



● HIGH ABILITY HANDBOOK

Union County College Corner Joint School District

Mission Statement

Union County College Corner Joint School District recognizes that some students perform at, or show the potential to perform at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in the core academic areas of language arts and mathematics. These students are found in all racial, ethnic, and socio-economic groupings of students, and we recognize the need to identify such students through a systematic approach. The high ability program provides the rigor, responsiveness, and support that will enrich learning so that students will maximize potential and develop socially and emotionally to be contributing members of society.

UCCCJSD High Ability Goals

1. Implement an unbiased identification process using multi-faceted quantitative and qualitative measures
2. Create a variety of program options designed to help HA students achieve maximum growth
3. Provide professional development for educators to allow them to meet the unique needs of the HA learner
4. Evaluate, reflect, revise the HA program annual to provide the most effective programming for the UCCCJSD HA student.

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District Definition of a High Ability Student

The UCCCSJSD follows Indiana Code in defining a student with high ability 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).

Multifaceted Identification Plan Components

Union County College Corner Joint School District High Ability Identification Plan

Kindergarten:

1. All students are administered the COGAT High Ability Screener.
2. NWEA Reading and Math Scores are compiled. mCLASS Reading scores are compiled.
3. Any student in the top 25% of the COGAT, or mCLASS Reading, are placed in the selection pool.
4. Classroom teachers complete a locally developed rating scale of high ability characteristics for each student in the pool.
5. Kindergarten teachers and high ability coordinator meet to make final identification based on all of the measures.

Fourth Grade:

1. A list is compiled of students currently not in the program to re-evaluate for consideration for the program. This list is comprised of students that receive a Pass+ rating in either Reading or Math on the third grade ISTEP, scored in the top 96% on the NWEA Reading or Math sections, or who have received an A for a semester grade in the second semester of third grade and the first semester of fourth grade in either Reading or Math.
2. The Math and Language Arts teacher(s) determine whether these students should be considered for inclusion in the high ability program.
3. The students identified in step 2 are administered the COGAT High Ability Screener.
4. Teachers, principals, and high ability coordinator consider all data and make determination as to whether any of these students should be placed in the program. Students should be in the 96% or higher.

Seventh Grade:

1. A list is compiled of students currently not in the program to re-evaluate for consideration for the program. This list is comprised of students that receive a Pass+ rating in either Reading or Math on the fifth grade ISTEP, scored in the top 96% on the NWEA Reading or Math sections, or who have received an A for a semester grade in the second semester of sixth grade and the first semester of seventh grade in either Reading or Math.
2. The Math and Language Arts teacher(s) determine whether these students should be considered for inclusion in the high ability program.
3. The students identified in step 2 are administered the COGAT High Ability Screener.
4. Teachers, principals, and high ability coordinator consider all data and make determination as to whether any of these students should be placed in the program. Students should be in the 96% or higher.

High School

1. Students who have been identified in middle school will keep their HA designation and receive advanced programming in the high school.
2. Additional students who did not previously qualify for HA services yet who wish to self-select HA courses should be considered on a case-by-case basis. These students and their parents will sign a waiver acknowledging that the placement was self-selected and not recommended and that the rigor of the course will not be modified.
3. PSAT scores will be used in conjunction with the AP Potential tool to identify students likely to score a 3, 4, or 5 on AP exams.

Actual observation of performance and insight from the teacher into the potential of the students to be successful with high ability curriculum may be the best indicator for placement or withdrawal from the program.

Appeals Procedure: (Appendix A)

The HA Identification Team for UCCJSD uses a well-designed process, complete with Indiana Code and Rules, based upon sound measures designed for use with high ability learners in order to find those students whose academic needs are far beyond those of typical student of the same age, experience, and environment. Students are identified as HA in Mathematics, Language Arts, or both, with multiple pathways designed for each. An appeals process is in place for the student who is not identified, and a teacher, parent, or other person close to the child may challenge this decision. An official written appeal using Appendix A must be provided to the building principal within 10 school days of receiving the letter of non-acceptance. A team consisting of the building principal, corporation HA Coordinator, and teacher of the class/course will review any appeal materials, new testing data, meet with the petitioner, and ultimately make the final decision on identification of the student. The decision after the appeal is final.

