



**CLARKSVILLE
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Clarksville Community
School Corporation

High Ability Program
Handbook

Table of Contents

Program Design	page 3
Program Administration	page 4
Identification Plan	page 5
Assessment Plan	page 6
Curriculum and Instruction Plan	page 9
Counseling and Guidance Plan	page 10
Professional Development Plan	page 11
Program Evaluation Plan	page 12

Program Design

The Clarksville Community School Corporation's program for high ability education is rooted within the district's belief statements.

We believe clearly defined high academic standards lead to high academic achievement. It is our responsibility to provide the necessary resources to assure that every child is extended an opportunity to grow and succeed in the classroom, on the stage, and on the field.

We believe that every child deserves an effective teacher in every classroom. In order to achieve this goal, our district is committed to ensuring that our standard for instruction is rigorous and our administrative teams are committed to providing the support necessary to achieve this goal.

We believe that behind every successful school district there exists a strong community connection. These community partners provide the talent, the expertise, and the financial support for school improvement.

We believe that the highest levels of academic, social, and emotional, growth for all students occur when schools are welcoming places, providing a nurturing learning environment that ensures physical and emotional safety.

We believe that ethical values, including an appreciation of diversity, integrity, compassion, commitment, and responsibility, are integral to the learning process.

Further, through the shared involvement of home, community and school, our purpose is to develop and provide quality work to prepare each high ability student to think, reason and participate in a diverse society as a lifelong, self-directed learner. We envision schools where these students experience success through authentic, real-life learning activities. Instructional activities include a focus on an appreciation of the diversity of society and the ever-changing world.

Clarksville's district level program design includes policies and procedures for the following: *Identification, Curriculum and Instruction, Counseling and Guidance, Professional Development, and Program Evaluation*. These program components will be described in greater detail throughout this document.

Program Administration

Clarksville's program for high ability education is facilitated by a High Ability Coordinator, a broad based planning committee (BBPC), building level teams, and classroom teacher leaders. Each component of the high ability administrative body has specific responsibilities to meet the needs of the district's high ability population.

The roles and responsibilities of the High Ability Coordinator are as follows:

- *Manage Indiana's High Ability grant, which includes submission of grant proposal, implementation of activities and programs outlined in the grant, completing the End of Year Report, communicating with the Indiana Dept. of Education's Center for Exceptional Learners regarding grant proposal and securing funding for the program*
- *Communicate with district stakeholders including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Technology, Corporation Treasurer, Director of English Language Learners, and the Director of Exceptional Learners*
- *Provide district and building level professional development*
- *Disseminate information from the Indiana Department of Education to the BBPC regarding the High Ability mandate and serving the needs of high ability students*
- *Coordinate the Identification Process for high ability eligibility*
- *Communicate with parents the results of HA identification and CCS HA programming*
- *Coordinate and facilitate BBPC meetings*
- *Coordinate and facilitate building level team meetings*
- *Provide resources and support for building based teachers of high ability students*
- *Facilitate both internal evaluations (annual) and external evaluations (no less than every 5 years)*

Clarksville's **Broad Based Planning Committee (BBPC)** for high ability education consists of building administrators, district administrators, classroom teachers, parents, community members, and school board members. The committee meets no less than once per school year to make informed decisions regarding the direction of the district's high ability program. The BBPC sets goals for the program, facilitates the evaluation of the program, and develops and reaches consensus on the district plan for high ability education. The BBPC serves as a resource to the district and building level high ability teams as well as for parents and the community as a whole.

Building level teams will meet at regular intervals and as needed. These teams have the following roles and responsibilities:

- *make informed decisions regarding student eligibility for high ability programming*
- *intake referrals for high ability programming from parents, teachers, administrators, a student, or the student's peers*
- *collect pertinent classroom or standardized assessment data that support the referral*

- *design a learning plan for students identified as high ability that defines the level of service needed*
- *provide professional development opportunities, from in-house and outside sources*
- *provide educational resources for the service of high ability students in the building*
- *facilitate program evaluations for building based teams*

Potential members of the building level high ability team should include, but not be limited to the following:

- *High Ability Coordinator*
- *Principal or designee*
- *School Counselor*
- *Classroom Teacher*
- *Teachers that have earned their High Ability licensure or are actively working toward it*

Identification Plan

The process for identifying those students who qualify for high ability programming is an inclusive one. Schools within Clarksville Community Schools have a responsibility to actively seek out those students that may need high ability programming. Multiple measures of academic ability and cognitive potential, including student products, achievement and aptitude test scores, and evaluation instruments specifically designed to measure gifted or high ability characteristics, are used to identify those who are in need of services. These instruments are research based and designed to be inclusive of those students who may be economically disadvantaged, who may have a language barrier that may impact performance on more typical measures of high ability, or who may have a twice exceptionality.

