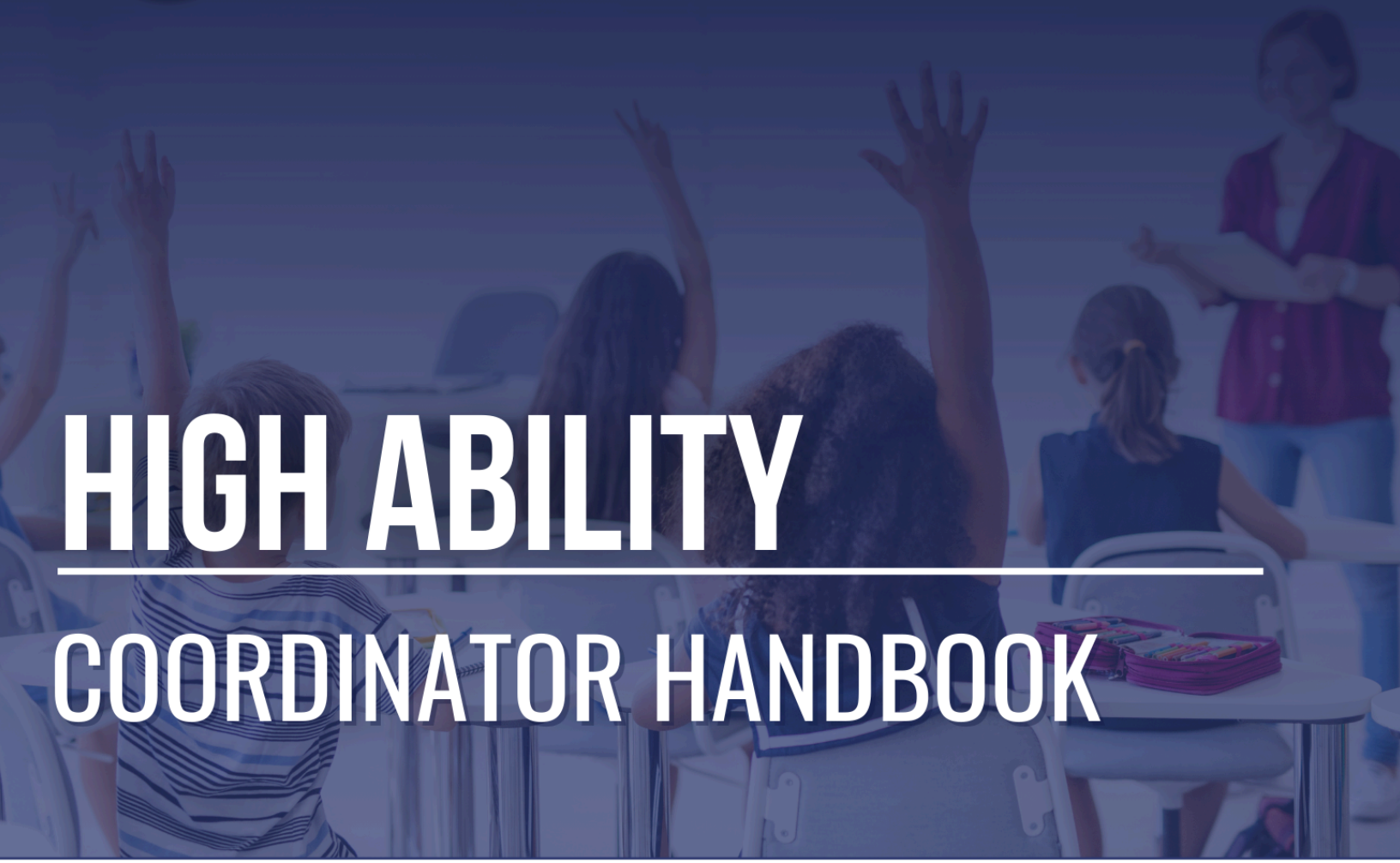
INDIANA DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION



HIGH ABILITY

COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

Indiana Department of Education
Office of Curriculum and Instruction

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in.gov

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2026-2027 High Ability Coordinator Handbook

The 2026-2027 High Ability Coordinator Handbook is developed by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and provides guidance and best practices for Indiana high ability coordinators in identifying and serving high ability students, as well as outlines state law requirements pertaining to high ability education.

A school corporation's high ability coordinator is designated by the superintendent or their designee and communicates directly with the following groups:

- **IDOE High Ability Specialist:** All important communication and information will be delivered via email from IDOE to high ability coordinators. It is the coordinator's responsibility to share with the appropriate personnel within the corporation.
    - When emailing IDOE's High Ability Specialist, please indicate the local educational agency (LEA) number in the subject line.
- **Data Teams/Individual(s):** High ability coordinators must work with corporation data teams to ensure that the DOE-AD is submitted correctly; provide a list of identified students and domain categories to the correct data individuals.
- **Superintendent/Corporation leadership**: Inform the leadership team of high ability professional development opportunities, as well as high ability programs, services, and updates.
- **Broad-Based Planning Committee:** Meet with this committee to review the continuous development and implementation of the corporation's high ability services and programs.
- **Principals:** Provide a list of identified high ability students and inform of professional development opportunities specific to high ability.
    - ***NOTE:*** *Identification is reported from the corporation level and not the building level.*
- **Teachers**: Provide a list of identified high ability students with the High Ability-Student Number designation, and notify them of high ability specific professional development opportunities.
- **Parents and Families:** Respond to questions/concerns about the corporation's high ability programs and services. Provide current information on the high ability website and schedule informational meetings throughout the year.
- **Counselors**: Consult with the counselors about their role in supporting effective education and the development of college/career readiness skills for high ability students.
- **Corporation Website Teams**: High ability coordinators work with corporation website teams to ensure that the high ability information posted is up-to-date and easily accessible.

Requirements for Serving High Ability Students

Indiana Code (IC) and Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) outline requirements for Indiana school corporations serving high ability students.

In order to qualify as a high ability program, per IAC 511 6-9.1-2, a school must meet all of the following:

- Provide educational opportunities that encourage high ability students to reach the highest possible level at every stage of development.
- Establish a differentiated program for high ability students and include the following plans filed with IDOE and available for public review:
    - A multifaceted student identification plan, including:
        - Norm-referenced measurement of achievement
        - Norm-referenced measurement of ability
        - Other forms of assessments, including qualitative measures.
    - A curriculum and instructional strategies plan.
    - A counseling and guidance plan.
    - A systematic program assessment plan.
    - A professional development plan.
- Provide educational experiences offered during the school day in core subject areas for high ability students (after school programs may supplement, not supplant, daily instruction).
- Have a broad-based planning committee to design and monitor the continuous development and implementation of service levels for high-ability students, composed of diverse stakeholders who meet periodically.
- Have approval by the local governing body.
- Identify students with high ability in all grades K-12 in accordance with the state definition of a high ability student.
    - As outlined in IC 20-36-1-3, “high ability student” means a student who:
        - ***performs at, or shows 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; and
        - is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.
- Identify and serve the following two required domains:
    - General intellectual and specific academic

        - Specific academic domains are math and English/language arts. Students identified as general intellectuals are identified in both math and LA. Students identified in either domain must receive HA services in that area.
    - Additional domains may be served, such as creativity, interpersonal, visual/performing and technical/practical arts.

- Record the relevant designation on the student test number (STN). HA-LA, HA-Math, HA-General Intellectual, or HA-Other.
    - Services are optional for students identified as HA-Other.
- Provide “appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction” to identified students in the relevant core content area(s).
- Report annually to IDOE on the programs and use of the state high ability grant.
- Report on the results of the program, including student achievement and program effectiveness.
- Provide professional development in high ability education delivered by experts in the field.
- Evaluate the program and make data-informed decisions to guide next steps.

Broad-based Planning Committee

Purpose of the Broad-based Planning Committee

The broad-based planning committee is a group of stakeholders organized to review the continuous development and implementation of the services and programs for high ability students.

The committee serves as the:

- Representation of key stakeholders
- Sounding board for programmatic ideas
- Fueling the vision for high ability education
- Assessor of the degree to which program goals are being met
- Impetus for improvement
- Serving as an ambassador for high ability services in the community

The local governing body has ultimate responsibility and authority for all student services. The broad-based planning committee is not a decision-making group; rather, it serves as an advisory board to review policies, services, and outcomes. The broad-based planning committee is required to meet once a year, but in order to optimally serve the community, the committee should meet at least three times during the school year.

Diverse stakeholders to consider:

- School board members
- Superintendent
- District-level administrators
- High ability coordinator
- Building-level administrators
- Teachers
- Instructional coaches
- Counselors
- Social workers
- Students
- Parents and families
- Community representatives

Members should have an interest in advocacy for high ability education and include some decision-makers within the corporation. High ability coordinators maintain a record of official members, including contact information, meeting dates, and agendas.

