude of K-12 administrators towards acceleration ?

1. Positive
2. Mixed
3. Negative
4. No Opinion



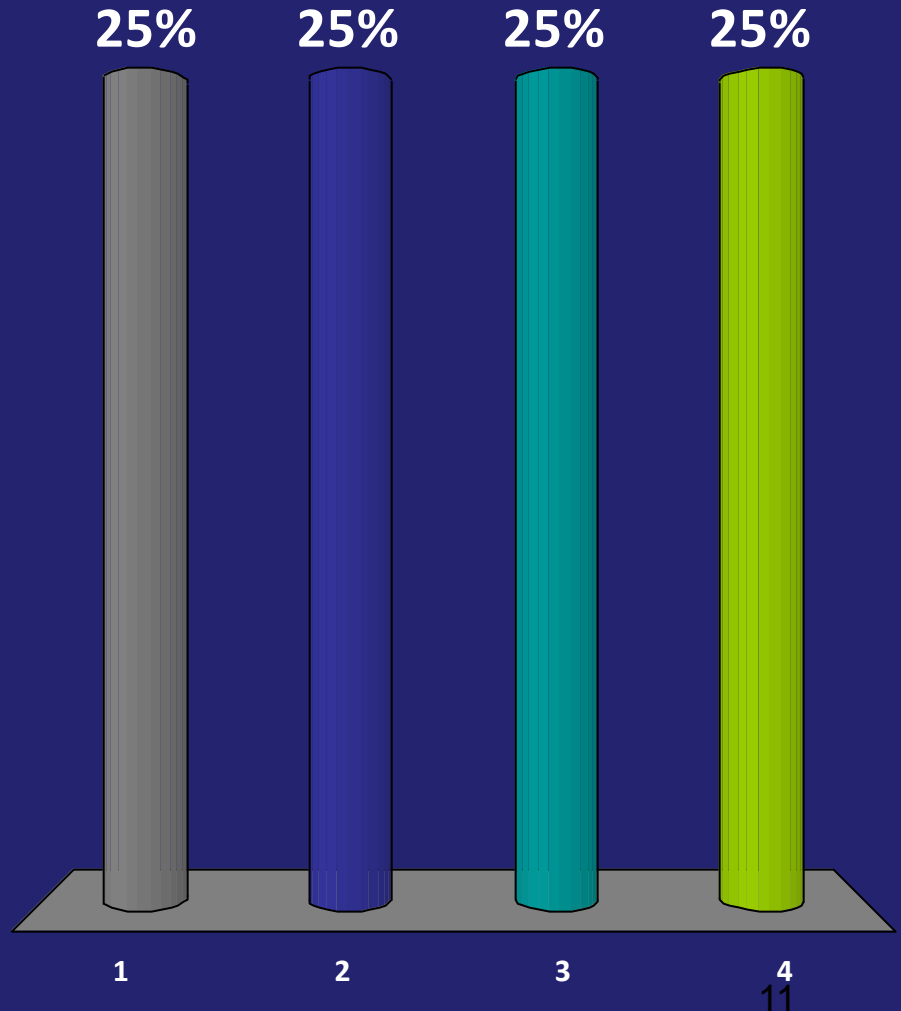
# In general, what is the attitude of classroom teachers toward acceleration?

