

High Ability Program Manual

Avon Community School Corporation



AVON | COMMUNITY
SCHOOL
CORPORATION

Table of Contents

Mission and Belief Statements	3
Requirements for Serving High Ability Students	4
Broad Based Planning Committee	5
Characteristics of High Ability Students.....	7
Programming and Identification	8
Grades K-2 High Ability Service Options	9
Grades 3-4 High Ability Program.....	10
Grades 5-6 High Ability Program.....	11
Grades 7-8 High Ability Program.....	12
New Students to Avon Schools.....	12
Service Options	15
Rtl Process and Exit Procedures	22
Counseling Plan.....	23
Professional Development	25
Program Evaluation	26
School Contact Information.....	27
Resources for Parents	28
Glossary of Terms.....	29-35

Mission and Belief Statements

The High Ability Program works toward the maximum intellectual development of high ability students in an atmosphere that recognizes the uniqueness of the individual.

The high ability educational environment assists students as they reach their social, psychological, intellectual, physical, and creative potential.

We believe that high ability students will...

- Be challenged to reach their full potential;
- Be provided leadership roles and responsibilities;
- Need qualitatively different experiences apart from the general curriculum;
- Benefit from interactions with varying populations of students;
- Be guided to be creative, independent, and critical in their thinking, problem-solving, and daily work;
- Require nurturing and understanding to promote healthy, social, and emotional well-being;
- Be recognized across all areas of the curriculum, including the arts;
- Engage in cooperative learning activities in order to develop a sense of teamwork and camaraderie.

Requirements for Serving High Ability Students

The Indiana Code sets forth certain requirements for Indiana school corporations related to the education of students with high ability. Indiana Administrative Code gives further explanation for some of these requirements. The Indiana Code and Indiana Administrative Code are provided in a separate section of this handbook. The requirements are summarized below.

The corporation must...

1. Identify students with high ability in all grades, K-12, in accordance with the Indiana Definition of High Ability Student. The Indiana definition is: "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 interests.

While there are additional domains of high ability that *may* be served (for example, visual and performing arts), the required domains of high ability that Indiana schools must identify for are the General Intellectual and Specific Academic domains. For now, the designations are for students with high ability in Language Arts (HA-LA), students with high ability in Math (HA-Math), and students who have high ability in both Language Arts and Math (HA – General Intellectual)

2. Record the relevant designation on the Student Test Number (STN). HA-LA, HA – Math, or HA- General Intellectual
3. Provide "appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction" to identified students in the relevant core content area(s).
4. Provide professional development in high ability education.
5. Establish a Broad Based Planning Committee that will meet at least once per year to review the program.
6. Evaluate the program.
7. Align with the strategic and continuous school improvement and achievement plans under IC 20-31-5-4 for schools within the school corporation.
8. Report annually to the IDOE on the programs and how the state grant to the corporation for high ability programs was used.
9. Report on the results of the program, including student achievement and program effectiveness.

Broad Based Planning Committee

Mission

The Avon Community Schools' Broad Based Planning Committee is committed to researching and understanding the needs of high ability students in order to make meaningful recommendations that will ultimately maximize opportunities for the students to attain their highest potential.

Composition of Required Broad Based Planning Committee

"Broad-based planning committee" means a diverse group with representation from:

1. educators;
2. parents;
3. students;
4. community members; and
5. other stakeholders;

organized for the purposes of planning and development of programs.

Members should have an interest in and support for high ability education. Members should also include decision-makers within the corporation. The High Ability Coordinator keeps a record of official members, including contact information.

Purpose of the Broad Based Planning Committee

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

Although the local governing body has ultimate responsibility and authority for all student services, the committee has the role of planning and reviewing policies and services. Suggested roles for the Broad Based Planning Committee include the following:

- Review the 5 required written plans that are to be available for public inspection (511 IAC 6-9.1-1)
 - Multifaceted Student Assessment Plan
 - Curriculum & Instructional Strategies Plan
 - Counseling & Guidance Plan
 - Systematic Program Assessment Plan
 - Professional Development Plan
- Review implementation of the 5 required plans
- Review the results of the programs for students with high ability, including student assessment results, program effectiveness, or student achievement. (IC 20 – 36 – 2)

- Prepare an action plan for improvement related to the 5 plans
- Develop a collaborative relationship between school staff(s) and the committee
- Develop a 3-5 year strategic plan for program development

Characteristics of High Ability Students

The Indiana Code defines a “high ability student” as one who: (1) 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 (2) is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests (IC 20- 36-1-3).

