

# **Hamilton Heights School Corporation**

## **High Ability Programming**

### **HHSC High Ability Mission Statement**

*We recognize and nurture students of exceptional ability  
within a challenging academic environment.*

“Exceptional Ability” means students whose abilities and skills are *significantly* beyond their peers.

Challenging Academic Environment includes and is not limited to:

- Acceleration and Enrichment of curriculum
- Differentiated instruction
- Critical and creative thinking
- Problem solving in daily work
- Development of Independent learners
- Leadership opportunities
- Service opportunities

### **Program Overview**

Hamilton Heights School Corporation is committed to maximizing student potential. A rigorous, differentiated core curriculum provides appropriate challenge for the majority of students. At times further differentiation or additional programming is appropriate in order to meet the needs of students who show exceptional strength in reading and/or mathematics.

Our five areas of focus are outline in this document:

- I. Multifaceted Identification
- II. Curriculum and Instruction
- III. Guidance and Counseling
- IV. Professional Development
- V. Program Evaluation

## **I. Multifaceted Identification**

The High Ability Learners (HAL) Identification Committee for each building is to be made up, at minimum, of the district high ability coordinator, a building administrator, and a teacher. The teacher should be the high ability liaison, or have experience or training in the area of high ability.

We are required by the Indiana Department of Education to attach the high ability designation each year to the student identification number of those students for whom high ability services are deemed appropriate. The state of Indiana defines “High Ability Student” as a student who “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 is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.”

In conjunction with the mission of Hamilton Heights School Corporation, the HHSC HAL Identification Committee is committed to researching and understanding the needs of high ability students in order to make meaningful recommendations that will ultimately maximize opportunities for the students to attain their highest potential.

### **Kindergarten**

- All kindergarten students are given the CogAT screener.
- Students scoring at or above the 80th percentile on the screener will go on to take the full CogAT.
- Students scoring at or above the 96th percentile on the full CogAT are automatically identified as HA.
- Students who score between the 80th-95th percentiles on the full CogAT are given the Iowa Assessment.
- Students scoring at or above the 96th percentile on the Iowa Assessment are automatically identified as HA.
- Students whose score falls within the standard error of measurement (SEM) of either CogAT or the Iowa assessment are further considered for identification and qualitative data will be gathered.

### **Grades 1**

New students who were identified as a high ability learner by their previous school may be administered the CogAT and/or an achievement test to determine their eligibility for the Hamilton Heights Primary School HAL program. If this data is available and current from a student’s previous school further assessment may not be warranted. Teachers may nominate students for High Ability identification by completing the Teacher Recommendation Form. The HAL Identification Committee will make final identification decisions using the available evidence to determine which students require High Ability services.

## **Grade 2**

The steps that are taken in kindergarten are repeated in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

Note: Students who were previously identified as high ability will continue on throughout their elementary years receiving high ability services unless there are indicators suggesting this student needs different placement.

## **Grades 3-4**

Every third and fourth grader who has not already been identified as a High Ability student is considered for placement. Teachers may nominate students for High Ability identification by completing the Teacher Recommendation Form. If a child is not nominated by a teacher and the child's parent believes the child should be considered, then the parent can nominate by completing the Parent Observation Form. Nominated students will then take the CogAT Assessment. Our HAL Identification Committee will meet to determine placement, based upon CogAT scores, achievement scores, and recommendation forms.

Note: Students who were previously identified as high ability will continue to receive services.

## **Grade 5**

The steps taken in third and fourth grades are repeated in fifth grade. In addition, any student who scores Pass+ on ISTEP+ will be given the CogAT assessment.

## **Grade 6-8**

### **Advanced Course Placement**

- Students will be placed in Honors English, along with identified high ability students, after taking in consideration the following information:
  - Teacher recommendation
  - Prior course grades
  - Meeting benchmarks on locally developed assessments, ISTEP+, and/or standardized tests
  
- Students will be placed in Advanced Math courses, along with identified high ability students, after taking in consideration the following information:
  - Teacher recommendation
  - Prior course grades
  - Meeting benchmarks on locally developed assessments, ISTEP+, and/or standardized tests

## **Grades 9-12**

Results from the grade 8 ISTEP+, SAT, PSAT and Core 40 tests will be used to determine which students should be encouraged to enroll in the AP and dual credit (college credit) courses. While these courses are open to all students that have met the prerequisites those students of higher ability are specifically encouraged to enroll.

## **Appeals Procedure**

A student, parent, teacher, or administrator may appeal a placement decision on behalf of a student who does not qualify for the high ability program. Requests for appeals are to be made within the first two school weeks following parent notification, by following the procedures below:

The concerned individual must submit a *Request for Appeal* form to Julie Gravely that includes the name of the student, the program under consideration (English, Math, or both), and the reason(s) for appealing the placement decision. The request of appeal must be accompanied by the following documentation and/or samples of student work that demonstrate the student's competency in the academic areas being evaluated. Students or parents requesting an appeal may provide testing from an outside source, but would be responsible for any costs incurred. Outside tests must be administered by a licensed psychologist in private practice and not affiliated with a particular public or private school.