Exit Procedure: (Appendix B & C)

If a student is performing below the expectations for a high ability program and the teacher is considering withdrawal from the program, a conference must be held. The teacher, building administrator, parent, and student would participate in the conference. At the conference an Improvement Contract may be developed. At a minimum the contract would contain:

1. Time frame for improvement
2. Specific areas the student needs to improve to remain in the program
3. Measures to determine the needed improvement has been made

At the conclusion of the time period, the school (building principal) will notify the parent of one of the following:

1. Student has been removed from the program.
2. Student remains in the program, but continues on a contract.
3. Student remains in the program without a continuing contract.

Should a parent no longer wish his/her child to be designated as high ability or receive high ability services, he or she may request this in writing to the High Ability Coordinator, 107 Layman Street, Liberty, IN 47353. The HA Coordinator will review the request along with the building principal. If a student is 18 years of age, he or she may sign permission to remove the flag for high ability placement and services himself/herself. The parent will be notified of the review decision.

Curriculum and Instruction Plan

Service models for the delivery of curriculum and instruction may vary from year to year based on the needs of the individual students and the number of identified students. The services listed below are research-based and supported by the district, but may vary from building to building depending on student need, enrollment, number of classrooms, and number of identified students at each grade level. See Appendix D for our local service diagram.

Student needs may be met in one or more of the following placements:

Grades K-5 (Elementary)

- Ability Grouping-Students are grouped by ability and readiness level in math and language arts. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes.
- 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. The groups will further differentiate in order to meet the needs of the students.
- Flexible Instruction Groups-during a particular subject, e.g. math or reading, all teacher of the same grade divide all the students into instructional groups according to skill level and provide differentiated instruction for each leveled group.
- Subject skipping-on occasion some students go to a different grade level for instruction or may use materials from higher placements in one or more subjects.
- Early Entrance into Kindergarten.

Grades 6-8 (Middle School)

- In addition to those above, UCMS offers:
- Honors Language and Math Classes. The honors class is differentiated to provide students of high ability the learning experiences at a level, speed, and depth that meets their needs.
- Subject Skipping Math-some students may go to the high school to participate in Geometry for high school credit; (entry for this option must be approved by both building principals)

Grades 9-12 (High School)

- UCHS course offering options challenge our High Ability students and prepare them for their continued advanced studies at a post-secondary institution. High Ability student may also have the opportunity for early graduation.
- Honors Courses-These courses cover material at a faster rate and incorporate more challenging content. The pace and rigor are designed to prepare students for the demands of AP coursework.
- Honors Advanced Placement Courses-College Board Approved curriculum/courses are of advanced or accelerated content comparable to introductory college level courses. An AP course includes the requirement to take the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Exam. Performance on those exams is on a scale of 1-5. Colleges may give credit or advanced placement to students who have achieved certain AP exam scores. Student grades are weighted by one point in AP courses. Currently we offer: AP Language, AP Literature, AP Stats, AP Calculus, AP Physics, AP Chemistry, AP Spanish, AP US History, AP US Government.
- Dual Credit Courses-elective courses available to enable student to concurrently earn high school and college credit.
- Technical Honors Courses-advanced technical courses offered through our cooperation with WCC.
- Early Graduation is an option at UCHS.