1. Positive
2. Mixed
3. Negative
4. No Opinion



# In general, what is the attitude of gifted/talented teachers or educators toward acceleration?

1. Positive
2. Mixed
3. Negative
4. No Opinion



## Acceleration Survey Results

*Describe others' attitudes about acceleration.*

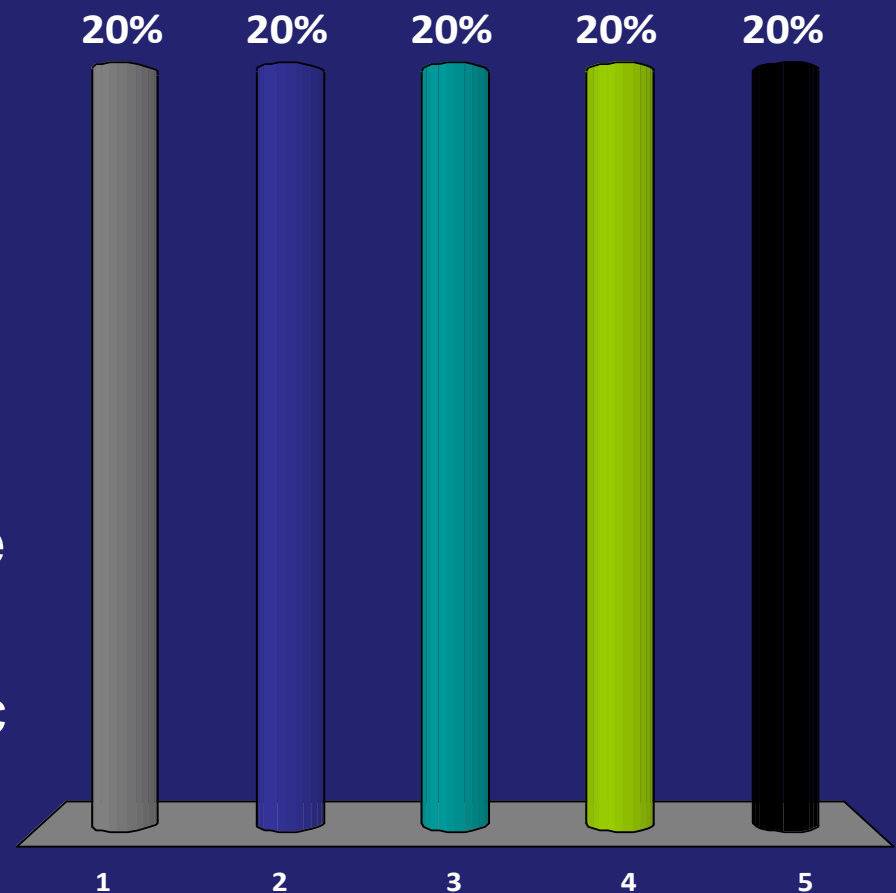
Behavior can be influenced by the beliefs we ascribe to others.

- 26% of administrators said other administrators have positive attitudes about acceleration.
- Only 20% of teachers said other teachers are positive.
- 64% of GT teachers said other GT teachers are positive.



# *Which of the following do you consider to be the main reason for not accelerating a student?*

1. Social-emotional concerns
2. Student will have gaps in knowledge
3. Advanced work will be too difficult
4. Student would preference not to accelerate
5. Scheduling is problematic



## Acceleration Survey Results

*Rank order the top three reasons for not accelerating a student.*

### *Administrators*

1. Social-emotional concerns (43%)
2. Student will have gaps in knowledge (26%)
3. Student preference (14%)

### *Teachers*

1. Social-emotional concerns (41%)
2. Student will have gaps in knowledge (17%)
3. The advanced work will be too difficult (12%)