A Bright Child	A Gifted Child
Knows the answers	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discussed in detail; elaborates
Top group	Beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings/opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes the assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates new designs
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technician	Inventor
Good memorizer	Good guesser
Is alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with learning	Is highly self-critical
Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity

Programming and Identification

Introduction & Rationale

Effective July 1, 2007, Indiana schools shall identify students with high ability in the general intellectual and specific academic domains and provide them with appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in core content areas, K-12 (refer to IC- 20-36-2-2). Specific identification processes remain a local decision and will vary according to district size, building configurations, demographics, etc. There are, however, best practices for identification; this document is based upon Indiana requirements and those best practices and is meant to be a guide in 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. When that occurs, the related information may have come from the field of gifted education and may reference a somewhat narrower definition of this group of students.

The High Ability Program works toward the maximum intellectual development of high ability students in an atmosphere that recognizes the uniqueness of the individual.

The high ability educational environment assists students as they reach their social-psychological, intellectual, physical, and creative potential.

Students in our High Ability Program have the opportunity to participate in classes that are accelerated or enriched. Accelerated classes have a curriculum that is above grade level. Enriched classes are on grade level but with a curriculum that provides the opportunity to explore topics in greater depth.

Grades 3-8 Program Continuum

Beginning in 3rd grade, Avon provides students with a specifically designed High Ability Program. Students are identified in the spring of their 2nd grade year for this option and will remain in the program through the 6th grade. Assessment criteria from CogAT and trend data from NWEA determine placement. Curriculum materials are selected to support this rigorous academic program in reading and mathematics. Instruction is differentiated to meet the highly challenging needs of the identified students. Students can qualify in reading, mathematics, or both. Each elementary/intermediate building designs a service structure based on the number of students qualifying for the program. Therefore, each building’s service option may look significantly different from another; however, the academic high ability expectations are the same. All students will take the CogAT three times during their elementary career, grades K, 2 and 4. Students who are new to Avon in grades 3-8 will take the CogAT. Students will go through a re-identification process for middle school high ability science and Algebra in 6th grade.

Grades K-2 High Ability Service Options

In the fall of each year, data will be collected to identify K-2 students as high ability for differentiated instruction per Indiana law. Beginning in Kindergarten, Avon starts recognizing emerging talent and identifying students that are certain to qualify for the High Ability Program in 3rd grade. The process will inform teachers of the need to enrich the curriculum within the general education classroom through 2nd grade. Building principals may determine to cluster students in classrooms as well as utilize Student Success Time to provide differentiated instruction at these grade levels. The district will provide opportunities for professional development in high ability education to K-2 staff.

Preliminary Identification

All kindergarten students take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Screener during the fall. This screener identifies the pool of students who will receive differentiated instruction based upon their needs in grades K-2. The goal is to identify students who exemplify truly academic giftedness or very high cognitive ability; therefore, students who have screener scores within the local norm band of 80-100th percentile will be tagged for a different service option in the classroom. Students having a score at or above the 96th percentile range in reading, mathematics, or both will be reflected in the student data system.

Students will also take the NWEA adaptive achievement test in January and May. The January test period is considered primarily a practice exercise; however, this data is used for baseline information. This assessment shows how a student actually performs in the academic areas of reading, language, and mathematics. Students who score at or above the 95th percentile on the NWEA assessment in reading, mathematics, or both will be reflected in the student data system.

Both the NWEA and the CogAT provide valuable information for the purpose of instructional differentiation. Once a student has taken the winter and spring NWEA assessment and the CogAT Screener and have met the threshold, building administrators and counselors will create a list and reflect them in the student data system. These students will then receive an enriched curriculum the following year in 1st and 2nd grade.

Grades 3-4 High Ability Program

Identification Criteria

Students will be identified for the 3rd - 4th grade High Ability Program during their 2nd grade year. Once a student has been recognized as high ability, he/she will remain in high ability classes through 6th grade.

During 2nd grade, all students complete the CogAT Full Battery and the NWEA Fall and Spring Assessments. Qualification is based upon the following scores:

- CogAT Full Battery score at or above the 96th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both
- AND/OR
- NWEA assessment scores with a trend at or above the 95th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both

Grades 5-6 High Ability Program

Identification Criteria

Students will be identified for the 5th - 6th grade High Ability Program during their 2nd grade year. Once a student has been recognized as high ability, he/she will remain in high ability classes through 6th grade.

During 2nd grade, all students complete the CogAT Full Battery and the NWEA Fall and Spring Assessments. Qualification is based upon the following scores:

- CogAT Full Battery score at or above the 96th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both,
AND/OR
- NWEA assessment scores with a trend at or above the 95th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both.

In 4th grade, students are once again assessed using the CogAT Full Battery as a check-in point for high ability growth comparisons. Students scoring lower than their CogAT score in 2nd grade are not pulled from the program. Rather, this score is an indicator of how the student is continuing to perform on abstract skills. This is also an opportunity to add students who score within the qualifying range of the 96th percentile and above.

Grades 7-8 High Ability Program

Identification Criteria

1. Students in seventh grade high ability classes will continue in eighth grade high ability classes unless the established exit procedure below is carefully followed and communicated to parents.