Students who are newly enrolled within the district are also eligible for high ability programming. An appropriate referral from any recognized referral source, coupled with student products that show exemplary performance in math or language arts warrant consideration for high ability services.

The state of Indiana categorizes gifted students in three domains: High Ability-General Intellectual, High Ability-Language Arts, or High Ability-Math. Inclusion within any of these domains requires that the 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 grade level curriculum.”

Furthermore a student is considered High Ability if she or he:

“.... demonstrates outstanding potential or performance according to school corporation criteria on an alternate form of assessment, such as peer evaluation, self-evaluation, teacher recommendation, parent recommendation, product or portfolio assessment, rating or observation scales, interviews, or performance assessment.”

With these state guidelines for identification in mind, Clarksville Community Schools uses the following indicators as part of a multi-faceted plan for identifying students in need of services for academic abilities:

- Pre-K Screening
- Nominations from self, peers, teachers, administrators, or parents-Grades K-12
- Academic Achievement Grades K-12
- Group Administered Achievement Tests: Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), Grades K-2; AIRWays Cambium (Clearsite), Grades 3-8
- Group Administered Norm Referenced Aptitude Assessment – CogAT, Grades K, 2, & 5
- Group Administered Achievement Tests: End of Course Assessments-Grades 9-10
- Writing samples, or other student products-K-12
- Screening Instruments, Rating scales, Surveys, Inventories, etc. are available to gather individual data on students who are being evaluated for high ability services

In determining eligibility for high ability programming, a student assessment profile is developed and kept on record. This profile includes the referral source, any assessments used in determining eligibility, and the high ability learner's interests, learning styles, and educational needs. Only those staff members who have a role in providing services to the student will have access to the results of assessments regarding eligibility.

Assessment Plan

Qualifications

Multiple sources of information are used to identify students. Outlined below, are the assessments and prerequisites for qualification. Building level teams review the information at each level and determine an appropriate placement.

Elementary

Students in Kindergarten, 2nd, and 5th grades take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), fulfilling the IN DOE aptitude requirement. All students take the AIRWays Cambium Assessment (Clearsite) fulfilling the IN DOE achievement requirement.

Kindergarten:

K students are given the CogAT screener. Those students scoring in the 90th percentile or above using local norms are given the full battery CogAT.

Students in the 90th percentile or higher on the full battery CogAT when compared to age level peers in Verbal, Quantitative, or Quantitative/NonVerbal Composite on CogAT automatically qualify for high ability programming.

Students in the 80th-89th percentile are considered and may qualify based on classroom data.

2nd and 5th Grades:

Students in the 93rd percentile using Standard Age Score (SAS) or higher in English Language Arts and/or Math on CogAT automatically qualify.

Students in the 85th-92nd percentile are considered and may qualify based on Achievement scores and teacher input.

The AIRWays Cambium and Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT) cut scores, as a measure of achievement for High Ability eligibility, will be determined in 2021-2022 school year in conjunction with IDOE guidance. This document will be updated to reflect this information.

Elementary Appeals Process

An appeal can be initiated by either the parent or a school employee. The initiator of the appeal should contact the High Ability Coordinator for the appeal form. In addition to the narrative form other documentation such as student products, classroom assessments, standardized assessments, and recommendation letters should be submitted to the High Ability Coordinator. The building level committee will review the student's appeal and communicate the determination for services to the child's parent.

Middle School

Students in 5th grade take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), fulfilling the IN DOE aptitude requirement. All students take the WIAT fulfilling the IN DOE achievement requirement.

English Language Arts

8th Grade

- 8th Honors - "Above Proficiency" on ILEARN (EoY) **OR** approved waiver **OR** consider students currently in Honors maintaining a B+ or higher

7th Grade

- 7th Honors – "Above Proficiency on ILEARN (EoY) **OR** approved waiver

Math

8th Grade

- 8th Honors (Alg 1 Honors) - "Above Proficiency" on ILEARN (EoY) **OR** approved waiver If student does not meet prerequisites but is getting a B+ or better in current 7th Math Honors, consider moving to Advanced.

