

High Ability and Honors Handbook



MSD Washington Township Schools

2024-2025



EQUITABLE

AFFIRMING

RESPONSIVE

MSDWT provides quality education in award winning schools built on a foundation of outstanding educators, administrators, school board members, and supportive parents. Our mission is to develop lifelong learners and globally-minded citizens by fostering the academic, creative, and social skills needed to achieve excellence in a multicultural environment.

DR. NIKKI WOODSON

Superintendent of Washington Township Schools

DR. NATAKI PETTIGREW

Chief Academic & DEI Officer



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Program Belief Statement & Goals and Objectives

High Ability Program Belief Statement

We are committed to providing a high ability program that challenges students to meet their full potential as lifelong learners and global citizens through supporting intellectual and social emotional needs. Through high ability programming, rigorous and differentiated curriculum, students will have the ability to think critically and work productively in a global society.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

We are committed to developing a culturally responsive identification process based on specific criteria using multi-faced quantitative and qualitative measures.

OBJECTIVES

- Utilize multiple data points that honor students' cultural backgrounds and languages
- Offer multiple entry points to high ability programming
- Evaluate students' potential for advanced study in view of previous learning by using local and subgroup norms
- Mine assessment data for patterns of performance that indicate upward trajectories and rapid growth or improvement
- Effectively identify students' needs in order to develop talent

DIFFERENTIATED CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

We aim to offer a K-12 continuum of services that provide differentiated curriculum and instructional strategies designed to help gifted learners meet their individual potential.

OBJECTIVES

- Infuse rigor, differentiation and enrichment into all our classrooms to meet the needs of all students
- Nurture talents and deliver meaningful enrichment opportunities
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Develop the academic abilities of students so that they will be able to master new and difficult curriculum challenges

FOCUS ON SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

We are passionate about providing social and physical opportunities to students to encourage them to become well-rounded individuals.

OBJECTIVES

- Incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices and opportunities for students to understand their identity as a learner and contributing member of a diverse community
- Implement social emotional learning practices to help students' understanding of emotional intelligence and self-awareness
- Provide learning environments that offer the level of challenge necessary of intellectual and personal growth
- Expose students to cultural experiences

Broad Based Planning Committee

Program evaluation is systematic with the following areas evaluated on a regular basis: beliefs and goals, student identification and placement, curriculum and instruction, and program design. The information collection strategies used are discussions, interviews, standardized results, and other sources of information. Based on the analysis of the data collected, the broad-based planning committee formulates a plan of action to improve the overall program for high ability students.

Feedback from these meetings will be considered when editing and updating the district strategic plan. Our High Ability Grant application is reviewed and approved by the Indiana Department of Education annually.

Each school year, a group of stakeholders meets to discuss the High Ability program-educators, administrators, parents, students etc.



MSDWT High Ability Programming



Elementary

MSD Washington Township students who achieve a composite score at or near the 96th percentile on CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) or who showcase a domain-specific exceptionalism in math or English/language arts, are automatically considered high ability and are eligible to participate in a high-ability cluster at their home school. Within high-ability clusters, students are placed in small groups with high performing peers within the general education classroom and receive differentiated instruction.

Students identified as high-ability in grades K-5 are assigned in small groups with high performing peers within the general education classroom and receive differentiated instruction. This model is known as the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model. In addition, all students in grades 3-5 who qualify for high-ability programming are eligible to participate in the high-ability cluster program within their home school. Qualified students are serviced in all MSD Washington Township schools.



Middle and High School

Middle school honors courses are available in English and math for grade six students and all core academic subject areas for students in grades seven and eight with content specific academic strengths. Advanced math placement is also available for eligible students.

North Central offers students programs that challenge them to achieve their potential. North Central offers Advanced Placement (AP) classes and Dual credit courses offered through the Advanced College Project (ACP) with Indiana University. Students also can participate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program (authorized in 1988). These courses/program give students the opportunity to earn advanced standing in college while they are still in high school.

In 2023-24:

- 948 North Central students were enrolled in one or more AP classes.
- 340 North Central students were enrolled in one more more ACP/dual credit classes
- 89 North Central students enrolled in IB Diploma or Certificate Programme
- 19 North Central students earned an IB diploma

Definition of High Ability

MSD Washington Township



INDIANA CODE FOR HIGH ABILITY PROGRAMS

Further information, definitions, requirements for state and local educational institutions, as well as further high ability education codes can be found on the Indiana Department of Education website below.

At MSD of Washington Township, high ability is designed for the student who performs at, or has the potential to perform at outstanding levels of accomplishment in at least one domain - mathematics, language arts, or both (the general intellectual) - when compared to other students of the same age. Students identify as high ability by their exceptional gifts, talents, interests, and motivation as demonstrated in instructional settings and beyond.

[Indiana Code for High Ability Programs](#)



MSDWT High Ability Program Testing Schedule 2024-2025

Universal CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) Screener

Grades K, 2, & 5
October 28-November 15

Universal CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) Screener

Selected 3rd & 4th
November 18-22

Window for Parent Requests: CogAT Testing

Grades 3 & 4
November 25th-December 13th

CogAT Results and Elementary High Ability Placement

Email Notifications

Before Winter Break

Elementary High Ability Appeals

Appeals Window Closes: January 10th

Curriculum Night for Rising 9th Graders

January 27th

Elementary Appeals Notifications

Week of February 17th

Middle School Curriculum Night

Rising 6th Grade
March 11 6:30-8:00 pm

Middle School Honors Notifications

Grades 5-7
Week of March 27th

Characteristics of a Gifted Child



Although there are many definitions of giftedness, according to the National Association of Gifted Children, gifted children do have many common characteristics. It is important to note however, that there is a distinction between a child who is bright and does well in school versus a truly gifted child.