Exit procedure - All middle school students must maintain a B- average in each High Ability class. This standard will be monitored at the end of each 4 ½ week progress report and 9 week grading period. Any student who does not meet that criterion will be placed on an Rtl plan and parents will be contacted. If the student is not successful on the Rtl plan, a conference with parents will be held. At this time, the student may be exited from the program.

2. Seventh Grade High Ability Language Arts Identification and Course Placement Criteria:
 - a. NWEA Reading scores showing trend data at or above the 95th percentile, OR
 - b. CogAT Verbal scores at or above the 96th percentile.
3. Seventh Grade High Ability Math Identification Criteria:
 - a. NWEA Math scores showing trend data at or above the 95th percentile, OR
 - b. CogAT Quantitative scores at or above the 96th percentile.
4. Seventh Grade Algebra Course Placement Criteria:
 - a. Sixth grade students with NWEA Math trend data at or above the 95th percentile will take the Orleans Hanna Algebra Assessment.
 - b. Students scoring at or above the 93rd percentile on the Orleans Hanna assessment will be invited to take high school algebra in seventh grade. Students who successfully complete the high school algebra course in seventh grade will be placed in high ability geometry in eighth grade.
5. Seventh Grade Pre-Algebra Course Placement Criteria:
 - a. Sixth grade students who took the Orleans Hanna Algebra Assessment and earned a score below the 93rd percentile and have NWEA trend data at or above the 80th percentile will be placed in pre-algebra during seventh grade.
 - b. Sixth grade students who did not qualify to take the Orleans Hanna Algebra Assessment and have NWEA Math trend data at or above the 80th percentile will be placed in seventh grade pre-algebra.
 - c. Students who successfully complete the seventh grade pre-algebra course will take high school algebra as an eighth grade student.
6. Middle school principals may identify students who “just miss” the established NWEA criteria above for placement in a high ability course to maintain appropriate class sizes for both high ability and general education classes. The parent must be made aware that their child did meet the high ability criteria while still be allowed to participate in a high ability course.

New Students to Avon Schools

New Students Grades K-2

Only new students to 1st and 2nd grade will be assessed during this off year for High Ability Identification. A student will be screened using the following instruments:

- Language Arts Universal Screeners: letter naming fluency, phonemic segmentation fluency, nonsense word fluency
- Math Universal Screeners
- NWEA (Either the Survey with or without Goals may be utilized depending upon the time of year the student arrives.)
- CogAT Full Battery

Building administrators and counselors will determine qualification based upon a CogAT Full Battery Score at or above the 96th percentile range in reading, mathematics, or both, and/or NWEA assessment scores with a trend at or above the 95th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both. The student will be reflected as High Ability in the student data system. The student will then receive an enriched curriculum from the time of identification through the end of 2nd grade.

New Students Grades 3-4

Students new to 3rd or 4th grade will be assessed for High Ability Identification. A student will be screened using the following instruments:

- CogAT Full Battery
- NWEA

Building administrators and counselors will determine qualification based upon a CogAT Full Battery Score at or above the 96th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both and/or NWEA scores with a trend at or above the 95th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both. Once a student has been recognized as high ability, he/she will remain in high ability classes through the 8th grade.

New Students Grades 5-6

Students new to 5th or 6th grade will be assessed for High Ability Identification. A student will be screened using the following instruments:

- CogAT Full Battery
- NWEA

Building administrators and counselors will determine placement based upon the NWEA and CogAT criteria. Once a student has been recognized as high ability, he/she will not be re-identified.

New Students Grades 7-8

Students new to 7th or 8th grade will be assessed for High Ability Identification. A student will be screened using the following instruments:

- NWEA
- CogAT Full Battery

Building administrators and counselors will determine placement based upon the NWEA and CogAT criteria. Once a student has been recognized as high ability, he/she will not be re-identified.

Service Options

A comprehensive review of the research (Rogers, 2007) indicates that services leading to the greatest achievement gains for high ability students include the following:

- Acceleration: Opportunities for various forms of subject and grade acceleration as needed
- Differentiation: Differentiation in pace, amount of review and practice, focus on larger concepts, and interdisciplinary connections
- Daily Challenge: Opportunity for daily challenge in identified areas of high ability
- Ability Grouping: Opportunities for high ability learners to socialize and to learn with like-ability peers
- Independent Work: Opportunities to work independently in areas of passion and talent.

Services for students of high ability must be interrelated with the general education program. Services must be designed from a theoretical, research-based, and practical perspective. Programming and services must also reflect the knowledge of how students of high ability develop and learn. This programming must include appropriate curriculum, acceleration, instructional strategies, assessment, and evaluation. 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.

