

High-Ability Handbook



Clinton Central School Corporation

A resource guide providing information relating to
Programing for high-ability students in grades K-12.

Revised 11/2017

Clinton Central School Corporation High Ability Programming

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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 are described in Code 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. 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). Students who are high ability in other domains that are not required for services are designated as HA-Other.
2. Record the relevant designation on the Student Test Number (STN). HA-LA, HA – Math, HA- General Intellectual, or HA-Other
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. Evaluate the program.
6. Establish a Broad Based Planning Committee that will meet at least once per year to review 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.

The Indiana Department of Education is also required to disaggregate from the total results of the ISTEP program test results for a school corporation the percentage of students in each school and each grade in the school corporation that are identified as high ability students (as defined by IC 20-36-1-3) by the school

corporation who also achieved a score in the highest performance level designated for the ISTEP test in the area of their identification.

In the Administrative Code, it is also stated that each school corporation must have written plans available for public inspection in the following areas to qualify as a differentiated program for high ability students:

- A multifaceted student assessment plan.
- A curriculum and instructional strategies plan.
- A counseling and guidance plan.
- A systematic program assessment plan.
- A professional development plan.

BROAD-BASED PLANNING COMMITTEE

Composition of Required Broad-Based Planning Committee

The Indiana Administrative Code defines a Broad-Based Planning Committee as the following:

“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 some decision-makers within the corporation. The High Ability Coordinator keeps a record of official members, including contact information, meeting dates, and agendas.

Purpose of the Broad-Based Planning Committee

The BBPC represents stakeholders and its purpose is to improve communication and visibility of the High Ability Program in the district. Its task is to review the continuous development and 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 improvement.
- Ambassador for high ability services in the community.

The local governing body has ultimate responsibility and authority for all student services; the BBPC is not a decision-making group, but it has the role of reviewing policies, services, and outcomes. The BBPC is required to meet once a year.

Definition of High-Ability Students:

High-Ability Student in Indiana according to IC 20-19.15.1-) is a student who:

- Performs at or shows the potential for performing at an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interest.
- Domains are areas of aptitude and talent designed to meet the various needs of high-ability students.
- General Intellectual pertains to the understanding of facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to a broad array of disciplines.
- General Creative focuses on understanding facts and concepts along with developing skills and generalization, and evaluating relationships with application to the following activities: problem finding, divergent thinking, flexibility, elaboration, and originality.
- Specific Academic relates to understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to the following disciplines: English and Language Arts, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, and Science.
- Technical and Practical Arts – applies the understanding of facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships in the application to the following: vocational-technical education; business technology education; family and consumer sciences; and technology education.
- Visual and Performing Art – allows the understanding of facts and concepts; developing skills and generalizations; and evaluation of their relationships as they apply to disciplines, such as: art, dance, music, and theater arts.
- Interpersonal – implies the understanding of facts and concepts in developing skills and generalizations; and evaluating their relationships to the following areas: leadership, mediation, counseling, and communication.

Differentiation of Instruction involves varied or tiered levels of service relating to instruction.

Levels of Service Program incorporates educational programs differentiated in depth and breadth such as:

- Compacting
- Acceleration
- Enrichment
- Problem Solving
- Creative Thinking

Multifaceted Assessments are utilized as a means of collecting and analyzing data to identify the educational needs of high-ability students.

Performance-Based Assessments evaluate the performance of students involved in complex learning opportunities with instruments such as:

- Rating Scales
- Observation or Interviews
- Portfolios
- Structured observations or interviews

Potential-Based Assessments strive to evaluate the potential performance of high-ability students with instruments such as:

- Standardized intelligence tests
- Standardized achievement tests
- Behavior rating scales

MULTIFACETED ASSESSMENT PLAN

Guidance on Identification of High Ability Students

Indiana Law: Since July 1, 2007, Indiana schools have been required to 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. It is a guide for 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.

The Indiana Code defines 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).

