

# "High Ability" K-12 Program

## Metropolitan School District of Steuben County



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## **Mission**

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County in partnership with our families and community provides all learners with challenging, engaging, and innovative educational experiences that inspire them to be tomorrow's leaders.

## **High Ability Mission**

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County is committed to providing a High Ability program that prepares our students for success in a global environment. To that end we will provide a curriculum that is rich in content, develops skills in communication, collaboration, critical and creative thinking, and inspires confidence and commitment in our High Ability students. Our district recognizes its responsibility to identify these students in an on-going systematic process regardless of their gender, ethnicity, age, or socio-economic status.

## **What Is High Ability**

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County identifies and serves students who perform at, or show potential of performing at an outstanding level compared to their peers in language arts, mathematics, or both in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. These students are characterized with high academic accomplishments, exceptional talents, motivation, or interests.

## **Indiana Code Definition of High Ability**

The Indiana Code defines a student with high abilities as one whom

- (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)

## **Indiana High Ability Domains**

Includes aptitude and talent:

General Intellectual Both Language Arts & Mathematics

Specific Academic Language Arts or Mathematics

## **Local Programs**

### **Elementary**

High Ability students receive services in cluster groups in the regular classroom setting at each grade level in each elementary building. Students receive advanced lessons using differentiated Project Based Learning Units that include learning centers, independent study, cooperative groups, and research focused on higher level thinking skills and accelerated content.

### **Middle Level**

Grades 6-8 sessions meet fifty (50) minutes daily for language with differentiated instruction with advanced language arts classes for identified students in grades 6, 7, & 8. "High ability" mathematics program is self-contained classes with differentiated instruction. Advanced classes offered are Advanced Math (6), Pre-Algebra (7), and Algebra (8). Sessions are fifty (50) minutes daily.

### **High School**

At grades 9-12 identified students are cluster grouped in a self-contained setting with differentiated instruction for identified high ability students.

**9-12 sessions will be 50 minutes daily and differentiated for HA enrolled students.**

Grade 9 -10	Course 1002H
Pre-AP English 9	Course 1004H
Pre-AP English 10	Course 2564
Pre-Calculus/Trigonometry 10	Course 2544
Advanced Math	Course 2562
A P Calculus	Course 3080
AP Physics	Course 3020
AP Biology	Course 3012
AP Environmental Science	Course 3060
AP Chemistry	Course 1058
AP Literature and Composition	Course 1056
AP Language and Composition	
Dual Credit Classes	

Curriculum and Instruction High ability students will be provided curriculum that:

- addresses core academic areas of English/language arts/Social Studies and Mathematics/Science
- addresses higher cognitive levels of thinking,
- addresses multiple intelligences,
- integrate research and problem-solving activities,
- is differentiated for kindergarten through twelfth grade,
- integrates digital skills

and

- is adapted, modified, or replaces regular classroom curriculum based upon each student's unique needs.

High ability students will be provided with instruction that:

- is differentiated,
- is accelerated and/or compacted,
- utilizes high-level curricular materials,
- provides ability grouping, and
- meets individualized needs.

High ability students will be provided with support services that

- provide counseling options,
- provide internship options,
- provide college & career education and,
- meet socio-emotional needs.

## **Identification**

Students with high ability perform or show the potential to perform at remarkably high levels of academic accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County recognizes there are such students in all cultural and economic groups and has procedures in place to identify those students in kindergarten through twelfth grade in order to provide the challenging curriculum and instruction they need to develop their potential.

Student assessments that identify high ability students will be multifaceted assessments to ensure that students not identified by traditional assessments because of economic disadvantage, cultural background, underachievement, or disabilities are included in high ability programming. Students will be identified “high ability” in the general intellectual domain, math, and language arts specific academic domain using performance-based assessments; potential-based assessments, and alternative assessments.

### **Elementary Identification:**

#### Assessment Data for Ability and Achievement Base:

- NWEA Fall Scores (Grades K-5)
- Spring state assessment scores (Grades 3-5)
- Student scores from COGAT 8

#### Assessment Screening Data for Selection:

- Student scores from Stanford Achievement Test Series (10<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)

#### Qualitative Recommendation:

- Teacher Recommendations
- Counselor Recommendations
- EL Teacher Recommendations
- Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI)

#### Timeline for Identification:

- Students in grades 1-5 following Fall formative assessment administration.
- Students in kindergarten in early spring of the school year.
- New students throughout the school year as they enroll.

The High Ability Coordinator, the elementary High Ability cluster teacher(s), an elementary guidance counselor, and grade level teacher(s) serve on the identification district-wide committee.

Students who are border-line will be provided with services on a trial basis.