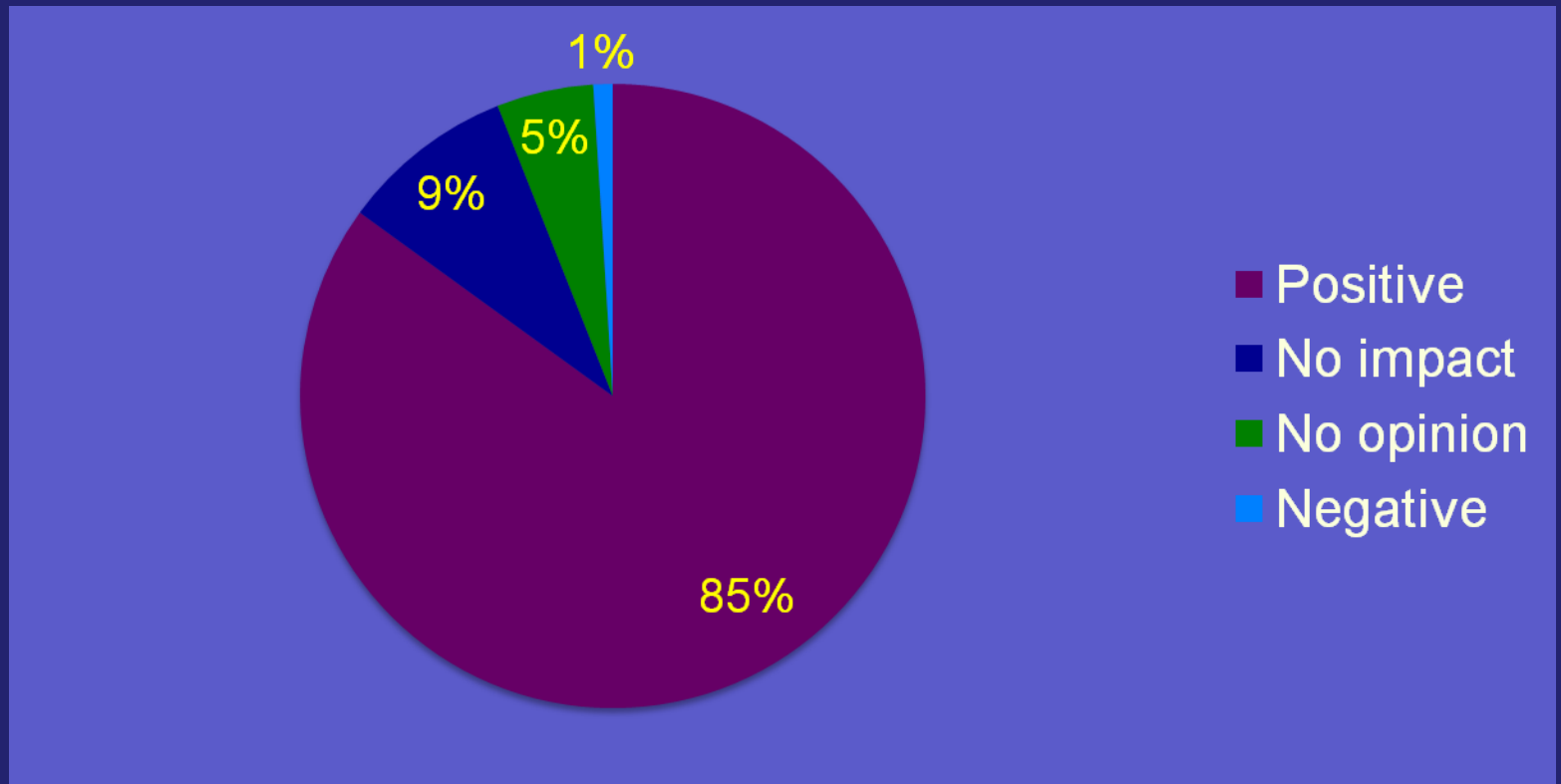
### *GT teachers*

1. Social-emotional concerns (34%)
2. Scheduling issues; work too difficult; student will have gaps in knowledge (all 13%)



# *A Nation Deceived, Three Years Later*

Impact on your own attitudes?



What's next?



# Acceleration policies in the U.S.

## State acceleration policy

- 28 states have NO policy, which means it defaults to the LEAs
- 8 states have a policy that permits acceleration
- 7 states have a policy that leaves it to the LEAs 32

## Early entrance to kindergarten

- 10states allow
- 13 states prohibit
- 21 leave decision to LEAs

## Grade-based acceleration

- Decision left to LEAs

## Content-based acceleration

- Advanced Placement courses offered in 60% of U.S. high schools
- 29 states allow concurrent or dual enrollment



*State of the States in Gifted Education 2008-2009*

NAGC & CSDPG

**Research and policy need to intersect.**

Policy must be based upon *research* at the individual, classroom, district, and national level.

Research needs to be conducted to identify impediments to policy implementation.

Research needs to shift from descriptive and reactive to empirical and proactive.

**Policy needs to be converted to legislation.**



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