

# **Milan Community School Corporation High Ability Program Policy**



**Created November 2014  
Last Edit September 2017**  
by  
High Ability Committee

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# Milan Community School Corporation High Ability Program Revised Policy

## Program Overview

### **Definition of High Ability (Note:Indiana uses Gifted interchangeably with High Ability)**

In accordance with the Indiana State Law, a student with high abilities is one who performs at, or shows potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in mathematics and/or language arts as compared to students of the same age and experience, and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests (See Appendix A - Indiana Definition of High Ability).

### **Mission Statement**

The Milan Community School Corporation (MCSC) recognizes the unique needs of high ability students. In keeping with the Milan Community School Corporation's and Indiana's definition of high ability learners, MCSC's High Ability services focus on students whose ability, knowledge, and/or demonstrated skills are significantly beyond their peers in the areas of math and/or language arts. Once identified, our mission is to provide high ability students, found in all populations, with a positive, challenging atmosphere and differentiated curriculum, in which they are engaged in 21st Century learning experiences.

### **Program Goals**

MCSC services students in Kindergarten through twelfth grade and will strive to identify students in need of High Ability services as soon as possible upon entering school. A multifaceted student assessment plan is implemented to identify students in need of High Ability services. We will place identified students into an educational environment that will challenge them and allow them to learn at an appropriate level.

Goal: To identify students in need of high ability services in our school.

- Test students in order to determine those in need of high ability services.
- Provide to all interested parties alternative assessments for nominating students to be considered for services.
- Allow testing and/or alternative assessments of students who may have moved into the school corporation, been ill during testing, or were otherwise overlooked during scheduled testing periods of time.

Goal: To provide enrichment opportunities and educational services at an appropriately challenging level to the ability of each identified student.

- Utilize the What I Need (WIN) Groups in grades K-5.
- Utilize the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model in grades 6-12.
- Utilize advanced, honors, Advanced Placement, and dual credit courses for grades 6-12.

## **Program Description**

The MCSC High Ability Program realizes that students identified for High Ability services have a variety of educational needs and are capable of working at a variety of academic levels. Services shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Acceleration of the student in one or more subjects through differentiated instruction.
2. The elementary school uses What I Need (WIN) Reading and/or WIN Math Groups in grades K-4 (See Appendix B - Elementary School High Ability Program).
3. The intermediate school, grades 5-6, provides cluster-grouped honors classes in both math and/or language arts in which an accelerated and differentiated curriculum is utilized (See Appendix C - Intermediate School High Ability Course Offerings).
4. The middle school, grades 7-8, provides cluster-grouped honors classes in both math and/or language arts in which an accelerated and differentiated curriculum is utilized (See Appendix D - Middle School High Ability Course Offerings).
5. In grades nine through twelve, students receiving High Ability services in math and/or language arts will have a variety of options to meet their academic needs. The high school will provide Advanced Placement (AP) classes, dual credit, advanced and honors courses taught by qualified teachers (See Appendix E - High School High Ability Course Offerings).

## **Screening / Identification Procedures**

All students in MCSC are initially considered for High Ability services. For screening purposes, the Cognitive Abilities Test of Aptitude (CogAT) will be administered to all students in grades K, 2, 5, and 8, and to any new students or students without a score in grades K-12. Other achievement data is gathered to be considered as part of the identification process. To ensure that identification is valid, reliable and fair, a multifaceted assessment plan is used consisting of a nationally normed ability measure, several achievement measures, and an alternative identification process where teachers, parents, or even students themselves can nominate a child for consideration of the high ability.

