

North Newton School Corporation High Ability Program Manual



2019- 2020

Mission Statement

The mission of North Newton School Corporation is dedicated to excellence in education, challenging students and staff to meet their full potential.

The North Newton School Corporation's High Ability program fosters creativity through differentiated curriculum and learning experiences to inspire higher-level thinking, which ensures that students reach their full potential.

Educate * Engage * Empower

*board approved July 8, 2019

North Newton School Corporation

High Ability Programming

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Purpose of this Manual

The information in this manual describes the high ability academic programming, information on identification, curriculum and instructional, social and emotional plans, program assessment, and professional development for teachers who teach high ability students and for students with the potential for performing at a High Ability at North Newton School Corporation. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a resource to parents and staff for use in understanding the corporation's procedures and program offerings for high ability students.

Broad Based Planning Committee (BBPC)

The Indiana Administrative Code requires the existence of a Broad-Based Planning Committee for High Ability. “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.

The BBPC represents stakeholders in high ability programming and its purpose is to review the implementation of the services and programs for high ability students. The committee serves as the:

- 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 continuous 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:

- Review the five required written plans that are to be available for public inspection (511 IAC 6-9.1-1)
 - Multifaceted Identification Plan
 - Curriculum & Instructional Strategies Plan
 - Counseling & Guidance Plan
 - 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 five plans.

High Ability Identification in Indiana

Because there are many components to being high ability, it is very important that schools identify these learners as soon as possible. How does this process work in Indiana?

According to PL 221, Indiana schools are required to meet the needs of all learners, including those with high ability. Every child is entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education.

The following is an excerpt from the document, “Identifying Students with High Abilities In Indiana”, a publication of the Department of Education:

“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 and demographics.

The Indiana Code defines a student with high abilities 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).”*

Retrieved from: <http://www.doe.in.gov/highability>

Multifaceted Identification Plan

Research supports a set of specific procedures for identifying students with high abilities in an equitable, fair, valid, and defensible way. High ability manifests itself differently in different cultures or socioeconomic groups. Multiple criteria are used including student achievement, student ability, and parent and teacher observations.

Definition of a High Ability Student A high ability student is one who: "performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in either or both verbal and quantitative domains when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and whose educational needs and/or individual academic growth cannot be met through grade level curriculum."

Step One: Initial Screening for High Ability All students in Kindergarten, 2nd, and 5th grades are screened using the CogAT.

Step Two: Formation of a Talent Pool Students in grades K through 6 who meet 3 out of the 5 following criteria are placed in the talent pool. Information will be on a data sheet, numbers will be assigned and names removed.

- CogAT score in the 8th or 9th stanine
- NWEA diagnostic testing data above grade level
- Pass + score on Math/English Language Arts on iLearn
- Teacher referral using the SIGS
- Lexile/F&P Reading level

Step Three: Determinations by the Identification Committee The identification committee will include three teachers, school principal, and high ability coordinator will review all students in talent pool for consideration. Placement determinations are made with final approval of the school principal.

Step Four: Parent Notification Parents receive notification of placement. Parent information meetings are held for parents of NEWLY identified students. Parents may accept or decline placement.

Step Five: Final Placement and Building Notification Placements are finalized. Teachers receive all of the testing information on their students. Assessments will be placed in permanent record file.

Step Six: Appeal Process If either party (parents/student or teacher/administrator) disagrees with the placement decision, the party may appeal the decision in writing to the high ability program coordinator.

Identification Instruments

Instrument	Measurement of Criterion Reference:	Purpose	Instructional Implications	Grade Levels
CogAT	Verbal/ non-verbal reasoning skills	Determine potential	Identification of students for remediation, talent development, high ability programming	K, 2, 5
iLearn	Achievement of academic standards	Determine mastery of grade level standards in math, ELA, and reading,	Identification of students for remediation, talent development, high ability programming	3-8
SIGS (Teachers)	Norm Referenced: characteristics of general intellect, math, and ELA	Analysis of high ability students' characteristics	Identify students in need of high ability services	K-6
NWEA	Norm Referenced	Achievement of academic standards	Identification of students for remediation, talent development, high ability	K-6
F&P/NWEA	Norm Referenced	Reading Lexile		K-6

Characteristics of High Ability Students

Note: Not all High Ability students will have all the characteristics, and some students will show some of these characteristics, and not be considered a High Ability student.

