



Community School Corporation of Southern Hancock County

High Ability Program Manual

2017-2018

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Introduction

The Community School Corporation of Southern Hancock County is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence for each and every student we serve. It is in this light that this document has been created to outline procedures and guidelines for serving our High Ability students and their families.

This document will be periodically updated in order to reflect current and innovative best practice, as well as to be in compliance with state and federal guidelines.

Mission and Belief Statements

Mission:

The purpose of Southern Hancock Schools is to work collaboratively with community stakeholders to develop in each student the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make them productive members of society. Southern Hancock recognizes that some students perform at or show potential for performing at an outstanding academic level. These students exist in grades K-12, come from all socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, and exhibit needs in academic and affective (social/emotional) domains which are to be met through a variety of environments and learning opportunities.

Belief Statements:

1. High Ability students have many social, emotional, and academic needs that make them unique and different. These characteristics should be celebrated and nurtured.
2. High Ability students need opportunities to work in various environments and group constructs in order to grow as individuals and influence peers in a positive way while being part of a larger community.
3. High Ability students should be challenged daily with maximum opportunities to achieve in a variety of areas that promote growth.
4. Learning opportunities should engage students with depth, integration, and practical learning across the curriculum.
5. The parents of High Ability students should be integral partners in the educational process at home and school.

Federal and State Law

The Indiana Department of Education requires school districts to identify High Ability students, K-12, and provide them with appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction. Specifically:

IC 20-36-2-2 School corporation high ability programs; criteria

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

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

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

(3) Professional development.

(4) Development and implementation of local services for high ability students, including appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in the core academic areas designated by the state board for each grade consistent with federal, state, local, and private funding sources.

(5) Evaluation of the local program for high ability students.

As added by P.L.1-2005, SEC.20. Amended by P.L.84-2007, SEC.3.

Characteristics of High Ability Students

The state of Indiana defines a High Ability (gifted) student as one who: *“performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment; and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.”*

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) defines gifted students as *“those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude or competence in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system and/or set of sensorimotor skills.”*

Dr. Bertie Kingore lists 7 characteristics of gifted individuals:

- Advanced Language
- Accelerated Learning*
- Analytical Thinking
- Meaning Motivation
- Perspective
- Sense of Humor
- Sensitivity

High Achieving vs High Ability

High Achieving	High Ability
Performs at the top of the group	Is BEYOND the group
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-3 repetitions for mastery
Comprehends at a high level	Comprehends COMPLEX ideas
Enjoys age peers	Enjoys INTELLECTUAL peers
Is receptive	Is INTENSE
Absorbs information	PROCESSES information
Is pleased with own learning	Is SELF-CRITICAL
Memorizes well	GUESSES AND INFERS well
Learns with ease	ALREADY knows
Is attentive	Is SELECTIVELY mentally engaged
Is interested	Is CURIOUS
Grasps the meaning	Infers and CONNECTS concepts

Adapted from the work of Dr. Bertie Kingore

Identification Procedures and Timeline

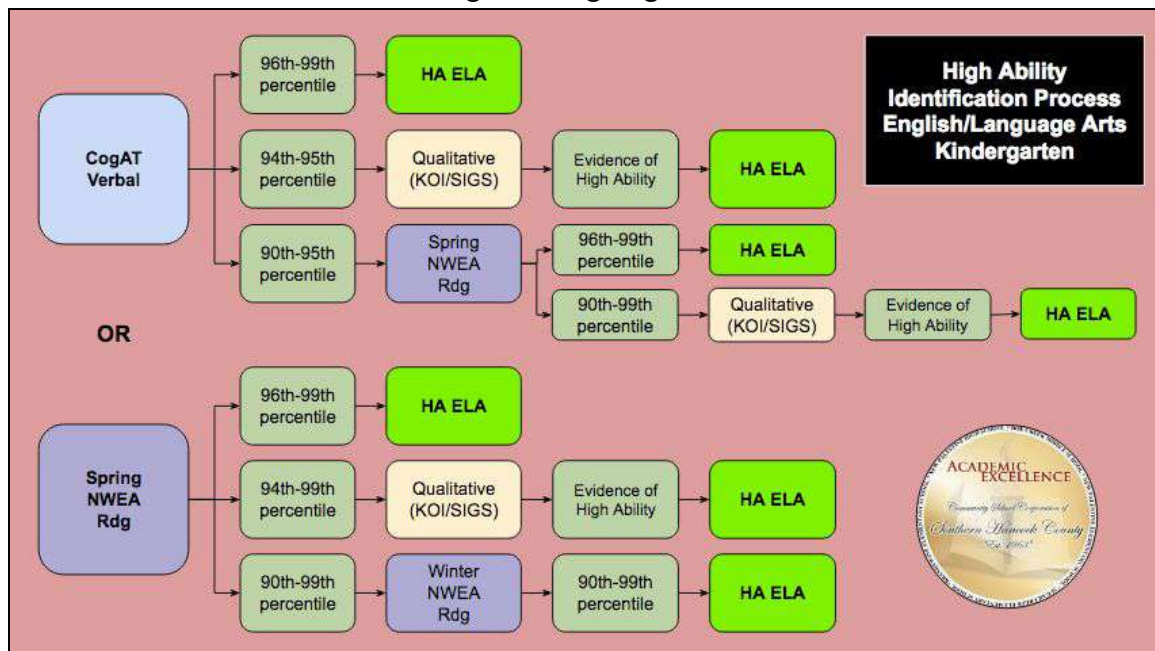
Southern Hancock uses norm-referenced tests and qualitative measures to identify high ability students K-12. Students in Kindergarten, 2nd and 6th grades will participate in a formal identification procedure.