7th Grade

- 7th Honors - Above Proficiency on ILEARN (EoY) **OR** approved waiver

High School

English Language Arts

12th Grade

- English 12 Dual Credit Courses through Ivy Tech (4 year bound) - 2.7+ GPA and at least Core 40 Diploma Track (recommended: 580 on PSAT)

11th Grade

- English 11 Dual Credit Courses through Ivy Tech- PSAT 560 (10th grade) or approved waiver

10th Grade

- 10th Honors-PSAT 540 (9th grade) or approved waiver

9th Grade

- 9th Honors - PSAT 520 (8th grade) or “Above Proficiency” on ILEARN or approved waiver

Math

- Finite- Algebra II and Geometry (Honors recommended).
- Calculus - Algebra II and Geometry (Honors recommended) and Pre-Calculus
- Pre-Calculus - Algebra II (Honors recommended)
- Geometry Honors - PSAT 500 (10th) or Honors Math previous year with a B- or better or waiver if 4 year college bound. NOTE: will follow with Honors Algebra II
- Algebra II Honors - PSAT 480 (9th grade) or Honors Math previous year with a B- or better or waiver if 4 year college bound. NOTE: will follow with Honors Geometry or Pre-Calculus
- Algebra 1 Honors-PSAT 460 (8th grade) or “Above Proficiency” on ILEARN or approved waiver if 4 year college bound. NOTE: will follow with Honors Geometry or Honors Algebra II

Secondary Appeals Process

Beginning in 7th grade, a student may initiate an appeal to be included in advanced/honors courses. The appeal can be initiated by the parent, but must include documentation that the student supports the appeal. The teacher, principal and counselor (in consultation with the High Ability Coordinator if desired) will review this request and meet with the parent to discuss appropriate placement.

Exit Procedure

It is important to keep in mind that cognitive growth is not always consistent, and consequently such placement is not necessarily permanent. Placement decisions may be modified in accordance with changes in students' learning profiles as they progress through elementary and middle school.

Students who are not performing at the expected level in the identified area will be taken through the Response to Intervention (RtI) process. After appropriate interventions are implemented and data is gathered, the committee, with input from the classroom teacher and High Ability Coordinator, will make a decision on how to proceed.

Parent/Guardians may also request for their child to be removed from the High Ability program. They must do this in a written request to the High Ability Coordinator. The Principal/Counselor, High Ability Coordinator, classroom teacher, and parent/guardian will meet to determine appropriate placement.

Curriculum and Instruction Plan

Students who have been identified for high ability programming receive instruction in Language Arts and Math designed to meet the needs of each individual student. These research-based, best practices include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Standards-based curriculum mapping*
- *Differentiation of instruction in content, process, and product*
- *Curriculum Compacting*
- *Acceleration*
- *Critical and Creative Thinking*
- *Higher Order Questioning,*
- *Inquiry Based Learning*
- *Standards based assessments through the Indiana Curriculum Accountability Network (ICAN)*
- *Grade level and cross grade collaboration meetings between teachers*

Through the lesson planning process, teachers are able to address individual learning styles and levels of content mastery. With this information teachers are able to make sound decisions regarding meeting the needs of the high ability learners in the classroom. Through reflective lesson plans, also known as “diary maps”, teachers are able to implement differentiated instructional experiences that meet the needs of all learners in the classroom.

The table below describes a general overview of courses of study and instructional experiences that are provided to students who have been identified as high ability. What levels of service each student may need are determined on a case-by-case basis.

<i>Grade level</i>	<i>LA/Math Enrichment</i>	<i>Acceleration</i>
<i>K-6</i>	Differentiated curriculum for high ability learners. Instructional practices may include learning centers or stations, open-ended tasks, product options, research and independent study, inquiry based learning, flexible and cluster grouping of high ability learners. Instructional materials available that are on student's interest and achievement level.	Curriculum compacting, pre-assessment, tiered instruction. <i>Decisions regarding early Kindergarten entrance and grade skipping in grades K-6 are made on a case-by-case basis.</i>
<i>7-8</i>	Differentiated curriculum for high ability learners. Instructional practices may include learning centers or stations, open-ended tasks, product options, research and independent study, inquiry based learning, flexible and cluster grouping of high ability learners. Advanced core curriculum classes. Instructional materials available that are on student's interest and achievement level.	Curriculum compacting, pre-assessment, tiered instruction. Opportunities for early matriculation: High School courses (based on teacher recommendation), Algebra I, II, Geometry. English 9, 10, Spanish/French, Biology.
<i>9-12</i>	Differentiated curriculum for high ability learners. Instructional practices may include learning centers or stations, open-ended tasks, product options, research and independent study, inquiry based learning, flexible and cluster grouping of high ability learners. Advanced core curriculum classes. Instructional materials on student's interest and achievement level. Advanced core curriculum classes.	Dual-Enrollment courses: Medical Terminology, Criminal Justice, Economics/Business, and Philosophy of Religion. Available courses of study: Honors Diploma, Technical Honors Diploma, Core 40 Diploma. <i>Possibility of credit acceleration by successful completion of End-of-Course Assessment requirement.</i>