Eligibility of transfer students previously identified in another district as high ability will receive services as indicated if:

- criteria for high ability identification used by the former school district is similar to MSD of Steuben County;

or

- a timely evaluation of the student using district criteria qualifies him/her as high ability.

**Middle School Identification:**

**LANGUAGE ARTS**

Qualitative:

- Teacher Recommendations
- Multi-faceted Checklist
- Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)

Quantitative Assessment Screening Data:

- 91% or higher on NWEA or state assessments
- Stanford Achievement Test Series (10<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- COGAT 8 90% or higher
- Previous elementary identification

**MATHEMATICS**

Qualitative:

- Teacher Recommendations
- Multi-faceted Checklist
- Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)

Quantitative Assessment Screening Data:

- 91% or higher on NWEA or state assessments
- Stanford Achievement Test Series (10<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- COGAT 8 90% or higher
- Previous elementary identification

Students enrolled in MSD of Steuben are identified using the above criteria in spring of each school year for Middle School High Ability Courses. Students new to the district are identified upon enrollment.

**High School Identification:**

Students are identified for “high ability programming” using the “High Ability Multi-Faceted Identification Checklist” and assessment criteria.

Qualitative:

- Student has a letter of recommendation from a current teacher/counselor for participation in the program.

Quantitative:

- Previously identified as “high ability” (Any student identified at previous grades is considered a high ability student as long as they receive services for the previous school year.)
- Received a 91% or higher on NWEA or state assessments
- Scored at or above the benchmark percentile nationally in the relevant subject area on the PSAT (Reading 49; Writing 48; Math 47)
- Student’s AP Potential score shows a 75% chance or better of passing an AP test in the course in question.

- COGAT 8 90% or higher (using national & local norms and with consideration of the standard error of measure)
- Stanford Achievement Test Series (10<sup>th</sup> Edition) 98% or higher (using national & local norms and with consideration of the standard error of measure)

### **Appeal Process:**

If upon completion of the identification process for High Ability services a parent or teacher feels that the student should qualify or a student has exited the program and wishes to re-enter, she/he may submit an appeal.

The appeal process is as follows:

The parent or teacher reviews the presentation on “Characteristics of Gifted Learners”.

The parent or teacher must submit in writing the reasons for the appeal to the district coordinator of high abilities programs or designee and provide two adult signatures (one must be the parent and one must be the current classroom teacher) showing support for the appeal. (Re-entry only: The student must put in writing reasons why he/she wants to re-enter the program and what they have done to over-come the reasons for previously exiting the program.)

- The person making the appeal should prepare a portfolio including other assessment information, exceptional student products, and at least two (2) letters of recommendation to be submitted to the district coordinator of high ability programs or designee.
- The coordinator will facilitate an appeal committee (principal, guidance counselor, classroom teacher, “high ability” resource teacher/ Honors or AP teacher, and district coordinator) meeting to review the file. The committee may request additional testing if the portfolio does not include adequate information.
- The review committee will respond in writing with one of the following within no more than thirty (30) instructional days from the date the appeal was received by the coordinator.
  1. The committee recommends the student be accepted into the high ability program.
  2. The committee recommends a trial period in the program (4 ½ to 9 weeks) with at least one observation by the district coordinator or designee.
  3. The committee with the child’s best educational and social/emotional interest in mind recommends that the student remain in the regular classroom with differentiation and not participate in high ability programs

### **Counseling and Guidance**

High ability students will meet as needed with a guidance counselor, as a group or individually, for support in emotional growth and socialization. Counselors will work collaboratively with parents, teachers, and administrators support student interventions, learning plans, and disseminate general information about high ability behavior.

Counselors will focus on the specific needs of each high ability student Kindergarten through twelfth grade including:

- underachievement or at-risk behavior,
- low self-esteem and self efficiency,
- anxiety,
- discipline problems,
- making referrals for community professionals and resources when necessary,
- college and career guidance especially designed for their needs,

and support of students with high ability from low socio-economic environments, with limited English, with learning or other disabilities, or with cultural differences.

**Students Receiving Services and Not Meeting Expectations:**

The teacher of the “high ability student” will call a school resource team (SRT) meeting by completing referral documentation and submitting to the building principal or designee. The school resource team (SRT) will convene to develop intervention strategies, conference with parents and student, and/or develop modifications in the high ability services.

**Program Exit Provisions:**

A student wishing to exit the program must put in writing their reasons for requesting the exit and give them to the resource teacher or middle/high school counselor. At the elementary level the teacher will then ask the school counselor to meet with the student concerning the exit for the purposes of gathering information for the conference. If the student is middle/high level the counselor will meet with the student.