Broad-based Planning Committee Responsibilities

- Review the required program plan available for public inspection.
- Review implementation of each of the required parts of the program plan.
- Review the results of the programs for students with high ability, including student assessment results, program effectiveness, and student achievement (IC 20–36–2).

- Review the action plan for improvement related to the program plan.
- Maintain a collaborative relationship between school staff and the committee.
- Review a three- to five- year strategic plan for program development.

Tips for Broad-based Planning Committees

- Survey preferences for meeting times, dates, and locations (i.e., evenings, after school, online).
- Limit meetings to no more than two hours.
- Send an agenda and any pertinent articles or information to members prior to meeting.
- Adhere to the agenda.
- Make a list of additional topics/questions/concerns to be addressed at a future date.
- Introduce broad-based planning committee members at school functions/parent meetings.
- Educate members by inviting them to go on school visitations, attend conferences, etc.
- Provide members with resources related to education of high ability students.
- Share awards, recognition, student products, reports, student-produced plays (i.e., classroom activities).
- Send a copy of the agenda and minutes of the meeting to all members and the superintendent.

Table 1: Sample Broad-based Planning Annual Agenda

Sample Broad-Based Planning Annual Agenda	
Meeting 1: Beginning of the year Prior to the grant application	• HA Coordinator present a HA program review to the committee • Committee discusses and decides focus for goals
Meeting 2: Middle of the school year	• HA Coordinator reports on the progress toward program goals.
Meeting 3: Near the end of the school year	• HA Coordinator gives a final report on the goal attainment for the year • Committee reviews data to help inform new objectives for upcoming school year and long-term district school improvement plan

Multifaceted Identification Plan

Guidance on Identification of High Ability Students

- Since July 1, 2007, Indiana schools have been required to identify students with high ability in the general intellectual and specific academic domains. Appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in core content areas, K-12, must be provided (refer to IC-20-36-2-2).
- Specific identification processes will vary according to district size, building configurations, demographics, etc. This document should support schools in utilizing best practices to fulfill state requirements for identifying high ability students for services in the general intellectual and specific academic domains. The term “high ability” is used in Indiana; in this guide sometimes the term “gifted” is used interchangeably.

IC 20-36-1-3 defines a high ability student as one who:

- ***Performs at, or shows 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; and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.

Components of a Multifaceted Identification Plan

A multifaceted plan to equitably identify students for high ability services should include the following elements:

LEA High Ability Program Mission Statement

- The mission for a high ability program should align with the overall mission of the LEA. It should specifically articulate the LEA’s beliefs about high ability students and how their educational needs will be met.
- For example, the mission should communicate the LEA’s understanding that high ability learners have unique cognitive and social needs requiring differentiated curriculum and instruction in order to actualize their potential.

Definition of a High Ability Student

- LEAs are welcome to include a definition of high ability that is broader than the state definition (for example, clearly defining additional domains of high ability identify and serve beyond those required), but the local definition must continue to include the required domains of General Intellectual and Specific Academic (IC- 20-36-2-2).

Identification Committee

- The identification committee differs from the broad-based planning committee. The identification committee should include representatives from each building level, administrator(s), and the high ability coordinator. Each of these committee members should have training in high ability identification.
- The broad-based planning committee includes representatives from all stakeholder groups including parents and students. These stakeholders should not have access to student-level data and should not be on the identification committee.

Identification Instruments

- In accordance with the state definition, the instruments used must include:
    - a measure of performance (norm-referenced achievement measure)
    - a measure of potential for performance (norm-referenced ability measure).
    - a measure of “characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, or motivation”
        - includes descriptive information gleaned through teacher and at-home rating scales.
- Universal screening with a norm-referenced measure of ability is needed to ensure all students have the opportunity to be identified as high ability. This screening should occur twice in elementary (ideally kindergarten and second grade). Additional identification screening is also recommended before each change in programming including before middle and before high school.

Selection Process

- The selection procedure should be clearly articulated such that a novice could read the process and immediately understand how students are identified.
- The grade levels where identification decisions are made must be listed. Grades kindergarten, second, and fifth are recommended; kindergarten is required as code calls for K-12 high ability differentiation.
- The percentage of students who participate in the multifaceted assessment process for identification in each grade level must be noted.
- Access and opportunity for all students must be clearly articulated and ensured.
- The parameters or guidelines for inclusion (percentiles, norms used, etc.) must be listed.
- Description of how the observation of characteristics of gifts, talents, motivation, and interests (qualitative data) is collected and ensured to be objective.

Appeals Process

- Each corporation should develop a formal appeals process for parents who would like the district to reconsider their child for identification for high ability services.
- The appeals process should specify a window of time (for example, three weeks) in which requests for appeals will be considered.
- The corporation should develop a form to be completed by parents who wish to appeal their child's placement, which requires justification of invalid assessment results.
- The corporation should consider any additional relevant qualitative data.
- The corporation should administer alternative norm-referenced measures of ability and/or achievement at no expense to the family, provided there is sufficient evidence that prior testing was not reflective of the child's ability.
- A committee of personnel with training in high ability education should review the additional data and render a decision on final identification and placement for the student.

Exit Procedure

- Each district should develop a formal exit procedure to remove students from the high ability program who are no longer benefiting from services. This exit procedure should be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
- An initial meeting should take place with the high ability teacher, coordinator, parents/guardians, and (if appropriate) the student.
- At the initial meeting, the child's progress to date and concerns over performance should be documented. Interventions should be developed and agreed upon by all parties.
- Interventions should be put into place with fidelity for no less than one grading period.
- Upon completion of the next grading period, a second meeting should be held during which time the child's progress under the interventions should be evaluated, and future placement should be determined.
- Compliance, attitude, and behavioral concerns are not reasons to initiate exit from the program, as these issues are not likely to resolve simply removing high ability services.
- The goal is to find the appropriate placement and services so that the student is appropriately challenged at all stages of development throughout K-12.

Domains for Identification and Services

Required Domain: "High Ability – Language Arts"

- A high ability language arts student (HA-LA) should have this designation on their STN if the child performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and whose educational needs and/or individual academic growth cannot be met through typical grade level curriculum and/or instruction in language arts.

Three possible pathways for being identified in language arts:

1. **Potential/Aptitude:**
    a. Performed at or above the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on a norm-referenced test of verbal reasoning ability (a list of approved aptitude assessments are included in the next section).
2. **Performance/Achievement:**
    a. Performed at or above the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on both the Reading and Language Arts subtests of a standardized norm-referenced achievement test (a list of approved achievement assessments are included in the next section).
3. **Exhibiting characteristics of exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests:**
    a. Performed within the standard error of measure of the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') in either aptitude - the norm-referenced measure of verbal reasoning ability or achievement - the norm-referenced measure of achievement in language arts; **and**
    b. Demonstrated outstanding characteristics of gifts, talents, motivations, or interests according to the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on a qualitative measure of assessment specific to language arts such as: rating or observation scales or performance assessment (examples of qualitative assessments are included in the next section).

Required Domain: "High Ability – Math"

- A high ability math student (HA-Math) should have this designation on their STN if the child performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and whose educational needs and/or individual academic growth cannot be met through typical grade level curriculum and/or instruction in math.

Three possible pathways for being identified in math:

1. **Potential/Aptitude:**
    a. Performed at or above the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on a norm-referenced test of quantitative reasoning ability OR a composite of BOTH quantitative and non-verbal reasoning (a list of approved aptitude assessments is included in the next section).
2. **Performance/Achievement:**
    a. Performed at or above the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on the math portion of a standardized norm-referenced achievement test (examples of achievement assessments are included in the next section).
3. **Exhibiting characteristics of exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests:**
    a. Performed within the standard error of measure of the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on the norm-referenced measure of math ability OR the composite of both quantitative and non-verbal reasoning OR the norm-referenced measure of achievement in math; **and**
    b. Demonstrated outstanding characteristics of gifts, talents, motivations, or interests according to the parameter determined by the LEA (using local norms whenever possible to indicate 'outstanding in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment') on a qualitative measure of assessment specific to math such as: rating or observation scales or performance assessment (examples of qualitative assessments are included in the next section).

Required Domain: "High Ability – General Intellectual"

- A high ability – general intellectual student performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and whose educational needs and/or individual academic growth cannot be met through typical grade level local core curriculum and/or instruction in both language arts and math.
    - A student should have the "High Ability – General Intellectual" designation on the STN if the child has met the criteria to be identified for both language arts and math.