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

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

Grades K – 5 Service Options		
Options for services	Considerations	Added Cost
	Flexibility is key; different options might work in different grades for different students. Avoid having one “Program” which is the only option.	
Early entrance to kindergarten	Good for student who is HA, academically advanced, socially mature, independent, and motivated. Child may also need advanced curriculum and instruction in new grade placement. Use Iowa Acceleration Scale to facilitate decision making.	None
Skipping kindergarten for direct placement in first grade		
Grade skipping		
Subject skipping	Good for student who is achieving well beyond others in a single subject.	None
Cluster groups	This can be a practical solution when there are not enough students of high ability for a separate class. It is best that this class not also have another special needs group.	None
Ability grouped classes for students of high ability by subject area with HA licensed teachers	This can combine students who are of high ability in general intellectual area with those who are of high ability in a specific academic area.	None
Self-contained multi-age split	Fulltime placement with other students of high ability and differentiated curriculum and instruction by a High Ability licensed teacher produces the greatest academic gains for HA- students.	None if class sizes remain same
Fulltime, self-contained class with High Ability licensed teacher		
Individual options: internships, mentorships, distance learning, IEP	Can be used in combination with other options.	None

Grades 6 – 8 Service Options		
Options for services	Considerations	Added Cost
	Flexibility is key; different options might work in different grades for different students. Avoid having one “Program” which is the only option.	
Early entrance to high school	Some students can skip a full year or do a semester in seventh grade and a semester in eighth grade.	None
Grade or subject skipping - Some may be ready to skip a level or two of math, science, or foreign language.	The student should be allowed to go to the high school for certain subjects if needed; this option is called dual enrollment.	None
Special advanced classes or “honors” classes by subject with G/T licensed teachers	This can combine students who are HA in general intellectual with those who are HA in a specific academic area.	None

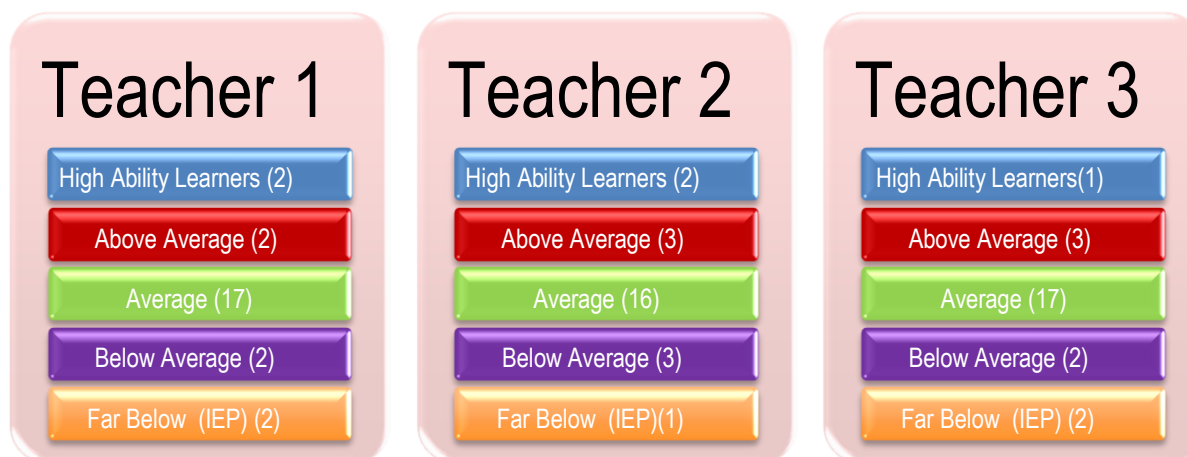
Grades 9-12 Service Options		
Options for services	Considerations	Added Cost
	Flexibility is key; different options might work in different grades for different students. Avoid having one “Program” which is the only option.	
Graduation before the senior year	Useful when a student can demonstrate academic functioning at the college level or has exhausted the most rigorous courses offered at the high school. Often these students have many years of college and advanced degrees ahead of them and have the maturity to begin that work early.	None, but revenue is lost per pupil enrollment in grade 12
Credit by examination	This is credit without seat time if proficiency is demonstrated.	None
Advanced or “Honors” classes by subject	The curriculum and expectations are more rigorous than the regular option.	None

Special classes that are interdisciplinary , teach subjects not usually taught in high school, or are seminars especially designed for students of high ability	Examples of these might include a double class in American history and literature or a philosophy course.	None
Distance learning classes from universities or Advanced Placement courses through distance learning	These require a student who is self-directed and a teacher who can monitor progress and provide onsite help.	Tuition for online courses
Dual enrollment in high school and college	Investigate the course requirements and any tuition required for credit. Be certain this is a better option than the more widely accepted Advanced Placement.	Tuition for university credit
Advanced Placement courses	Curriculum, teacher training, and exams offered by the College Board. These should be available prior to the senior year.	AP exam fees
Individual options: internships, mentorships, foreign study, IEP	Can be used in combination with other options.	None