Counseling and Guidance Plan

Students with High Ability may require support with fostering positive social and emotional development and the development of self-regulatory skills (organization, time management, self-discipline, motivation, etc.) Children with high abilities may have affective needs resulting from their increased capacity to think beyond their years, greater intensity in response, combinations of unique interests, personality characteristics, and conflicts that are different from those of their age mates. The counselors at the upper levels and teachers at the primary levels are available to meet with students and parents to discuss the specific needs of their high ability children. In particular, these social and emotional issues will be covered: over excitabilities, asynchronous development, perfectionism, self-esteem/identity issues, introversion, peer pressure, bullying, competitiveness, social skills, stress, acceptance, family dynamics, study habits and leadership skills. In the Advanced Placement classrooms, counselors present information to students to help them cope with the stresses of the high ability world. Counselors at the high school meet individually each year to chart the high ability student's post-secondary path. Parents, teachers, and administrators can submit a referral for consideration of guidance/resources for support.

Professional Development Plan

High Ability Licensure:

The Union County College Corner Joint School District will pursue the finest and most qualified candidates for positions in our schools. We continue to financially support teachers who seek to obtain their High Ability licensure through additional coursework.

UCCCJSD is committed to the professional development of all those involved in HA Programming including, but not limited to:

Group	Type/Topics/Training	Timeline
High Ability Coordinator	<p>*Assistance from experts to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. align the philosophy, goals, and commitment for the development of students with HA with district goals for the development of all students 2. Create flexible policies regarding student placement to meet the need of individual students 3. Ensure that the five required plans are developed according to best practice and implemented K-12 4. use student outcomes to demonstrate program effectiveness 5. Involve stakeholders in the planning of services, communicating, and evaluating the program 	On-going, evaluated in accordance with the district Program Evaluation Plan.
Principals	Training by expert who can provide guidance on identification, grouping options, and differentiation specific to high ability.	At least one time per year
Teachers of Students with High Ability	<p>Training on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics and possible behavior manifestation of students with high ability 2. Issues and needed supports 3. Indiana Code 4. Recognizing traditionally underserved populations 5. Basics of gifted education, including curriculum and instruction 6. Use of student performance data to inform curriculum and instruction and to inform content for professional development <p>Encouragement to earn HA licensure Encouragement to attend the Indiana Association for the Gifted Backward Design of HA Curriculum</p>	On-going At least once per year
Counselors	Specific training related to students with high ability and their social and emotional needs	One time per year
Parents	<p>Training on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics and concerns of gifted students after identification notices go out 2. Programs and services available in the district when there will be different program options open to particular groups 3. Enrichment activities 	One time per year Individual meetings with HS counselors during scheduling. AP Counseling sessions
General Ed Teachers	Overview of the program and services	One time per year

The focus of High Ability Professional Development in 2017-2018 will be:

1. Meeting the social and emotional needs of the high ability learner
2. Advanced Placement course instruction professional development
3. Backward design curriculum assessment for mathematics and language arts 12-K

The UCCCJSD High Ability Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Building Principal, HA Coordinator, and teacher. Each student will be evaluated using the following measures:

Elementary:

Students success will be measured on grade level achievement testing with 96% or above being the recommended cut-off. Each child's individual growth should be demonstrated even if that child began the year proficient on grade level standards.

Middle School:

Program effectiveness will be measured by achievement testing that note growth and are norm referenced. Participation rates can be measured in high school courses taken at the middle school and the mid-west talent search.

High School:

Program effectiveness will be measured by success in honors courses, including AP classes. Additionally students success will be measured on the PSAT.

The committee will complete the *Master Checklist of High Ability Program Elements for Self-Assessment (Appendix E)* on a yearly basis.