The identification process is completed by a committee of educators, counselors, and a high ability coordinator. MCSC is committed to an identification process that is fair, unbiased, and based upon reliable data. All students earning a score of 96% or higher in math and/or language arts on the CogAT Test will be identified as High Ability in math and/or language arts. In addition, all students earning a score of 96% or higher in math and/or language arts on the NWEA Test will be identified as High Ability in math and/or language arts. Any student scoring at 96% or higher on the Iowa LANG and Reading tests would be identified as high ability in language arts, and any student scoring at 96% or higher on the Iowa math would be identified as high ability in math. Now, for students who just missed this cutoff on either the CogAT, NWEA, or the Iowa, we will collect qualitative data to determine placement. This can be a teacher rating scale such as the SIGS, or an essay prompt, math problem solving activities, etc. Students could submit a portfolio of work in the areas of English or math to the HA committee for consideration for admission to our HA program if they did not meet the cut score. Students scoring well on the qualitative measures (who just missed the cut score on the quantitative measures) would be identified as high ability. Those who did not score well on the qualitative measures would not be identified.

If a child has already been identified as a high ability student in another school district, he or she will also be considered for a similar placement in MCSC upon enrollment. His or her records will be reviewed to determine if the former school district's criteria is similar that of MCSC. The High Ability Committee will determine the most appropriate placement in MCSC to ensure continued academic success.

### ***Instrumentation/Screeners***

Measurement tools are approved by the High Ability Committee to make certain that they are free of biases. The committee, made up of teachers, counselors, and administrators from every building in the corporation, is responsible for researching and individually reviewing materials to ensure that students of all ethnicities, backgrounds, and learning styles are given equal opportunity to be admitted into the program (See Appendix F - Instrumentation Tools).

#### Screeners

1. ISTEP + (3-10)
2. Diagnostics Mathematics Screener (6-7)
3. SAT/ACT (6-12)
4. PLAN/ASVAB (10-12)
5. ACCUPLACER (10-12)

#### Identification

6. NWEA (K-8)
7. CogAT Test (K-12)
8. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery (K-12)
9. Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test (5-12)
10. PSAT (6-11)

#### Qualitative Measures

11. Teacher Rating Scale (K-12)
12. Parent Rating Scale (K-12)
13. Scales for Identifying High Ability Students (SIGS) (K-12)
14. Portfolio (K-12)

### **Placement Decisions**

Multiple assessments are used in the entire process. Test-based identification measures are administered before or during the third grading period. Identified students will be placed for services for the following school year.

Due to testing constraints, teachers or parents can nominate additional children for consideration in early 4th quarter and early 2nd quarter; nominations will be processed in late October of each school year, prior to November testing. Teachers nominate students for High Ability consideration by completing the appropriate form (See Appendix G - High Ability Program Teacher Nomination/Observation Form). Parents may also complete the appropriate form (See Appendix H - High Ability Program Parent Nomination/Observation Form).

The High Ability placement committee is composed of teachers, counselors, and member(s) of the High Ability Committee. The identification process is done “blindly” by the committee, which means names of students and schools are not revealed until after placement decisions are made. MCSC is committed to a fair and unbiased identification process that is based on reliable data. The High Ability placement committee meets in late May/early June to identify High Ability students. Parents will be notified of their child’s High Ability qualification status by mail before the start of the following school year.

The timing of the initial identification measures provides an adequate number of school days for end-of-year appeals and nominations. If consensus by the committee cannot be reached (in the original identification process or in the appeals process), the principal of the building in which the student is enrolled will make the final decision.

If a student is identified as High Ability, parents will be notified during the summer via form letter (See Appendix I - High Ability Program Parent/Guardian Notification Letter). At the start of each school year, teachers will receive a list of students that have been identified as High Ability via shared (protected) doc.

### **Social and Emotional Plan**

As required by Indiana law, MCSC has a specific Guidance and Counseling plan for those students who require High Ability services (See Appendix J - Guidance and Counseling Plan for High Ability Students).

### **Appeals Process**

Teachers, administrators, school personnel, and/or parents may appeal on behalf of a student not placed for High Ability services. The appeal should be accompanied by any additional information that the stakeholder feels should be considered in making a decision regarding the student's placement. The stakeholder might want to include a rationale for why the identification process was not valid for their children. Appeals must be filed in a timely manner. The High Ability Committee will review the student's records and the appeal form, and inform the parent in writing of the decision (See Appendix K - High Ability Program Appeals Request Form).

