# National Policy and the Gifted

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# Background

- *A Nation at Risk* (1983)
- *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* (National Academies, 2007)
- *National Action Plan for Addressing the Critical Needs of the U.S. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education System* (National Science Board, 2007)
- *Foundations for Success* (National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008)
- For those training gifted educators, NCATE now has standards for gifted education

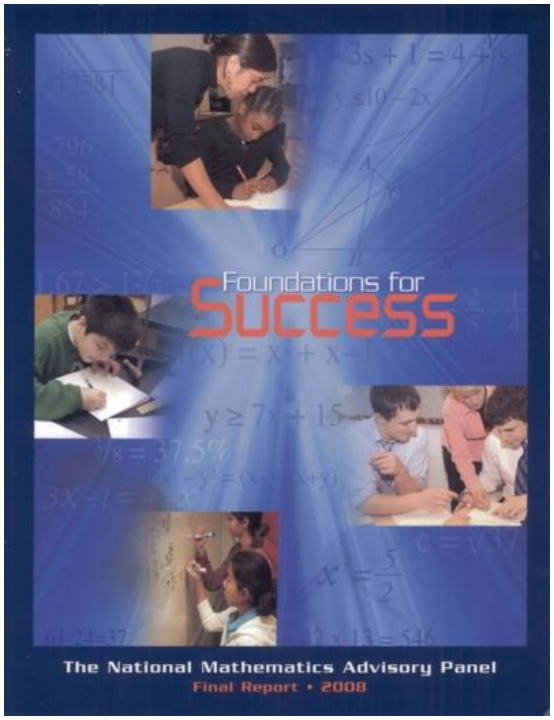
# *Foundations for Success*, the National Math Panel Report

Findings

- Supported differentiated curriculum, especially including acceleration (pace and level)
- Support for individualized instruction, including computer instruction
- Students accelerated by other means gained time and reached milestones earlier, with achievement comparable to same-age peers
- Accelerated students appear to become more strongly engaged in STEM areas
- Limited support was found for supplemental enrichment programs

Recommendation

- More high-quality experimental and quasi experimental research on effectiveness of interventions for gifted. Especially needed are evaluations of academically rigorous enrichment programs.



# National Science Board

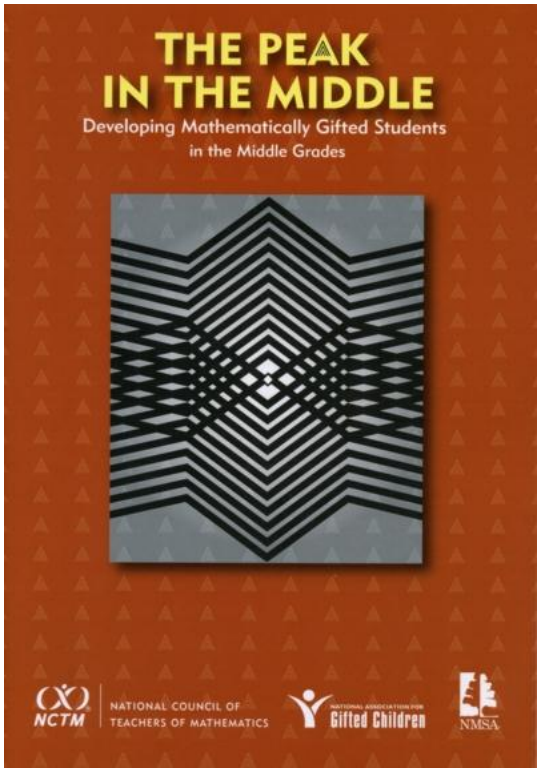
- *Preparing the Next Generation of STEM Innovators*
- Approved, May 2010
- Charge: "identifying strategies for increasing the number of future STEM innovators and synthesizing recommendations for how the NSF, and possibly other Federal entities, might engage in fostering the development of these individuals"
- Includes numerous broad and specific policy recommendations

# NSB keystone recommendations

- Provide opportunities for excellence
- Cast a wide net
- Foster a supportive ecosystem

# *The Peak in the Middle*

- Policy for mathematically gifted middle school students should rely on research evidence that supports best practice for this population.
- Policy should provide multiple opportunities for accelerated coursework that incorporates more depth and complexity as well as multiple ways of accelerating the curriculum according to the student's level of ability and motivation.
- Overwhelming evidence supports policy that recognizes the need for flexible, homogeneous grouping for targeted instruction with a curriculum matched to a student's aptitude in mathematics.
- Policy should include mechanisms to identify students who are ready for accelerated coursework in mathematics. The identification process should include multiple opportunities for assessment and the use of a variety of identification tools that are fair, reliable, and valid for advanced learners, including out-of-level assessments.
- Policy at all levels should include a professional development component for teachers of advanced and gifted students in mathematics.



# Riding the wave

- Can we ride this wave without crashing?