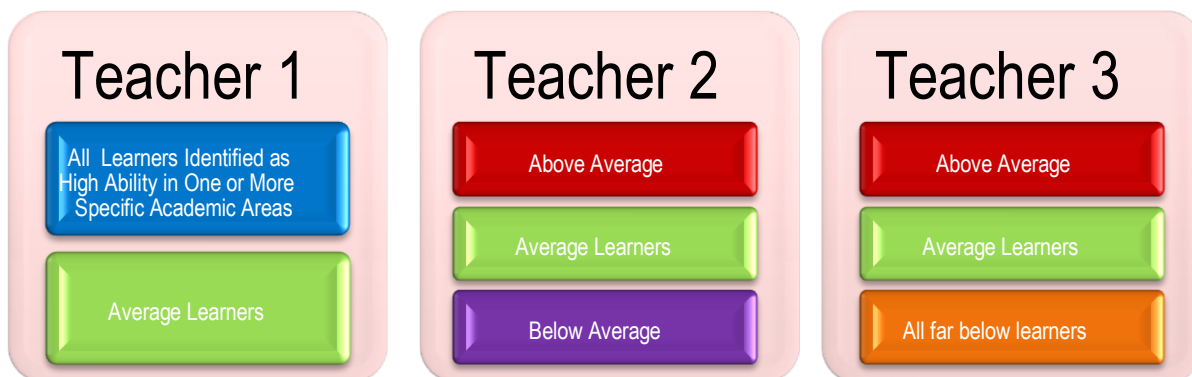
Cluster Grouping as One Service Option or Model for Services

Cluster grouping is a very popular service option in Indiana due to its versatility and ability to be used in small schools. As a result, a description of this service option is expanded upon below. When identifying students for the cluster groups, it is important to remember not to identify on the basis of achievement alone but rather to consider both high performance as well as the potential for high performance as required in the mandate for identifying and serving high ability students. Best practice would be to complete the formal identification process first and then determine cluster group placement after students have been formally identified.

The following diagram is an example for how three classrooms of 25 students each would be configured before grouping (assuming ability is normally distributed).



This second diagram illustrates the classroom configurations after purposeful grouping according to the Cluster grouping model.



Features:

All students are purposefully placed to reduce the number of instructional groups for all classrooms.

- All classes have strong students.
- All classes have average learners. When new students move in who are in the average range (68% of students are within one standard deviation of the mean), they could be placed in any of the classes thereby making sizes of classes able to be kept fairly even.
- The class that includes the lowest students is likely to have additional assistance available for those students in their core instruction (IEP's).
- No teacher has more than 3 instructional groups or the full range of learners.
- The class with the gifted learners should have only two instructional groups as that teacher will need to further differentiate within the gifted group and usually has the additional responsibility for developing curriculum for that group.
- If a student is identified as needing services just in language arts, depending on their math performance they could stay in the gifted classroom receiving instruction with the average math group during math time or they can go to one of the other classrooms for math with the above average math group during math time. Similarly for those just gifted in math and not in language arts.
- Only one teacher would have to have training in gifted education.

Rtl Process and Exit Procedures

If a student, parent, or teacher believes a high ability placement for services is no longer appropriate, he or she may do the following:

1. Arrange a conference with the parties involved, including the parent, administrator, and the teacher providing services. This conference may be a telephone conference.
2. Parent, student, teacher and administrator examine issues of concern and discuss interventions that may be implemented.
3. Participants agree on an Rtl plan not less than one semester to implement interventions.
4. At the end of the Rtl timeline, the parent, student, teacher and administrator meet to review progress and determine whether or not the student should exit services.
5. If an exit is deemed appropriate, the parent signs permission to remove the student from high ability placement and services.
6. Parent permission for exit and documentation of meetings/interventions are sent to the high ability coordinator.
7. High ability coordinator removes high ability flag for student in database.

The High Ability Exit Form can be found on the Avon Schools High Ability webpage at <http://www.avon-schools.org/Page/12835>.

Counseling Plan

The Avon High Ability Counseling Plan can be found at <http://www.avon-schools.org/Page/12835>.

Social and Emotional Challenges of the High Ability Student

There are a cluster of traits and issues that seem to have a higher incidence among HA students. Many of these are potential strengths. However, as with anything in life, if these tendencies are overly strong and hindering daily functioning (impacting eating, sleeping or social interactions), they may signal a problem that needs to be addressed. Small group and individual counseling may be available from your school counselor if you observe any of the following on an ongoing basis:

- Overexcitability
 - o Intense, almost exclusive focus on a particular topic
 - o Sensitivity to their environment (noise, light, taste, feel of certain clothing items and even allergies)
 - o Excess physical energy
 - o Vivid imagination and even dreams
 - o Heightened sensitivity to criticism, perfectionism
 - o Heightened awareness and intolerance for the discomfort of others (empathy for homelessness or animal abuse)
- Asynchronous Development
 - o While academic achievement is above grade level, emotional or physical development may be lagging behind that of peers.
 - o May engage in emotional outbursts despite obvious ability to reason verbally
 - o Struggle to interact with peers at the same emotional level if they aren't at the same intellectual level
 - o Generally, the greater the level of ability, the larger will be discrepancies.
- Perfectionism
 - o Unrealistically high standards for themselves and peers
 - o Fear of failure and avoidance of challenges because they believe others expect too much of them
 - o Procrastinating on projects due to feeling overwhelmed by their vision of what it should be
- Self-esteem and identity struggles
 - o Lack of understanding their own abilities
 - o Feeling different from peers
 - o Feeling at odds with gender role expectations