Optional Domain: "Other"

- In addition to the domains of General Intellectual and Specific Academic, state law also includes the domains of:
    - Technical and Practical Arts
    - Visual and Performing Arts
    - Creativity
    - Interpersonal.
- It is **optional** for LEAs to provide identification and services in these additional domains. The pathways for identification in these areas will vary depending on the available measures of aptitude, performance, and outstanding characteristics in each domain.

Selection and Use of Quantitative Measures

- A norm-referenced test is used to determine an individual's status with respect to the performance of other individuals on that test.
- Norm-referenced tests are appropriate for identification of high ability students since they compare students to others taking the same test.
    - A "norm" group is the large number of examinees who have taken a particular test and whose scores form the basis of the norms reported in the testing manual.
    - The most inclusive set of norms is recommended.
        - Local norms align with the definition of high ability in Indiana and ensure the local identification of students who perform or show the potential to perform at an outstanding level in comparison to peers of the same age, experience, or environment.
        - High achieving school districts may need to use national norms in order to appropriately identify and compare students to peers of the same age.

    - At every level of test usage, it is important to match the scope of the test with the purpose that the test is supposed to perform.

- Criterion-referenced achievement tests are used to determine the individual's mastery of specific skills or knowledge.
    - Assessment of grade level standards
    - Exhibit limited utility in identifying high ability students
        - Commonly do not provide opportunity to demonstrate advanced abilities.
        - Commonly do not show performance in comparison to others.
        - Grade level achievement tests often do not have a high enough ceiling to accurately show how far a student can achieve.
- Non-verbal measures should not be used as a stand-alone measure of general intellectual ability. However, these can be effective as part of a multifaceted identification process for English Language Learners, as long as appropriate modifications are made according to the testing system instructions.
    - Strong non-verbal scores alone are not predictive of achievement in math or language arts.
    - Non-verbal scores, only used in conjunction with quantitative scores, can add to the prediction of performance in math.
- Always use the most recent test edition available.
- Achievement measures should not be used as screeners for determining the administration of full-battery ability measures.

Table 2: Measures of Ability/Potential

Measures of Ability/Potential (Norm-referenced assessment must measure verbal and quantitative reasoning)				
Test	**Grades**	**Verbal**	**Quantitative**	**Nonverbal**
Cognitive Abilities Test (full CogAT)	K-12	☑	☑	☑
InView	2-12	☑	☑	☐
Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT)	3-12	☑	☑	☑
Naglieri General Abilities Tests	K-9	☑	☑	☑
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)	1-11	☑	☑	☑
Woodcock-Johnson III Normative Update Test of Cognitive Abilities	K-12	☑	☑	☑
Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Second Ed. (KABC-II)	K-12	☑	☑	☑
Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test	K-12	☑	☑	☑
Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students (TOMAGS-2)	**Math Only 1-6**			
Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students (TOMAGS-3)	**Math Only 2-12**			
Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT)	**Math Only K-12**			

Table 3: Measures of Achievement/Performance

Measures of Achievement/Performance					
Test	**Grades**	**Reading**	**Math**	**Science**	**Social Studies**
ILEARN Checkpoints & Summative	3-8	☑	☑	☐	☐
	4, 6, HS	☐	☐	☑	☐
	5, HS	☐	☐	☐	☑
IXL	K-8	☑	☑	☐	☐
Northwest Evaluation Association Measure of Academic Progress (NWEA-MAP)	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
	2-12	☐	☐	☑	☐
Iowa Assessments (formerly ITBS)	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
iReady Inform Curriculum Associates	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
ExactPath	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
Terra Nova	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
	1-12	☐	☐	☑	☑
Stanford Achievement Test (SAT10)	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
	3-12	☐	☐	☑	☑
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test	K-8	☑	☐	☐	☐
Woodcock-Johnson III NU Tests of Achievement	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement	K-12	☑	☑	☐	☐

Selection and Use of Qualitative Measures

- The instrument needs to match the definition of high ability used by the corporation. For example, when identifying high ability in math, the data gathered should reflect math tasks and behaviors.
- The instrument should add information useful for making programming decisions. It is best used as supporting evidence when students' test scores are "on the bubble" (falling just short of the guideline for inclusion and within the Standard Error of Measure). The additional evidence provided by qualitative data will assist in determining the best placement for the student.
- The personnel completing and/or interpreting these instruments need to be trained in their use. If not trained, teachers often overlook qualified students for high ability programs.
- When using portfolios, work samples should include indicators of best performance as well as student reflections on their work. Rubrics for evaluating the portfolio should be determined in advance, and raters need to be trained in order to develop reliable evaluations.
- Because many qualitative measures are not norm-referenced, school corporations may want to develop their own local norms.

Table 4: Qualitative Measures of Gifted Characteristics

Measures of Gifted Characteristics	
Test	**Grades**
Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)	K-12
Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI)	K-8
Renzulli Scales Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students	3-12
USTARS Plus, Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS)	K-3

Identification and Family Notification

The purpose of identification is to provide the appropriate academic placement or services needed for the student. Students identified as high ability in Indiana must be provided appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction. In the primary grades, some students enter school with strong school readiness having had many opportunities to learn. These students may already be reading and be comfortable in a school environment. Later, other students with high ability may catch up in their school related skills and even surpass those with an early advantage. Development plays an important role at the primary level. Motivation and hard work can also propel student achievement for those with high ability. Therefore, students must be evaluated at strategic points in their development in order to make the most appropriate academic placement decisions for those who "perform at or show the potential for performing at an outstanding level when compared with others of the same age, experience, or environment."

Notification to families should emphasize meeting the academic needs of the child and not the label of high ability. Appeals and exit decisions should be based upon assessing the academic fit of the child's capabilities and the curriculum and instruction provided.

Sample Family Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

It has been a pleasure working with [Student Name] during these first months of kindergarten. Based on the information gathered through our identification process, we believe [Student Name] may benefit from more advanced content and instruction than what is typically provided in the regular classroom.

As a result, we are recommending that [Student Name] receive advanced curriculum and instruction in [insert math, language arts, or both] during the next school year.

Please keep in mind that cognitive growth is not always consistent, and placement in high ability programming is not permanent. All students are systematically re-evaluated for instructional placement in second and fifth grade, and placement decisions may change as students' learning profiles develop.

If you would like the district to reconsider your child's placement decision, you may submit an appeal within three weeks of receiving this letter. The appeals process includes:

- Completing an appeals form with your reason for reconsideration.
- Review of additional qualitative data and, if appropriate, administration of alternative assessments at no cost to your family.
- A trained committee will review all data and make a final decision.

To request an appeal form or learn more, please contact:

[High Ability Coordinator Name]
Phone: [Insert Phone] | Email: [Insert Email]

If at any point it appears that [Student Name] is not benefiting from high ability services, an exit process will be initiated:

- An initial meeting with the high ability teacher, coordinator, parents, and (if appropriate) the student to review progress and concerns.
- Development of interventions to support success, implemented for at least one grading period.
- A follow-up meeting to review progress and determine future placement.

Please note that behavioral concerns alone are not reasons for exit; our goal is to ensure appropriate challenge and support for every student.

We look forward to partnering with you to support [Student Name]'s academic growth. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Curriculum and Instruction Plan

The Curriculum and Instruction Plan is constructed at the district level and details specifically how the curriculum and instruction are differentiated in breadth, depth of content, and materials used to meet the needs of one or more high ability students within each grade level. At a minimum, it should include English Language Arts and Math, grades K-12. It shows how the curriculum for high ability students is differentiated from the general education curriculum according to the elements of high ability education listed below. The district plan should include a Scope and Sequence or Curriculum Map to show the K-12 articulation of the curriculum for high ability students. When looking at the plan, an interested party could see what was provided for students with high ability at each grade level and how the learning progresses in a purposeful way from K-12. Regardless of the particular format used, the plan should demonstrate clearly the inclusion of the elements listed below.

- Content is conceptually focused and is both accelerated and enriched.
- Materials used are written at levels of complexity appropriate for students with high ability.
- Standards include many that are above grade level.
- Instruction is focused on the development of critical and creative thinking
- Students are given opportunities to pursue individual areas of choice.
- Assessments call for demonstration of advanced understanding and the skills of synthesis, analysis, and evaluation.
- Careful attention has been paid to vertical articulation.

Program Models and Service Plans

High ability learners require intentional, research-based program models and service plans that align instruction with their advanced readiness, rapid learning pace, and need for sustained intellectual challenge. Research consistently demonstrates that high ability students learn at significantly faster rates than their age-peers and often master grade level curriculum in a fraction of the instructional time when content repetition is reduced through curriculum compacting.[8] Without appropriate adjustments to pace and complexity, these students are at risk for underachievement, disengagement, and loss of academic growth.