Additionally, the district high ability plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Broad-Based Committee. The Indiana State Board of Education requires the establishment of a Broad-Based Planning Committee (BBPC) that meets at least annually to review the local education plan for high ability learners. The committee must have participation from diverse groups representing the school and community. Each BBPC

Appendix

Union County College Corner Joint School District

High Ability Manual Forms/Procedures

- A: Appeal Paperwork
- B: Withdrawal Paperwork
- C: Improvement Plan
- D: UCCCJSD Service Diagram
- E: Program Evaluation Check Sheet
- F: Rating Scale of Highly Qualified Characteristics (K Teachers)
- G: Letter of Acceptance in HA
- H: Letter of Removal from HA



Appeal Process for Placement in A High Ability Class or Program Union County College Corner Joint School District

1. Complete the information below and return it to the building principal.
2. The appeal will be considered by a committee consisting of the following individuals:
 - a. Building Principal
 - b. Corporation High Ability Coordinator
 - c. Teacher of the Class or Program
3. The requesting individual will have the opportunity to discuss their appeal with the committee before any decision is made.

.....

Student Name: _____

Name of Program: _____

School: *Circle One:* CCUS LES UCMS UCHS Grade: _____

Date: _____

Name of Individual Making the Appeal: _____

Relationship to the Student: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please give a description of the reasons you feel this student should be included in this program. (You may attach additional information/evidence.)



Withdrawal Process From A High Ability Class or Program Union County College Corner Joint School District

1. If a student is performing below the expectations for a high ability program and the teacher is considering withdrawal from the program, a conference must be held.
2. The teacher, building administrator, parent, and student would participate in the conference. At the conference an Improvement Contract would be developed. At a minimum the contract would contain:
 - a. The time frame for improvement
 - b. Specific areas the student need to improve to remain in the program.
 - c. Measures to determine whether the needed improvement has been made.
3. At the conclusion of the time period, the school will notify the parent of one of the following:
 - a. Student is removed from the program
 - b. Student remains in the program, but continues on a contract
 - c. Student remains in the program without a continuing contract.
4. A parent may remove a student from HA with written notification.



Student Improvement Plan For A High Ability Class or Program
Union County College Corner Joint School District

Name of Student: _____

Name of Program: _____

Date of Conference with Parent and Student: _____

Time Frame for Improvement:

The following areas must show improvement for the student to remain in the program:

Improvement will be measured in the following manner:

Comments:

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date

Principal Signature

Date

**Union County College
Corner High Ability
Services
For Elementary Students**

**Appendix D: Elementary
Service Diagram**

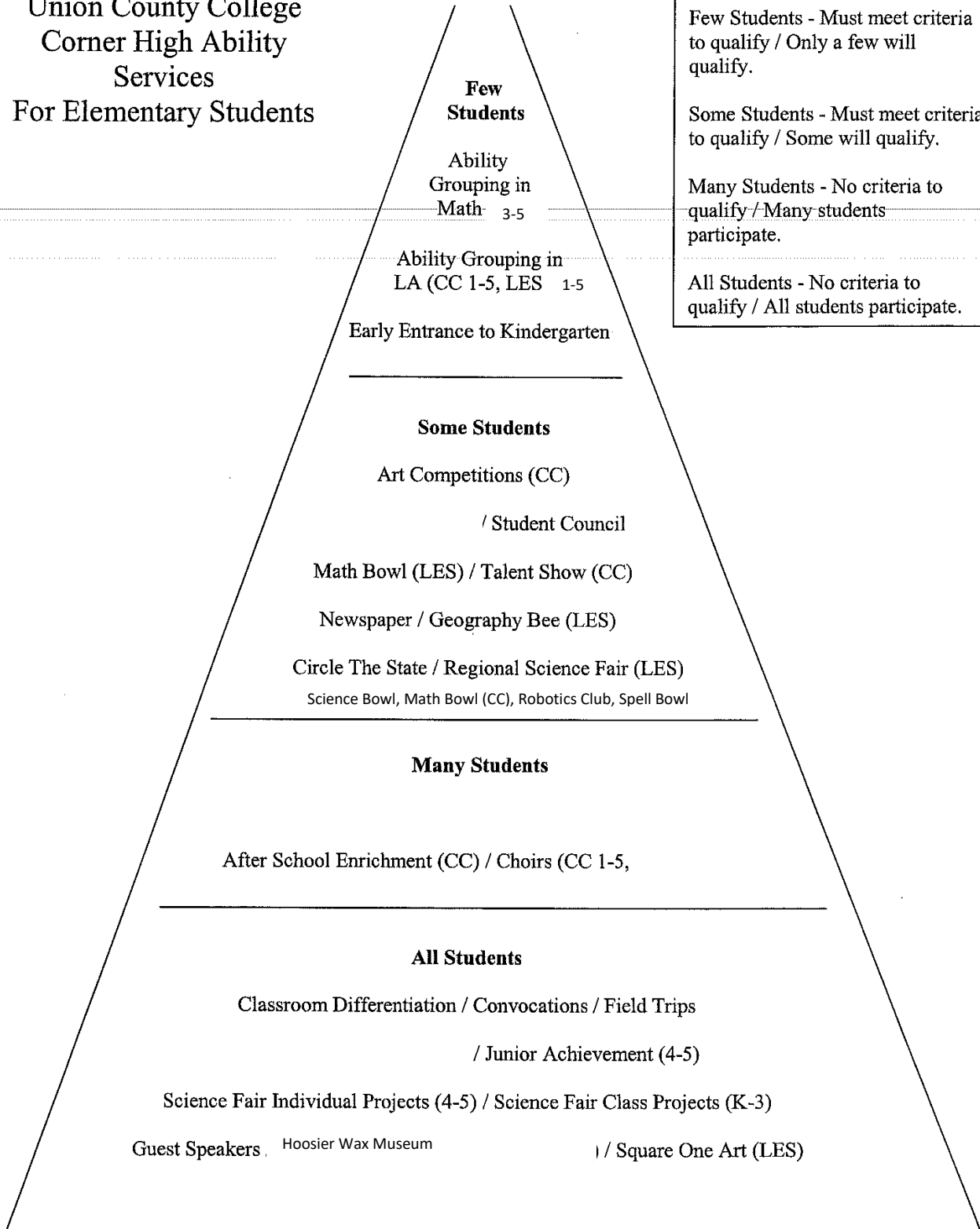
Elementary Levels of Service

Few Students - Must meet criteria to qualify / Only a few will qualify.

Some Students - Must meet criteria to qualify / Some will qualify.

Many Students - No criteria to qualify / Many students participate.

All Students - No criteria to qualify / All students participate.



Union County College
Corner High Ability
Services
For Middle School and High
School Students

Appendix D: Middle
and High School
Service Diagram

Secondary Levels of Service

Few Students - Must meet criteria
to qualify / Only a few will
qualify.

Some Students - Must meet criteria
to qualify / Some will qualify.

Many Students - No criteria to
qualify / Many students
participate.

All Students - No criteria to
qualify / All students participate.

**Few
Students**

AP
Classes (H)

Early
Graduation (H)

Internships (H)

Subject Skipping

Indiana Academy (H)

Independent Study (H)

Project Lead The Way (H)

Ability Grouping Science (H)

Ability Grouping LA and Math

Some Students

Advanced Classes (H) / Student Council / Spell Bowl

National Honor Society (H) / Jr. National Honor Society (M)

Academic Teams / Club Leaderships (ex. Pres. FFA)

Club Competition Advancement (ex. FFA State Finalist) (H)

Drama Club (H) / Vocational (H) / Yearbook / Newspaper (M)

Friday Patriot News (M) / Model Legislature Leadership (H)

Solo and Ensemble / Athletics (H) / Midwest Talent Search

Many Students

Drama Club (M) / Math Counts (M) / Club Membership / Athletics (M)

Math League Test (H) / ACT, SAT, PSAT, PLAN / Model Legislature (H)

All Students

Classroom Differentiation / Convocations / Field Trips / One on one Initiative (H) / Jr. Ach. (M)

