



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

High Ability Program Grant Guidance: Fiscal Year 2026 (2025-2026)

Indiana Department of Education

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in.gov/doe

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Grant Overview

K-12 High Ability Program Grant	
Grant Period	July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026
Application Release Date	Friday, May 23, 2025
Application Due Date	Friday, August 15, 2025, at 11:45 p.m. ET
Submission Process	High Ability Program Grant Application
Eligibility	<p>Pursuant to Indiana Code (IC) 20-24-1-4, an “eligible school” means a public school, including a charter school. Pursuant to IC 20-36-1-3, a high ability students refers to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students in kindergarten through grade 12 who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Are enrolled in an eligible school; b) Qualify for high ability services through a multifaceted identification process; and c) Perform at or show the potential for performing at an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment. <p>Local educational agencies (LEAs) must submit one application on behalf of all eligible schools seeking funding.</p>
Award Amounts	LEAs are awarded funding based on total enrollment and the number of identified high ability students in kindergarten, grade two, and grade five. LEAs will also receive an amount specifically designated for ability/potential tests for all students in grades K, 2, and 5.
Grant Award Notification	October 2025

Summary

The K-12 High Ability Program Grant is designed to support eligible entities in establishing or maintaining high ability programs in accordance with [IC 20-36-2-2](#), to provide the following:

1. Identification measures;
2. Differentiated curriculum and instruction;
3. Professional development;
4. Affective curriculum; and
5. Program development.

Funded through appropriations by the Indiana General Assembly, this grant aligns with the mission of Indiana's dedication to provide students in public and charter schools identified as high ability with engaging, accelerated learning experiences that prepare them for emerging careers and educational opportunities. Eligible entities must present evidence within the grant application which high ability programming options are provided for all K-12 students.

Application Overview

Entities seeking funding through the *High Ability Program Grant* from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) must provide the following *per eligible LEA*:

- A detailed program plan outlining your high ability identification and programming;
- A detailed budget reflecting how you intend to expend your funds;
- A detailed rationale regarding how grant funds will be used for the sole benefit of high ability students;
- A statement showing how your budget will go toward items that are reasonable, allocable, allowable, and outside the general educational needs of identified students; and
- An assurance that your funds will be used as indicated in your application.

The grant narrative must ensure each student is assessed for high ability. An entity or school must provide evidence of the following for each team included in their grant proposal (i.e., elementary, middle, high school):

- A process that is open to all students and clearly communicates program supports available to appropriately differentiate and/or accelerate instruction for all identified high ability students.
- A system in place to engage resources such as special education and English learner (EL) teachers of record, when necessary.

IDOE will determine an amount allocated for each LEA depending on total student enrollment, the number of grade levels served, and the number of students identified as high ability. It's imperative that these numbers are reported accurately via Data Exchange to ensure your LEA receives the maximum amount of funding. **LEAs should submit one application for the entire district.** Review the following timeline for more information.

2025-2026 Grant Timeline	
Date	Task
May 23, 2025 - August 15, 2025	Application Window
August-September 2025	Grants Reviewed
October 2025	Application Approvals Sent
May 1, 2026	Amendment Deadline
June 2, 2026	Cash Request Deadline
June 30, 2026	Encumbrance Deadline
August 28, 2026	Liquidation Deadline
November 30, 2026	Final Report Deadline

When completing application components, please refer to the following rubrics, which outline requested information and scoring criteria.

Grant Evaluation Rubrics

Grant Narrative: Identification		
Scoring Indicator	Developing (1)	Meets or Exceeds (3)
Describes the identification process to include approved ability, achievement, and qualitative measures and parameters for qualification in high ability programming (measures used must appear on the list of approved instruments)		
Describes procedures in place for universal, multifaceted identification in kindergarten, grade two, and grade five		
Indicates norms used - national, state, local, building		
Describes procedures in place to identify students who may be twice exceptional or part of another special population (e.g., EL)		
Total (must earn 12 points):		

Grant Narrative: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction		
Scoring Indicator	Developing (1)	Meets or Exceeds (3)
Describes programming models in place for each grade band (elementary, middle, and high school)		
Describes, in detail, how curriculum is differentiated specifically for high ability students (i.e., curriculum compacting, acceleration, or similar)		
Describe your vertically articulated, high ability-specific curriculum at each grade level		
Total (must earn 9 points):		