Testing instruments utilized include:

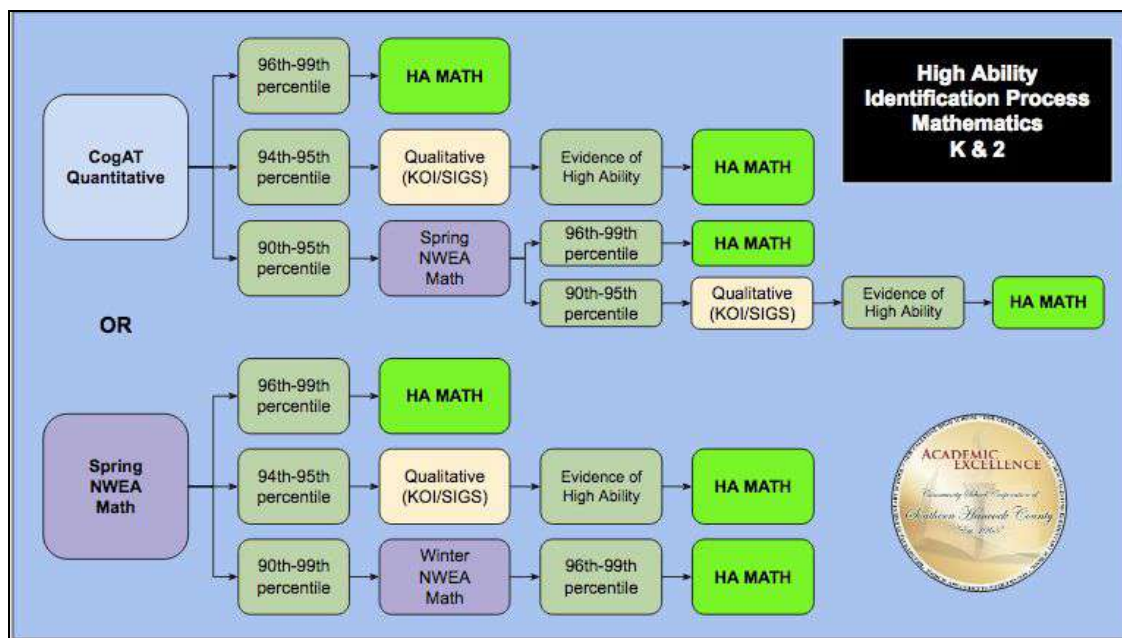
- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
 - Given to each Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 6th grade students
 - Measures cognitive ability
 - Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal measures
- NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
 - Given 3 times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)
 - Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics
- Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI)
 - 6th grade students observed over 6 week period
 - Looking for gifted characteristics in daily classroom activities
- Kingore Planned Activities
 - Kindergarten and 2nd grade
 - Activities specifically designed to elicit gifted characteristics
 - Scored collaboratively
- Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)
 - Utilized when more information is needed on a given student
 - Rating scales completed by staff and parents

Kindergarten and 2nd Grade ID Flowcharts:

