

Analysis of Team Decision and Outcome

Jenny:

Current Grade: 3rd Grade, with acceleration in reading and language arts

Proposed Grade for Acceleration: 5th Grade

IAS Score: 55 (good candidate for whole-grade acceleration)

Overall, Jenny is a good candidate for acceleration into the fifth grade. One concern did suppress her score, and this was indicated in Section VII, Item 1, and Grade Placement Under Consideration. Jenny earned a zero on this item because acceleration, at this point in time, would result in a mid-year change in buildings—she would be moved from the elementary school to the junior high school. Because the acceleration would take place during the academic year, Jenny would miss the transition year activities which her current grade peers will experience in the fourth grade. Whole-grade acceleration is still recommended; however, a plan needs to be in place so that Jenny can make the necessary adjustments in the new environment. This plan includes specifically implementing some of the typical transition activities experienced by fourth graders.

In reality, Jenny's acceleration took place several years ago. Because of this, we have been able to track her progress. At the beginning of the trial period, Jenny was treated much like a transfer student and was given special consideration regarding the change in her routine. In no time, though, her mother reported that Jenny had adapted to the new setting like "a fish to water." A critical factor to the success of this intervention was the receiving teacher's willingness and openness to having Jenny in her class. This set the tone for the rest of the class. Additionally, the receiving teacher was involved in the planning phase of the acceleration process, which eased some of Jenny's anxieties. It was clear from the beginning of the process that Jenny knew what she wanted and was willing to work with the teachers to ensure that she was in a challenging setting.

Jenny has been much happier since she was accelerated. She has been more appropriately challenged, and her enthusiasm for school has remained undiminished. All indicators continue to confirm that the acceleration was a successful educational intervention.