### **Exiting Procedures**

1. Communication (phone calls, parent--teacher conferences, and written statements) regarding concerns of student placement for High Ability services should first occur at the building level. The student, parent, and/or school personnel may initiate this communication.
2. If the above does not produce a satisfactory resolution, a formal Exit Conference will be scheduled. The teacher, parent, student (if this seems advisable by teacher and/or parent), a High Ability Committee member, and the principal will attend this conference. All issues will be examined and resolved to the greatest educational benefit of the student. Interventions will be agreed upon by all parties and put into place with fidelity for a set period of time before meeting again to determine the effectiveness of the interventions and future placement for the student. Students will be placed on probation for a minimum of one grading period. At the conclusion of this set probationary period, a second evaluation will occur.
3. If the decision is made at the conclusion of the probationary period to withdraw the student from services, the initiating party (parent or teacher) will complete the Exit Request Form (See Appendix L - High Ability Program Exit Request Form). If there is disagreement over the withdrawal of the student from the High Ability Program, the Exit Request Form will be sent to the Licensed High Ability Coordinator for consideration by the High Ability Committee.
4. The High Ability Committee may consult with Exit Conference attendees and has the option of convening an additional conference with the participants. The High Ability Committee will then recommend exploration of additional options or approve the student's withdrawal. The High Ability Committee will provide verbal & written communication regarding this decision to the parents, teacher, & building principal.

### **Professional Development Plan**

All individuals working with High Ability students are provided professional development regarding, but not limited to student identification and instructional differentiation. This service will be provided during professional development days or during PLC. The district also provides the opportunity to attend the Indiana Association for High Ability Annual Conference and other High Ability education workshops throughout the year, including those sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education Division of Exceptional Learners. Building principals and other administrators need professional development as they have the responsibilities related to students with high ability.

## Timeline

July	Confirm Professional Development dates
August	Broad Based Planning Meeting
Aug to Dec	Policy Revisions
September	Grant application begins Begin camp plans
Oct & Mar	Appeals accepted at any time
November	Administer CogAT: all students grades 2,5,8, as well as students with no scores all other grades
December	High Ability Committee meets to identify Kindergarten students in need of High Ability services
January	CogAT administered to Kindergarteners IOWA administered to qualified students based on November CogAT results
February	Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test grade 6
March	Requests for classroom materials begin
March/April	Data collection sheets are distributed and completed for grades K, 2, 5, 6, and 8
April	High Ability Committee meets to make placement decisions for students Inventory High Ability materials and tests Requests for classroom materials are due
May	Placements are finalized for the upcoming school year All appeals should be resolved by the end of the current school year High Ability Committee is formed Professional Development day are requested by the High Ability Committee Staff is informed of plans for professional development days for the next academic year
June	Finalize High Ability report

## **Resources For Parents**

National Association for Gifted Children:

<http://www.nagc.org/>

Supporting the needs of high potential learners

Indiana Department of Education's Office of High Ability Education:

<http://www.doe.in.gov/highability>

Administers grants that support school corporations in the development of local programs and services for high ability students. Provides resources, workshops, and materials suited to the needs of the high ability population.

Indiana Association for the Gifted:

<http://www.iag-online.org/>

Advocating for gifted youth

(See Appendix M - Common High Ability Education Myths)

(See Appendix N - Bright Child vs. High Ability Learner)

(See Appendix O - Characteristics of High Ability Students)

## **Disclaimer**

As the High Ability Education services in MCSC evolve, the High Ability Program Policy will reflect any improvements or adjustments recommended by the High Ability Committee. Any adjustments to this handbook will be consistent with the services that are in place and described within this handbook and will only reflect our efforts in pursuing excellence in the services we provide in the area of High Ability education. We believe it is important to continually assess our services and seek ways in which we can improve them in order to benefit the students of our corporation.