Components of a Multifaceted Assessment Plan

A multifaceted plan to identify students for high ability services should include the following elements:

- The school corporation’s mission statement for its high ability program: The mission for a high ability program should align with the overall mission of the school district, but it should include information that specifically articulates the district’s beliefs about high ability students and the dedication to meeting their educational needs. For example, the mission should communicate the district’s beliefs that high ability students can be found in all racial, ethnical, and socio-economic populations and its commitment to using identification practices to find high ability students in all of these populations. It should also include a reference to the recognition that high ability learners have unique cognitive and social needs and therefore require differentiated curriculum and instruction in order to actualize their potential.
- The Indiana definition of a high ability student: School districts are welcome to include a definition of high ability that is broader than the state definition (for example, clearly defining additional domains of high ability beyond General Intellectual and Specific Academic), but the district definition needs to include General Intellectual and Specific Academic as those are the required domains to be identified and served.

- Identification Committee: Note: The identification committee is different than the Broad-Based Planning Committee. The BBPC includes representatives from all stakeholder groups including parents and students. These stakeholders should not have access to student level data so should not be on the identification committee. The identification committee should include representatives from each building level, administrator(s), and the high ability coordinator. Each of these committee members should have training in high ability identification.
- Instruments used in the identification process at each level (e.g. kindergarten, end of second grade, before middle school, and before high school). In accordance to the state definition, the instruments used should include a measure of performance (norm-referenced achievement measure) and a measure of potential for performance (norm-referenced ability measure). Measures should also include indicators of “characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, or motivation” which include descriptive information such as that gleaned from work samples, problem solving activities, or teacher rating scales.
- Selection process: The selection procedure should be clearly articulated such that a novice could read the process and immediately understand how students were identified. If identification decisions are made at particular grade levels, those should be listed. Additionally, the percentage of students in each grade level that are tested with the ability and achievement measures should be noted, so equity in the opportunity to be identified can be determined. Finally, the specific guidelines for inclusion (percentiles, norms used, etc.) should be listed as well as the role that additional descriptive data (qualitative data) plays in the decision making process.
- Appeals procedure: The Appeals process should specify the conditions under which appeals will be granted as well as describe the types of additional data that will be considered to determine eligibility. Note: To ensure equity for families without financial means, the district should not require outside testing for an appeal; the district may want to purchase some alternate norm-referenced measures of ability and achievement to keep on hand for appeals.
- Exit procedure: An exit procedure should be in place that clearly demonstrates the reasons for initiating an exit procedure are based on a concern that the curriculum and instruction in the high ability program is proving to be too challenging for the child; compliance, attitude, and behavioral concerns are not usually reason enough to initiate exit from the program as these issues are not likely to resolve simply by moving the student to a general education classroom.

Required Domains for Identification and Services

Domain: “High Ability – Language Arts”

A High Ability Language Arts student (L-HA) should have this designation on the Student Test Number (STN) if the child performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment 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 typical grade level curriculum and/or instruction in language arts.

Three possible pathways for being identified in Language Arts. Students are identified as high ability if they:

- Performed at or above the 96th percentile (using local or national norms, whichever are more inclusive) on a norm-referenced test of verbal reasoning ability.

OR:

- Performed at or above the 96th percentile (using local or national norms, whichever are more inclusive) on both the Reading and Language Arts subtests of a standardized norm-referenced achievement test.

OR:

- Performed within the standard error of measure of 96th percentile (using local or national norms, whichever are more inclusive) on either the norm-referenced measure of verbal reasoning ability or the norm-referenced measure of achievement in language arts AND demonstrated outstanding potential or performance in language arts according to district criteria on a qualitative measure of assessment specific to language arts such as: product or portfolio assessment, rating or observation scales, interviews, or performance assessment.

Domain: “High Ability – Math”

A High Ability Math student (M-HA) should have this designation on the Student Test Number (STN) if the child performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment 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 typical grade level curriculum and/or instruction in math.

Three possible pathways for being identified in Math. Students are identified as high ability if they:

- Performed at or above the 96th percentile (using local or national norms, whichever are more inclusive) on a norm-referenced test of quantitative reasoning ability or a composite of BOTH quantitative and non-verbal reasoning.

