

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



Be remarkable

Nurturing Potential | *Inspiring Excellence*

Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration (IRPA)

Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education

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

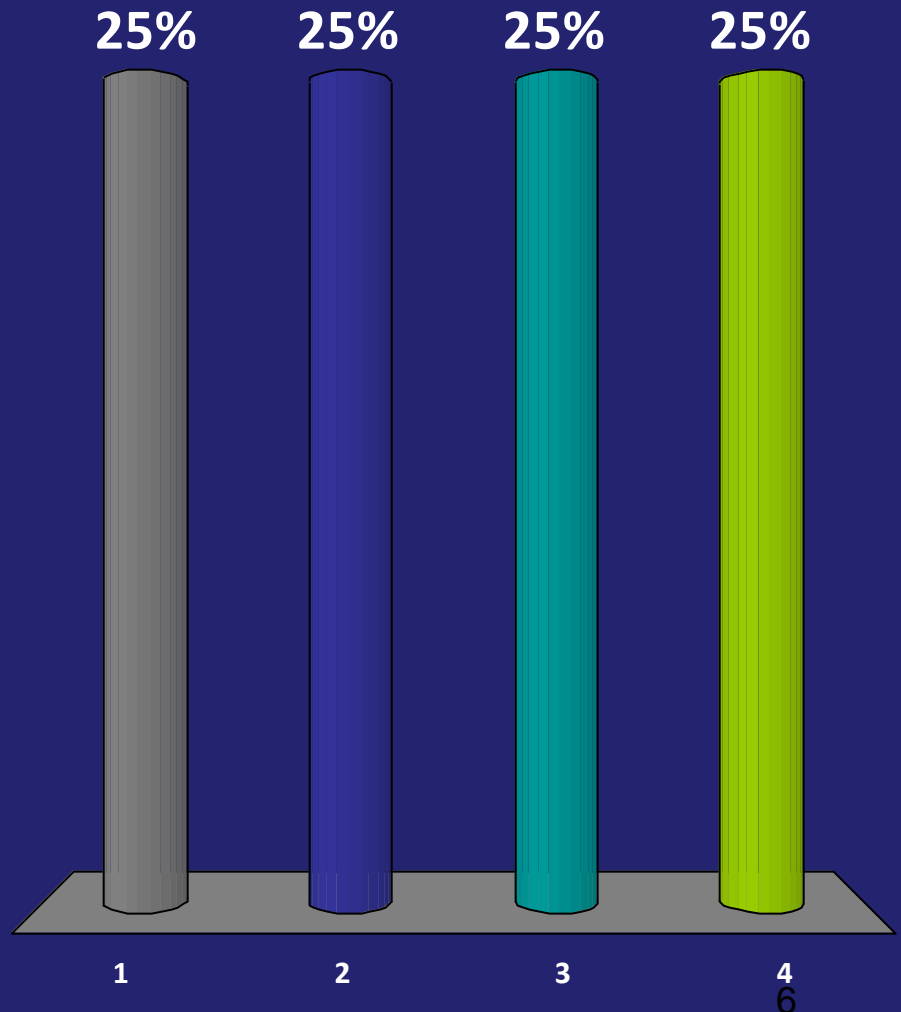
82 regular classroom teachers

334 public school GT teachers or coordinators



Please indicate your position

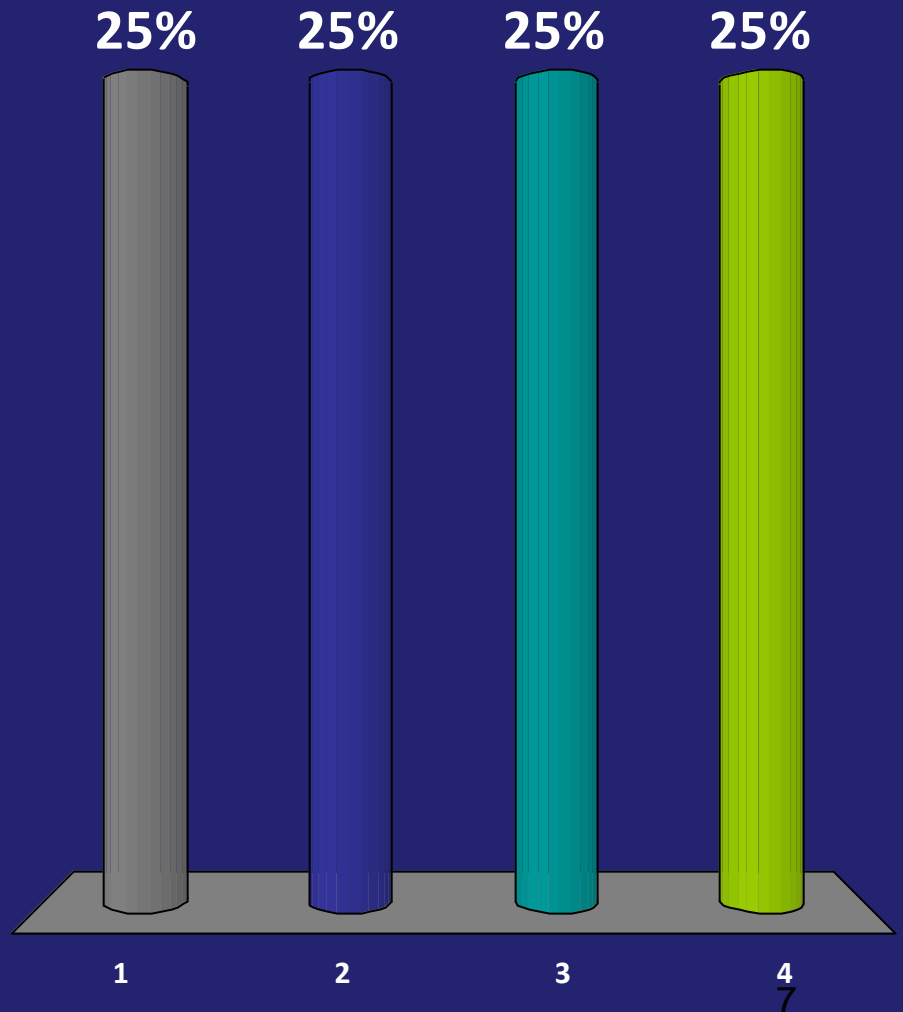
1. K-12 Administrators
2. K-12 regular classroom teachers
3. K-12 GT teacher or coordinators
4. University faculty or administrator