- The following are common to all children but with a higher incidence among high ability students:
 - Introversion
 - Peer pressure (desire to fit in is greater because they already feel different)
 - Bullying (can be targets for bullies or become bullies)
 - Competition
 - Social skills (due to overexcitabilities and asynchronous development)
 - Stress/anxiety
 - Accepting others who are different
 - Study habits (especially when they begin to be challenged at their true academic level after they have grown accustomed to 'coasting' because the work was easy)

Additional Resources Available

- “Guiding Students with High Abilities: Social and Emotional Considerations” is an IDOE resource available for download in a PDF in the Learning Connection and the IDOE High Ability website. This resource includes the following:
 - Chart of common characteristics of high ability students and their possible negative classroom manifestations.
 - Descriptions of Common Social and Emotional Issues faced by high ability students
 - Tips for parents, teachers, and counselors of high students
 - Resources for addressing the social and emotional needs of high ability students
- The Indiana Association for the Gifted provides resources for high ability coordinators and parents and teachers of high ability students. Visit www.iag-online.org.
- The organization SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted) has resources for addressing the social and emotional needs of high ability students. Visit www.sengifted.org.

Professional Development

Introduction and Rationale

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 thought out plan for professional development will move the district services forward.

All stakeholders will have an understanding of the following:

- the identification process that has been developed at the district level;
- the district design of student services;
- delivery of services for students that facilitate differentiation of student instruction through grouping and collaboration;
- student achievement data;
- training opportunities in gifted education to maximize both teacher and student performance;
- parental concerns about individual students; and
- the Counseling and Guidance Plan.

Program Evaluation

Introduction and Rationale

Avon will continually assess our program to develop and maintain optimal cognitive, social, and emotional development for their gifted students, districts need to continually assess their programs to look for areas of strengths, challenges, and potential recommendations for improvement. To that end, the Indiana Code calls for school districts who receive a grant for high ability programming to provide an annual report to the department with results of the programs for which the grant is used, including student general assessment results, program effectiveness, or student achievement. In addition to this annual report of program effectiveness, best practice in gifted education advises that programs and services for gifted students undergo formal evaluation by outside experts in the field approximately every five years (National Association for Gifted Children, 2001).

School Contact Information

<i>Grades K-4</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
Cedar Elementary	Kevin Gray	(317) 544-6200
Hickory Elementary	Keary Rininger	(317) 544-6300
Maple Elementary	Nikki Harrison	(317) 544-6400
Pine Tree Elementary	Karie Mize	(317) 544-6500
River Birch Elementary	Kris Kingery	(317) 544-6800
Sycamore Elementary	Nicole Harris	(317) 544-6600
White Oak Elementary	Nikki Harrison	(317) 544-6700

<i>Grades 5-6</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
Avon Intermediate School East	Jennifer Shayotovich	(317) 544-5800
Avon Intermediate School West	Amber Walters	(317) 544-5900

<i>Grades 7-8</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
Avon Middle School North	Susan Green	(317) 544-5500
Avon Middle School South	Dan Chapin	(317) 544-5700

<i>Grades 9-12</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
Avon High School	Matt Shockley	(317) 544-5000
Avon Advanced Learning Center	Frank Meyer (Asst. Principal)	(317) 544-5300

Avon Schools
Administration Center

High Ability Coordinator
Karen Oliver

Phone Number
(317) 544-6000

Resources for Parents

- Northwestern University Center for Talent Development offers high school credit courses online for grades 6-12. More information can be found on their website: <http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/gll/> .
- National Organization for the Gifted - <http://www.nagc.org/> : This site offers information on national and local conventions, updates on legislation, resources for school and community groups, as well as curriculum standards for school districts.
- The National Research Center on Gifted/Talented - www.gifted.uconn.edu/NRCGT : This site details findings from an ongoing longitudinal study of giftedness in children. Parent, school district, and research resources available.
- GT World - <http://gtworld.org/> : Authored by parents, this site offers numerous text resources, web links, and curricular ideas gathered by parents of GT students all over the world.
- Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted - <http://www.sengifted.org/> : Links to conferences, parent groups, text resources, and more regarding the emotional needs of gifted students.
- [National Association for Gifted Children - Homeschooling article](#)
- [High Anxiety article](#)
- Purdue University Gifted Education Resource Institute - Enrichment Programs
http://geri.education.purdue.edu/youth_programs/SSAT/index.html
- Indiana State Approved Course Titles and Descriptions <http://www.doe.in.gov/ccr/course-titles-and-descriptions>

Glossary of Terms

Ability Grouping: Students are grouped by ability and readiness level. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes. Ability grouping is NOT synonymous with "tracking."