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
OF GIFTED
CHILDREN

Definition of High Ability

HIGH-ABILITY STUDENT IN INDIANA ACCORDING TO IC 20-19.15.1-) IS AN EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT WHO:

"...performs at or shows the potential for performing at an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain (areas of aptitude and talent) compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interest."

Indiana Department of Education

Domains of High Ability

- General Intellectual – pertains to the understanding of facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to a broad array of disciplines.
- General Creative – focuses on understanding facts and concepts along with developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating relationships with application to the following activities: problem finding, divergent thinking, flexibility, elaboration, and originality.
- Specific Academic – relates to understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations and evaluating their relationships as they apply to the following disciplines: English and Language Arts, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, and Science.
- Technical and Practical Arts – applies the understanding of facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships in the application to the following: vocational-technical education; business technology education; family and consumer sciences; and technology education.
- Visual and Performing Arts – allows the understanding of facts and concepts; developing skills and generalizations; and evaluation of their relationships as they apply to disciplines, such as: art, dance, music, and theater arts.
- Interpersonal – implies the understanding of facts and concepts in developing skills and generalizations; and evaluating their relationships to the following areas: leadership, mediation, counseling, and communication.

"...(high ability students) are characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interest..."

Indiana Code
IC 20-19.15.1



Understanding Types of Learners

Kingore, B. (2004). *High Achiever, Gifted Learner, Creative Learner. Understanding Our Gifted.*
Szabos, J. (1989). *Bright child, gifted learner. Challenge, 34. Good Apple.*

A HIGH ACHIEVER

Remembers the answers

Is interested

Is attentive

Generates advanced ideas

Works hard to achieve

Answers the questions in detail

Performs at the top of the group

Responds with interest and opinions

Learns with ease

Needs 6-8 repetitions to master

Comprehends at a high level

Understands complex, abstract humor

Grasps the meaning

Completes assignments on time

Is receptive

Is accurate and complete

Enjoys school often

Absorbs information

Is a technician with expertise in a field

Memorizes well

Is highly alert and observant

Is pleased with own learning

Gets A's

Is able

A GIFTED LEARNER

Poses unforeseen questions

Is curious

Is selectively mentally engaged

Generates complex, abstract ideas

Knows without working hard

Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives

Is beyond the group

Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives

Already knows

Needs 1-3 repetitions to master

Comprehends in-depth complex ideas

Prefers the company of intellectual peers

Creates complex, abstract humor

Initiates projects and extensions of assignments

Is intense

Is original and continually developing

Enjoys self-directed learning

Manipulates information

Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field

Guesses and infers well

Anticipates and relates observations

Is self-critical

May not be motivated by grades

Is intellectual

A CREATIVE THINKER

Sees exceptions

Wonders

Daydreams; may seem off task

Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed

Plays with ideas and concepts

Injects new possibilities

Is in own group

Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions

Questions, "What if..."

Questions the need for mastery

Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone

Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor

Initiates more projects than will ever be completed

Is independent and unconventional

Is original and continually developing

Enjoys creating

Improvises

Is an inventor and idea generator

Creates and brainstorms well

Is intuitive

Is never finished with possibilities

May not be motivated by grades

Is Idiosyncratic

High Ability Services by Level



In order to meet the needs of those students whose performance is consistent with nationally-recognized criteria for giftedness, we must provide them with advanced experiences beyond grade level curriculum. This may include acceleration when appropriate, curriculum compacting, and/or enrichment of the curriculum.

PROGRAMMING AND IDENTIFICATION FOR GRADES K-5

MSD WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

- Ongoing differentiated curriculum and instruction in all content areas
- Grade level science and social studies with emphasis on critical thinking, application, and inquiry
- Teachers engage in PLC's and supplemental training to support HA students.
- Universal screener for high ability is provided to all Kindergarten, 2nd, and 5th grade students per IDOE guidelines
- Students who qualify as high ability in grades 3-5 qualify for the high ability cluster program at their home school.



Elementary High Ability Identification

COGNITIVE ABILITIES TEST

MSD Washington Township uses a multifaceted approach to ensure equitable access to high-ability programming for all qualifying students. Data points include NWEA Math and Reading, CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test), in-class performance, and more. For the 2024-2025 school year, all Kindergarten, second, and fifth grade students will be administered the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) in November.

The CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) measures the level and pattern of cognitive development of a student compared to age mates and grade mates. These general reasoning abilities, which start developing at birth and continue through early adulthood, are influenced by experiences gained both in and out of school.

The CogAT measures cognitive abilities in three batteries:

- The verbal section measures a child's ability to remember and transform sequences of English words, to understand them and to make inferences and judgments about them.
- The quantitative section measures a child's understanding of basic quantitative concepts and relationships.
- The non-verbal section measures reasoning using pictures and geometric shapes. This section reduces the impact of language on the student's score.

The composite score is a total score for all three batteries.

In Kindergarten, we identify the cognitive strengths of students to better support their development throughout the primary years to ensure that students are matched with classroom experiences that will support their ongoing cognitive needs. This could include grouping like-minded students who have been identified as high ability or may include enrichment and extension opportunities.



OTHER DATA POINTS

It is critical to have multiple data points to make a determination that could include, but are not limited to (least subjective to most):

- NWEA Tests
- I-Read 3 Score (3rd grade only)
- ILEARN scores (at grades 3-6)
- Guided Reading Level (Benchmark)
- Common Assessments
- Writing Benchmark
- Teacher Observations
- Classroom performance
- Content Specific Tests



Cluster Model

DEFINITION AND PROCEDURE

Cluster grouping is when gifted and talented and/or high-achieving students are identified as being within the top five percent and placed in a standard, mixed-ability (heterogeneous) classroom within their grade. Groupings of three to six or five to eight are typical cluster groups. If there are more than eight to ten students meeting the necessary criteria, another cluster group is typically formed and placed in a different class. These groups are instructed by a teacher who has ideally undergone specialized training in differentiated learning, gifted instruction, or both. Washington Township high-ability teachers routinely participate in professional learning on topics of differentiation for high-ability and gifted students, and are supported by our district and building level coaches.