Effective service plans include differentiated curriculum that increases depth, complexity, and abstraction within the general education classroom, ensuring continuous progress beyond grade level standards.[9] Opportunities for independent study, inquiry-based learning, and problem-based experiences further support high ability learners by fostering autonomy, creativity, and advanced problem-solving skills while allowing students to apply learning at an appropriately challenging level.[10] Collectively, these evidence-based practices provide an equitable framework for meeting the academic and affective needs of high ability students and serve as the foundation for high-quality

programming across school settings.

When choosing appropriate service options for students it is important to include acceleration. This ensures that instruction is aligned with students' demonstrated readiness and rate of learning. Acceleration may involve early entrance, grade skipping or subject-level advancement and is widely supported by research as one of the most effective interventions for advanced learners. The Integrated Acceleration System (IAS) provides a structured, research-informed process for evaluating multiple academic, social, and developmental factors to determine student readiness for various forms of acceleration.[1] Accelerated students demonstrate strong academic outcomes without negative social or emotional effects and often perform as well or better than older peers in advanced placements.[5] By incorporating acceleration within a continuum of services, schools can respond appropriately to the needs of students who master curriculum at an accelerated pace and require advanced learning opportunities to sustain growth and engagement.

Service plans, or interventions, should only be considered as part of the comprehensive programming, not *in lieu of* formal high ability programs. The strategies and interventions benefit all students at all levels; high ability students need them at higher levels to engage in appropriately challenging curriculum and instruction.[7]

Elements of High Ability Differentiated Instructional Strategies

- Curriculum/Content Concepts:
    - Focuses on larger concept with interdisciplinary connections
    - Provides acceleration and/or curriculum compacting when appropriate
    - Meets above grade standards to include advanced reading and vocabulary
    - Develops habits of experts through use of primary sources
    - Encourages greater depth and complexity of instruction
- Assessments/Products:
    - Uses models to develop critical and creative thinking, as well as developing communication and collaboration skills:
        - Paul's Reasoning Model
        - Creative Problem Solving
        - Problem Based Learning
        - Socratic Seminars
        - Debate

- Instructional Practices:
    - Demonstrates higher level thinking through critical and creative thinking.
    - Provides opportunities for student choice and demonstration of communication skills in multiple formats:
        - Choice boards
        - Research-based projects
        - Extension menus
    - Demonstrates metacognition (planning/organizing, monitoring, evaluating)

When planning appropriate programming and services for students of high ability, corporations must consider:

- How high ability students will be grouped, organized, or provided with individual plans for the most effective learning;
- What training the teacher has or needs to most effectively teach and plan learning experiences for students of high ability;
- What content, standards, and pace are most appropriate for these students; and
- What instructional models, strategies, projects, and products are most appropriate for promoting academic growth?

One specific type of programming for students of high ability cannot meet the needs of the many levels and types of talents and abilities evidenced by these students, K-12. Therefore, a variety of services and programming options are needed and described below.

Table 5: Program models and considerations

Program Models and Considerations		
Elementary (K-5)		
Model	**Benefits**	**Considerations**
Self-Contained Classroom	• Easy tracking of services • Offers a structured and consistent environment • Allows for better attention to affective needs and instruction of	• How can we create a continuum of services that builds on itself through the grades? Elementary and secondary services should be vertically aligned.

	high ability students ● High challenge and peer match	● Does the intensity and rigor of instruction match the needs of students? ● How will the self-contained classroom be differentiated by instructional needs within the classroom? Consider pacing, content, processing, and strategies.
Cluster or Flexible Grouping Between Class Grouping	● Provides opportunities for students to work with both intellectual and academic peers throughout the day. ● Reduces the range of learners in an academic setting to enhance teacher efficacy. ● Promotes learner collaboration. ● Minimal financial cost to school districts. ● Avoids permanent placement of students and allows instruction in a single domain.	● How are all students placed across the grade level to avoid a wide range of learners? ● What measures are in place to ensure tracking of high ability students? ● How will these groupings be communicated to teachers and families? ● How will classroom instruction be differentiated to reflect the accelerated and advanced learning abilities of the high ability students?
Pull-Out Services	● Allows for easier differentiation of curriculum. ● Keeps students in age-peer classrooms. ● Provides focused high ability support without full schedule separation. ● Focuses on developing critical creative, metacognitive, and problem-solving skills beyond what is provided in the general education classroom.	● How will these services be consistent across grade levels and the district? ● How will expectations be communicated with the teacher providing services? ● How will services be scheduled to avoid a disruption to the general education classroom or to the student's overall learnin?.
Push-in Services (co-teaching)	● Reduces the student-to-teacher ratio. ● Maximizes available instructional time. ● Promotes the generalization of skills in the environment in which	● How will you reduce the classroom distractions during small group instruction? ● Plan to collaborate with the classroom teacher-both are considered specialists.

	the skills are used. ● Provides opportunities for students to collaborate with age-peers. ● Allows for focused, small group instruction.	● What differentiated instructional materials will need to be available? ● How will services be scheduled to maximize instruction and service all identified students?

Table 6: Decision Making Process for Services-Elementary (Grades K-5)

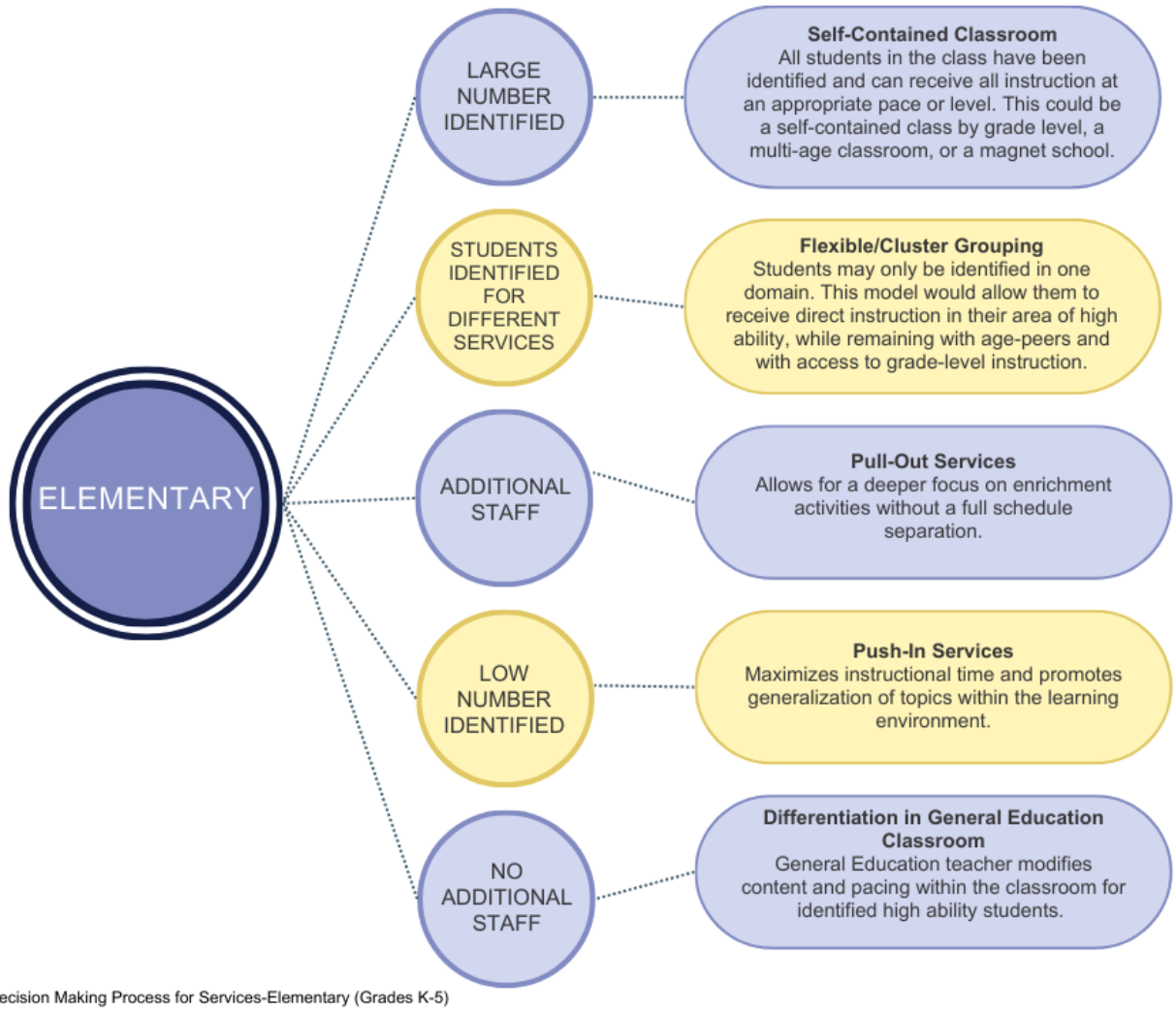


Table 6: Decision Making Process for Services-Elementary (Grades K-5)