Grant Narrative: Differentiated Guidance and Counseling Plan		
Scoring Indicator	Developing (1)	Meets or Exceeds (3)
Description of high ability-specific differentiated support, services, and guidance are provided in K-12		
Evidence of a system in place to provide high ability-specific professional development for counselors so they may effectively offer support to high ability students		
Total (must earn 6 points):		

Grant Narrative: Professional Development Plan		
Scoring Indicator	Developing (1)	Meets or Exceeds (3)
Description of high ability-specific training and coaching is provided to educators, counselors, and administrators to assure access and opportunity for all identified high ability K-12 students		
Description of the qualifications of people delivering professional development to include evidence of expertise or certification in high ability		
Total (must earn 6 points):		

Grant Narrative: Program Evaluation Plan		
Scoring Indicator	Developing (1)	Meets or Exceeds (3)
Description of a systematic plan for program evaluation and continuous development/implementation of K-12 services for high ability students		
Description of the Broad-Based Planning Committee to include how many members, what roles the members hold, how often they meet, and evidence of diverse stakeholders (i.e., administrators, teachers, community members, students)		
Total (must earn 6 points):		

Applicants must **meet or exceed all scoring indicators** on the grant narrative to be eligible for receiving High Ability Program Grant funding.

Budget Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Fail (0 points)	Pass (5 points)
Allowable expenditures	The budget narrative and budget summary template include unallowable expenditures.	All expenditures included in the budget narrative and budget summary template are allowable.
Reasonable, allocable, and necessary to fulfill proposed grant activities	The budget narrative and budget summary are not reasonable, allocable, and/or necessary to fulfill proposed grant activities.	The budget narrative and budget summary include expenditures that are reasonable, allocable, beyond the general education expense, and/or necessary to fulfill proposed grant activities.
Total (must earn 10 points):		

Cash Requests

The High Ability Program Grant will be administered as follows:

- Funding will be disbursed to grant recipients upon receipt and approval of a cash request form;
- Grant recipients are required to submit a report at the end of the year with a detailed budget and narrative of expenditures; and
- Recipients must return any funds not spent as budgeted for the sole benefit of high ability students.

Expenses Eligible:

Applicants can apply for the following expenses:

- High ability-specific curriculum, including textbooks, supplemental novels, manipulatives;
- High ability-specific professional development (e.g., workshops, conferences, guest speakers);
- Identification materials;
- Entry fees and in-state transportation costs associated with academic competitions other than robotics;
- High ability-specific registrations/membership fees;
- Salaries, stipends, and benefits for staff working with high ability students.

Expenses Not Eligible:

Grant funds may **not** be used for the following non-allowable expenses:

- Preparation of the initial grant application;
- Decorative items (e.g., shirts or uniforms, classroom decoration);
- Office supplies, furniture, or equipment (e.g., printers, computers/tablets, SmartBoards, televisions, laminators, desks, paper/craft products);
- Purchase of facilities or vehicles;
- Land acquisition;
- Capital improvements;

- Lodging other than for HA-specific conferences;
- Permanent renovations;
- Food and drinks.

See the chart below for more detailed allowable expenses:

Permissible High Ability Program Grant Expenditures by Program Element
Multifaceted Identification
<p>Identification Tools and Materials</p> <p>Materials ensuring an inclusive, multifaceted, high ability identification process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Online testing seats ● Tangible testing booklets ● Scoring sheets ● Scoring services ● Aptitude/potential assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cognitive Abilities Test (full CogAT) ○ General Abilities Test (full GAT) ○ InView (Only appropriate for grades 2-12, as the K-1 version does not have a quantitative subtest) ○ Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (8th ed.) (OLSAT) (Only appropriate for grades 3-12, as earlier grades do not have a quantitative subtest) ○ Naglieri General Ability Tests - Verbal, Nonverbal, and Quantitative ○ Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) ○ Woodcock-Johnson III Normative Update Test of Cognitive Abilities ○ Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Second Edition (KABC-II) ○ Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test ○ Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students (TOMAGS) – (Math only) ○ Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test – (Math only) ● Achievement/performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) ○ Iowa Test of Basic Skills: Complete Battery ○ iReady Diagnostic Curriculum Associates ○ ExactPath ○ IXL ○ ILEARN checkpoints and summative assessments ○ AIRWays Cambium Assessment ○ Terra Nova (most recent addition) ○ Stanford Achievement Test ○ Wechsler Individual Achievement Test ○ Woodcock-Johnson III NU Tests of Achievement ○ Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement ● Observational/Qualitative Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)

- Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI)
- Renzulli Scales Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students
- USTARS~Plus, Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS)
- **DIBELS (mClass) is not an approved high ability identification measure.**
- **Achievement measures may not be used as screeners for determining the administration of full-battery ability measures.**

Technical assistance from high ability experts with experience with IC requirements

Curriculum and Instruction

Personnel

- High ability-specific teacher salaries
- Substitute teacher pay for high ability professional development

Stipends for:

- Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)/humanities unit development
- High ability professional learning community (PLC) (separate from regular team or grade-level group)
- High ability leadership teacher team
- High Ability coaching
- Summer high ability-specific professional development

Note: Food/refreshments are not allowable expenses.

Direct Services for High Ability Learners

- Clubs targeting high ability learners
- Summer high ability camps
- Student fees for academic competitions targeting high ability learners, such as:
 - MathCounts
 - Odyssey of the Mind
 - Future Problem Solving
 - Continental Math League
- In-state transportation for high ability-specific:
 - Field trips
 - Academic competitions
 - Access to site-specific programming

Note: Beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2026, robotics extracurriculars, competitions, salaries/stipends, transportation, and electives are no longer allowable expenses. Please apply for the *K-12 Robotics Competition Grant* to support robotics programs.

Note: Clothing (e.g., team shirts or uniforms), food, awards, and refreshments are not allowable expenses.

Instructional Supplies and Materials

- Math problem solving books
- Books for parent/community book study
- Core content materials, including digital materials and technology
- Student materials for academic competitions targeting high ability learners

Note: Furniture, office equipment (e.g., printers, laminators, computers/tablets), and office supplies (e.g., paper, craft supplies, writing utensils, classroom decorations) are not allowable expenses.

Professional Development

High ability-specific conference registrations, such as:

- Indiana Association for the Gifted (IAG)
- National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

Reimbursement for graduate high ability coursework leading to certification

- Teacher investment/incentive program

High ability-specific workshop registration

Administrators

- High ability student characteristics
- Identification tools and best practices
- Increasing access for all students Cluster grouping
- Program models
- Data analysis

High ability-specific workshop registration

Teachers

- High ability student characteristics
- Identification
- Curriculum content knowledge
- Curriculum differentiation
 - Compacting
 - Accelerating
 - Enriching
- Instruction
 - Higher order questioning
 - Shared and independent inquiry
- Advanced Placement (AP) or pre-AP teacher training

High ability-specific workshop registration

Counselors

- High ability-specific needs
- High ability parent group
- Community outreach

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twice exceptional
AP or pre-AP teacher training
Guidance and Counseling
<p>High ability-specific workshop registration</p> <p>Counselors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High ability-specific needs • High ability parent group • Community outreach • Twice exceptional
Development of a guidance and counseling plan led by someone with expertise in the social needs of the gifted
Program Evaluation
Outside review or formal program evaluation by experts in gifted education recommended every five years to set direction for program improvement
<p>High ability-specific workshops</p> <p>Family and community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High ability student characteristics ○ College and career readiness

Submission Instructions

This year, schools will complete the application in eCivics, Indiana’s new online grant platform, which includes some updates to the application process. IDOE staff will review applications using the rubrics provided and will contact you if there are errors or if additional information is needed. To avoid delays, please ensure all requested information is included in your detailed narratives. Use the following resources to complete the application process:

- [Planning Form](#) - This is optional, but allows the opportunity to further define application details.
- [High Ability Program Plan Template](#)
- [eCivics Application](#)
- High Ability Program Evaluation for 2024-2025 (part of the grant application)

Final Grant Report

Pursuant to [IC 20-36-2-1b](#), LEAs must annually submit a report regarding the use of High Ability Program Grant funds. This report should contain a detailed narrative outlining progress toward the approved SMART goals and a budget accurately reflecting how funds were spent. This budget must match your approved budget and/or any amendments filed.

Failure to complete and submit this report by the deadline may result in delayed approval of future high ability grant funding. Contact IDOE's High Ability Specialist at studentpathways_highability@doe.in.gov with additional questions over this grant program.