A Schoolwide Model How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All Revised and Updated 2019 by Dina Brulles, Ph.D. and Susan Winebrenner, M.S.



ADVANTAGES OF CLUSTERING

- Grouping all gifted children in a regular classroom provides social, emotional, and academic advantages to students
- Inclusive spaces
- Gifted students often feel more comfortable among students with similar abilities. Cluster groupings help facilitate this comfort level by increasing the number of high achieving students within one class.
- Once a student is identified, special instruction is often legally required. Cluster groupings can fulfill this mandated instruction in a cost-effective, full-time program where students benefit each day.

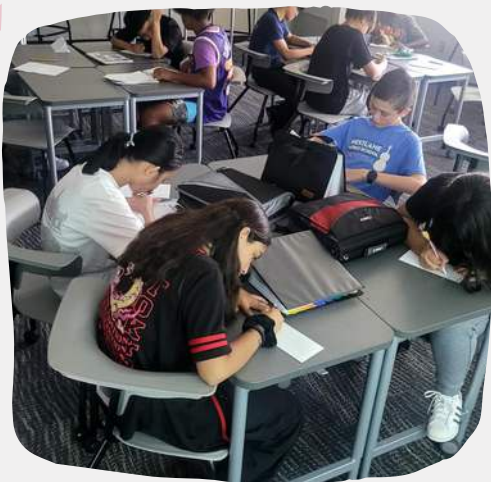


Middle School Honors

MIDDLE SCHOOL HONORS COURSE OPTIONS

- 6th Grade English
- 6th Grade Math
- 7th Grade English
- 7th Grade Math
- 7th Grade Social Studies
- 7th Grade Science
- 8th Grade English
- Algebra 1 (High School Credit)
- 8th Grade Geometry (High School Credit)
- 8th Grade Social Studies
- 8th Grade Honors Biology (High School Credit)

Equity is the concept of giving learners what is needed to help them reach their full potential, and it is activated through student voice. Student-centered learning positions scholars at the center of decisions that impact their educational experiences. Agency, where students exercise their voice and have choice, has been researched to bring greater levels of achievement, classroom engagement, and preparation (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2017). The creation of learning opportunities that elicit students' voices and advocacy pertaining to their interests, passions, and skills, generate stronger engagement and a deeper commitment towards learning.



- Honors math placement for 6th graders will be based on student achievement and/or aptitude test results that may include grades, NWEA, CogAT, ILEARN, etc. These assessments help instructional leaders determine which math placement is most appropriate. Due to the scope and sequence of math skills, it is important to ensure that students have a solid math foundation for their continued success.
- Honors English, Social Studies or Science/Biology will be based upon student achievement and/or aptitude test results that may include grades, NWEA, CogAT, ILEARN, etc. We recognize that test scores are only one indicator of many components that shape the story of a learner. Parents will have the opportunity to provide additional data to support learners wanting to experience middle school honors courses. By design, middle school honors classes do not only target Gifted/High Ability students.
- The goal for middle level learners is to provide greater opportunities to expose students to a rigorous curriculum and provide differentiation and support for students who transition into honors courses based upon district expectations.
- The honors program is no longer based upon the application process. We encourage flexible thresholds for various subgroups to support more equitable outcomes. Our classes are designed to provide a more rigorous and challenging curriculum than general courses but one that is accessible to a broader group of students,



Grades 9–12

High Ability courses in grades 9-12 empower students to reach their full potential through advanced coursework and enriched learning experiences. Designed for students who thrive on challenge and innovation, these courses offer rigorous curricula that span a range of subjects, from advanced sciences and mathematics to creative arts and humanities. With a focus on fostering critical thinking, leadership, and collaboration, these courses provide a dynamic environment where students are encouraged to explore their passions, tackle complex problems, and prepare for success in higher education and beyond.

North Central High School utilizes a grade point average (GPA) weighting system to recognize and reward academic work in selected courses where student work is judged to be significantly above that present in the college preparatory program. A complete list of all weighted courses is available in the North Central Course Catalog.

DUAL CREDIT

North Central High School and the J. Everett Light Career Center have partnerships with IU, Ivy Tech, IUPUI, and Vincennes to offer Dual Credit courses, in which students earn both college and high school credit. Some colleges require certain test requirements (PSAT, SAT, ACT, Knowledge Assessment [KA]), grade point averages (GPA), grade levels and/or fees, in order to enroll in their Dual Credit courses. Fees are significantly reduced from the university's on-campus fee. Students enrolled in Dual Credit courses earn credit based on their final grade in the class.

DUAL CREDIT AT THE J. EVERETT LIGHT CAREER CENTER

The J. Everett Light Career Center (JELCC) students have the opportunity to earn dual credits for the following classes: Animation & Film Production, Auto Collision Repair & Refinishing, Auto Maintenance & Detailing, Auto Service Technology, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Digital Designs and Advertising, Education Careers Professions, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Health Careers, CNA Prep, Cyber Security, Coding & Networking, Medical Assisting, Music/Sound Production, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), Veterinary Careers, and Welding.