OR:

- Performed at or above the 96th percentile (using local or national norms, whichever are more inclusive) on the math portion of a standardized norm-referenced achievement test.

OR:

- Performed within the standard error of measure of 96th percentile (using local or national norms, whichever are more inclusive) on the norm-referenced measure of math ability OR the composite of both quantitative and non-verbal reasoning OR the norm-referenced measure of achievement in math AND demonstrated outstanding potential or performance in math according to district criteria on a qualitative measure of assessment specific to math, such as: product or portfolio assessment, rating or observation scales, interviews, or performance assessment.

Domain: “High Ability – General Intellectual”

A High Ability – General Intellectual student performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an

outstanding level of accomplishment 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 typical grade level core curriculum and/or instruction in both language arts and math.

In all districts a student should have the “High Ability – General Intellectual” designation on the Student Test Number (STN) if the child has met the criteria to be identified for both language arts and math.

Optional Domains for Identification and Services

In addition to the domains of General Intellectual and Specific Academic, Indiana Code also includes the domains of Technical and Practical Arts, Visual and Performing Arts, Creativity, and Interpersonal. It is optional for districts to provide identification and services in these additional domains. It is required for districts to provide identification and services for the domains of General Intellectual and Specific Academic domains. The designations are for students with high ability in Language Arts (HA-LA), students with high ability in Math (HA-Math), students who have high ability in both Language Arts and Math (HA – General Intellectual), and students with high ability in the other domains (HA-Other).

The pathways for identification in the areas of technical and practical arts, visual and performing arts, creativity, and interpersonal will vary depending on the available measures of aptitude and performance in each domain.

Considerations for Selection and Use of Quantitative Measures

- A norm-referenced test is used to determine an individual's status with respect to the performance of other individuals on that test.
- Norm-referenced tests are appropriate for identification of high ability students as they compare students to others taking the same 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 reported in the testing manual. The norm group may be national or local. At every level of test usage, it is important to match the scope of the test with the purpose that the test is supposed to perform.
- Criterion-referenced achievement tests are used to determine the individual's mastery of specific skills or knowledge. These are usually measures based on grade level standards and may be used as one screening tool but have limited utility in identifying high ability students because they do not provide opportunity to demonstrate advanced abilities or performance or show what students know compared to others. Grade level achievement tests do not have a high enough ceiling for identifying high ability students.
- Achievement tests measure acquired information and therefore will likely not be good predictors of high ability for K-2 students living in impoverished environments.
- Non-verbal measures, such as Raven's or Naglieri (NNAT), should **not** be used as a stand-alone measure of general intellectual ability. Strong non-verbal scores alone are not predictive of achievement in math or language arts. Non-verbal scores, only used in conjunction with quantitative scores, can add to the prediction of performance in math. (David Lohman – see <http://faculty.education.uiowa.edu/dlohman/>)
- Always use the most recent test edition available.

Measures of Ability (also referred to as measures of aptitude or potential):
Verbal/Quantitative Reasoning

Screen ONLY (only for districts using a two-step process)

(These measures are quick measures given to all students in the grade level; the top 20- 25% of scorers will then take the full identification (ability and achievement) measures.

- CogAT Screener

For Identification

(These measures have strong enough reliability and validity indicators to serve as final identifiers. They are for districts using a One-Step Process or for the second step of a Two-Step Process.)

- Cognitive Abilities Test (full CogAT)

Measure of Aptitude for Creativity: *Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking*

Measures of Achievement (also referred to as measures of performance): Math/Language Arts

Screen ONLY (for districts using a two-step process). Note: Achievement screeners are not appropriate for primary grades. Only ability screeners should be considered at the primary level.