# **MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix A: Indiana Definition of High Ability**

Title 511 Indiana State Board of Education Final Rule  
Section 1.511 IAC 6-9.1

## Sec. 2

- (a) To qualify as a program for high ability students under this rule, each school corporation shall meet all of the criteria in this section.
  
- (b) The school corporation shall develop and periodically update a level of services program to provide educational opportunities to encourage high ability students to reach the highest possible level at every stage of development.
  
- (c) The differentiated program for high ability students must include the following:
  - (1) A multifaceted student assessment plan, including the following:
    - (A) Performance-based assessment
    - (B) Potential-based assessment
    - (C) Alternative assessment
  - (2) A curriculum and instructional strategies plan
  - (3) A counseling and guidance plan
  - (4) A systematic program assessment plan
  - (5) A professional development plan.
  
- (d) Educational experiences offered outside the school day may be used to supplement, but not to supplant, the levels of services provided for high ability students offered during the school day.
  
- (e) The governing body shall create a broad-based planning committee to design and monitor the continuous development and implementation of the levels of services program for high ability students.
  
- (f) The plan must be approved by the governing body.
  
- (g) The plans described in subsection (c) must be available for public inspection and filed with the department.

## **MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix B: Elementary School (K-4) High Ability Program**

The identified high ability students in all grade levels are placed in the high ability group during daily WIN (What I Need) time. Students in the high ability WIN group work on reading and math skills beyond the current level of average classmates. The curriculum for WIN groups includes, but is not limited to: writing, performances, art, books beyond grade level, research, use of technology, problem solving, higher order thinking skills. High Ability students are afforded advanced differentiated language and math opportunities daily with teacher-led instruction and multi-leveled software programs. Leadership academic contests, technology, and service groups provide time to practice and learn 21st Century Skills.

## **MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix C: Intermediate School (5-6) High Ability Course Offerings**

Students placed in our intermediate school high ability classes will experience an accelerated and differentiated curriculum specifically designed for students with high ability. We use cluster grouping as scheduling allows.

### **5th and 6th Grade High Ability**

High ability students in 6th grade will have access to core courses designed to be differentiated in content, pace, and complexity. Mathematics curriculum is accelerated at least one year. Most students are identified using our above identification procedures and placed in all subject areas. However, students can be placed only in accelerated mathematics and/or accelerated language arts.

## **MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix D: Middle School (7-8) High Ability Course Offerings**

Students placed in our middle school high ability classes will experience an accelerated and differentiated curriculum specifically designed for students with high ability. We use cluster grouping as scheduling allows.

### **7th and 8th Grade High Ability**

Accelerated classes offered at the 7th and 8th grade level include language arts and math (pre-algebra is offered in the 7th grade and algebra is offered in the 8th grade for high ability students). As staffing permits accelerated classes will be expanded to include Science and Social Studies. Students are identified using our above identification procedures and placed in the subject area(s) according to their needs.

### **Mathematics**

Students who take high ability pre-algebra in the 7th grade are placed in high ability algebra in the 8th grade. The HA algebra class offered is an accelerated course more demanding than the regular freshman algebra course at MHS. The high school may require the student to retake algebra if he/she receives a C or lower average for the school year.

### **Language Arts**

Students who take high ability Language Arts in the 7th grade are placed in high ability Language Arts in the 8th grade, depending on their grade and performance. The HA 8th grade Language Arts class offered is an accelerated course more demanding than the regular freshman Language Arts course at MHS. The high school may require the student to take a regular Language Arts class if he/she receives a C or lower average for the school year.

## MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix E: High School (9-12) High Ability Course Offerings

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Course Offering</u>	<u>Prerequisite</u>
Freshman	High Ability Geometry	CogAT/Iowa Scores, 8th Grade Algebra I, ISTEP Score
	High Ability English 9	CogAT/Iowa Scores, Essay Administered by High School English Department, ISTEP
Sophomore	High Ability Algebra II	CogAT/Iowa Scores, Algebra I, Geometry
	High Ability English 10	CogAT/Iowa Scores, English 9
Junior/Senior	Pre-Calculus Dual Credit	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, ACCUPLACER score that satisfies cooperating university (may take as senior, not HA math track)
	Finite Mathematics Dual Credit	Geometry, Algebra II, ACCUPLACER score that satisfies cooperating university
	Calculus AP/ Dual Credit	Pre-Calculus, ACCUPLACER score that satisfies cooperating university
	AP Language/ Dual Credit	English 9 and 10, ACCUPLACER score that satisfies cooperating university
	AP Literature/ Dual Credit	English 9 through 11, ACCUPLACER score that satisfies cooperating university
	US History AP/ Dual Credit	DC: ACCUPLACER score to satisfy cooperating university AP: None
	Biology AP/ Dual Credit	DC: ACCUPLACER score to satisfy cooperating university AP: Pre-req Biology, Pre-req/Co-req Chemistry
	Human Biology Dual Credit	ACCUPLACER score to satisfy cooperating university
	Chemistry AP	AP: Pre-req Chemistry, Pre-req/Co-req Algebra 2
	Physics AP/ Dual Credit	DC: ACCUPLACER score to satisfy cooperating university AP: Pre-req Geometry, Pre-req/Co-req Algebra 2

## MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix F: Instrumentation Tools

1. **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** - Its purpose is to assess students' abilities in reasoning and problem solving using verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal (spatial) symbols. It is a group administered ability test battery appropriate for grades K-12. Testing time requirements include 30 minutes or less per session for Level K; 50 minutes or less per session for Levels 1-2; and 60 minutes or less per session for Levels A-H. This abilities test is designed to help teachers expand instructional opportunities for all students, and it is co-normed with the Iowa Test for greater instructional insights.
2. **Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery** - The Iowa Tests meet most state's requirements for an annual, nationally normed standardized test and offer educators a diagnostic look at how their students are progressing in key academic areas. Available for Kindergarten to Grade 12, the Iowa tests allow educators to trace student achievement growth continuously. Key academic areas include Language Skills, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Study Skills
3. **Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test** - The Orleans-Hanna provides teachers, counselors, students, and parents with objective results to support decisions about students' readiness for algebra course placement.
4. **INSPECT** - The INSPECT assessment solution helps deliver better, more informed teaching in English language arts, math, and science with a complete, integrated assessment system—assessments, reports, instructional resources, and customization opportunities that are aligned to our state standards. With INSPECT, teachers receive benchmark assessments and a process of formative assessment that is easily administered during a single class period to help guide and monitor everyday classroom instruction in the high school 9-12 classroom..
5. **PSAT** - is designed to measure the ability to understand and process elements of reading, writing, and mathematics.

### Screeners

6. **ISTEP+ Test** - The purpose of the *Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+)* program is to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science (Grades 4 and 6), and Social Studies (Grades 5 and 7). In particular, *ISTEP+* reports student achievement levels according to the most recently adopted Indiana Academic Standards by the Indiana State Board of Education. An Applied Skills Assessment and a Multiple-Choice Assessment, which are required components of the *ISTEP+* program, are used to measure these standards.
7. **Diagnostics Mathematics Screener** - These placement tests measure ability, cover prerequisite concepts, but are not achievement tests. These placement tests measure student mastery of concepts and skills that have been introduced or developed in the student's current

mathematics course, that are further developed in the next course.

8. **Scales for Identifying High Ability Students (SIGS)** - Norm-referenced rating scale designed to assist school districts in the identification of students in need of High Ability services. The SIGS assessment completed by teachers and analyzes characteristics of students in the areas of general intellect, math, and language arts.