ADVANCE COLLEGE PROJECT (ACP)

The Advance College Project (ACP) is Indiana University's dual credit program. ACP allows high school students to take college classes taught by carefully selected and specially trained secondary teachers affiliated with Indiana University (Bloomington) academic departments. ACP credit is transferable to many post-secondary institutions; however, transfer policies do vary. ACP recommends the following criteria for participation: should be on a college preparatory track, a minimum GPA of 2.7, and have appropriate high school endorsements. Currently North Central offers ACP in Speech S121, English W131 and L202, French F200 and F250, Spanish S150 and S200, Psychology P101, Math M118 and M211.



INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA



The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program [IBDP] is a rigorous course of study that meets the needs of motivated high school students. It provides students, which IB calls 'candidates', with intellectual, social, and critical skills to navigate a global society. All full IBDP candidates engage in the study of Languages, Sciences, Mathematics, and Humanities in their junior and senior years. This program allows students to be well-rounded, as they pursue knowledge in a wide range of topics. At the same time, candidates will dive deeply into questions and topics they are interested in investigating. Candidates will learn how to learn, how to analyze, and how to reach considered conclusions about the world around them.

Students and families that want to be eligible for participation in the IB Diploma Program should let their counselors know this when enrolling in classes at North Central High School, as choices in 9th and 10th grade can impact options later in high school. Additionally, it is possible for students to select portions of the IBDP that they would like to participate in, even if they are not qualified or interested in pursuing the full diploma.

Questions?

Contact Andy Hodson, IB Coordinator, ahodson@msdwt.k12.in.us

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program is a cooperative educational endeavor of secondary schools, colleges, and the College Board. AP courses are offered in more than 10,000 high schools in every state in the United States, every province and territory in Canada, and in 63 other countries. They are recognized in nearly 3,000 U.S. and foreign colleges and universities which grant credit, appropriate placement or both, to students who have performed satisfactorily on AP examination. Approximately 1,200 institutions will grant sophomore college standing to students who have demonstrated their competence in three or more of these examinations.

North Central offers 31 College Board approved A.P. courses:

2-D Art and Design, 3-D Art and Design, Art History, Biology, Calculus BC, Chemistry, Chinese Language & Culture, Computer Science A, Computer Science Principles, Drawing, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Environmental Science, European History, French Language and Culture, German Language and Culture, Human Geography, Japanese Language and Culture, Latin, Music Theory, Macroeconomics, Physics 1, Physics C Electricity and Magnetism, Physics C Mechanics, Psychology, Spanish Language and Culture, Spanish Literature and Culture, Statistics, United States Government and Politics, United States History, World History Modern.

Students are strongly encouraged but are not required to take the AP exam for any of these classes. AP Classes can be taken independently of each other. Exams are taken in May with a fee of \$99/test. All STEM exams are subsidized and only cost \$15 per exam. The State subsidizes the cost for some other exams, up to three per student.

College Credit Information is outlined below:

- In State/Public: Credit Hours may be awarded for a 3 or higher on exams at most public post secondary schools
- Out of State/Private: 4 or higher

Questions?

Contact Cynthia Hairston, AP Coordinator, chairston@msdwt.k12.in.us



Students New to MSD Washington Township

2024-2025

Parents of new students should indicate during time of enrollment whether or not their child has participated in high ability programming at a previous school. Students moving into the district from another school corporation who were enrolled in a HA program will be required to submit test scores and grades for consideration for a HA placement in the district. In addition, new students may be required to participate in further testing. Parents should supply supporting data from a previous school district or private testing to determine if the child fits a profile of a student to be tested for the district's programming. Placement in a previous district is not necessarily an automatic placement in Washington Township. We will need to determine the correlation of assessments and their connection to the aptitude measures used within our district.

Students may also be placed in a general education or regular division course on a trial period to see how the student performs. If the data indicates that the student has the potential to thrive and be successful in HA programming or Honors courses a change will be made as supported by data.

Middle School Students New to MSD Washington Township

2024-2025

Middle schoolers new to Washington Township should indicate during time of enrollment whether or not their child has participated in high ability programming at a previous school and provide supporting documentation of coursework completed.

Middle school counselors will schedule enrollment appointments with prospective and new families. Families should bring supporting documentation (if applicable) to support high ability placement.

Supporting documentation will be shared with the district's high-ability identification and placement team.

To learn more about your child's school, visit their webpage for contact information.



Professional Development

High Ability Licensure: the district will pursue the most qualified teaching candidates for positions in our schools. High Ability qualifications are valued in this pursuit.

Professional Development: MSDWT has partnered with experts in the field of high ability education, curriculum, social-emotional needs of high ability learners, and instructional practices to ensure that staff working with identified students are equipped with best practices for meeting the needs of this population of students. Additionally, the district high ability coach engages in routine coaching cycles and professional learning for high ability teachers district-wide. Teachers are supported in the area of cultural responsiveness through robust professional learning on culturally responsive, student-centered pedagogy in high ability education.

Building-based professional development is offered through a variety of structures: Team Meetings, Grade-Level Meetings, Professional Learning Communities, etc. In addition to the variety of building offerings, participants will be selected to attend the Indiana Association for the Gifted Annual Conference, curriculum workshops, and other opportunities offered outside the district that align to our High Ability mission and goals.

Counseling Plan: Supports Available to Students



Students with High Ability may require support with fostering positive social and emotional development and the cultivation of self-regulatory skills (organization, time management, self-discipline, motivation, etc.). School counselors or school social workers are available to meet with students and parents to discuss the specific needs of their high ability children. School counselors and school social workers utilize classroom lessons, social skills or other small groups, and individual sessions to meet the social and emotional development needs of our students.

Parents, teachers, and administrators can submit a referral to the school counselor or school social worker to request support for any student. In elementary schools where a counselor is not present, parents can submit a referral request to the principal or assistant principal. Visit the Washington Township [School Counseling](#) or [School Social Work](#) websites for more information, including contact information for your child's assigned school counselor or school social worker. Please contact the building principal or assistant principal if you would like support in obtaining and/or submitting a referral.



