



# Davidson Institute for Talent Development

## *Educators Guild*

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# Successful Advocacy for Gifted Students

<http://www.DavidsonGifted.org/EdGuild/>

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# Quote

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“Advocacy is an ongoing process that requires thoughtful, organized planning directed towards achieving identified, reasonable goals.”

- *Davidson Guidebook*

# Planning & Preparation

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- Determine Goal
- Gather Information
- Read Extensively
- Policies & Procedures
- Form a Tentative Plan

# Determine Goal

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- Consider academic, social/emotional and interest-based needs
- Ask yourself and student:
  - What is working well?
  - What could use improvement?

# Gathering Information

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## Assessments

- Formal
  - IQ & Achievement
- Informal
  - Portfolio & Observation



# Read Extensively

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- Vital to successful advocacy
- Advocacy involves educating
- Familiarize yourself with research and state specific policies and procedures

# Policies & Procedures

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- Research district and state policies
- Consider:

What's happened so far with your child?

What local policies are in place?

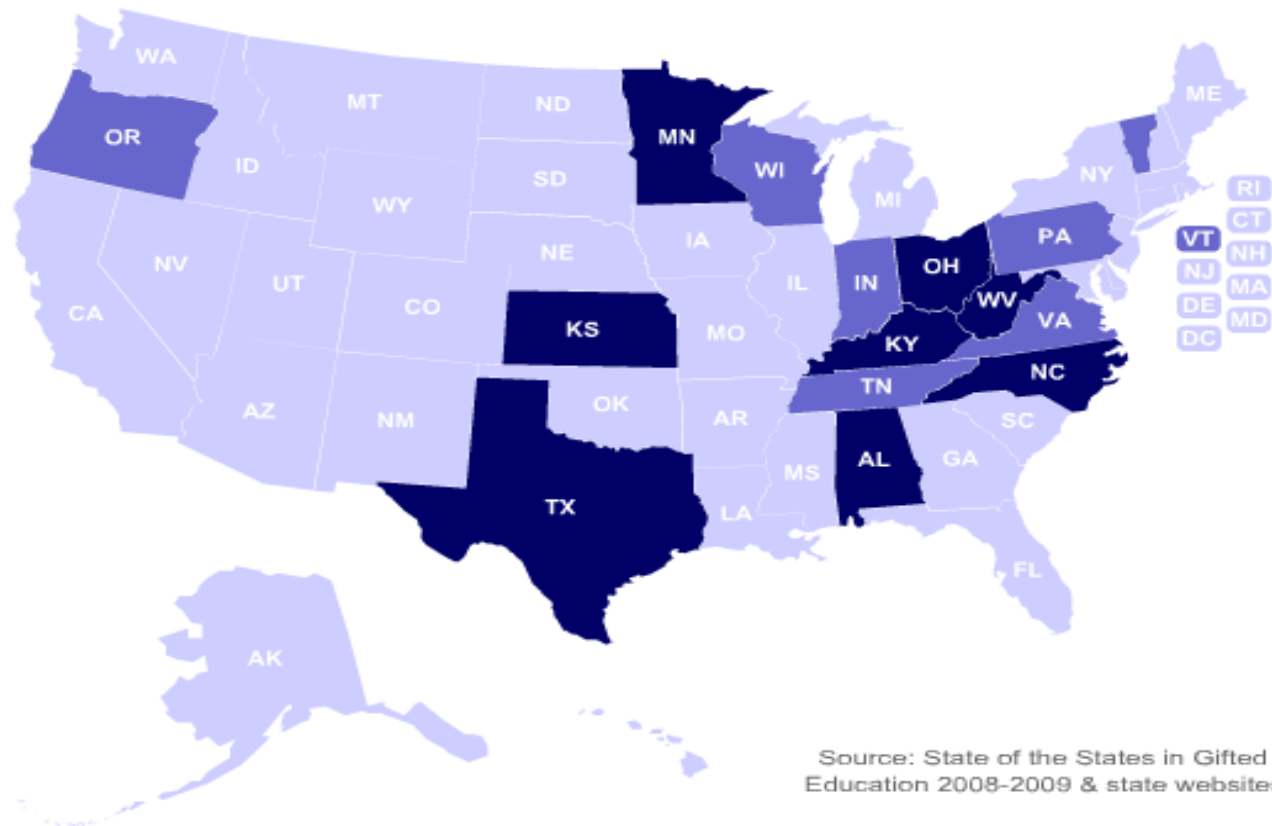
Which option will work best for my student?

# Planning & Preparation

## State Policy

Click on a state to view its acceleration policies.

- State policy explicitly allows acceleration
- State policy lets LEAs decide acceleration policy
- No state policy; LEAs decide acceleration policy



Source: State of the States in Gifted Education 2008-2009 & state websites



# Individualized Accommodations

## *Early Admission to Kindergarten*

### **Early entrance to kindergarten**

Local school districts are allowed to set the entrance age (as long as it is not less than four years old before the first day of school) where a kindergarten program is established ([§ 11.14. Admission to kindergarten when provided](#)).

