



Davidson Institute

Twelve Cost Effective Educational Options for Serving Gifted Students

At present, nearly half of all gifted students are underachievers. There is no federal legislation that mandates gifted education nor are there cohesive infrastructures in place that help parents recognize – and take advantage of – resources to effectively advocate for gifted children. The absence of such practices stifles the development of highly intelligent youth, a population the Davidson Institute asserts is one of the most under-served populations in American schools today, and poses significant concerns regarding the development of future advances and inventions in all fields of study.

What can schools do to help these students when they really care, but don't have the funds?

1. Some gifted students may be candidates for **early entrance to kindergarten**, or possibly **first grade** if they are already reading.
2. **Pre-assess gifted students** before a unit or a course for mastery of the subject matter and offer a more advanced unit or course.
3. **Self-contained classes** for gifted students, particularly in core curriculum classes, help them move on to more advanced subjects.
4. **Multi-age, self-contained gifted classes** are even more effective. Learning with intellectual peers encourages gifted students to achieve.
5. **Subject acceleration** is appropriate when a student is proficient in a particular subject.
6. **Consider grade acceleration** when a student demonstrates proficiency at a particular grade level. Use the Iowa Acceleration Scale to evaluate this and other options.
7. **Dual enrollment** in middle or high school, or high school and college, offers challenging opportunities for gifted students.
8. Offer [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#) courses and/or [International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#) programs for gifted students.
9. Provide **counselors who are trained to counsel gifted students**, including advising them of talent development opportunities.
10. Advise students of [Academic Talent Searches](#), **scholarships and academic competitions** and give students credit for the advanced courses they take in **academic [summer programs](#)**.
11. Create a **school culture** that values intellectual discovery and achievements, where students encourage one another to accomplish more than they would on their own.
12. Encourage administrators and teachers to educate themselves on the **wide range of exceptional abilities among bright students** and increase flexibility in addressing the individual learning needs of gifted students.