- Iowa Assessments **Survey** Battery
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test II **Abbreviated**
- Stanford Achievement Test **Abbreviated**

Appeals Procedure

- Each district should develop a formal appeals process for families who would like the district to reconsider their children for identification for high ability services.
- The appeals process should specify a window of time (for example, three weeks) in which requests for appeals will be considered.
- The district should consider developing a form for parents who are appealing that includes providing a justification for why the original process was not valid for their child.
- The district should consider any additional relevant qualitative data.
- The district should administer alternative norm-referenced measures of ability and/or achievement at no expense to the family provided there is sufficient evidence that prior testing was not reflective of the child's ability.
- A committee of personnel with training in high ability education should review the additional data and render a decision on final identification and placement for the student.

SERVICE OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH HIGH ABILITY

Introduction and Rationale

The need for comprehensive services for students of high ability that are differentiated to meet their academic, social, and emotional needs has been well documented. A 2016 review of 2015 achievement test data from across the U.S. not limited to those identified as high ability showed large percentages of American students perform well above grade level (Makel, Matthews, Peters, Rambo-Hernandez, and Plucker). According to Reis, Burns, & Renzulli (1992), elementary students identified as high ability spend as much as 50% of their time working with curriculum they have already mastered. When the general education curriculum fails to provide new learning experiences and skills for students who have already mastered the standards being taught, these students do not have an appropriate learning environment and are being denied appropriate educational services.

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

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

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

1. How high ability 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 for promoting academic growth?

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.** Services for high ability students are included on the Multifaceted Student Assessment Plan and are reported on the high ability grant final report submitted to the IDOE.

Decision Making Process for High Ability Service Options

1. Identify according to a valid and reliable process.
2. Look for any outliers who may need to skip a grade or skip a subject. Consider those cases individually, including consulting the Iowa Acceleration Scale to assist in making decisions.
3. How many identified students do you have for both High Ability Math and High Ability Language Arts (General Intellectual); HA math only; and HA Language Arts only? This will change from year to year and from grade to grade, depending on the group of students; therefore your service options for particular grade levels might change from year to year.
4. Consider your options in the following order. The order is determined by the greatest likelihood of providing appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction as required by Indiana Code.
 - a. **Self Contained Classrooms.** In this model all of the students in the class have been identified as High Ability and all of the instruction can be at the appropriate pace and level. Be flexible in your thinking and consider a Magnet School for the district, a self contained classroom by grade, or a multi age classroom. It is best for the teacher to have a High Ability License. This model provides the most opportunity for appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in core content areas.
 - b. **Between Class Ability Grouping by Subject Area.** In this model, the schedule will need to be constructed so that all students at the grade level have math at the same time and all have language arts at the same time. During the two subject specific times, students will be grouped at their instructional level with the identified high ability learners in the same group with a licensed High Ability teacher. The remainder of the day, students would be in heterogeneous classrooms.
 - c. **Cluster Grouping.** In this model, students are ability grouped to provide a narrowed instructional range in each class; however, all classes have a group of average learners. One class has high ability and a group of average learners. Other classes have some above average students, an average group, and some below average students. This model requires fidelity of implementation to remain true to the model throughout the year (with transfers in and out). The cluster teacher needs a High Ability License.
5. Provide additional services for individual students, depending on need or exceptional ability. These are likely combined with group services explained above. Examples of services for individuals: On Line Courses, Mentorships, Internships, ELL Services, IEP Services, etc.

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 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>

An identification committee will be established to review qualitative and quantitative data. The identification committee will consist of the High Ability Coordinator, elementary teacher, junior high teacher, high school teacher, and an administrator. 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 Clinton Central High Ability program. It is a parents right to refuse High Ability Services.

Clinton Central Elementary School will provide services through two self-contained classrooms and some cluster grouping. The Jr. High Schools provide services to high ability learners using an adapted Cluster Grouping Model. With this model students in the junior high are purposely placed in cluster classrooms based upon their abilities, potential, and achievement. Included in this program are a grades 3-4 and grades 5-6 pull out program. At Clinton Central High School, high ability students are encouraged to participate in Advanced Placement (AP) classes and honors classes in the various content areas.

