

Mission statement – Special Interest Group on Acceleration

Every comprehensive programme for gifted and talented children needs the options of enrichment and acceleration. Acceleration refers to any means of matching the child's ability, academic needs and level of motivation with advanced content. This implies moving faster through academic subjects and content, allowing students to skip instructions and grades, so as to learn at a level that best matches their academic abilities. Some of the options for acceleration include early entrance to kindergarten, grade skipping, subject acceleration, and curriculum compacting.

International research shows evidence that qualitative acceleration benefits certain gifted pupils cognitively and mentally.

Acceleration allows gifted and talented pupils to progress at their own pace. High ability girls and boys who are accelerated avoid getting bored and frustrated in the classroom.

Research shows that accelerated girls and boys profit intellectually and emotionally from being with intellectual peers (Colangelo et al. 2004 / Assouline et al. 2015). Gifted and talented children often prefer older children and youngsters as peers because their levels of development fit each other better than those of biological age mates.

Although there will always be more enrichment because it is suitable for more bright and motivated children, acceleration is more than twice as effective as enrichment (enrichment 0,39 / acceleration 0,88; see Hattie 2009 / 2012)

Research shows that some children who have been accelerated later say that they would have preferred more of it.

Therefore, the members of the Special Interest Group on Acceleration (SIG-A) aim to

- collect reports by children, youngsters, adults, parents and teachers on the topic of acceleration, to be published on the ECHA website
- disseminate scientific knowledge and data on acceleration.
- provide support to teachers, heads of schools and policy makers in their decisions to accelerate cognitively strong pupils in a responsible and effective way.

References

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- Colangelo, Nicholas / Assouline, Susan G. & Gross, Miraca U.M. (2004). *A nation deceived: How schools hold back America's brightest students*
- Hattie, John A. (2009). *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*, Routledge, London & New York
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