English Language Arts

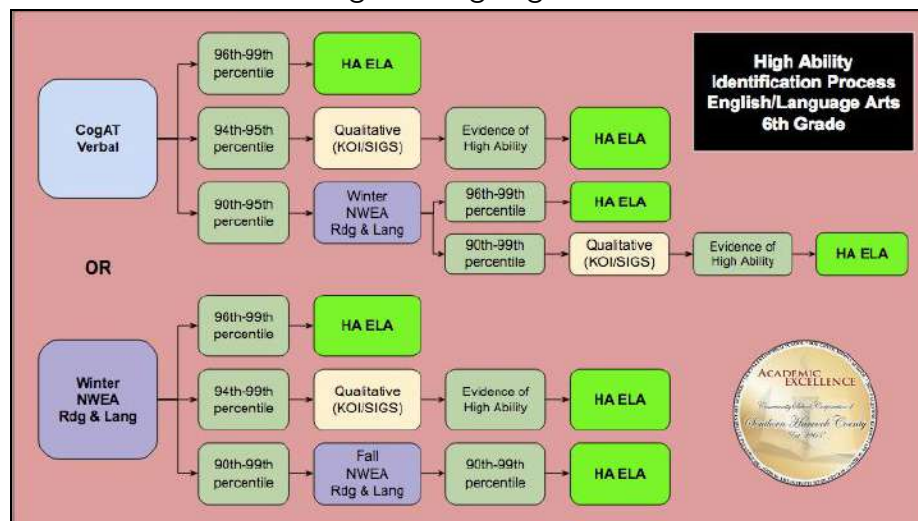


Mathematics

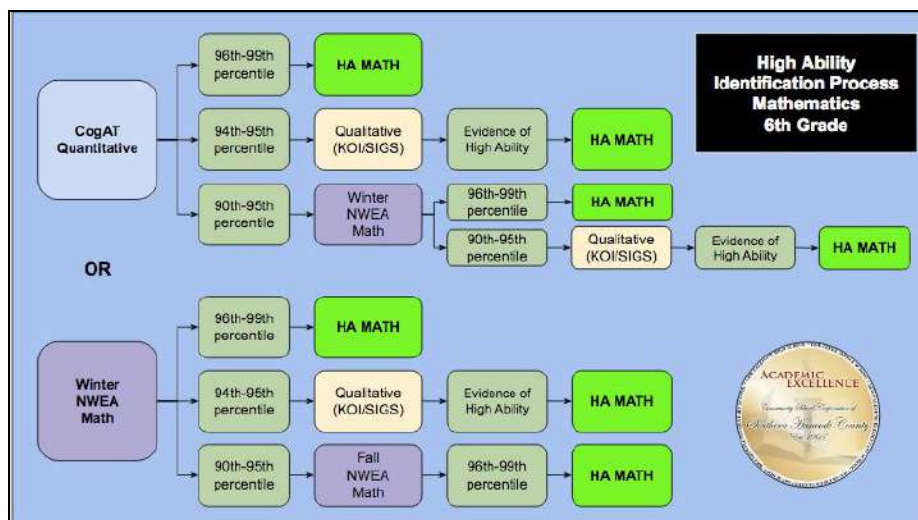


6th Grade ID Flowcharts:

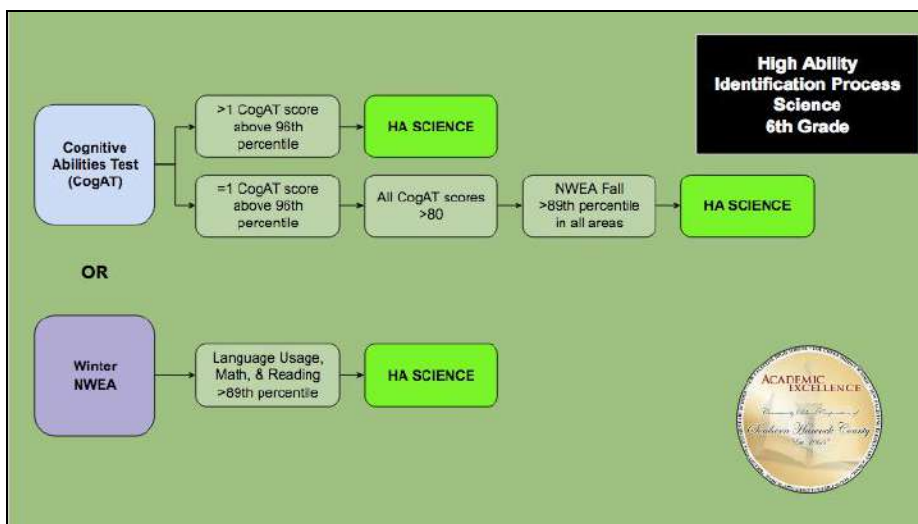
English Language Arts



Mathematics



Science



Proposed Identification Timeline

August/September

- Fall NWEA

October

- Train teachers in facilitating Kingore Planned Activities and Observation Inventory
- Kingore Planned Activities (Grades K & 2)