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Request for an Appeal

A request for a review of records can be made by a parent on behalf of a student who is not selected for high ability programming. The request should include evidence a parent wishes to have considered by the review committee, such as student work samples, portfolio, outside testing, etc., that was not available during the initial identification period. This supporting evidence is then reviewed by the committee which will make the final determination for placement for the current school year. (See Appendix for a copy of the Request for Review/Appeal Form, Grades 2-5). Students in Grades 6-8 should request a meeting with the building principal to initiate a change to the student's courses.



Exit Procedures

Students who are not successful may be exited from the high ability program at any time. This process may be initiated by the school or by the parent. Before a student is removed from programming, a committee made up of the parent, teacher, high ability staff, and school administrator/counselor, will meet to establish a Student Improvement Plan.

The goal of the Improvement Plan is to set forth interventions which will assist the student in being successful in the high ability placement. Improvement steps will be identified, a timeline will be set for completion and then the committee will reconvene to determine the success of the plan. If improvements have been made, additional supports can be added to continue the placement. If the interventions have not assisted the student in being successful, then the student may be exited from the program. (See Appendix for copies of the Student Improvement Plan and Exit Procedure Form)

Appendix - A

REQUEST FOR APPEAL GRADES 2-5

PROGRAM FOR HIGH ABILITY EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS

We are committed to providing a high ability program and Honors courses that challenge students to meet their full potential as lifelong learners and global citizens. Through rigorous and differentiated curriculum, students will have the ability to think critically and work productively in a global society.

If your student participated in the high ability identification process and did not qualify, you are welcome to appeal the placement decision and convey the reasons to support placement within the honors course or program.

A request for a review of records can be made by a parent or caregiver on behalf of a student who is not selected for high ability or Honors programming. The request should include evidence a parent wishes to have considered by the review committee such as student work samples, portfolio, outside testing, etc., that was not available during the initial identification period. This supporting evidence is then reviewed by the committee which will make the final determination for placement for the current school year. Please note the process as follows:

- The Chief Academic and DEI Officer reviews the new information provided and notifies the following of the appeal: (1) Director of Teaching & Learning, Grades K-5; and (2) respective school. Building administrators and/or Director may request alternative assessments to be completed by the student at the school. These may include alternate measures of ability and/or achievement, approved work samples, and/or interviews.
- The school based identification team reconvenes to consider all appeals and any new data.
- The Identification Team will report results to the petitioner.

Thank you for your partnership in this process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nataki Pettigrew
Chief Academic & DEI Officer
8550 Woodfield Crossing, Indianapolis, IN 46240
rpettigrew@msdwt.k12.in.us



Appendix - B

REQUEST FOR APPEAL GRADES 2-5

PROGRAM FOR HIGH ABILITY EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS

This document references the form you can find online and complete to appeal.

Student Name:

Date:

Address:

Phone:

School:

Present Grade:

1.APPEAL REQUEST FOR:

Elementary program (3-5)

English/Language Arts

Mathematics

Science

Social Studies

2.SUPPORTING DATA:

Please attach supporting documentation for consideration. Refer to the Appeals Process in the High Ability Handbook for appropriate supporting documentation. Applications submitted without supporting documentation will be considered incomplete and will not be acted upon.

3.REASON FOR APPEAL:

Name of Person (s) Completing this Form:

Relationship to Student:

Parent/Guardian Email Address:

SUBMIT THIS FORM AND SUPPORTING DATA TO:

Dr. Nataki Pettigrew

Chief Academic & DEI Officer

8550 Woodfield Crossing, Indianapolis, IN 46240

rpettigrew@msdwt.k12.in.us



Appendix - C

SUPPORT PLAN FOR HIGH ABILITY EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS

Student(s) and parents will develop a plan collectively with the teacher if they are struggling to meet the demands and expectations of the HA program or course.

Student Name:

Grade:

School:

Support Team:

DESCRIBE CONCERNS/AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT:

INTERVENTIONS/SUPPORTS:

IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTION 1:

IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTION 2:

REVIEW DATE FOR PROGRESS OF INTERVENTIONS:

Student Signature: _____ (grades 3-5)

Parent Signature: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

SUBMIT A COPY OF THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:

Dr. Nataki Pettigrew

Chief Academic & DEI Officer

8550 Woodfield Crossing, Indianapolis, IN 46240

rpettigrew@msdwt.k12.in.us



Appendix - D

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following glossary is adapted from the Indiana Association for the Gifted (IAG) Resource Guide for Indiana Parents & Teachers, 2nd Edition. It was constructed by modifying and adding to a similar glossary published by the California Association for the Gifted. The Glossary appeared in their publication: *The Challenge of Raising Your Gifted Child* (1998).

Ability Grouping: Grouping students by ability or readiness level. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes. Ability grouping is not synonymous with “tracking”.

Academic Excellence: Expecting each student to work at maximum level toward a set of external standards as defined by state, corporation, and/or local school. Learning and performing for each student is at a challenge level commensurate with each student’s skills and developed abilities.

Accelerated Learning: Pacing students through the curriculum at a rate commensurate with their advanced ability. Students may or may not be formally identified as high ability to participate in some forms of accelerated learning.

Achievement Test: A test that measures the extent to which a student has mastered the skills and knowledge of a particular area.

Advanced Placement: Any of 33 classes endorsed by the College Board in which a secondary student can earn college credit or placement beyond introductory courses by successfully meeting criteria established by higher education institutions on a nationally given and scored Advanced Placement examination. Students also earn high school credit upon successful completion of the course(s).

Affective Learning: Incorporating into the curriculum opportunities for students to address socio-emotional issues, attitudes, and appreciations of self and others.