### **Multifaceted Student Assessment Plan:**

#### Grades K-2

1. NWEA
2. CogAT Test -Aptitude
3. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery

#### Grades 3-5

1. ISTEP +
2. NWEA
3. Diagnostic Mathematics Screener
4. CogAT Test- Aptitude for grades 5 and 8 only
5. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery

#### Grade 6

1. ISTEP+
2. NWEA
3. CogAT Test -Aptitude
4. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery
5. Diagnostic Mathematics Screener
6. Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test  
(Grade 6 top 25% and 5th as recommended)

#### Grade 7

1. ISTEP +
2. NWEA
3. Diagnostic Mathematics Screener (grades 5-7)
4. CogAT Test- Aptitude for grades 5 and 8 only
5. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery

#### Grade 8

1. ISTEP +
2. NWEA
3. CogAT Test- Aptitude for grades 5 and 8 only
4. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery

#### Grades 9-12

1. ISTEP + (All Students)
2. INSPECT
3. PSAT/SAT/ACT
4. PLAN/ASVAB
5. ACCUPLACER
6. CogAT Test -Aptitude
7. Iowa Test of Basic Skills Complete Battery given to top 80-95% scores on the CogAT

## MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix G: High Ability Program Teacher Nomination/Observation Form

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Nominating Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the number that best describes your student:

4 – almost always; 3 – regularly; 2 – occasionally; 1 – seldom or never; 0 – not observed

1)	Grasps concepts/big picture easily	4	3	2	1	0
2)	Has advanced vocabulary, expresses him/herself well	4	3	2	1	0
3)	Completes a project once it is begun	4	3	2	1	0
4)	Is observant	4	3	2	1	0
5)	Uses many different ways of solving problems	4	3	2	1	0
6)	Is persistent, sticks to a task	4	3	2	1	0
7)	Is impulsive, acts before he/she thinks	4	3	2	1	0
8)	Is independent and self-sufficient	4	3	2	1	0
9)	Questions everything	4	3	2	1	0
10)	Is self motivated	4	3	2	1	0
11)	Likes to read (other than school books)	4	3	2	1	0
12)	Sets high standards for self	4	3	2	1	0
13)	Has keen sense of humor	4	3	2	1	0
14)	Tends to dominate others if given a chance	4	3	2	1	0
15)	Recalls facts easily	4	3	2	1	0
16)	Puts unrelated ideas together in new ways	4	3	2	1	0



17)	Frustrated with others less capable	4	3	2	1	0
18)	Is eager to learn	4	3	2	1	0
19)	Is creative in thoughts and ideas	4	3	2	1	0
20)	Has more intense activity level	4	3	2	1	0
21)	Ability to concentrate	4	3	2	1	0
22)	Extremely sensitive and/ or introverted	4	3	2	1	0
23)	Perfectionist	4	3	2	1	0
24)	Demonstrates leadership potential	4	3	2	1	0
25)	Is beyond their peers	4	3	2	1	0
26)	Initiates projects and/or extensions of assignments	4	3	2	1	0
27)	Abstracts beyond the field	4	3	2	1	0
28)	Unmotivated by grades	4	3	2	1	0
29)	Pays attention in class	4	3	2	1	0
30)	Follows oral directions	4	3	2	1	0

Please return by \_\_\_\_\_ to your respective school.

Milan Elementary School 418 Carr Street Milan, IN 47031 PH: 812-654-2922 FAX: 812-654-2796	Milan Middle School 609 N Warpath Drive Milan, IN 47031 PH: 812-654-1616 FAX: 812-654-2368	Milan High School 609 N Warpath Drive Milan, IN 47031 PH: 812-654-3096 FAX: 812-654-2368
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## MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix H: High Ability Program Parent Nomination/Observation Form

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the number that best describes your student:

4 – almost always; 3 – regularly; 2 – occasionally; 1 – seldom or never; 0 – not observed