- Reads intensively at an accelerated rate.
- Has extensive vocabulary, background knowledge in a particular area, and memory of detail.
- Solves problems involving critical thinking
- Intuitive and enjoys logic and puzzles
- Grasps the big picture and concepts; forms connections
- Long attention span
- Extremely sensitive and/or introverted
- Intense energy level and talks fast
- Thinks outside the box and is creative
- Sense of humor
- Curious, observant
- Perfectionist

- Interest in complex games, fantasy and/or non-fiction
- Observes before participating
- Intense sense of morality
- Leadership potential
- Learns easily and gains new information rapidly
- High critical thinking skills
- Self-motivated and works independently

Source: <http://www.iag-online.org/resources/IAG-Parent-Guide-12-11.pdf>

Identification Committee

An identification committee will be established to review qualitative and quantitative data. The identification committee will include three teachers, school principal, and high ability coordinator. The committee will review all students in the talent pool for consideration. Placement determinations are made with final approval of the school principal.

To ensure student confidentiality, all student names will be omitted and decisions for identifying students as having the potential to perform at a high ability will be based solely on qualitative and quantitative data. Students will be identified in the areas of Mathematics, English Language Arts, or General Intellectual.

Letters will be sent to parents informing them of their child's identification as having the potential for performing at a high ability in math, English Language Arts, or General Intellectual and placement in a cluster classroom. Parents will sign and return a permission letter granting participation in the North Newton High Ability program. It is the parents' right to refuse High Ability Services. If parents do not agree with the identification decision made by the committee, they may appeal the decision in writing to the High Ability Coordinator. (See Appendix A)

High Ability Program Services Overview

K	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom Leveled Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math
1	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom (Cluster Grouping when possible) Leveled Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math
2	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom (Cluster Grouping when possible) Use of Leveled Text in Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math-Advanced Math
3	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom (Cluster Grouping when possible) Use of Leveled Text in Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math-Advanced Math

4	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom (Cluster Grouping when possible) Use of Leveled Text in Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math-Advanced Math
5	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom (Cluster Grouping when possible) Use of Leveled Text in Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math-Advanced Math
6	Differentiation within the Full-day Classroom (Cluster Grouping when possible) Use of Leveled Text in Reading & Flexible Grouping for Math-Advanced Math
7	High Ability Pre-algebra, High Ability Language Arts, High Ability Social Studies, and High Ability Science
8	Algebra I for High School credit, STEM, High Ability Language Arts, High Ability Social Studies, and High Ability Science

North Newton High School 9-12

English	Math	Science	Social Studies
AP / Dual Credit Honors 9, 10	AP / Dual Credit Calculus Honors Geometry Honors Algebra 2 Pre- Calculus	AP Biology Environmental Science	AP / Dual Credit US History

High Ability Programming Exit Process

Students, parents, and teachers may initiate exiting procedures when high ability programming is no longer appropriate. Parents of a student receiving high ability programming who wish to withdraw/exit their student from the program due to personal or academic reasons may notify the committee in writing at any time. If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request.

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

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 a Response to Instruction (RTI) plan not less than one semester to implement interventions.
4. At the secondary level, if a parent wishes to opt their child out of honors or AP, a meeting of the parent, student, teacher, administrator and guidance counselor should happen immediately.
5. At the end of the RTI Timeline, the parent, student, teacher and administrator meet to review progress and determine whether or not the student should exit services.
6. If an exit is deemed appropriate, the parent signs permission to remove the student from high ability placement and services. (See Appendix C)
7. Parent permission for exit and documentation of meetings/interventions are sent to the high ability coordinator.
8. High ability coordinator removes high ability flag for student in database.