Table 7: Decision Making Process for Services-Middle School (Grades 6-8)

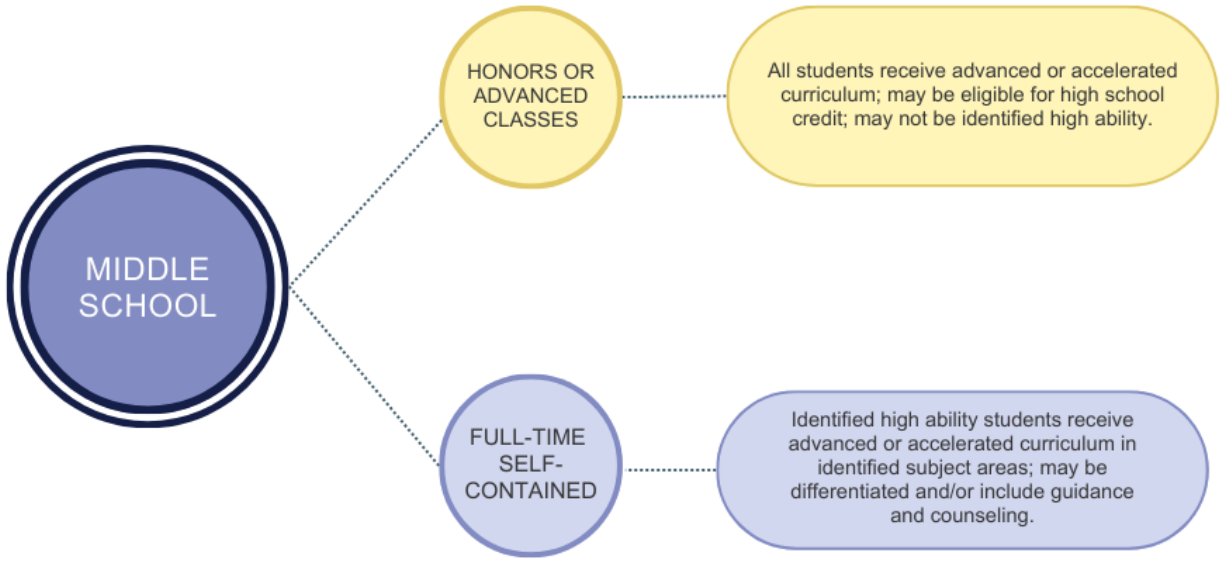


Table 7: Decision Making Process for Services-Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Table 8: Decision Making Process for Services-High School (Grades 9-12)

Note: any student may enroll in advanced courses in high school as long as they have met the course prerequisites.

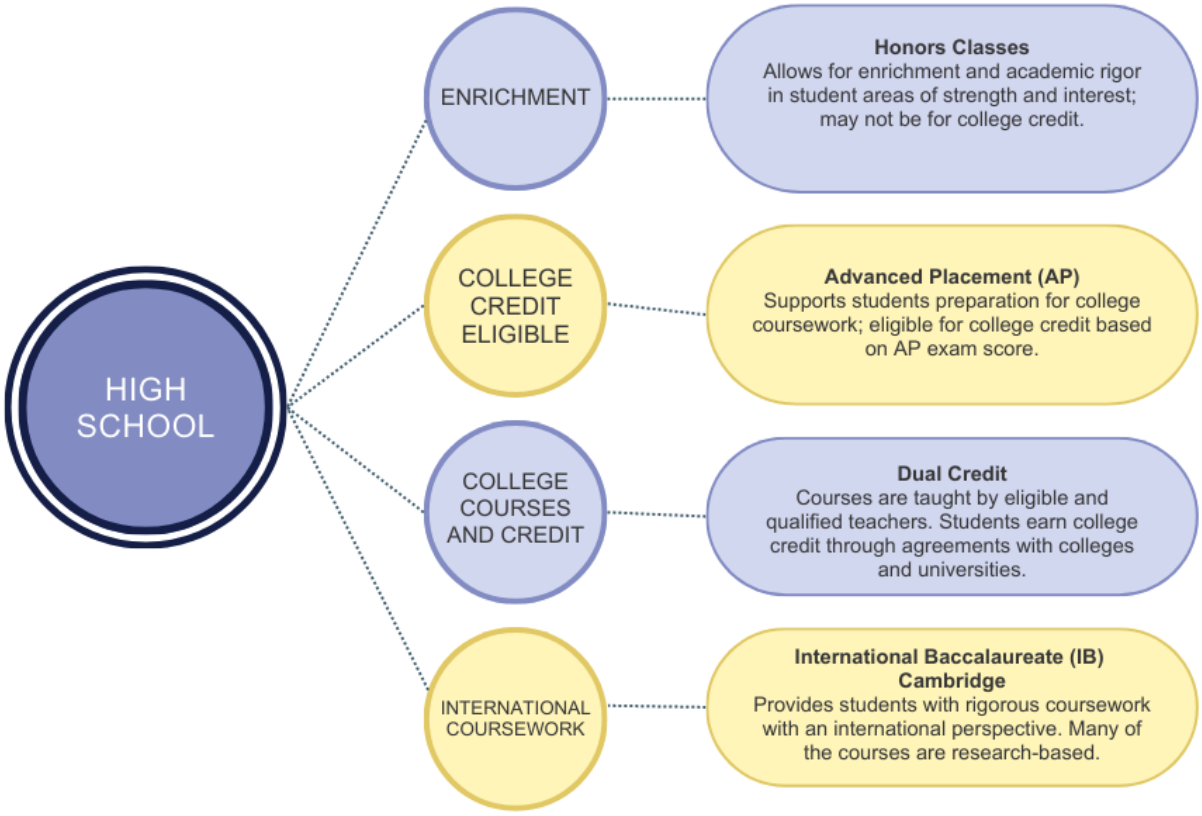


Table 8: Decision Making Process for Services-High School (Grades 9-12)

Counseling and Guidance Plan

Each child, regardless of ability, has his/her own personality characteristics that require certain well-being needs to be met. In addition, each child has needs that arise because of the situation or environment in which he/she lives. Children with high abilities, however, may have additional affective needs resulting from their increased capacity to think beyond their years, greater intensity in response, combinations of unique interests, personality characteristics, and conflicts that are different from those of their age level peers. It is important to provide a systematic and differentiated program of affective services, K-12, for these students; this proactive approach will facilitate development of their high potential and promote their positive adjustment.

This differentiated affective curriculum plan should include the following:

- A K-12 scope and sequence documenting coverage of common well-being issues faced by high ability students
- Description of how the high ability affective curriculum interfaces with the Indiana guidance and counseling standards
- The plan will be most effective if the construction is a collaborative effort among the high ability coordinator, teachers of gifted students, and school counselors.