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

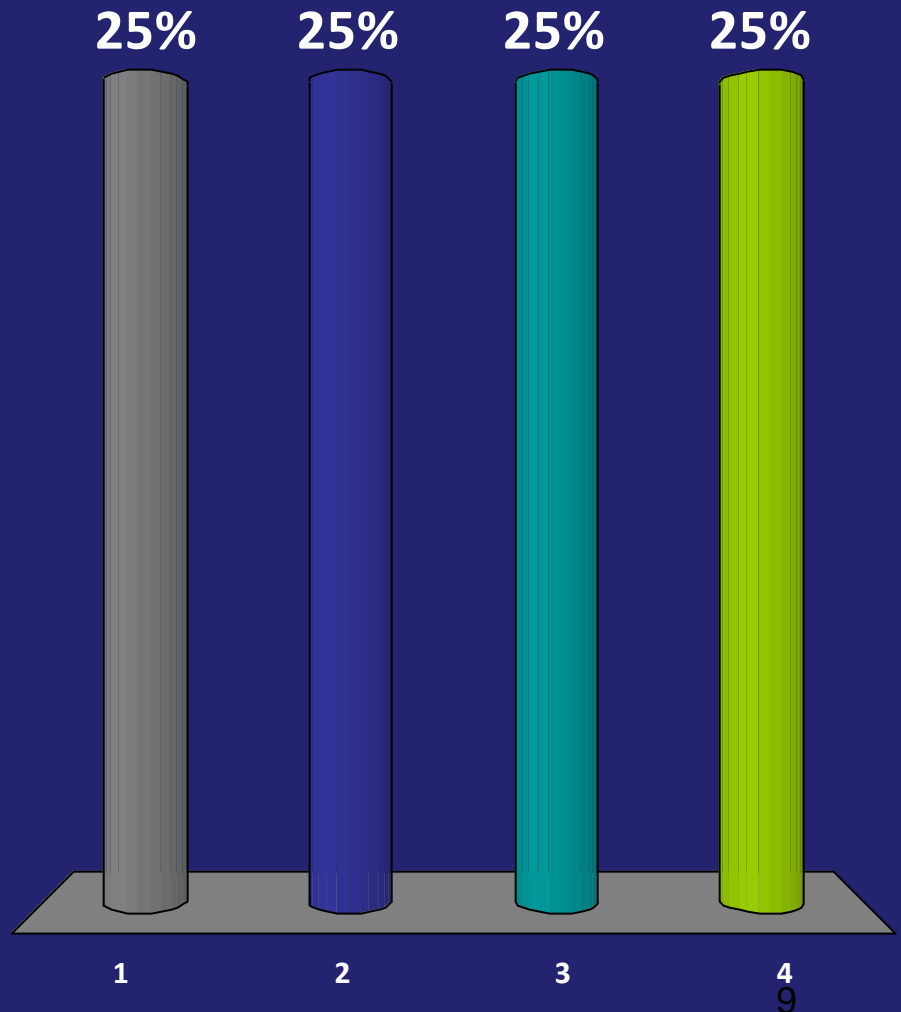
Teachers: 80% positive

GT teachers: 87% positive



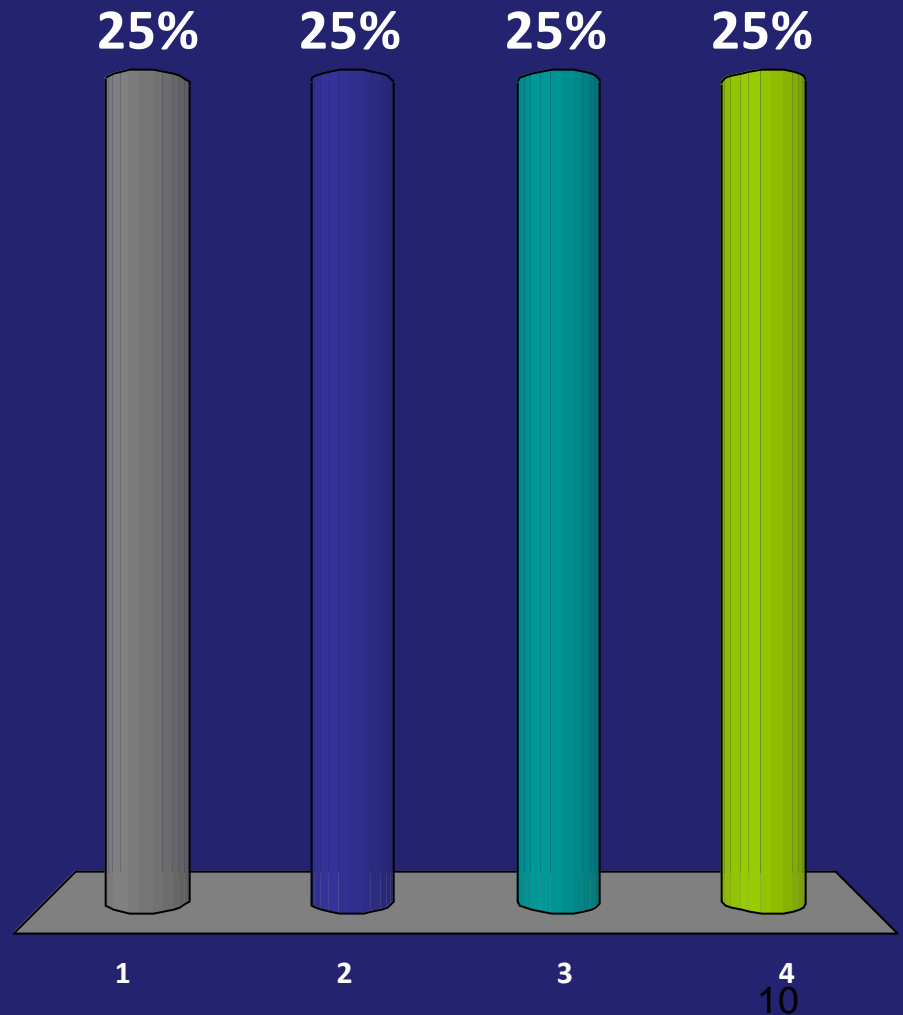
In general, what is the attitude of K-12 administrators towards acceleration ?