Ability Test (also called a measure of potential or aptitude): Evaluating the potential performance of high ability students usually through the use of intelligence or cognitive ability tests that test more than one reasoning ability: verbal, quantitative and nonverbal.

Academic Excellence: Expecting each student to work at maximum level toward a set of external standards as defined by state, district, and/or school. Learning and performing for each student should be 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. Gifted students need more than just acceleration; they need enrichment of their learning experiences as well.

Achievement Test: A test that measures the extent to which a student has mastered the skills and knowledge of a particular subject and/or grade level.

Advanced Placement (AP): Any of the approximately 35 classes endorsed by the College Board in which a secondary student can earn college credit 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). AP Scores are in the range of 1-5, with scores of 3, 4, or 5 being highly correlated with college graduation.

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

Alternative Assessment: Assessments that provide additional information about a child's ability beyond what may be gleaned from traditional testing. Also referred to as other forms of assessment.

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.

Authentic Assessment: Process of evaluating student learning using student products or performance instead of traditional standardized tests.

Behavioral Rating Scale/Checklist: A checklist or scale that reports the frequency or extent to which an individual demonstrates specific actions or characteristics. Caution: When using these for identification, it is important that the items on the scale or checklist be relevant to the specific services to be provided.

Between-Class Grouping: The practice of "trading students" among teachers at a particular grade level so that each teacher has a narrower range of abilities for the chosen subject or topic.

Cluster Grouping: The practice of identifying a small group of high ability students at a grade level and placing them in the same classroom at that grade level with a teacher who is best suited and qualified to work with high ability students.

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 constitute the core curriculum.

Credit by Examination: The student is awarded advanced standing credit or the ability to be placed in a higher level class) by successfully completing some form of mastery test or activity.

Criterion-Referenced Test: A test to determine whether the student has achieved specific skills or concepts, such as grade level standards. Each individual is compared with a preset standard for acceptable achievement, not compared to other students. This type of test may limit the demonstration of knowledge for students with high ability.

Cross-Grade Grouping: The practice of placing students in a particular subject so that they are with other students who are ready for instruction at that particular grade level, regardless of their current grade in school.

Curriculum Compacting: A process used to give students validation for what they already know. It allows students who demonstrate mastery to omit portions of assigned curriculum, or to move more quickly through 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 & Instructional Strategies Plan: A plan that details how the curriculum and instruction are differentiated in breadth or depth of content to meet the needs of one or more high ability students in each grade level, K-12. It also indicates how the curriculum for high ability students is differentiated from the general education curriculum to promote such things as higher order thinking, decision making, creative problem solving, and effective researching. This should include a Scope and Sequence or Curriculum Map to show the K-12 articulation of the curriculum for high ability students.

Differentiation: Adapting the curriculum to meet the unique needs of learners by making modifications in complexity, depth, and pacing. It may include selecting, rather than covering all, the curriculum areas dependent on the individual needs of students. Differentiation in general can be by readiness, interest or learning style. However, when differentiating for students with advanced potential, curriculum and instruction should be at an appropriately high level of challenge first, and then can be further differentiated along other dimensions.

Disaggregated Data: Data that is separated by race, ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, language proficiency, gender, presence of an IEP, or accommodations.

Domain: "Domain" includes the following areas of aptitude and talent frequently covered in state definitions: general intellectual, creativity, specific academic, visual and performing arts, and leadership. Additional domains of talent may be mentioned in specific state definitions.

Dual/Concurrent Enrollment: This practice allows a student of high ability to attend classes in more than one building level during the school year and receive credit for a parallel course at a higher level. This can also be when high school students take high school and college classes simultaneously.

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

Early Graduation: Acceleration options have allowed the number of years a student spends in mastering the K – 12 curriculum to be shortened and makes possible early high school graduation.

Early Matriculation: Enrollment in college before completion of the usual seven or eight 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: Activities that supplement the core curriculum. Such activities may or may not be specified in the curriculum; they are frequently selected by the teacher and/or students in a given classroom. Enrichment, by itself, is not enough for high ability students. However, both enrichment and acceleration are elements of a good curriculum for high ability students.

General Intellectual: “General intellectual” means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to a broad array of disciplines.

Gifted and Talented: There is no single, widely accepted definition of “gifted” or “talented.” Identification criteria used to determine who will participate in services or programs may vary by state and/or by local district.

Governing Body: Local Education Agency or board of education (school board).

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

Guidance and Counseling Plan: The plan outlines the differentiated services within the district to meet the specific affective needs and educational career plans of the students of high ability. It may include topics such as:

- academic program planning,
- career & life planning,
- organization & 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. Homogeneous grouping is based on common criteria such as the students' interests, special needs, or academic abilities.