Curriculum and Instructional Strategies Plan

The Plan for Curriculum and Instruction is constructed at the district level and details specifically how the curriculum and instruction are differentiated in breadth, depth of content, and materials used to meet the needs of one or more high ability students within each grade level. It includes English Language Arts and Math, K-12. It shows how the curriculum for high ability students is differentiated from the general education curriculum to promote such things as higher order thinking, creative problem solving, and effective researching. Content is both accelerated and enriched.

Continuum of Services

The North Newton School Corporation offers a continuum of services for high ability students in grades K-12. Below is a description of many of the options available to high ability students.

Level One	Level Two:	Level Three:	Level Four:
Services for ALL Students	Services for MANY Students	Services for SOME Students	Services for a FEW Students
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Workstations <input type="checkbox"/> Guided Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> IXL K-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Differentiated Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> IXL K-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Counts <input type="checkbox"/> Exact Path <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible Grouping	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic teams <input type="checkbox"/> Battle of the Books 3-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Math Bowl 4-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Spell Bowl 4-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Science Bowl 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Super Bowl 6-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Quiz Bowl 9-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Student Council 4-12 <input type="checkbox"/> School Clubs <input type="checkbox"/> Solo and Ensemble 7-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Drama 9-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Jazz Choir 9-12 <input type="checkbox"/> National Honor Society <input type="checkbox"/> Associates Degree Program	<input type="checkbox"/> High Ability Clusters 1-6 (must qualify through identification process) <input type="checkbox"/> High Ability small groups intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Honors <input type="checkbox"/> Early Entrance <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Placement(AP) <input type="checkbox"/> Cluster Grouping High Ability Classes 6-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Early Graduation <input type="checkbox"/> Advance College Project and other dual credit opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Study Algebra-8 th gr. <input type="checkbox"/> College classes <input type="checkbox"/> Grade Skipping

Policy for Whole Grade Acceleration

North Newton School Corporation strives to provide every child, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, or giftedness access to a challenging, standards-based curriculum. Research shows that students develop at different rates, and some students can exceed grade-level proficiency long before their age peer group. With this in mind, North Newton strives to ensure that every student is provided the opportunity to fully develop his/her intellectual, creative, and academic capabilities. In order to meet these needs, whole-grade acceleration may be an alternative to what is considered the normal academic tracks.

Whole-Grade Acceleration

“Acceleration is really about letting students soar. Acceleration is a strategy that respects individual differences and acknowledges the fact that some of the differences merit educational flexibility.” - Kumar Singam

Whole grade acceleration, or grade skipping, is not appropriate for every high ability student. Acceleration must match the readiness and motivation of the student. Parents must ask themselves if they truly believe their child is mature enough to handle the advanced curriculum. Parents must also be ready to accept that accelerated students will be exposed to social topics of older students at an earlier age, and will need to evaluate whether their child will be able to interact successfully with older students. Parents should talk to their child to be sure the child is on board with the whole-grade acceleration.

Steps to Whole-Grade Acceleration K-8

1. A written request is submitted to the building principal.
2. An acceleration evaluation committee is formed consisting of the building principal, the student's current teacher, the high ability coordinator, and a teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated. The building guidance counselor may also be included if there is a guidance counselor on staff.
3. The committee will evaluate the students for whole-grade acceleration based upon both qualitative and quantitative student data.
4. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached, the acceleration will proceed if a two-thirds majority of the committee recommend the placement. The decision of the committee is to be considered final.
5. A written decision will be sent to the building principal and to the student's parents or legal guardians.

6. A transition period of nine weeks will be allowed, in which time the parents or teachers involved have the opportunity to request in writing that the accelerated student be placed back in his/her original grade level.
7. After the transition period of nine weeks, the acceleration is considered a permanent placement.

Counseling and Guidance Plan

The social and emotional health of high ability students is very important to the staff at North Newton School Corporation. It is important that the affective goals of students be attended to as well as the cognitive and academic goals. These may include issues dealing with self-esteem, peer pressure, competitiveness, perfectionism, and social skills- all of which high ability students may sometimes have difficulties with.