### **Math**

- Documentation and/or samples of student work and an end-of-year standards-based test that demonstrates 75% mastery of the math standards that would be taught in the regular math curriculum in the upcoming year. **OR**
- Documentation of performance at or above the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile on a norm-referenced test of quantitative reasoning ability

### **English/Language Arts**

- Documentation and/or samples of student work that demonstrate 75% mastery of the language arts standards that would be taught in the regular language arts curriculum in the upcoming year **and** a reading test score showing ability at or above the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile. **OR**
- Documentation of performance at or above the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile on a norm-referenced test of verbal reasoning ability.

Julie Gravely, High Ability Coordinator, will meet with the appeal committee consisting of the student's most recent classroom teacher, a building administrator and/or counselor, and a teacher with training or experience in high ability students, preferably the high ability cluster teacher for the next grade level.

The appeal committee will review the information provided and make a thoughtful decision on a case-by-case, individual basis that is in the best interest of the student. Parents will receive written notification of the decision within one week of the committee's meeting date.

## **Exit Procedures**

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 and the teacher providing services. This conference may be a telephone conference.
2. Parent, student, and teacher examine issues of concern and discuss interventions that may be implemented.
3. Participants agree on a probationary period not less than one semester to implement interventions.
4. At the end of the probationary period, the parent, student and teacher 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.
6. Parent permission for exit and documentation of meetings/interventions are sent to the Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator.
7. The Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator removes the high ability flag for the student in the database.

## **II. Curriculum and Instructional Strategies**

Hamilton Heights Primary and Elementary (K-5)	Hamilton Heights Middle School (6-8)	Hamilton Heights High School (9-12)
<p>Cluster groups in grades K-5.</p> <p>Instruction is presented at the appropriate level through flexible grouping and differentiated instruction with a focus on reading and math.</p> <p>Appropriate acceleration and enrichment through use of technology.</p>	<p>Appropriately differentiated instruction and enrichment is offered in all core subject areas. Honors courses and advanced mathematics courses are offered in grades 6-8.</p>	<p>Appropriately differentiated instruction and enrichment is offered in all core subject areas.</p> <p>Honors, AP, dual-credit, and specialty area courses are available to all qualifying students.</p> <p>Distance Learning Classes through the Indiana Online Academy are a possibility.</p> <p>Early graduation is available.</p>

### **III. Guidance and Counseling**

High ability students will receive counseling services in academic, career, and citizenship development. Also, students will participate in classroom guidance lessons and group counseling (stress reduction, social skills, etc.) when appropriate. When individual counseling is necessary, the high ability student and counselor will meet 4-7 sessions; counseling will center around meeting individual student needs with regular feedback and emphasis on problem solving. Counseling focus will include developmental problems, more effective living, problem prevention, problem containment, and establishing more effective actions in a talent domain.

School counselor will be knowledgeable about the characteristics associated with giftedness. Most counseling goals will fall in one or more of three areas: self-actualization, problem solving, and performance. Goals include improved psychological health, enhanced skills, increased self-awareness, enhanced expression of needs, and personal growth. Problem-solving goals include a reduction of risk factors and an increase in protective factors, such as, improving family relations, unifying parents, creating homework structure, and accepting situations that cannot be changed. Assessment will be made through observation and data collection from school community members. Collaboration will be the key component as the school counselor, family members, school personnel and gifted student work together toward academic and social success.

### **IV. Professional Development Goals and Opportunities**

- Teachers and administrators will understand the characteristics and needs of high ability children, as well as the definition of giftedness as defined by Indiana.
- Using best practices, teachers will provide differentiated services for students.
- Effective professional development will support both general and high ability teachers as they respond to the academic and social-emotional needs of high ability learners.
- Teachers and administrators will understand the identification process.
- Administrators and high ability coordinator will provide leadership in analysis of student data.

## **V. Program Evaluation**

The High Ability Broad Based Planning Committee (BBPC) serves an advisory function and provides a forum for discussion of current research and how to use available resources to best meet the needs of our high ability students. Stakeholders include administrators, teachers, and parents.

Administrators at each school building will identify one administrator and at least one certified staff member as high ability liaisons. These individuals will attend the BBPC meetings and oversee high ability identification, programming, and professional development at their building with support and guidance from the Corporation High Ability Coordinator. Administrators and liaisons are encouraged to invite community members, parents, and where appropriate, high ability students, to attend BBPC meetings.

### **BBPC Administrators:**

Julie Griffey

Bret Bailey

Jarrold Mason

### **BBPC School Liaisons**

Jennifer Tebbe -PS

Marianne Collar - EM

Kari Berry – MS

Joy Volz-HS

### **Parents/Community**

Emily Beechler

### **High Ability Coordinator**

Julie Gravely