1)	Has advanced vocabulary, expresses him/herself well	4	3	2	1	0
2)	Completes a project once it is begun	4	3	2	1	0
3)	Is observant	4	3	2	1	0
4)	Uses many different ways of solving problems	4	3	2	1	0
5)	Is persistent, sticks to a task	4	3	2	1	0
6)	Is impulsive, acts before he/she thinks	4	3	2	1	0
7)	Is independent and self-sufficient	4	3	2	1	0
8)	Questions everything	4	3	2	1	0
9)	Self motivated	4	3	2	1	0
10)	Likes to read (other than school books)	4	3	2	1	0
11)	Sets high standards for self	4	3	2	1	0
12)	Has keen sense of humor	4	3	2	1	0
13)	Tends to dominate others if given a chance	4	3	2	1	0
14)	Recalls facts easily	4	3	2	1	0
15)	Puts unrelated ideas together in new ways	4	3	2	1	0
16)	Is eager to learn	4	3	2	1	0
17)	Is creative in thoughts and ideas	4	3	2	1	0

**Open Response**

- 1) Please explain why you think your student should be considered for the High Ability Program. Include observations you have made in your student's behavior which led you to believe that he or she should be in this program. Include your thoughts on the ways in which he or she might benefit from such a program.

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- 2) What is your student's approach to tasks (deliberate, rushes into, etc?)

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Please return by \_\_\_\_\_ to your respective school.

Milan Elementary School 418 Carr Street Milan, IN 47031 PH: 812-654-2922 FAX: 812-654-2796	Milan Middle School 609 N Warpath Drive Milan, IN 47031 PH: 812-654-1717 FAX: 812-654-2368	Milan High School 609 N Warpath Drive Milan, IN 47031 PH: 812-654-3096 FAX: 812-654-2368
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**MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix I:  
High Ability Program Parent/Guardian Notification Letter**



**Milan Community School  
Corporation**

412 East Carr Street  
Milan, Indiana 47031  
Tel 812-654-2365 Fax 812-654-2441

Mrs. Jane Rogers  
Superintendent

[Date]

RE: Acceptance to Milan Community Schools High Ability Program

Dear Parents/Guardians of \_\_\_\_\_,

It is our pleasure to announce that your child has qualified for the Milan High Ability Program based on state required testing that was recently done. This will ensure that your child will be included in the High Ability Program as it stands at their current grade level. It also ensures that your child will be invited to the free High Ability Summer Enrichment Camp next year.

Test scores are not automatically mailed home, but if you would like a copy, they are available through the guidance counselor at each school. Please direct any other questions to the High Ability Program coordinator [shannon.morris@milan.k12.in.us](mailto:shannon.morris@milan.k12.in.us).

Sincerely,

*MCSC High Ability Committee*

Guidance Counselors:

Milan Elementary School

Brenda Schwering - [brenda.schwering@milan.k12.in.us](mailto:brenda.schwering@milan.k12.in.us)

Milan Middle School

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# **MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix J:**

## **Guidance and Counseling Plan for High Ability Students**

High ability education programming must include the development and implementation of a counseling and guidance plan to support the unique socio-emotional needs of high ability students.

### **Elementary School**

Topics discussed during Guidance sessions include but are not limited to:

- Friendship
- Respecting Others
- Accepting Differences
- Conflict Resolution
- Stress Management
- Listening Skills
- Setting Goals/Careers
- Being a Perfectionist/Fear of Failure
- Self Esteem
- Patience
- Social Skills (getting along with others)
- Responsibility
- Good Study Habits
- Stress and Dealing with Expectations
- Leadership

### **Middle School**

Academic Development

- School counselors collaborate with classroom teachers to identify strategies, instructional practices, and resources for High Ability students within the classroom.
- School counselors work individually with students whose needs are not being met in the general education classroom.
- School counselors assist students in developing and maintaining personalized education plans.
- School counselors monitor students' academic progress.
- School counselors advocate for the development of new accelerated academic programs.
- School counselors collaborate with parents to implement intervention strategies for High Ability students.

Career Development

- School counselors work with students individually to conduct career and interest inventories.
- School counselor will ensure that students do a career activity annually, for example career fair, career research, Reality Check, etc
- School counselors ensure students are aware of the Midwest Talent Search (SAT).