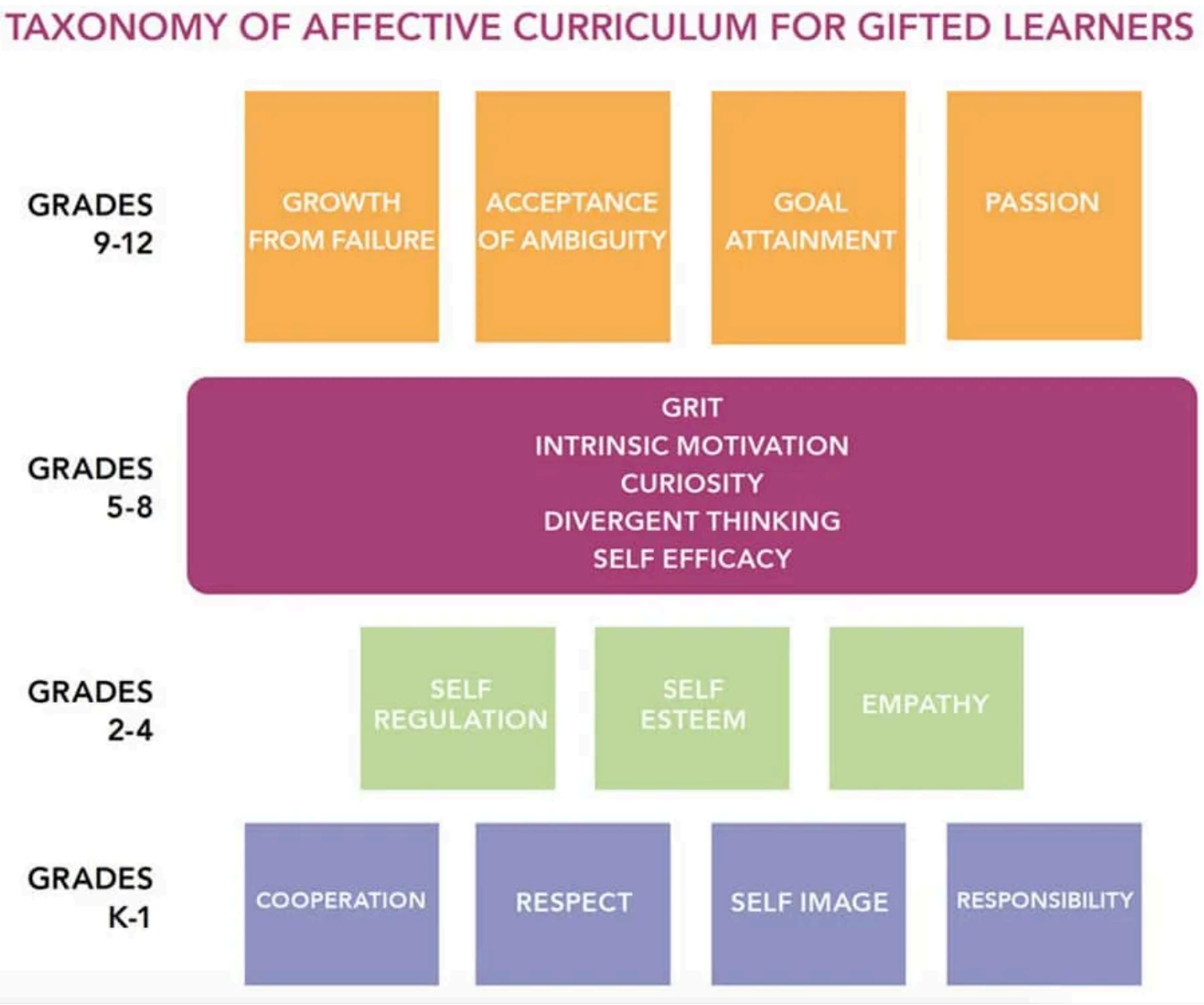
Table 9: Topics covering the affective characteristics of high ability learners

Topics covering the affective characteristics of high ability learners	
Overexcitabilities	High ability students may have “intensities” that can manifest themselves in one or more areas: psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginational, and emotional.[6] Students may exhibit greater sensitivity to their environment (loud noises, bright lights, greater allergies, appreciation for music or art, etc.). They may also exhibit heightened emotional sensitivity in their reaction to criticism, perfectionism, empathy, and attachment.
Asynchronous Development	Physical, cognitive, and emotional development may be at different places within the same child. For example, a six-year-old child may think like a nine-year-old and wants to draw like a nine-year-old, but his motor coordination is age appropriate. A five-year-old girl may be reading at an eighth grade level, but she is at grade level in math.[4] Adults, accustomed to advanced verbal reasoning from the child, may fail to understand emotional outbursts more typical of his/her chronological age. In addition, children may find it difficult to communicate with peers who are considerably below their intellectual level, even if they are at the same level emotionally.

Perfectionism	High ability students may place unrealistically high standards for performance on themselves which can result in anxiety, frustration, or self-blame for less-than-perfect performance. Likewise, students may feel as though others (parents and teachers) have unrealistically high expectations resulting in fear of failure, avoidance of challenges, depression, and connection of self-worth to performance.
Self-esteem/identity Issues	High ability students may experience difficulty constructing their identities, which may lead to lowered self-esteem. This is largely due to hitting adolescent milestones earlier than same-age peers. If a child feels unsupported and unaccepted at school, they may develop low self-esteem which can contribute to depression and anxiety. Supporting the intellectual and social needs of high ability learners promotes a healthier sense of self.[3]
Bullying	High ability children may be targets for bullying, and they may also be bullies themselves. Common characteristics of high ability learners may make them vulnerable to victimization. Traits such as high self-expectations, asynchronous development, sensitivity, and a strong sense of social justice can influence how a high ability child reacts to bullying, but can also lead to resilience and empower others.[4]
Social Skills	Because of advanced vocabulary, increased intensity, and/or different interests, high ability children may experience difficulty interacting socially with their same-age peers. Their difficulty in making friends with same-age peers most likely is a result of not having like-minded peers whom they can form a connection with.[3] High ability students may appear to be socially isolating, but it may be introversion. He or she may be more comfortable with one or two close friends, playing alone, or using books or pets for companionship.[4]
Study Habits	High ability students often lack good study skills, as they frequently can earn solid grades without effort. In later grades, when faced with challenging coursework for the first time, high ability students lacking study skills may avoid the challenge, fail, or experience undue stress and self-doubt from lack of preparation.
Leadership Skills	High ability students often seek out opportunities for leadership as they have the capacity to lead change and innovation. It is essential that leadership development is addressed because it provides an added challenge and areas for growth beyond academics. It requires advanced problem-solving skills, critical

	thinking, creativity, strategic planning, and strong communication skills.
College and Career Readiness	High ability learners are often multi-talented, and this can cause more difficulty in making career decisions. Special care should be taken to ensure students have the opportunity to explore career possibilities and to assist them in aligning these possibilities with interests and abilities. Assistance is often needed to recognize where interests and abilities might be used in college planning and career decision-making. Such assistance many include: ● Mentoring opportunities ● Career shadowing opportunities ● Pre-college opportunities, such as Advanced Placement or academic summer programs/camps in the college setting ● Knowledge of college selection and application process ● Knowledge of financial assistance opportunities

Table 10: Taxonomy of Affective Curriculum for Gifted Learners[2]



Cavilla's taxonomy of affective curriculum begins in kindergarten with basic social skills. As students progress through their school career, the taxonomy adapts with the changing needs of gifted learners.

Strategies to use in Addressing Affective Issues for High Ability Students

Discussion Groups

- It is important that general guidance discussions at all levels include such topics as respecting others, conflict resolution, managing stress, setting goals, being a good friend, valuing community service, developmentally appropriate concerns, etc. These are not specific to the needs of children with high abilities, but they help all children get along with others and develop in a healthy way. However, it will be important for there to be opportunities for high ability students to be together and discuss those issues that specifically relate to being different from others.

Guided Reading or Guided Viewing

- Guided reading, also referred to as Bibliotherapy, is the use of reading specific, targeted selections to promote personal growth and development. Guided viewing is a natural extension to guided reading, and it has several more advantages to offer: many movies targeting adolescents portray gifted characters; movies may be more appealing to visual learners than books; and movies are a central part of American culture, so students may be more receptive to discussing topics through films.

Role Playing

- With this strategy, groups or pairs of students are given scenarios dealing with an affective problem in which they assume the roles of the characters, act out the scenario, and devise a solution to the problem.

Journal Writing

- School counselors or teachers of high ability students may want to consider journal writing as a strategy for unpacking these students' thoughts and feelings on affective issues. Corresponding back and forth through journal prompts can be a way to open up channels of communication between high ability students and their teachers or counselors regarding sensitive topics.

Concept Mapping

- Mind maps, also called concept maps, can be an effective strategy to facilitate high ability students' comprehension of well-being issues as well as a means through which they can brainstorm solutions to problems.

Mode Switching

- Mode switching involves using multiple methods of representation to explore topics and facilitate understanding. Such methods may include figures, symbols, words, musical interpretations, feelings, or even actions. This transformative process is effective because it requires deeper mental processing of information that leads to better understanding and synthesis of information.

Professional Development Plan

When designing professional development related to students with high ability, all facets of the program, as well as all individuals with a vested interest in the program, need to be targeted. A well-designed plan for professional development will propel the district services forward.

Who needs professional development?

- Corporation High Ability Coordinator
- Building principals and other administrators
- Teachers assigned to work with students with high ability
- Counselors
- Parents/Guardians
- All other teachers

The Corporation High Ability Coordinator, building principals and other administrators need professional development since they have the following responsibilities related to students with high ability:

- Understanding the elements of a well-designed identification system that is fair, reliable, and consistent with Indiana Code
- Aligning the implementation of student services with best practice and local needs
- Facilitating delivery of services for students, such as scheduling classes to facilitate differentiation of student instruction through grouping and collaboration
- Providing in-depth training opportunities in gifted education to maximize both teacher and student performance
- Addressing parental concerns for the appropriate academic challenge for individual students

All coordinators and teachers of high ability students need to demonstrate their understanding of the characteristics and needs of gifted children, well-designed identification practices and procedures consistent with state law, how to structure services for students with high ability that will demonstrate program effectiveness, and how to develop and assess curriculum and instruction that is appropriately differentiated for students with high ability.

Classroom teachers who are not specifically assigned to high ability students need a basic understanding of the characteristics and possible behavioral manifestations of students who are gifted as well as how students in the district are identified for services. This will allow them to identify students who may have been overlooked in the identification process.