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



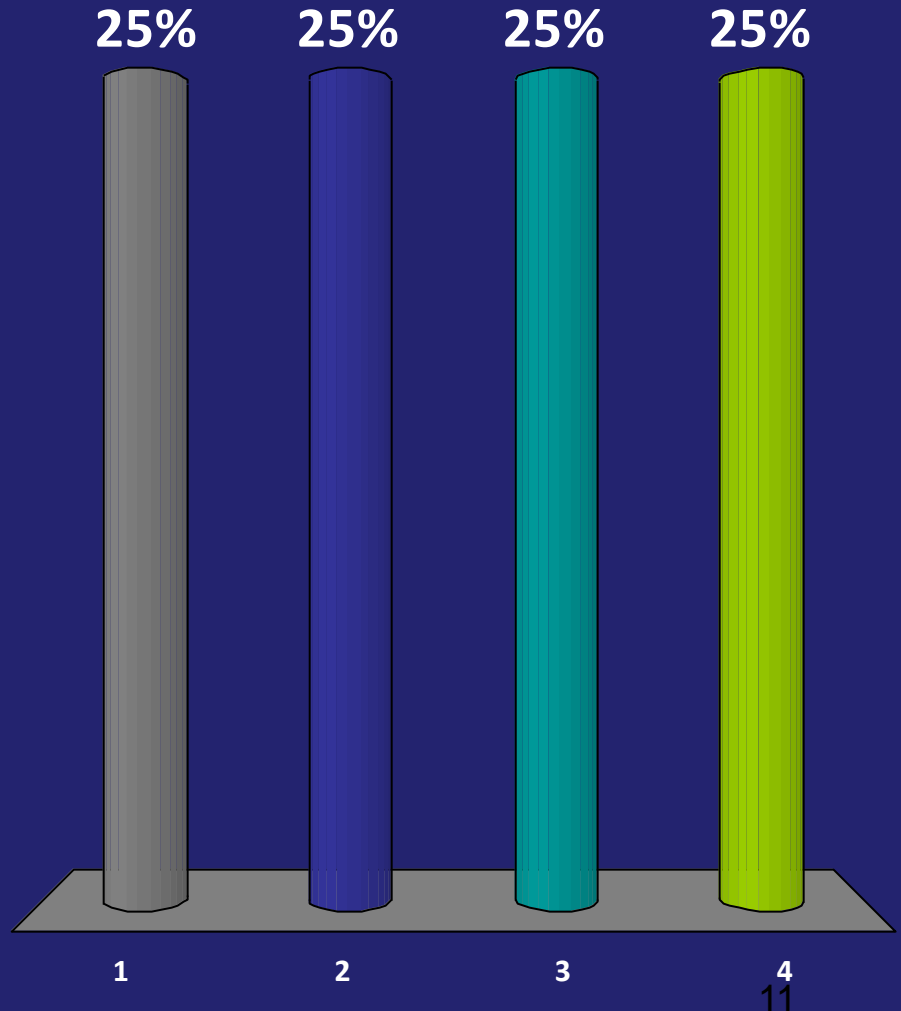
In general, what is the attitude of classroom teachers toward acceleration?

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.

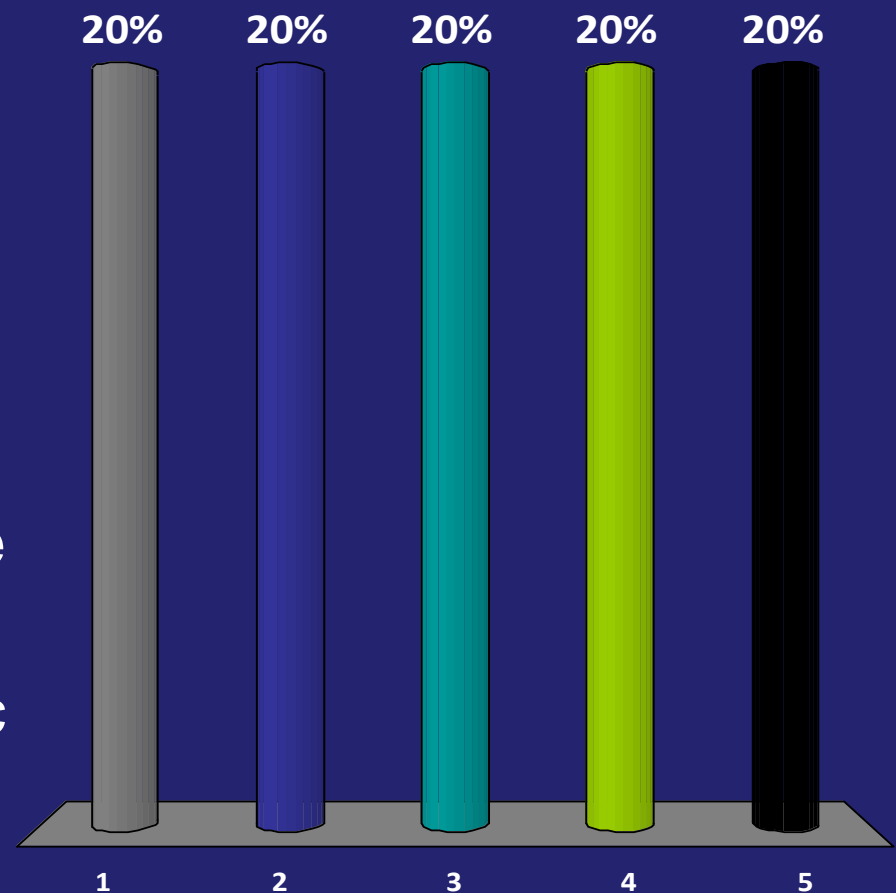
Behavior can be influenced by the beliefs we ascribe to others.