High Ability Student: This is sometimes a relative term; a sample definition would be: "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 interests.

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 when compared to the general education curriculum. Traditionally, students who meet prerequisite criteria are accepted into these courses. These courses may include students other than those identified as high ability by the school district.

Independent Study or Self-Directed Study: Allowing students to 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. It is good to have carefully constructed outlines of expectations and product rubrics to ensure rigor and the meeting of program goals.

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.

Individualized Education Plan/Program (IEP): A written document that describes how a student will access a variety of high ability services that may include the use of several service options.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ): 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 IQ as one of the many ways to measure a student's academic potential.

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. Programs are available for elementary and middle school, but these are not part of the diploma program.

Magnet School or Magnet Program: Many school districts, 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 high ability students. Since space is usually limited, special entrance requirements may apply.

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

Mentorships: The practice of placing a student with an expert or practicing professional in a particular area of interest to the student. The student would learn about or study the interest area intensely with the mentor. This is usually an option that occurs outside of the normal school day.

Multifaceted Assessment: means collecting and analyzing data to identify the educational needs of high ability students through the following:

- Performance-based assessment, which includes evaluating the performance of students involved in complex learning opportunities usually through the use of achievement tests.
- Potential-based assessment, which includes assessing verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal reasoning to evaluate the potential performance of high ability students. This evaluation can be through the use of instruments, such as standardized intelligence or cognitive ability tests.
- Other forms of assessment, frequently descriptive in nature and known as qualitative assessments. Qualitative measures such as rating scales, portfolios, structured observations or interviews can provide important information about advanced performance or advanced ability if they are selected/designed to provide information about abilities in areas of services provided.

Multifaceted Assessment Plan: outlines the instruments used to identify students of high ability and must include at least one norm-referenced performance-based measure, one norm referenced potential-based measure, and one other form of assessment.

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

Norm-Referenced Test: A test used to determine an individual's status with respect to the performance of other individuals on that 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 that is 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.

Portfolio Assessment: A collection of student products used to measure student progress and achievement. A collection of student products is often used to determine the appropriateness of placement. This practice allows students to demonstrate a wide variety of abilities and talents that traditionally are not measured well by standardized tests. Material in a portfolio may be student selected.

Potential-Based Assessment: Evaluating the potential performance of students of high ability through the use of instruments, such as: standardized intelligence tests or tests of verbal, quantitative and non-verbal reasoning.

Professional Development Plan: The plan describes the opportunities provided by the school district to promote professional growth in all areas of high ability services. This plan may include:

- assistance for personnel to attain university coursework or licensure in gifted education
- district in-services for teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and volunteers;

- staff release time for attending workshops, seminars, conferences, etc;
- resources within the corporation; and
- study groups within the corporation.

Program for Students of High Ability: “Program” means the range of educational services differentiated in depth and breadth designed to meet the needs of one or more students of high ability through activities such as compacting, acceleration, enrichment, critical thinking, and problem solving.

Pull-out Program: Students with advanced potential are pulled from their regular classrooms to work with each other and a resource teacher to facilitate accelerated and/or enriched learning experiences. To be effective in increasing student achievement in a particular subject area, this option needs to replace the regular grade level instruction in one or more areas of core curriculum and occur on a daily basis.

Qualitative Assessment: Measures that provide more descriptive information about a child’s ability or performance in a given area such as portfolio, rating scales. They are not tests.

Reliability: The consistency of an instrument/test over time; the accuracy and repeatability of a measurement.

Screening Measure: A brief, less reliable instrument used to find the top 20-25% of each demographic subgroup that will take a longer identification measure.

Self-Contained Classroom: A programmatic term defining a homogeneous setting of students with common needs and/or abilities. The class can include multiple grades or ages.

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

Specific Academic: One of the domains of high ability. “Specific academic” means 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.

Stakeholder: Persons with interest in the programming for students of high ability; e.g. administrators, school board members, community members.

Stakeholder Planning Committee: means a diverse group with representation from educators, parents, students, community members, and other stakeholders; organized for the purposes of planning and development of programs for students of high ability.

Standardized Test: A standardized test is one that is administered under standardized or controlled conditions that specify where, when, how, and for how long children may respond to the test items. Standardized tests should meet acceptable standards for technical qualities in construction, administration, and use.

Subject-based Acceleration: Any option that allows a gifted student to gain exposure to advanced content and skills beyond the average curriculum standards that are expected for a certain age or grade.

Subject Skipping: Allows a student to be placed in classes with older students for part of the day (or with materials from higher grade placements) in one or more subject areas.

Systematic Program Assessment Plan: The plan shows the procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the district's program for high ability services. It may include topics such as:

- schedule for reviewing and updating the current program,
- instruments and methods for evaluating program effectiveness,
- procedures for data collection, and
- recommendations for change.

Twice-Exceptional: Students with needs and characteristics of more than one special population, e.g. gifted and learning disabled.

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.