Anchoring: An instructional strategy that provides meaningful and important independent activities with challenge levels ranging from remediated to accelerated in content and/or enrichment areas. This is a type of differentiation.

At-Risk: Students who may underachieve or who may drop out of school. Unmet economic, physical, emotional, linguistic, and/or academic needs may inhibit a student’s ability to learn or attend school.

Alternative Assessment: Procedures designed to reduce any assessment biases that may be inherent in other assessment methods used to evaluate the levels of services needed for students with high ability. Also referred to as other forms of assessment.

Authentic Assessment: Process of evaluating student learning using student products or performance instead of traditional standardized tests. It allows students to be evaluated with regard to their individuality and creativity.

Basic Inclusion: As used in Indiana, it refers to students randomly placed in classrooms without regard to their readiness levels, abilities, interests, and/or learning styles.

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Behavioral Rating Scale/Checklist: Checklists or scales report the frequency or extent to which an individual demonstrates specific actions or characteristics.

Broad-Based Planning Committee: In Indiana Administrative Code, "Broad-based planning committee" means a diverse group with representation from educators, parents, students, community members, and other stakeholders; organized for the purpose of planning and development of programs for students with high ability.

Cluster Grouping: A method for organizing a heterogeneous classroom by purposefully assigning students with similar high abilities to the same classroom.

Collaborative Learning: A teaching strategy in which students are expected to share expertise and effort in order to create a common project/product. This is effectively used with students with high abilities when they have already been grouped with others of similar abilities.

Compliance This term is used when the Indiana Department of Education evaluates school corporation applications for grants for high-ability programs. It indicates agreement between the School Corporation and State for the program components outlined in the Indiana Code and Administrative Rule 511 (Section 1 511 IAC 6-9.1). All items must be adhered to for compliance.

Cooperative Learning: This practice assigns a common task and/or project to a group of students with varying ability levels. It often reflects the full range of student achievement and aptitude. The purpose of such learning is to prepare students to live in a democratic society, to help them understand group membership and group dynamics, and to allow them to practice both leadership and follower skills. It has not been proven to be effective with high-ability learners.

Core Curriculum: The common knowledge and skills to be learned by all students of a particular grade; reading, writing, mathematics, history-social studies, and science make up core curriculum.

Creativity: The human attribute of constructive originality. It is the process of combining what exists into something new. The something new could be procedure idea, or product relative to the individual. Creativity needs to be nurtured in students to develop the abilities necessary to affect our society with new ideas and solutions to problems.

Critical Thinking: Analytical thinking is developed for purposes of decision making. This includes using specific attitudes and skills such as analyzing arguments carefully, seeing others' points of view, and reaching sound conclusions.

Cross-Grade Grouping: Students from two or more grade levels with similar readiness levels, interests, and/or learning styles are placed together in a classroom.

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Curriculum Compacting: A process used to give students validation for what they already know. It allows students who demonstrate mastery to omit portions of the assigned curriculum, or to move quickly through the curriculum than would be typical. Students are thus able to “buy time” which can be used to accelerate content or to pursue enrichment activities while the unit is being taught to other students.

Curriculum and Instructional Strategies Plan: One of the five written levels of service program plans required for corporations participating in the State High-Ability Grant Program. The plan details how the curriculum and instruction are differentiated in breadth or depth to meet the needs of one or more students with high ability within the corporation through activities such as compacting, acceleration, enrichment, and problem solving. It also indicates how the curriculum for students with high ability is differentiated from the general education curriculum to promote such things as higher-order thinking, decision making, creative problem solving, and effective researching.

Differentiation: Adapting the curriculum to meet the unique needs of learners to making modifications in complexity, depth, and pacing. It may include selecting, rather than covering all the curriculum areas depending on the individual needs of students. In Indiana Administrative Code, “differentiated” means providing tiered levels of services for all educational needs.

Domain: As used in Indiana Code, “domain” includes the following areas of aptitude and talent: general intellectual, general creative, specific academic, technical and practical arts, visual and performing arts, and interpersonal. See definitions for each of the domains in this glossary.

Dual/Concurrent Enrollment: Students earn credit at two levels while enrolled in one course. While this is usually college credit and high school credit while enrolled in a course of study, it could also apply to receiving high school credit for a course taken while in an earlier grade.

Early Entrance: Students begin their elementary school or college education prior to the designated chronological age of entrance.

Early Matriculation: Students enroll in college before completion of the usual 7 or 8 semesters of high school. This usually involves meeting diploma requirements through a combination of course completions and demonstration of proficiency in one or more required areas.

Enrichment: These activities supplement the core curriculum. Such activities are generally not specified in the curriculum and are selected by the teacher and/or students in a given classroom.

Equity: Fair and impartial learning opportunities and access to good teaching are provided for all students. In order to meet educational needs at all levels of development these opportunities encourage and enable all students to develop to their fullest potential. To be equitable, opportunities will be different for individual students according to their differing abilities and readiness levels.

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General Creative: One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code and defined as understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to activities such as problem finding, divergent thinking, flexibility, elaboration, and originality.

General Intellectual: One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code and defined as understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to a broad array of disciplines.

Governing Body: The Local Education Agency or board of education (school board) is the governing body.

High Ability: There is no single definition of “gifted” or “talented”. In Indiana, each school corporation may determine the identification criteria used to determine who will participate in services or programs it designs to meet the needs of students of high ability.

Grade Skipping: Students progress through grade level instruction skipping one or more grades.

Grading: The evaluation of student work by teachers; usually recorded in letter grades or in percentages.