Ideal practices for meeting the unique needs of students with high abilities must include classroom and guidance efforts differentiated to meet the socio-emotional needs of high ability students. Teachers may coordinate and facilitate whole group, small group and individual lessons for students based on need.

Teachers will have ongoing consultation with the school counselor and students. High ability students will be provided guidance services to address their affective needs through a guidance counselor, or the school counselor can provide ongoing consultation with the classroom teacher, students, and parents.

Teachers will support high ability students by facilitating the needed response that addresses the specified area at issue. These students may require Response to Instruction (RtI) plans that documents the goals and progress made.

High ability students will be provided with career guidance that is designed to meet their individual needs based on their individual talents and strengths. High ability learners are often multi-talented, and this can create more difficulty in making career decisions. Special care should be taken to ensure students are given the opportunity to explore career possibilities to assist them in aligning these possibilities with interests and abilities. Assistance is often needed to recognize where interests and abilities might be used in college planning and career decision-making. Such assistance may include:

- Mentoring opportunities.

- Career shadowing opportunities.
- Pre-college opportunities, such as dual enrollment in college courses or academic summer programs/ camps in the college setting.
- Knowledge of college selection and application process.
- Knowledge of financial assistance opportunities.
- Information on talent search programs and opportunities for gifted students, such as Midwest Talent Search through the Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University (<http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/>).

Program Evaluation Plan

Indicators of program effectiveness need to be in place at the classroom, building, and district levels. Program effectiveness can also be examined through the lens of program accountability at the classroom, building, and district levels.

In the classroom:

Are there opportunities for students to achieve above grade level?

Are classroom activities and assessments differentiated for students who can achieve at advanced levels?

At the building level:

Are the teachers effective in differentiating to meet the needs of high ability students?

Are measures of growth for high ability students documented?

Is professional development in high ability education provided or offered for teachers?

Finally, at the district level, policies can be reviewed to determine what is in place with regard to identification and services for high ability students. The curriculum may also be reviewed for vertical articulation of grades K-12, that includes both accelerated and enriched opportunities for high ability learners.

Professional Development Plan

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.

Groups or individuals that will need professional development:

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

The Coordinator and the K-12 teachers who are assigned to provide core content instruction for students identified as having high ability will need the most in-depth knowledge of gifted education. These individuals should have or be working toward having a High Ability License. This license is added to an existing teaching license in the State of Indiana. Professionals seeking this License need to take the coursework required by a university accredited to provide such coursework by the Indiana Department of Education and to pass a proficiency exam determined by the IDOE.

All coordinators and teachers of high ability students need to demonstrate their understanding of the characteristics and needs of gifted children, identification practices and procedures that are based on best practice and consistent with Indiana Code, how to structure services for students with high ability that will demonstrate program effectiveness, and how to develop and assess curriculum and instruction that is appropriately differentiated for students with high ability.

Building principals and other administrators need professional development, as they have the following responsibilities related to high ability students:

- Understanding the identification process that has been developed at the district level
- Aligning the implementation of student services with the district design
- Facilitating delivery of services for students, such as scheduling classes to facilitate differentiation of student instruction through grouping and collaboration
- Providing leadership in analysis of student achievement data

- Providing in-depth training opportunities in gifted education to maximize both teacher and student performance
- Addressing parental concerns about appropriate academic challenge for individual students.

Counselors need an understanding of the characteristics and needs of high ability students. They need to understand how those characteristics may manifest in terms of behavior and the associated issues faced for those students; this includes students who are both high ability and have another area of difference that may cause them to go unrecognized as having advanced potential (referred to as Twice Exceptional Learners). Counselors need to know appropriate strategies for addressing those needs and issues, and then build effective curriculum across grade levels that will systematically address those concerns. In addition, high ability students have different needs for college and career guidance; counselors need to know how to differentiate guidance for these students in order for them to develop to their advanced potential.