November

- Kingore Observation Inventory (Grade 6)

December

- Winter NWEA

January

- CogAT given to students in grades K, 2, and 6

March

- Spring NWEA
- Identify High Ability students in Grade 6

April/May

- Identify High Ability students in Grades K and 2
- Identification letters sent to parents

**Subject to change based on state guidelines*

Notification to Parents

Once students have been identified by the selection committee, letters will be sent home to parents. The letter will explain the reason for identification, as well as provide information about programming that can be expected for their child.

Option to Waive Services

Parents can choose not to enroll their child in the High Ability (HA) program. Before making this decision, the parent should be informed of the benefits of High Ability services and of the potential difficulties that often accompany the lack of such services. After this information is provided, the parent may choose to waive HA services. If a parent decides to waive HA services, the school corporation should keep written documentation of that decision with the parent's signature and date the decision was made.

When a parent declines participation, the district retains a responsibility to ensure that the student has an equal opportunity to have his or her academic needs met.

Appeal Procedures

Parents are encouraged to use the appeal process if they have concerns with their child's current high ability identification. Parents of new students and non-identifying grade levels (1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th) who have concerns about their child's identification may fill out the Parent-Input Form to provide more information. These forms will be submitted and reviewed by the identification committee.

[Parent Input Form](#)

Exiting from Services

A student's admission and continuation in the High Ability program is based on several factors, including test scores, classroom performance, participation, teacher/parent input, and overall academic progress and benefit to the student. High Ability programs are designed to meet the needs of high-performing students.

However, there are times when students, parents, and staff consider whether a High Ability placement is appropriate for individual students. These considerations could be due to a lack of academic progress, behavioral concerns, social/emotional issues, etc.

In those cases, it is important that the following take place:

- All stakeholders work collaboratively to address the concerns.
- A review process must be executed
 - Parent and teacher have been in contact multiple times and have attempted to address the situation.
 - If initial communications do not resolve the concerns, the parent, student (if applicable), teacher, counselor (if applicable), building principal, High Ability Coach and/or Coordinator (if applicable) will meet, during which a written intervention plan will be created and implemented.
 - Parents and staff will have regular communication about the progress of the plan.
 - At the end of the period, the team will reconvene to discuss the student's classroom performance.
 - At this point, the team will make a decision on how to progress.
 - If there is disagreement about the decision, the parent has the right to submit a letter to the High Ability Coordinator for review.
- At any point, if the parent and/or student chooses to re-enter the program, they may contact their teacher for evaluation.

[High Ability Intervention Plan](#)

Continuum of Services

Southern Hancock seeks to serve students grades K-12 that perform, or show potential to perform, with general academic High Ability in Mathematics and Language Arts within the regular classroom. Students will be offered a variety of services in the form of acceleration, enrichment*, and differentiated instruction within the general education classroom. All academic instruction for High Ability is during the regular school day. Academic competition teams meet before or after school hours.

Elementary high ability students are served within regular classrooms with teachers who have training/interest in High Ability. In the middle school, High Ability students will be served in honors specific subject area classrooms. In the high school, High Ability students will be serviced by honors courses along with AP courses and they can earn dual credit*. The AP and/or dual credit* courses available are in Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, and US History.

Elementary Programming

In the elementary buildings (K-6), the following opportunities are available:

- All classes 1-6 utilize a cluster model
- Early entrance to Kindergarten
- Grade skipping*
- Curriculum compacting
- After school enrichment* activities
- Differentiated instruction within general education classroom
- Affective (social/emotional) lessons with school social worker
- Academic competition teams

Middle School Programming

At Doe Creek Middle School (7-8), the following opportunities are available:

- Honors courses in Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science
- Curriculum compacting
- Single subject acceleration
- Career Counseling (course selection)
- Academic competitions
- Differentiated instruction within general education classroom

High School Programming

At New Palestine High School (9-12), the following services are offered:

- Honors courses in Language Arts, Science, and Mathematics
- Dual Enrollment
- Advanced Placement* (AP) courses in English, Math, US History, Psychology and Science
- Internships
- Early graduation
- Differentiated instruction within general education classroom
- Career/College Counseling

Early Entrance into Kindergarten

If a child does not meet the required birth date to enter Kindergarten in the fall the parent may petition with an Early Entrance* document. The parent will need to fill out the form and notify the school during regular Kindergarten Round-Up or registration. The child will be administered a test to see if they are ready for the academic and social demands of Kindergarten. The parent will be notified of the decision.