Counseling & Guidance Plan: One of the five levels of service program plans required for corporations participating in the State High-Ability Grant Program. The plan outlines the services within the corporation to meet the affective needs and educational career plans of the students with high ability. It may include topics such as:

- academic program planning,
- career and life planning,
- organization and management skills,
- the meaning of giftedness,
- stress management, and
- individual-, small-, or large- group counseling sessions.

Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping: Grouping heterogeneously generally occurs by chronological age level and without regard for the diverse needs of students, their learning styles, or their interests. Homogeneous grouping is based on common criteria such as the students’ interests, special needs, or academic abilities.

High-Ability Student: In Indiana Code “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 (1) domain when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment; and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interest.

Honors Class: Classes at the middle school/junior high or high school level in which content, pace, or depth of instruction is accelerated and/or enriched. Traditionally, students who meet prerequisite criteria are accepted into these courses.

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Independent Study or Self-Directed Study: Students follow individual or self-selected areas of interest and specific aptitude by designing and implementing their own study plans. Close monitoring by teachers is an essential component of independent study.

Individualization: Providing a specific program that meets the particular needs, interests, and/or abilities of an individual student for some part of his/her educational experience. It does not mean, however, that every child is working in isolation on a different level or a different subject at all times. It does mean that students are working on levels commensurate with their assessed ability, needs, and/or interests.

Instructional Scaffolding: An apprenticeship approach to instruction which places the teacher in a collaborative, interactive role with students by providing carefully structured and sequenced support as they undertake new and more difficult tasks. Emphasis is on teacher modeling, extension, rephrasing, questioning, praise, and correction rather than on the teacher as evaluator.

Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.): A measure of ability or aptitude at a given point in time, comparing children of the same chronological age. It is a test designed to measure one's potential for learning including abstract thinking and reasoning, knowledge acquisition, and problem-solving abilities. Originally it was considered to be the sole way of measuring student ability. Current thinking now accepts I.Q. as one of the many ways to measure a student's academic potential.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum: This type of curriculum is structured to study a topic or concept by gathering and relating information and ideas from multiple disciplines.

International Baccalaureate (IB): A rigorous international pre-university course of study, leading to examinations, that meets the needs of highly motivated and academically superior secondary school students. IB has a comprehensive classics curriculum (languages, sciences, mathematics, and humanities) that allows its graduates to fulfill education requirements of various nations. Only schools approved by the IB organization may offer the program. Also, school fees are charged by the IB organization.

Indiana Administrative Code (IAC): The rules developed by the State Board of Education which are most frequently contained in Indiana Administrative Code 511. They are the State School Board's interpretation of the statutes passed by the Indiana General Assembly. (Also known as Rule 511)

Indiana Association for the Gifted (IAG): IAG is a united body of parents, educators, and concerned citizens committed to the advocacy and advancement of educational practices and resources which will meet the unique learning needs of gifted/talented students.

Indiana Code (IC): The state statutes created by the Indiana General Assembly. After passing a statute, the legislature may delegate authority to a state agency (such as the DOE) or board to develop further rules (regulations) to carry out and implement the law.

Interpersonal: One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code defined as understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to areas such as leadership, mediation, counseling, and communication.



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Learning Styles: A student's preference for a mode of learning and/or type of learning environment. For example, a student could favor auditory learning in an independent learning environment.

Magnet School or Magnet Program: Many school corporations, especially those with large student enrollments, select individual schools to emphasize particular programs or services. Some magnet programs focus on specific learning areas such as math, science, or performing arts. Others are designed to serve a specific student population such as highly gifted or gifted students with high ability. Since space is usually limited, special entrance requirements may apply.

Mandated Program: A legally required program or action authorized by law.

Mentor: An adult member of the community who can provide expertise and/or advice in a field of study or other community endeavor when matched with a student on a one-to-one basis.

Multifaceted Assessment: According to Indiana Administrative Code, "multifaceted assessment" means collecting and analyzing data to identify the educational needs of students with high ability through the following:

- Performance-based assessment, which includes evaluating the performance of students involved in complex-learning opportunities through the use of instruments, such as rating scales, observation or interviews, portfolios, structured observations or interviews.
- Potential-based assessment, which includes evaluating the potential performance of students with high ability, through the use of instruments such as standardized intelligence tests, standardized achievement tests, and behavior rating scales.
- Other forms of assessment, which include using procedures designed to reduce any assessment biases that may be inherent in other assessment methods used to evaluate the levels of services needed for students with high ability.

Multifaceted Assessment Plan: One of the five written levels of service program plans required for corporations participating in the State High-Ability Grant Program. It outlines the instruments used to identify the needs of students with high ability and measure their progress and must include at least one performance-based measure, one potential-based measure, and one other form of assessment.

Multiple Intelligences: The theory that intelligence can be expressed in a variety of ways and is not limited to the rational linear mode. The theory, proposed by Howard Gardner identifies at least seven intelligences: linguistic, musical, spatial, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

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National Association for the Gifted (NAGC): An organization of parents, teachers, educators, other professional, and community leaders who unite to address the unique needs of children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those children who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences. They support and develop policies and practices that encourage and respond to the diverse expressions of gifts and talents in children and youth from all cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups. NAGC supports and engages in research and development, staff development, advocacy, communication, and collaboration with other organizations and agencies who strive to improve the quality of education for all students.

Nomination: A referral process for consideration of a student into a specialized program.

Nontraditional Identification: An alternative means of identification using instruments and procedures that provide an assessment of students that is not norm-referenced or standardized.

Norm-Referenced or Standardized Test: A test used to determine an individual's status with respect to the performance of other individuals on the 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. Such a test may be based on national norms, state norms, or local norms. At every level of educational test usage, it is necessary to match the scope of the test with the purpose that test is supposed to perform.

Off-Grade Level Tests: A test one or more grade, or age, level(s) above the student's actual grade placement or age used to assess a student's ability or achievement.