Parents/guardians of students who are identified as having high ability need professional development. They need to know how and why students are identified and the programs and services available to them in the district. They need to know the characteristics and needs of these students, as well as how to facilitate the development of the advanced potential. They also need to know common issues and how to assist their child.

Professional Development Resources

- Indiana Learning Lab
- Keep Indiana Learning
- National Association for Gifted Children
- Indiana Association for the Gifted
- National Math Stars
- Davidson Institute
- Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted
- With Understanding Comes Calm

Licensure Programs

The Coordinator and the K-12 teachers who are assigned to provide core content instruction for students identified as having high ability will need in-depth knowledge of high ability education. These individuals should have or be working toward obtaining an Indiana High Ability License. This license is added to an existing teaching license. Professionals seeking this license need to take the coursework.

- Ball State University
- IU Southeast

Program Evaluation Plan

Program evaluation is a critical component of effective high ability education. It provides systematic evidence on how well high ability services are meeting their intended goals and supporting student learning and growth.

State law calls for school districts to provide an annual report to IDOE with results of the programs for which the grant is used, including student general assessment results, program effectiveness, and student achievement. However, program evaluation is not simply a compliance requirement, but a tool for program improvement, accountability, and decision-making. Educators are able to identify strengths and gaps in instructional practice and are able to base adjustments on data rather than intuition alone.

Student achievement and growth metrics, alongside qualitative indicators (student engagement) are essential for gauging program quality and impact and reveal whether students are being appropriately challenged and progressing academically as a result of differentiated programming.

Indicators of Program Effectiveness through Student Achievement

- At the elementary level and all levels, program effectiveness would be demonstrated by high ability students' performance on achievement measures, with an emphasis on growth data. Ideally, there should be accountability for each child's individual achievement growth which would reveal the need for accountability for academic growth for all students, even those who were proficient on grade level standards at the beginning of the school year.
- At the middle school level, program effectiveness can be assessed by achievement tests that note growth and are norm-referenced, with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge above grade level. In addition, it can be noted how many middle school students receive high school credit for math courses or participation rates and results from academic competitions such as History Day and Science Fair at the local, state, and national levels.
- At the high school level, success in advanced courses including AP, Cambridge International, and IB programs could be considered as well as performance on measures such as PSAT.

Indicators of Program Effectiveness at Classroom, Building, and District Levels

- Program effectiveness can also be examined through the lens of program accountability at the classroom, building, and district levels. In the classroom, are there opportunities for students to achieve above grade level? Are classroom activities and assessments differentiated for students who can achieve at advanced levels?
- At the building level, are students grouped with others of high ability and teachers effective in differentiating to meet the needs of high ability students? Are measures of growth for high ability students documented, and is professional development in high ability education provided or supported for teachers?
- Finally, at the district level, policies can be reviewed to determine what is in place with

regard to identification and services for gifted learners. The curriculum can also be reviewed for vertical articulation, K-12, that includes both accelerated and enriched opportunities for high ability learners.

High Ability Program Evaluation

Use the following rubric to evaluate the required components of a High Ability Program. Score each of the subcategories of recommended best practices using the 1-4 scale. Average the subcategory scores to determine the overall rating for each of the High Ability Program components.

Table 11: High Ability Program Evaluation

High Ability Program (HAP) Plan Template 2026-2027	
Program Evaluation Rating	
Complete this evaluation of your current high ability program. Use the below scoring guide to rate each section of your program. Use this information to guide your SMART goal development.	
Implementation Ratings	
4 = Implemented successfully	**Programmatic**
3 = Implemented and ready to enhance	**Professional Development**
2 = Implemented but needs improvement	**Program Evaluation**
1 = Not yet implemented	**SMART Goal Planning Guide**
Programmatic	
A norm-referenced measure of ability/potential is used in each of the areas for which program services are offered.	
A norm-referenced adaptive measure of achievement/performance is used in each of the areas for which program services are offered.	
A qualitative indicator of achievement or aptitude is used in each of the areas for which program services are offered.	
Students are universally screened for identification at all grade levels for which services are provided, and the formal multifaceted identification process is repeated at targeted grade levels.	
The appeals process is publicized and allows for students to take alternative ability, achievement, and/or qualitative measures at no cost to the family.	
The exit procedure includes a period of intervention no less than one grading period to determine if the student, with support, can be successful in the program.	

There is a written curriculum specific to high ability students in core content areas (and other content areas as served by the district) that is vertically aligned for all grades K-12.			
Curriculum, instruction, and learning experiences are clearly differentiated in depth and complexity through enrichment, acceleration, and curriculum compacting.			
High ability students are grouped together for core instruction in their area(s) of talent.			
Policies are in place to allow early entrance, grade skipping, subject skipping, early credit, and early graduation according to individual student need.			
A written, differentiated, affective curriculum that addresses the needs of high ability students is available and used by teachers and counselors.			
Documentation of differentiated college and career guidance for high ability students is available (e.g. field trips, independent study projects, speakers, or shadowing experiences pertaining to college exploration).			
		Programmatic Average Rating	

Professional Development			
Personnel working with high ability students have or are pursuing licensure in gifted education.			
Personnel working with high ability students are provided with opportunities for continuing professional development in the area of high ability education.			
Personnel working with high ability students are coached on instructional best practice.			
Administrators are trained on how to use a multifaceted identification process that ensures access for all students, especially those typically underrepresented.			
Families of high ability students are provided with learning opportunities about the characteristics and needs of high ability students.			
Personnel receive training in the affective characteristics and asynchronous development of high ability students.			
School counselors are provided opportunities for continuing professional development in the area of high ability student characteristics and needs.			
		Professional Development Average Rating	
Program Evaluation			
The committee must have stakeholders representing the school and community (e.g. teachers, administrators, counselors, parents/gu, students, community members, industry partners).			
The committee meets periodically to review the local plan for high ability students. *Minimum one annual meeting required. Three annual meetings recommended.			

The committee designs and monitors the continuous development and implementation of the levels of services of the program.			
Services are constructed, developed, and regularly reviewed by a high ability specific, district-wide, stakeholder group to ensure the broad range of individual high ability needs are met.			
There is a written mission statement related to high ability students with articulated goals and objectives of the services provided for the students at each grade level and in each area served.			
All elements of the high ability program are periodically reviewed by individuals who are knowledgeable about high ability learners and competent in the evaluation process in order to continue program improvement.			
The results of the program evaluation are presented to the local school board, the stakeholder group, and accessible to all constituencies of the program.			
Student growth and achievement is regularly measured and evaluated using multiple strategies to ensure consistent and sustained progress to include: 1) High school credit opportunities for middle school students 2) Monitoring the percentage of HA students earning the Enrollment Honors Plus seal			
		Program Evaluation Average Rating	

Grants and Reports

High ability funds come from a designated line item in the state budget. All public school corporations and charter schools are eligible for the non-competitive grant. Grants are based on a formula and determined by the IDOE.

- DOE-AD Collection – May-June
    - The DOE-AD is the data collection in which high ability students are reported and counted. It is important to find out who enters this data for the corporation. The high ability coordinator should work closely with the person(s) so that the appropriate students are designated each year.
- In order to be designated on the DOE-AD as an identified high ability student, a student:
    - Must have been identified by the corporation multifaceted student assessment plan **AND**
    - Must have been eligible to receive high ability services during the current school year.

The fiscal year for high ability grant funds is July 1 through June 30 of the current school year. For example, for the 2026-27 school year, the fiscal year is July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, Fiscal Year (FY) 27. Please note that all reimbursement requests need to be made before August 28, 2027, to allow time for processing.

All coordinators receive email communications from the IDOE High Ability Specialist with a link to the online application, instructions for completing the grant, and the due date.

High Ability Program Grant

The high ability grant application collects basic contact information, goals for the current fiscal year, and a proposed budget/use of funds. The link and detailed instructions explaining grant procedures is emailed to all High Ability Coordinators and Superintendents in May. The assurance page requires e-signatures from both the Superintendent and High Ability Coordinator.

Grant proposals are reviewed in the order in which they are received. Some email exchanges may be needed during review.

Districts will be notified when the grants are approved, with the aim of all approvals by mid-October.

Grant Budget Planning

- Review the high ability requirements and the district's data to determine where to construct goals to best utilize the high ability grant for district-wide program improvement.
- Each corporation will be expected to write at least three goals, including a

measurable objective and the necessary steps for goal attainment. Goals should align with each of the following categories: programmatic, professional development, and student achievement.