Master Checklist of High Ability Program Elements for Self -Assessment

Program Design Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
1. There is a written philosophy and/or mission statement related to high ability students.				
2. There is a written definition of which students the district considers to have what particular needs that require specialized services.				
3. There are written goals and objectives for these services.				
4. There is a written description of the services to be provided for the described students at each grade level and in each area served.				
5. Services provided align with how high ability is defined.				
6. High ability students are grouped together for instruction in their area(s) of talent.				
7. Services are constructed so that there is a continuum of services to meet the broad range of needs of individual high ability students.				
8. Policies are in place to allow early entrance, grade skipping, subject skipping, early credit, and early graduation according to individual student need.				
9. The roles of personnel at the district, the building and the classroom are clearly defined.				
10. A district-wide stakeholder group exists and meets on a regular basis to review the district services for high ability students.				

INDIANA HIGH ABILITY COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

Identification Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
11. The district uses a norm-referenced measure of ability in each of the areas for which program services are offered (i.e. math, language arts).				
12. The district uses a norm-referenced measure of achievement with adequate ceilings to assess achievement above grade level in each of the areas for which program services are offered.				
13. The district uses qualitative indicators of achievement in each of the areas for which program services are offered.				
14. Students are identified in all grade levels for which services are provided.				
15. The formal identification process is repeated at targeted grade levels including (but not limited to) kindergarten, 2 nd grade, prior to placement for middle school, and prior to placement in high school.				
16. The appeals process is publicized.				
17. The appeals process allows for students to take alternative ability, achievement, and/or qualitative measures at no cost to the family.				
18. The exit procedure includes period of intervention no less than one grading period to determine if student can be successful in the program with supports.				

INDIANA HIGH ABILITY COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

Curriculum and Instruction Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
19. There is a written curriculum in core subject areas and other areas served by the district that is specific to students identified as high ability K-12.				
20. Student learning goals are clear, and evidence of how the learning will be demonstrated is clearly stated.				
21. The written curriculum has clear evidence of vertical articulation from grade to grade and K-12.				
22. There is clear evidence of acceleration of curriculum in areas served.				
23. There is clear evidence of enrichment of curriculum in areas served.				
24. Instruction and learning experiences are clearly differentiated to focus on higher order thinking.				
25. There is evidence of teaching of communication, collaboration, research, critical thinking, problem solving.				
26. The pace of instruction is appropriate for high ability students.				
27. There is evidence of student use of technology for creating content, learning content, and communicating content.				
28. Assessments are aligned to curriculum goals.				
29. Pre-assessment is used to determine individual instructional plans.				

INDIANA HIGH ABILITY COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

30. Post-assessment is used to demonstrate student growth and attainment of stated learning goals.				
Affective Needs Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
31. A written, differentiated, affective curriculum that addresses social and emotional needs of high ability students is available and used by teachers.				
32. Affective curriculum teaches students about social and emotional characteristics as well as potential issues they may face.				
33. Documentation of differentiated college guidance for high ability students is available (e.g. fieldtrips, independent study projects, speakers, or shadowing experiences pertaining to college exploration).				
34. Documentation of differentiated career guidance for high ability students is available (e.g. fieldtrips, independent study projects, mentors, speakers, or shadowing experiences pertaining to college exploration).				
Professional Development Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
35. Personnel working with programs and services for high ability students have licensure in gifted education.				
36. Personnel working with high ability students are provided with opportunities for continuing professional development in the area of gifted education.				
37. Parents of high ability students are provided with opportunities for professional development about the characteristics and needs of this population.				

INDIANA HIGH ABILITY COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

Program Evaluation Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
38. The district uses multiple strategies to assess high ability student performance and growth.				
39. All components of the high ability program are periodically reviewed by individuals who are knowledgeable about high ability learners and competent in the evaluation process. The results are used for continuing program improvement.				
40. The evaluation report for all educational services involving high ability students				
includes both strengths and areas of challenge of the program and is accompanied by a plan with implications for improvement and renewal over time.				
41. The results of the program evaluation are presented to the local school board, the stakeholder group, and accessible to all constituencies of the program.				