The School Resource Team (SRT) will convene a conference prior to exiting a student from the program. All efforts to assist the student in the high ability programming will be made by the school staff, prior to exiting the student. This may include but is not limited to counseling, tutoring, regular classroom compacting, or assistance from outside agencies.

Students participating in “high ability” programs at the elementary, middle/high level may exit or be asked to exit the program by teacher, parent, or administration as follows:

- Grades kindergarten- second grade students may exit the high ability group following an SRT intervention. Students will be re-grouped with the least disruption as possible to their regular class schedule.
- Grades three-five students may exit the program following a conference and/or SRT intervention and completion of a permission to exit form completed by the teacher or the parent.
- Grades six-eight students may exit a program at the request of teacher, student, or parent following a conference, and SRT intervention approval.
- Grades nine-twelve students may exit a course with approval from the guidance counselor, parent, and principal.

**Professional Development**

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County will provide opportunities for staff working with high ability students to participate in appropriate on-going professional development activities to develop awareness and classroom instructional strategies for:

- characteristics and identification of high ability students,
- differentiated instruction, and
- socio-emotional needs of high ability students.

Professional development opportunities for staff are designed by need and may include consultants, workshops, state conferences, and teacher collaboration activities.

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County will provide opportunities for parents to participate in appropriate professional development activities as needed to develop awareness for:

- characteristics and identification of high ability students,
- program design,
- curriculum,
- social and emotional needs of high ability students.



**Program Evaluation:**

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County provides on-going program evaluation and assessment reporting annually (formative) and minimally every five (5) years (summative). The program evaluation will be conducted by the district “High Ability” Broad Based Committee. Data will be provided to the Indiana Department of Education as requested for program effectiveness.

Program summative evaluation is based on the following Standards from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

- Information collected will address pertinent questions raised by all stakeholder groups and will be responsive of the needs of all stakeholders.
- Allocation of adequate time, financial support, and personnel will be provided to conduct systematic program evaluation.
- The evaluation will be designed to report strengths and weaknesses found in the program as well as address critical issues that may influence program services.
- Instruments used will be sufficient, reliable, valid, appropriate, and diversified for the target population.
- All BBC members involved in the evaluation process will be given opportunities for verifying information and input on interpretation and recommendations.
- The evaluation report will be designed to present results and encourage follow-through for changes in programming.

**Broad Based Committee:**

The Metropolitan School District of Steuben County will organize a broad-based planning committee representing educators, parents, and community members that will meet at least annually to evaluate and support the program.

The Broad Based Committee (BBC) will meet on an annual basis to monitor development and implementation of the “high ability” program, review evaluation information, and make recommendations for improvements in the program for high ability students. This committee will consist of representation from educators, parents, students, community members, and other stakeholders. The BBC will meet a minimum of one time each school year.

The BBC will examine the following formative evaluation data to develop and update the high abilities program:

- Student assessment/identification practices (using pre- and post student achievement data).
- Program design/implementation (using student, teacher, and parent surveys).
- Professional development (using workshop evaluations, teacher attendance, and activity schedules and calendars).

**Grade Acceleration:**

Grade level acceleration is a building based decision involving the school resource team and review of student data, social adaptation, and additional information provided by parents and teachers.

**PERMISSION FOR EXIT**  
**from the MSD of Steuben County**  
**High Ability Program**  
**Form to be completed at the Exit Committee Meeting**

It is agreed that \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
**(student name)**

will not participate in high ability programs and may not re-enter any program during the current school year. The exit committee (HA teacher, classroom teacher, counselor, principal, parent & student if applicable) decision was made for the following reasons:

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**SIGNATURES:**

Student:	_____	Date	_____
Parent/Guardian	_____	Date:	_____
Program Teacher:	_____	Date:	_____
Principal:	_____	Date:	_____
Classroom Teacher	_____	Date:	_____
Counselor	_____	Date:	_____
Program Coordinator	_____	Date:	_____

Comments/Dissenting Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

Cc: HA Coordinator; Student File

**APPEAL CHECKLIST/RECOMMENDATION**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please comment on all criteria and note recommendation for acceptance or denial for the **High Ability Programming**.

<b>Teacher Nomination/Comments:</b>	
<b>Evaluation of Test Data Benchmarks</b>	
<b>Evaluation of Students Sample(s)</b>	
<b>Evaluation of Additional Classroom Test Data:</b>	
<b>Evaluation of Parent Recommendation/Comments:</b>	
<b>District Committee Comments? Recommendation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> We recommend this student for participation in the program. <input type="checkbox"/> We recommend this student for participation on a trial period of nine weeks. <input type="checkbox"/> We do not recommend this student for participation in the program.

**District Committee Signatures:**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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