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

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

2019-2020 Professional Development Plan

Summer	September/October	November	December
High Ability Literacy from IDOE	PD on Leveled Reading Instruction High Ability Boot Camp	PD on Differentiated Instruction	Teachers and HA Coordinator attend IAG Conference
January	February	March	April/May
PD on how to use Formative Assessment	CogAT training	CogAT administration training	HA Identification training

Appendix A: Appeal Forms

**NORTH NEWTON SCHOOL CORPORATION
HIGH ABILITY PROGRAM
GRADES 1-6 PLACEMENT APPEAL FORM**

Student Name _____

Grade Level for 20____-20____ School Year _____

Parent(s) Name _____

Home Address _____

Telephone # _____ (Home)

_____ (Work)

Review application for placement in:

_____ 1st Grade High Ability Program

_____ 2nd Grade High Ability Program

_____ 3rd Grade High Ability Program

_____ 4th Grade High Ability Program

_____ 5th Grade High Ability Program

_____ 6th Grade High Ability Program

_____ Math _____ Language Arts _____ General Intellectual

The following items are possible reasons for requesting an additional review of this student's application file for the High Ability Program. Read these carefully and indicate which reasons you believe apply in this situation. Explain why the choice(s) selected are applicable. Include a copy of any additional information.

1. Special circumstances have existed which cause this student to (a) test poorly, (b) receive an inappropriate score, (c) rate a low recommendation, (d) have low grades. Comments:

2. We have additional test information. Comments:

3. This student has recently received special recognition. Comments:

4. Other comments:

Parent Signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date

High Ability Coordinator

Date

Send to: High Ability Coordinator
North Newton School Corporation
310 S. Lincoln Street
Morocco, Indiana 47923
(219) 285-2228

Please complete the Placement Appeal Form and mail or to the address above. The committee will review all appeals. You will be notified of the decision by mail.

NORTH NEWTON SCHOOL CORPORATION
HIGH ABILITY PROGRAM
GRADES 7-8 PLACEMENT APPEAL FORM

Student Name _____
Grade Level for 20_____-20_____ School Year _____
Current School: _____ Next Year's School _____
Parent(s) Name: _____
Home Address: _____

Telephone # _____ (Home)
_____ (Work)

Review application for placement in:

_____ 7th Grade HA Program _____ 8th Grade HA Program



English/Language Arts



English/Language Arts



Mathematics



Mathematics

The following items are possible reasons for requesting an additional review of this student's application file for the High Ability Program. Read these carefully and indicate which reasons you believe apply in this situation. Explain why the choice(s) selected are applicable. Include a copy of any additional information.

1. Special circumstances have existed which cause this student to (a) test poorly, (b) receive an inappropriate score, (c) rate a low recommendation, (d) have low grades. Comments:

2. We have additional test information. Comments:

3. This student has recently received special recognition. Comments:

4. Other comments:

Parent Signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date

High Ability Coordinator

Date

Send to: High Ability Coordinator
North Newton School Corporation
310 S. Lincoln Street
Morocco, Indiana 47923
(219) 285-2228

Please complete the Placement Appeal Form and mail or to the address above. The committee will review all appeals. You will be notified of the decision by mail.

Appendix B: Early Entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade Form

We request that the North Newton School Corporation arrange for the evaluation of our/my child for early entrance into the North Newton School Corporation:

_____ Kindergarten

_____ First grade program

Name of Child: _____

Legal Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Birthplace: _____ Birthdate: _____

Name and Address of any Kindergarten or Pre-School your child has attended.

Please attach any records concerning your child's participation in another Kindergarten or Preschool program and a copy of a recent physical examination by a licensed physician.

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Daytime Phone Number: _____

Appendix C: High Ability Parent Exit Contract Form

After reviewing the “Student Exit Procedures” for the High Ability and Honors Program and participating in a conference, I wish to:

_____ withdraw _____ from the High Ability program
(Student’s Name)

_____ keep _____ in the program after completing the
(Student’s Name)
following recommendations:

Task commitment:_____

Grades below expected standard:_____

Other: (i.e. project completion, homework, etc.)_____

_____ Date _____ Teacher’s Signature

_____ Date _____ Parent’s Signature

_____ Date _____ Student’s Signature

_____ Date _____ Principal’s Signature

_____ Date _____ High Ability Coordinator’s Signature