[Early Entrance into Kindergarten \(EARLY ENTRANCE FORM\)](#)

Social and Emotional Needs of High Ability Students

Southern Hancock recognizes that High Ability learners have unique needs socially, emotionally, and academically.

- At the elementary level, the classroom teacher serves as the primary provider of counseling and guidance services to the student. Issues unique to High Ability students are addressed individually and/or in activities for their cluster groups*. The services of the school social worker and other trained personnel can be accessed as needed. Resources of additional information that might be helpful to parents of High Ability learners are shared as appropriate.
- At the secondary level, a trained guidance counselor enhances the services provided in addition to their classroom teachers. Counseling is directed at college and career opportunities as well as academic options during the high school years such as Advanced Placement*, dual credit*, etc. Social and emotional issues are addressed on an individual or group basis. Referrals are made to specialized school services personnel and community resources as needed.

Professional Learning and Certification

Southern Hancock Schools believes in the power of professional learning. We will continue to provide professional learning opportunities to each staff member who serves High Ability learners. These opportunities may include:

- Outside consultants
- Workshops facilitated by High Ability Coach, High Ability Coordinator, and/or teachers
- High Ability professional learning opportunities provided outside of the district (ie. conferences, workshops, Indiana Department of Education)

Southern Hancock Schools, in conjunction with an outside consultant, have created a series of modules which, when completed, will allow staff members to be district-certified in the area of High Ability. These modules include:

- What is High Ability?
- Characteristics of High Ability Students
- Curriculum for High Ability Students
- Managing the Classroom to Meet the Needs of High Ability Students
- Instructional Strategies for High Ability Students

At this time, it is not a requirement, but it is a recommendation that teachers of High Ability students complete the modules.

Teachers also have the option to pursue Gifted Education licensing at the university and state level.

Broad-Based Planning Committee

The Broad-Based Planning Committee (BBPC) is a group of stakeholders enlisted to help guide High Ability programming for the district. They will meet multiple times over the course of the school year. The members of the committee include:

- Students
- Parents
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Social Workers

Program Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of the High Ability Program is necessary to maintain a successful trajectory. Administrators, teachers, and members of the Broad-Based Planning Committee are continually evaluating progress and programming to determine the highest priorities for the program and students.

It is important to have a periodic evaluation conducted by outside experts. In November 2015, Southern Hancock Schools contracted Susan Brady, Educational Consultant for High Ability Programming, to conduct such an evaluation. Several program areas were evaluated, including:

- Program Design
- Identification
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Guidance and Counseling
- Professional Development
- Program Evaluation

Parent Resources

The following links are helpful to parents of high ability children:

- [Growth Mindset for Parents](#)
- [Tips for Counselors and Teachers](#)
- [Tips for Parents](#)
- [Parent Guide to High Ability Education and Advocacy](#)
- [National Association for Gifted Children](#)
- [Indiana Association for the Gifted](#)
- [Hoagie's Gifted Education Page](#)
- [Office of High Ability Education - IN Department of Education](#)

Glossary of Terms

Accelerated Learning - Pacing students through the curriculum at a rate appropriate to their advanced ability. Students may or may not be formally identified as High Ability to participate in some forms of accelerated learning.

Advance College Project (ACP) - An Indiana University dual credit program. See Dual Credit below.

Advanced Placement - Any courses 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).

Cluster Grouping - Grouping of several High Ability students in a regular classroom with students from a variety of ability or achievement levels.

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. In Indiana Administrative Code, "Differentiated" means providing tiered levels of services for all educational needs.

Dual Credit - Students earn both high school and college credit while enrolled in a course.

Early Entrance - when students begin their elementary school or college education prior to the designated chronological age of entrance.

Enrichment - Activities that 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.

Flexible 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."

General Intellectual - understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to a broad array of disciplines.

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

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 interests.
(Indiana Code 20-36-1-3)

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.

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.

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.

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.

Adapted in part from the Indiana Association for the Gifted (IAG) Resource Guide for Indiana Parents and Teachers, 2nd Edition R

Appendix

[High Ability Intervention Plan](#)

[Parent Input Form](#)

[Early Entrance into Kindergarten Form](#)

Contact Information

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