Open-Ended Question: Provides opportunities for more than one "right" solution to answer. Student response is judged by the logic by which the response is explained or defended. Students must be able to recognize tasks without a label, draw upon prior knowledge, generate relevant approaches on their own, and articulate their reasoning.

Other Forms of Assessment: Procedures designed to reduce any assessment biases that may be inherent in other assessment methods used to evaluate the levels of services needed for students with high ability. (Also referred to as alternative assessment.)

Peer Grouping: A practice which indicates voluntary or assigned matching of students by shared characteristics such as age, ability, needs, and/or interest in order to affect teaching and learning.

Performance-Based Assessment: The performance of students is evaluated through complex learning opportunities with the use of instruments such as rating scales, observation or interviews, portfolios, or structured observations or interviews.

Potential-Based Assessment: The potential performance of students with high ability is evaluated through the use of instruments such as standardized intelligence tests, standardized achievement tests, behavior-rating scales.

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Problem-Based Curriculum: Problem-based curriculum is a model that enables the learner to solve a problem using knowledge and skills across the disciplines. It enables gifted students to practice critical and creative thinking while researching information and organizing ideas to solve a real-world problem.

Productive Thinking: This set of skills and/or processes is defined by higher-order-thinking such as creative problem solving and critical thinking.

Professional Development Plan: One of the five written levels of service program plans required for corporations participating in the State High-Ability Grant Program. The plan describes the opportunities provided by the corporation to promote professional growth in all areas of high-ability services. This plan may include:

- 1.corporation in-services for teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, volunteers;
- 2.staff release time for attending workshops, seminars, conferences, etc.;
- 3.resources within the corporation; and
- 4.study groups within the corporation.

Program for Students with High Ability: According to Indiana Administrative Code, “program” means educational services differentiated in depth and breadth designed to meet the needs of one (1) or more students with high ability through activities, such as compacting, acceleration, enrichment, problem solving, and creative thinking.

Reliability: The likelihood that an instrument’s/test’s results will remain consistent over time; the accuracy and repeatability of a measurement.

Rubric: A rubric or scoring guide is an assessment scale. Each interval along the scale represents a specific level of learning from the novice to expert. The levels of learning are accompanied by specific descriptors of the type and quality of work.

School Improvement Plans: According to Indiana P.L.211, all schools have a School Improvement Team which develops a School Improvement Plan. This plan, reviewed and revised annually, establishes achievement objectives of the school for a three-year period. These achievement objectives must be consistent with academic standards and include improvement in (at least) attendance, percentage of students meeting academic standards under the ISTEP program, and for a secondary school, graduation rate.

School of Choice: Parents and students may have opportunities to select a school of attendance.

Self-Contained Classroom: A programmatic term defining a set of students with common needs and/or abilities (e.g., all students with high abilities). The class can include multiple grades or ages.

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Site-Based Management: A school restructuring model by which local autonomy is given to schools for planning and decision making, also known as school-based management. A team of educators and community members assume responsibility and accountability for all education programs in a school, striving to assist all students to reach their fullest potential. (See School Improvement Plan)

Socio-Emotional: The social and emotional needs of the student; affective domain.

Specific Academic: One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code defined as understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to specific disciplines, such as English language arts, social studies, foreign languages, mathematics, and sciences.

Stakeholders: These persons have interest in a specific area such as high-ability programming (e.g., administrators, school board members, community members).

Standards: Content standards are the specific academic knowledge, skills, and abilities that all public schools in this state are expected to teach and all pupils are expected to learn in each of the core curriculum areas, at each grade level. Performance standards are standards that define various levels of competence at each grade level in each of the curriculum areas for which content standards are established. Performance standards gauge the degree to which a student has met the content standards and the degree to which a school or school corporation has met the content standards.

State Gifted/Talented Grant Program The state resources program established by the IDOE (IC 20-36-21-2-1) Sec. 3) to award grants to school corporations and others to:

1. Support school corporations in the development of local programs for students with high ability;
2. Enable educational opportunities that encourage students with high ability to reach the highest possible level at every stage of the students' development;
3. Provide state integrated services that include, but are not limited to:
4. Information and materials resource centers,
5. Professional development plan and programs,
6. Research and development services,
7. Technical assistance that includes the following:
 - a. Student assessment,
 - b. Program assessment,
 - c. Program development and implementation.

Systematic Program Assessment Plan One of the five written levels of service program plans required for corporations participating in the State High-Ability Grant Program. The plan shows the procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the corporation's program for high-ability services. It may include topics such as:

1. schedule for reviewing and updating the current program,
2. instruments and methods for evaluating program effectiveness,
3. procedures for data collection,
4. plans for action research.

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Technical and Practical Arts One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code defined as understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to disciplines, such as vocational-technical education, business technology education, family and consumer sciences, and technology education.

Twice-Exceptional Students exhibit needs and/or characteristics of more than one special population (e.g., gifted and learning disabled).

Thematic Curriculum A curriculum which focuses on the study of a topic or concept that is specific, such as “animals,” or global, such as “change.” The theme serves as an organizing element to provide continuity and “connectedness” for learning.

Tiering Providing assignments varying in level of complexity/challenge while focusing on the same basic concept or learning experience. This is a type of differentiation.

Tracking Fixed groups that are rigidly maintained over time. This word is NOT synonymous with grouping and does not preclude opportunity for specialized groups for any learner at some time.

Underachieving A discrepancy between recognized potential and actual academic performance. The causes of underachievement may be social, emotional, physical, and/or academic.

Validity The degree to which a test/assessment measures what it purports to measure.

Visual and Performing Arts One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code and defined as understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to disciplines, such as art, dance, music, and theater arts.