- 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%)

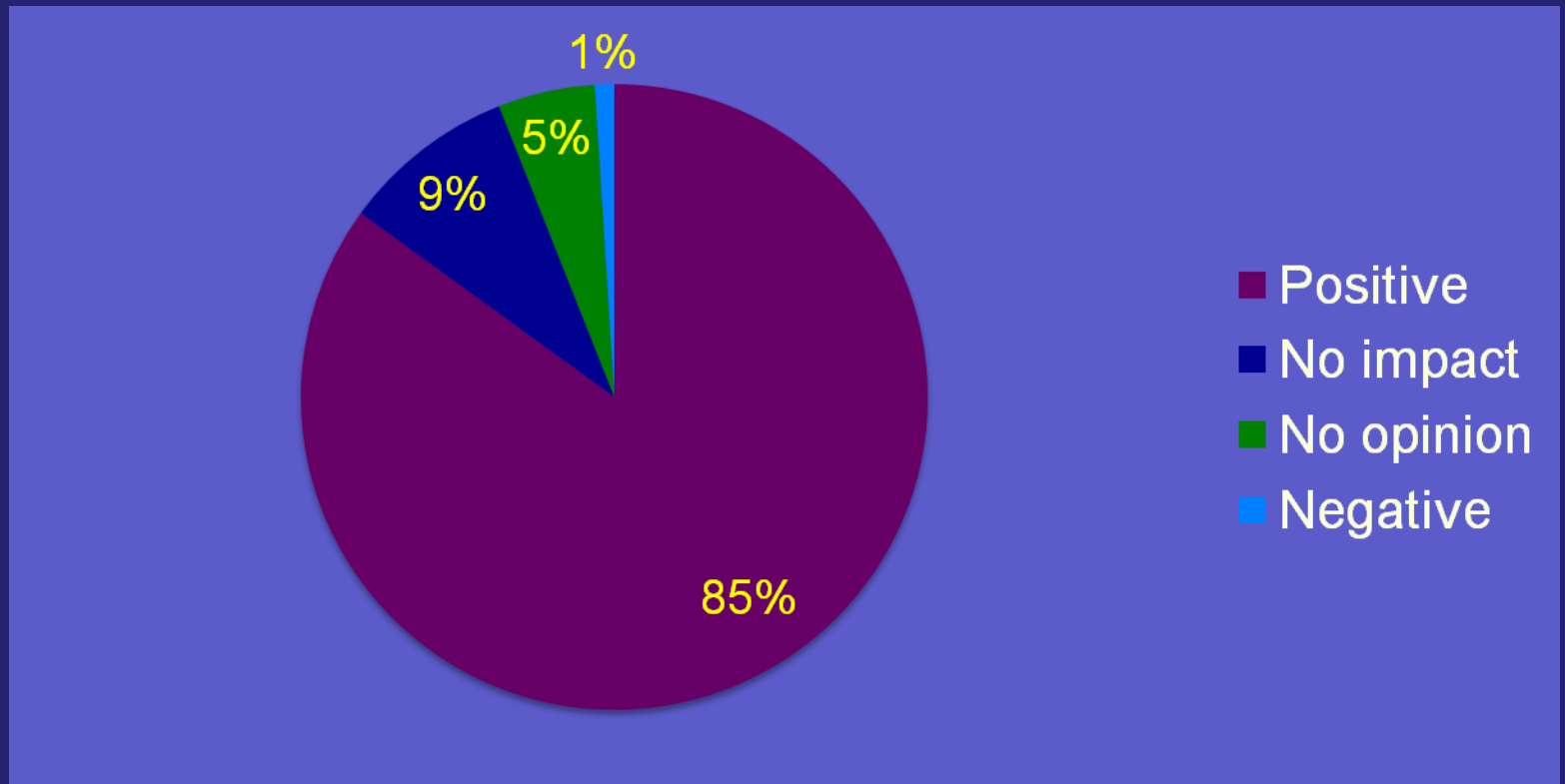
GT teachers

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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Thank you



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