Checklist is adapted from the NAGC's Administrator Tool Kit available on their website <http://www.nagc.org/administratortoolbox.aspx>. The checklist was originally published in Speirs Neumeister, K. & Burney, V. (2012). *Gifted Program Evaluation: A Handbook for Administrators & Coordinators*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Student Name: _____

Rating Directions: Read the statement and make your best determination as to whether the student exhibits the characteristic.

0=Never exhibits the characteristic

1=Exhibits this characteristic about the same as his or her classmates

2=Exhibits this characteristic somewhat more than his or her classmates

3=Exhibits this characteristic much more in comparison to his or her classmates

	0	1	2	3
Learns new things quickly and easily. Needs only 1 or 2 repetitions to grasp concepts.				
Has extensive vocabulary, background knowledge in a particular area, or memory of detail.				
Grasps math concepts quickly and is intuitive in math thinking.				
Interested in some things in depth, grasps big picture, forms connections.				
Has a more intense energy level, activity level, ability to concentrate, talks fast.				
Is extremely sensitive or introverted.				
Thinks differently; is creative.				
Has a good or advanced sense of humor.				
Is curious or observant				
Is a perfectionist.				
Likes to observe before participating.				
Is sensitive to environment (light, noise, smell, touch)				
Demonstrates leadership potential.				
Learns to read quickly.				

Total Points: _____

Note: Should be on School Letterhead

Date

Dear (insert parent name here):

(Insert student name here) has been identified for the high ability program in:

_____ Language Arts _____ Mathematics

Your child has been identified for the high ability program. The identification is based on ability testing, achievement measures, and teacher ratings. We are required to identify students at a young age, but do have some concerns about doing this. Our concern for this practice is that this early identification can be inaccurate after such a short time in school and may be the result of a strong literacy background in the home and not of a native high ability. On the other hand, this identification can be very accurate and students who are identified at this stage are successful with high ability services throughout their school career.

High ability students in the primary grades receive differentiated instruction from the teacher. This means that when the opportunity presents itself the instruction will be different and more challenging for these students. They are not placed in a separate class. Our teachers do what good teachers have always done and that is to differentiate instruction for both high ability students and students who are struggling. At times they may be grouped with other high ability student in their classroom to work on a project or a task different from what other students are doing. Your child's teacher can explain in what ways she differentiates instruction.

As your child moves into upper elementary grades, classes are sometimes grouped with all high ability students for specific subjects. In the middle school grades, these classes become the honors classes. In the early years of high school, honors classes continue and students then move into AP classes in their junior and senior years.

As students get older, we sometimes find that high ability instruction is not a good fit. At times teachers recognize this, sometimes it is parents, and sometimes it is the student. When that happens, a conference is held and the student may be given an improvement plan to try to bring themselves up to the level of achievement necessary or sometimes it is decided that it is in the best interest of the student to drop out of the high ability program. The main point is that high ability classes are not a life sentence. If it is not working out, students can be withdrawn from the program.

In most cases, the identification is accurate and students benefit from more challenging instruction and higher expectations. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call your building principal. Some of your more specific questions might best be answered by the child's teacher.

Sincerely,

Building Principal's Name
Principal

School Letterhead

Date

Parent

Address

City, State, Zip

Salutation:

This letter is being sent as notification that your child will be moved into the general education curriculum from the High Ability Curriculum. We have met as a team and the determination of the team is that your child will best be served academically by being exposed to a general education curriculum.

There is an appeal process that is in place should you disagree with the committee decision. The paper work you will need can be provided by the building principal. As part of that appeal, the student may be placed on an improvement plan if that is the decided course of action. The determination of the committee after the appeal steps have been exhausted is final.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns please call the building principal or the High Ability teacher of record.

Sincerely,

Building Principal
Principal