



High Ability Program

Mission Statement

Bloomfield School District (BSD) recognizes that high ability students are found in all populations. In order to develop the potential and achievement of identified students in the BSD, our High Ability Program supports classroom teachers in providing appropriate learning experiences that provide challenge and rigor in order to develop the cognitive and affective processes of high ability students.

Definition of High Ability Students

Indiana Code (20-36-1-3): A high ability student is one 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.”

Program Overview

The BSD High Ability Program follows the Indiana mandates for high ability students in grades K – 12 and is overseen by a Program Coordinator. The High Ability Program is supported by grant funds from the Indiana Department of Education, provides resources, training for teachers, and classroom instruction that supports the unique needs of the identified, high ability students in general intellect and the specific academic areas of language and math.

Students are identified as having potential for achievement and/or demonstrating high levels of achievement in general intellectual ability, language arts and/or mathematics as compared to same-age peers. Students participate in screening processes to determine levels of potential and achievement. Students who demonstrate high levels of ability and/or

achievements are considered for formal identification.

Formal identification procedures take place in grades K, 2, 5, 7 and as needed per teacher recommendation and parent and/or student nomination. Student information and data gathered from various tools and assessments are used in the identification process by a team of qualified teachers who assess student data for evidence of achievement and general intellectual strengths. The final identification of students is made during second semester for grades K, 2, 5 and 7 each year.

The list of identified students is submitted to the IDOE and HA status is noted on student school records. School administrators, program representatives, counselors, classroom teachers and parents receive information about identified students at appropriate times within the school calendar in order to support instruction and meet individual student needs.

Student Identification

Many documents may be used by the Program Coordinator to screen for and identify student potential and achievement and monitor progress. Based on data collected, recommendations for identification or change in services are made to an identification team made of qualified teachers and school professionals who will have access to any or all data collected.

Identification for HA students will focus each year on kindergarten, second grade, fifth grade, and 7th grade with formal screening and identification each year according to the following procedures:

Students in grades K, 2, 5 and 7 will complete the CogAt screening test during the 1st semester. Students in grades 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8 who are new to BSD will be provided the CogAt Abilities Test for identification based on parent and/or teacher recommendation. All previously identified HA students are included in the advanced math and/or language arts classes, dependent upon identification.

Students in grades 8 and 9 complete the PSAT 8/9 for identification. Students in grades 10, complete the PSAT as a screening and identification measure for advanced classes. ISTEP+ Pass+ and/or End of Course Assessments are used for Algebra I, Biology I, and English 10 to identify students for advanced courses in these three areas. Students are grouped according to teacher recommendation, parent nomination, and self-nomination for advanced classes.

High Ability Instruction Grades K – 6

High ability students remain in the regular classroom for their core learning experiences and instruction. Groups of identified students will be gathered at each grade level to provide peer support that better meets the academic and social needs of high ability students. This inclusion program utilizes differentiated instruction with the support of the Indiana CCRA standards and resources provided through the BSD HA Program. With the help and support of the High Ability Coordinator, classroom teachers use professional judgment to provide leveled instruction as appropriate to meet the individual needs of the identified students for both potential and achievement in the areas of general intellectual ability, English/language arts and mathematics. Teachers differentiate by incorporating advanced curriculum and instruction, high level thinking skills and individual learning style(s) into daily lessons and curricular activities which may include: independent projects, creative writing, and critical and creative thinking skills through problem solving.

High Ability Instruction Grades 7 – 12

Bloomfield Jr.-Sr. High School offers courses to meet the needs of high ability students. Advanced Placement (AP) courses in World History and Calculus AB are available for high school students. Dual College Credit courses are available in English Composition, English Literature, Chemistry, Biology, Biotechnology, Calculus, College Algebra, Trigonometry, Finite, Spanish, French, Psychology, and Speech. Furthermore, advanced courses in English (Bible Literature, Entomology), Math (Honors Algebra I, Honors Geometry, Honors Algebra II, and Quantitative Reasoning), and Science (BioMed, Honors Biology I, Honors Chemistry I) are offered to high ability learners. Algebra 8 and English 8A are also offered for advanced Math and English students. Pre-Algebra and English 7A are offered to advanced 7th graders. Sixth grade high ability learners are offered advanced language arts and math.

Progress Monitoring

In addition to ISTEP+, all formally identified students in grades 3 – 8 will participate in Acuity Engrade Pro testing to monitor academic progress in the spring testing window. Test results are reported to parents and placed in student files.

Release/Change in Services

A student's need for high ability services may change over time for a variety of reasons. If it is determined by available data that a student may no longer benefit from high ability services, a student may be released from the high ability program with approval from the BBPC or by parent request.

Classroom teachers may begin the process of a change in services by professional observation and/or judgment and gathered data. Working with the high ability coach, parent(s), coordinator, and/or other professionals, teachers may schedule a meeting with parent, student and high ability coordinator or coach to develop and agree on interventions for one grading period. A second meeting will be scheduled to determine outcomes and placement for services based on these interventions. If a decision to discontinue services is made and approved by the BBPC, a letter to communicate this change in programming to the parent or guardian with a Release from Services Parent Letter. Parents are asked to return a signed copy to be placed in the student's permanent file.

Appeals

BSD has a committee of highly qualified teachers, administrators and staff who serve on the Appeals Committee. Parents may appeal any decision made by a program committee by contacting the High Ability Coordinator and providing a rationale for why the initial testing or data gathered is not valid for their child. BSD will provide alternative measures and data for the student. This will be reported to the appeals committee within a reasonable amount of time and parents will be notified.

Counseling and Student Support

Building administrators, counselors, HA program coordinator and classroom teachers are available to discuss the progress of individual high ability students and their specific needs.

Parents with input or concerns are encouraged to contact any of these professionals, and schedule a conference if needed. High ability students in grades 7-12 are counseled for college preparation and in the college application process by qualified school counselors who are active in helping college-bound students prepare for college and apply for scholarships. Students are grouped into intellectual peer groups when possible or as needed to provide peer support for HA students.

Broad Based Planning Committee

The high ability program is monitored by a broad based planning committee. This group includes administrators, counselors, building representatives, teachers, parents, and community members. The group meets no less than two times each school year to discuss program development, identification and to make, recommend, and/or approve changes in programming and procedures.