- When contemplating whether or not an expenditure is allowable, ask:
    - Is it **beyond the general education expense** and specific to high ability?
    - What is the impact factor for the overall program?
    - Aim for high impact: Identification Instruments = High Impact,
    - A unit-specific: educational toy for use in one grade level = Low Impact

Table 12: Examples of Allowable Expenditures

Examples of Allowable Expenditures	
Programmatic	
Identification	● Instruments, answer sheets, scoring services, training fees for instruments designed for use by high ability learners ● Identification coursework ● Technical assistance from high ability experts with experience with Indiana Code requirements
Curriculum and Instruction	● Teacher salary ● Core content materials, including digital materials and technology, specifically designed for high ability students ● Class novel sets to accompany high ability specific curricular units ● Student materials and fees for academic competitions targeting high ability learners
Guidance and Counseling	● Development of a guidance and counseling plan
Professional Development	
Training and Certifications	● Stipends to attend summer high ability-specific professional development ● IAG Conference ● High Ability licensure for teachers and/or coordinators ● Dual credit coursework ● Online professional development

Guidance and Counseling	● Counseling workshops related to well-being needs of all students ● High ability-specific workshop registration
Program Evaluation	
	● Outside review or formal program evaluation by experts in gifted education-recommended every five years ● Annual school-level high ability program evaluations

Note: After school robotics clubs and supplies/resources for general STEM programs, activities, extracurriculars, or Makerspace locations are not permissible expenditures. Please apply for the separate ***K-12 Robotics Competition Grant*** or the ***STEM Integration Grant***.

It is not permissible to use grant funding for furniture, storage containers, basic office supplies, conferences, or workshops that are not fully specific to High Ability education, tuition and related fees for college-level courses for students other than dual credit, food for meetings, items that do not directly benefit the core content education of High Ability students, or in-house PD delivered by individuals not certified and experienced in High Ability education.

Note: Corporations may identify and serve in the “other” domains (interpersonal, visual and performing arts, practical and technical arts, creativity), but high ability funds may be used to support these areas only after identification and services for the required domains are in place.

High Ability Program Grant Final Report

The link and detailed instructions about completing the report will be emailed to all coordinators near the end of the school year. The broad-based planning committee should be included in reviewing and analyzing data to determine the district’s level of services and goal attainment, being mindful to be proactive in areas of need for the upcoming grant cycle.

Indiana Codes Related to High Ability

Indiana Code 20-36-2 Programs for High Ability Students

Sec. 1. (a) The department shall establish a state resources program using designated state resources that:

(1) supports school corporations in the development of local programs for high ability students;

(2) enables educational opportunities that encourage high ability students to reach the highest possible level at every stage of the students' development; and

(3) provides state integrated services that include the following:

(A) Information and materials resource centers.

(B) Professional development plan and programs.

(C) Research and development services.

(D) Technical assistance that includes the following:

(i) Student assessment.

(ii) Program assessment.

(iii) Program development and implementation.

(E) Support for educators pursuing professional development leading to endorsement or licensure in high ability education.

(b) In addition to the program established under subsection (a), the department shall use appropriations to provide grants to school corporations for expenditures beyond those for regular educational programs and specific to programs for high ability students under section 2 of this chapter in an amount determined by the department that is based upon a set minimum amount increased by an additional amount for each student in the program. A school that receives a grant under this subsection shall submit an annual report to the department that includes the following:

(1) The programs for which the grant is used.

(2) The results of the programs for which the grant is used, including student general assessment results, program effectiveness, or student achievement.

Sec. 2. A governing body shall develop and periodically update a local plan to provide appropriate educational experiences to high ability students in the school corporation in kindergarten through grade 12. The plan must include the following components:

(1) The establishment of a broad based planning committee that meets periodically to review the local education authority's plan for high ability students. The committee must have representatives from diverse groups representing the school and community.

(2) Student assessments that identify high ability students using multifaceted assessments to ensure that students not identified by traditional assessments because of economic disadvantage, cultural background, underachievement, or disabilities are included. The assessments must identify students with high abilities in the general intellectual domain and specific academic domains. The results of an assessment under this subdivision must be recorded with the student test number assigned to a student.

(3) Professional development.

(4) Development and implementation of local services for high ability students, including appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in the core academic areas

designated by the state board for each grade consistent with federal, state, local, and private funding sources.
(5) Evaluation of the local program for high ability students.
(6) Best practices to increase the number of participants in high ability student programs who are from racial and ethnic groups that have been underrepresented in those programs.

Indiana Administrative Code 511 IAC 6-9.1-2 Program Requirements

Sec. 2. (a) To qualify as a program for high ability students under this rule, each school corporation shall meet all of the criteria in this section.

(b) The school corporation shall develop and periodically update a level of services program to provide educational opportunities to encourage high ability students to reach the highest possible level at every stage of development.

(c) The differentiated program for high ability students must include the following:

(1) A multifaceted student assessment plan, including the following:

(A) Performance-based assessment.

(B) Potential-based assessment.

(C) Other forms of assessment.

(2) A curriculum and instructional strategies plan.

(3) A counseling and guidance plan.

(4) A systematic program assessment plan.

(5) A professional development plan.

(d) Educational experiences offered outside the school day may be used to supplement, but not to supplant, the levels of services provided for high ability students offered during the school day.

(e) The governing body shall create a broad-based planning committee to design and monitor the continuous development and implementation of the levels of services program for high ability students.

(f) The program must be approved by the governing body.

(g) The plans described in subsection (c) must be available for public inspection and filed with the department.

Advice for New Coordinators

Step One: Review district high ability program plan

- ☐ Locate the philosophy and mission statement for high ability education for the school district, K-12. (Check the district website for this.)
- ☐ Read the Indiana Code for High Ability and the Administrative Code Guidelines. These are found within the High Ability Coordinator Handbook.
- ☐ Locate the most recent high ability data for your district, as well as past performance of high ability students for short and long-term planning.
- ☐ Seek any written documentation of the district's high ability program and ensure that it is current; update it as needed.
- ☐ Find the most current high ability grant application and the previous year's final report.
- ☐ Prepare a list of questions about the identification process: committee, instruments, grade levels, timeline, appeals, and exit procedures.
- ☐ Prepare a list of questions about the services: What happens in each grade? Who are the teachers? What is the curriculum? What are the policies on early admission, grade skipping, credit in middle school, etc.?
- ☐ Prepare a list of questions about accountability: student growth, number of high ability students achieving Pass Plus, Advanced Placement scores, PSAT scores, number of high ability students with Academic Honors Diplomas or Enrollment Honors Plus seals, information for the DOE-AD report, state grant, and final report.
- ☐ Request a "Handoff "meeting with the previous coordinator (if the person is available). Ask the questions that you have prepared and what he/she saw as the strengths and the challenges.
- ☐ Request minutes of the meetings of the BBPC for the past year; consider meeting with the previous BBPC, or with specific members of that group.
- ☐ Ask if there are board policies, administrative guidelines, or district handbooks with procedures for high ability identification and program design.
- ☐ Look at previous financial records to find what professional development the faculty has had within the past five years. Solicit documentation of what specific professional development has been done and by whom.
- ☐ Find the identification protocols. Check to see if supplies are adequate for your needs.
- ☐ Look for samples of parent communications. Has there been any parent orientation/ education?
- ☐ Join IAG (check with IAG to see if your district is already a member) and register for the IAG

conference as soon as registration opens (it fills quickly).

- ☐ Develop a calendar for the year to establish timelines for various events pertaining to high ability. (e.g. IDOE offerings, grant application, identification, broad-based planning committee, parent meetings, curriculum writing, professional development, DOE - AD report, grant final report)

Step Two: Develop a plan for improvement

- ☐ Stability in the personnel assigned to lead the high ability program, implement the program, and teach the high ability students fosters growth and momentum (especially the assignment of program coordinator).
- ☐ Written policies with school board approval that become part of the district administrative code allow for consistency, sustainability, and continuity.
- ☐ Review your district's high ability data for areas needing immediate attention. Intentionally and proactively plan your high ability grant fund budget around the events and purchases necessary for goal attainment.
- ☐ Establish/update written policies and/or procedures for student identification, placement, continuation, appeals, and removal from services.
- ☐ Establish a High Ability Identification Committee of personnel knowledgeable in high ability education that meets regularly to determine eligibility, and the identification and placement of individual candidates, including transfer students.
- ☐ Verify that selected assessments for identification of high ability students are valid**,** reliable, and equitable for use with high ability students. The assessment system must include measures of both ability and achievement.
- ☐ Provide teachers, families, administrators, and school services' personnel with information regarding the characteristics of students with high abilities, their related well-being characteristic development, and associated problem behaviors.
- ☐ Report early progress in directing programs and services to the superintendent.
- ☐ Develop an advocacy plan and implementation plan with the BBPC and others.
- ☐ Provide annual professional development or support for progress toward licensure for teachers of high ability students in the area of appropriate curriculum and instruction specific to high ability learners. This is an ongoing need and is the foundation for a K-12 Curriculum Plan for High Ability Students.

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