Counseling and Guidance Plan

Many high ability students have unique characteristics that merit attention from a school corporation's counseling and guidance department. Generally speaking, academic provisions such as the ability to learn with others of similar interests, ability, and drive, having learning experiences presented to them at appropriate levels, and flexible pacing of the curriculum can be of great benefit in meeting the social and emotional needs of high ability students. Some studies indicate that these students may need additional assistance to cope with their heightened sensitivity, perfectionist tendencies, peer relationships, and career and post-secondary education planning. Furthermore, Clarksville's educational staff and counselors need to be aware of special populations of students who may be in need of high ability programming. Special care must be taken to offer early identification and support of students of lower socio-economic status, have limited English proficiency, or have learning or cultural differences.

Clarksville Schools enjoys a partnership with CenterStone to assist with social/emotional needs of our students. We have life skills experts and counselors at all three levels (elementary, middle, and high) of our educational programming. These services, along with our school counselors, provide CCSC students with social and emotional support throughout their educational careers.

All of Clarksville's schools have counselors on staff who have had training on the affective development of children and young adults. Counselors participate in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) training throughout the year to develop a better understanding of the needs of high ability students. Counselors provide training to staff through professional development to help teachers to support the (SEL) needs of high ability students. The corporation's high ability coordinator continually provides school based counselors with resources and professional development opportunities designed to better meet the needs of these unique students and their families. Each year, a portion of the corporation state based High Ability Grant is dedicated to professional development that includes the district's counseling department.

Professional Development Plan

Professional development for Clarksville's administrators, teachers, and instructional support staff is on-going and comprehensive.

At the beginning of each school year, all instructional staff members participate in a full day of professional development that is facilitated by district and building based administrators. Activities and experiences for staff members are centered on meeting individual student needs within the classroom--both educational and emotional.

Also, throughout the school year, teachers are provided with job-embedded time to collaborate with their grade level colleagues to align curriculum and plan educational experiences for Clarksville students. During professional development, instructional staff participate in an ongoing discussion to continually improve our plan for meeting students' social emotional wellness. Furthermore, every school is equipped with a trained SEL school counselor.

Throughout the school year, instructional staff members are provided professional development sessions that focus on differentiation of instruction, standards based assessment, and meeting the needs of all learners within the classroom setting. High Ability Certified teachers provide instructional guidelines to classrooms with high ability students ensuring non-negotiable skills are met at each grade level for high ability learners.

Teachers of identified high ability students receive professional development opportunities during monthly committee meetings including book study analyses, instructional strategies, and curricular updates. Teachers of identified students in grades K-8 receive a full day of job embedded professional development facilitated by the High Ability Coordinator. The focus of this day is English Language Arts and Math strategies for high ability learners.

Teachers are encouraged to take part in outside-district training as well. Dual Credit teachers at the high school level are credentialed through the post-secondary institution awarding the college credits. The Indiana Commission on Higher Education governs the credentialing requirements for post-secondary institutions. Other trainings include local (High Ability Bootcamp with Consultants for High Ability, Creative and Critical Thinking Workshops with Consultants for High Ability, Pages to Paradise Literacy Workshop sponsored by INDOE), state (Indiana Association of the Gifted Conference), and national (National Association of the Gifted) sponsored professional development opportunities designed to enhance their understanding of high ability students in the cognitive, academic, socio-emotional, and artistic domains.

Program Evaluation Plan

Development of Clarksville's comprehensive program design for high ability education was based on a needs assessment/self-evaluation that was provided by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). As a second evaluation tool, Clarksville also measured its program effectiveness against the “exemplary” program standards provided by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). The district’s broad-based planning committee for high ability education completed these assessments. The committee consists of district and building level administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. Each spring, the program goals and objectives are evaluated by the broad-based planning committee to look for specific areas for improvement, or any gains that are to be celebrated. Evaluation of the High Ability program is two fold: progress of students who are enrolled in the program as measured by classroom performance, and district level evaluations based on the performances outlined in the Indiana Standards for High Ability Education and the NAGC program performance standards.

After program review, a written report is developed based on the findings of the evaluation and that report is submitted to the superintendent and the school board of trustees. Also, as a requirement of the IDOE, Clarksville's program for high ability education is scrutinized by external evaluators no less than once every five years. The findings of the outside evaluations are reported in writing and in a public forum as well. Results of any evaluations are used to strengthen programs for the high ability learners of the school corporation.