### **Early entrance to 1st grade**

Pennsylvania defines a "beginner" as "a child who enters a school district's lowest elementary school grade that is above kindergarten" ([§ 11.13. Compulsory school age](#)), which is often first grade. The local board may determine the entrance age for first grade, so long as it is not less than 5 years and 7 months before September 1st ([§ 11.15. Admission of beginners](#)). However, early admission to first grade is allowed ([§ 11.16. Early admission of beginners](#)).

# Individualized Accommodations

## *Partial or Subject Matter Acceleration*

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**Middle school students permitted dual or concurrent enrollment in high school**

State policy leaves LEA to determine.

**Advanced Placement®**

State policy [permits](#).

**Talent Search**

[Carnegie Mellon Institute for Talented Elementary Students \(C-MITES\)](#)

**Credit by examination/proficiency-based promotion**

State policy leaves LEA to determine.

# Individualized Accommodations

## *Dual Enrollment*

**Dual or concurrent enrollment in community college, college, or university**

State policy specifically permits for students in grades nine through twelve.

[General Dual Enrollment Funding Information](#)

[Accelerated High School \(AHS\) at the University of Pittsburgh](#)

[University of Pittsburgh College in High School \(CHS\)](#)

[Carnegie Mellon](#) offers summer programs that allow juniors and seniors in high school to earn college credit.

[The Penn Pre-College Program](#) allows sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school (as well as some high school freshmen based on academic record) to earn college credit over the summer ([additional website for Penn summer program](#)).

[Summer Study at Penn State](#) accepts sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school to college-credit summer classes.

# Individualized Accommodations

## *Grade Acceleration*

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### **Whole-grade acceleration**

Districts can use the [Annotated Gifted Written Report \(GWR\)](#) to help determine appropriate student placement.

### **Early high school graduation**

"A school entity may choose one of two methods of determining whether a student has met the proficient level of achievement. First, the school entity may choose to graduate students achieving proficiency on the PSSA administered in grade 11 or 12. In the alternative, the school entity may choose to graduate students achieving proficiency on a local assessment aligned with the academic standards and the PSSA."

[Assessments and Graduation Requirements](#)

# Formulate a Tentative Plan

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- Utilize information gathered from reading and research
- Prioritize requests
- Remain Flexible

# Effective School Meetings

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- Appropriate Communication
- Arranging a School Meeting
- Holding an effective school meeting
- Following-Up

# Appropriate Communication

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- Collaboration and teamwork
- Remember gifted is not mandated
- Separate the people from the problem
- Honey & Vinegar

# Arranging a School Meeting

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- Follow the chain of command
- Start with the teacher
- Meet with additional school personnel as needed



# Holding an Effective School Meeting

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- Bring materials
- Focus on the needs of the child
- Rely on facts instead of emotions
- Take notes
- Determine follow-up timeline

# Following-Up

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- Generate a paper trail
- Send thank-you notes!
- Monitor Progress

# Moving Forward: Self-Advocacy

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- Advocacy is learned
  - Be a positive role model
- Students should be an active part of the entire process
  - Identifying goals and potential solutions

# Rewards of Successful Advocacy

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“The success story continues because of the groundwork that we laid. Our daughter is now in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and accelerated to 7<sup>th</sup> grade science and math.”

# Rewards of Successful Advocacy

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“Advocating for the needs of our son has not always been easy, but has been well worth it for his social, educational and personal well being. We took the methodical, work together with the school approach, and it has resulted in a full grade skip and appropriate math acceleration that have helped to make my child a well adjusted person.”

# Rewards of Successful Advocacy

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“I remember meeting with our school principal, another caring individual, as we were just starting to understand and try to meet Jack’s needs. I could not get through those meetings without tears . . . I don’t feel tearful anymore. I feel resilient, resolved and educated. And grateful. Very, very grateful.”

# Rewards of Successful Advocacy

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“We developed a relationship with our local district and have worked to develop a plan for alternative pathways for other gifted students through the public school . . . This has opened the door for other gifted children who will follow.”

# Resources

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[www.FreeSpirit.com](http://www.FreeSpirit.com)

- *When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers* - Delisle, J. & Galbraith, J.

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

- *Re-Forming Gifted Education: Matching the Program to the Child* - Rogers, K.
- *Guiding the Gifted Child* - Webb, J., et al.

[www.Prufrock.com](http://www.Prufrock.com)

- *Developing Math Talent* - Assouline, S. & Lupkowski-Shoplik, A.
- *Parenting Gifted Kids: Tips for Raising Happy and Successful Children* - Delisle, J.

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

- *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students* – Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration (IRPA)

[www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org/DB)

- Resources > Browse by Topic: Support: Advocacy; Plus, Articles on various topics
- *Four Simple Steps to Self- Advocacy* – Article
- *Advocating for Exceptionally Gifted Young People: A Guidebook* - Davidson Institute for Talent Development



# Closing

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## Davidson Institute Programs and Services

- Educators Guild
- Davidson Young Scholars
- Davidson Fellows Scholarships
- THINK Summer Institute
- Davidson Academy of Nevada

Any Questions?

## Thank You



[www.DavidsonGifted.org/EdGuild](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org/EdGuild)