After the high ability identification process has been completed, any parent or guardian who disagrees with the decision has the right to appeal. An appeal may be requested for reconsideration for high ability programming to the Clinton Central School Corporation High Ability Committee by submitting a request for review to the corporation High Ability Coordinator or building level administrator. To file an appeal the parent or guardian must fill out the High Ability Program Appeal Form (see Appendix A) for the respective grade level up to 14 calendar days after the placement decision has been made. The corporation High Ability Identification Committee will review the request and the student's current criteria and make a final determination.

High Ability Identification Committee at Clinton Central School Corporation consists of:

- High Ability Coordinator
- Building level Administrator
- Elementary teacher
- Jr-Sr. High teacher

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 wishing 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 an RTI plan not less than one semester to implement interventions.
4. 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.
5. If an exit is deemed appropriate, the parent signs permission to remove the student from high ability placement and services. (See Appendix C)
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.

Curriculum and Instructional Strategies Plan

Introduction and Rationale

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. At a minimum, it should include 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. This should include a Scope and Sequence or Curriculum Map to show the K-12 articulation of the curriculum for high ability students. When looking at the Curriculum and Instructional Strategies Plan, an interested party could see what was provided for students with high ability at each grade level and how the learning progresses in a purposeful way from K-12. Regardless of the particular format used, the Curriculum and Instructional Strategies Plan should demonstrate clearly:

- Content is both accelerated and enriched.
- Students are given opportunities to pursue individual areas of choice.
- Materials used are written at levels of complexity appropriate for students with high ability.
- Standards that are above grade level may be included.
- Assessments call for demonstration of advanced understanding and the skills of synthesis, analysis, and evaluation.
- Careful attention has been paid to vertical articulation.

Policy for Whole Grade Acceleration

Clinton Central School Corporation strives to provide every child, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, or giftedness access to a challenging, standard-based curriculum. Research shows that students develop at different rates and some students can exceed the grade-level proficient long before their age peer group. With this in mind, Clinton Central strives to ensure that every student be provided the opportunity 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 is a universally accepted, though rarely used method of intervention that, “...has been shown to increase motivation, reduce boredom, and enhance the social and emotional well-being of appropriately selected students.” (Ohio Department of Education) 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 also 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 current teacher of the student, 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 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, 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 Clinton Central School Corporation. It is important that the affective goals of students be attended to as well as the cognitive and academic goals. This 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. The teachers may coordinate and facilitate whole group, small group and individual lessons for students based on need.

The teacher will create opportunities for consultation with the counselor and students, if deemed necessary. High ability students will be offered 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.

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

High ability students at the Jr-Sr High School level 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 cause more difficulty in making career decisions. Special care should be taken to ensure students are given the opportunity to explore career possibilities and 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

The Broad Based Planning Committee will conduct an annual review of the high ability program. The committee will monitor the progress of identified students through analysis of all available data and will make recommendations for program adjustments.

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 may be working toward having a Gifted and Talented 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 for the appropriate academic challenge for individual students.

Counselors need an understanding of the characteristics and needs of high ability students. They need an understanding of how those 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). They need to know appropriate strategies for addressing those needs and issues and then to build an affective curriculum across grade levels that will systematically address those concerns. In addition, high ability students have different needs for college and career guidance; the counselors need to know how to differentiate the guidance for these students in order for them to develop to their advanced potential.

Classroom teachers not specifically assigned to high ability 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 having 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 the advanced potential. They also need to know common issues and how to assist their child.

Appendix A: Appeal Forms

**CLINTON CENTRAL 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

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
Clinton Central School Corporation
725 N. State Road 29
Michigantown, Indiana 46057
(765) 249-2515

Please complete the Placement Appeal Form and mail or to the address above. This form must be returned by June 1st. The committee will review all appeals. You will be notified of the decision by mail.

Appendix B: Appeal Forms

**CLINTON CENTRAL 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 High Ability
Program

English/Language Arts

Mathematics

Program _____ 8th Grade High Ability

English/Language Arts

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
Clinton Central School Corporation
725 N. State Road 29
Michigantown, Indiana 46057
(765) 249-2515

Please complete the Placement Appeal Form and mail or to the address above. This form must be returned by June 1st. The committee will review all appeals. You will be notified of the decision by mail