## Socio-Emotional Development

- School counselors collaborate with classroom teachers to identify high ability students presenting at-risk behaviors and implement intervention strategies with these students.
- School counselors work individually with students identified as displaying at-risk behaviors.
- School counselors collaborate with parents to implement intervention strategies for at-risk high ability students.
- School counselors develop connections with community resources to provide additional support to high ability students.
- The school counselors will also work with parents to discuss ways in which they can help their child at home.

## High School

### Academic Development

- School counselors collaborate with classroom teachers to identify strategies, instructional practices, and resources for High Ability students within the classroom.
- School counselors work individually with students whose needs are not being met in the general education classroom.
- School counselors assist students in developing and maintaining personalized education plans.
- School counselors monitor students' academic progress.
- School counselors advocate for development of new accelerated academic programs.
- School counselors collaborate with parents to implement intervention strategies for High Ability students.

### Career Development

- School counselors work with students individually to conduct career and interest inventories.
- School counselors host an annual College/Career Fair in the spring.
- School counselors ensure that students are aware of the PSAT, SAT, and ACT testing programs and encourage students to take these tests more than once.
- School counselors facilitate and coordinate the visitation of college representatives to the school during school hours.
- School counselors arrange sessions with students and parents regarding college and career preparation.
- School counselors maintain college and career resource information database.

### Socio-Emotional Development

- School counselors collaborate with classroom teachers to identify high ability students presenting at-risk behaviors and implement intervention strategies with these students.
- School counselors work individually with students identified as displaying at-risk behaviors.
- School counselors collaborate with parents to implement intervention strategies for at-risk high ability students.
- School counselors develop connections with community resources to provide additional support to high ability students.

**MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix K:  
High Ability Program Appeals Request Form**

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

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Individual making appeal: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Best Time to Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the next page with additional information to consider.

**Appeal Request - Additional Information**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Area \_\_\_\_\_

The following items are possible reasons for requesting an additional review of this student's application file for the high ability program or course offerings. Read these carefully and indicate which reasons you believe apply to this situation. Explain why the choice(s) selected are applicable. Include a copy of any additional information.

- 1. We have additional test information (copies of test results must be provided).

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 2. This student has recently received special recognition or done work that shows exceptional ability.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 3. The previous test results were invalid. Please provide evidence.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 4. Circumstances exist which cause this student to (a)test poorly, (b)receive few nominations, (c)rate a low recommendation, and (d)has low grades. Please provide evidence.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*This information will be reviewed by the Identification Committee.  
Parents will be informed in writing of the committee's decision.*



**MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix L:  
High Ability Program Exit Request Form**

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

Name of Individual requesting this conference: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Conference Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Conference Date: \_\_\_\_\_

After reviewing the "Withdrawal Guidelines" for the program, the conference committee recommends:

A. \_\_\_\_\_ Withdraw from High Ability Program (Explain: Math, Language Arts, or both)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This withdrawal will take place at \_\_\_\_\_ **quarter break** OR \_\_\_\_\_ **semester break**

B. \_\_\_\_\_ Remain in the program after completing the following recommendations:

1. Maintain a Grade of: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Other (i.e. project completion, homework, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

OR

C. \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Check here if your school is attaching any specifics on course changes.**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Counselor Representative's

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

High Ability Coordinator's

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

If at the High School, Student's

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix M: Common High Ability Education Myths**

**Myth:** High Ability Students Don't Need Help; They'll Do Fine On Their Own.

**Truth:** High Ability Students need guidance from well-trained, challenging teachers to help develop their talents. Many High Ability students may be so far ahead of their same-age peers that they know more than half of the grade-level curriculum before the school year begins. Their resulting boredom and frustration can lead to low achievement, despondency, or unhealthy work habits.

**Myth:** Teachers Challenge All Students, So High Ability Kids Will Be Fine In The Regular Classroom.

**Truth:** Although it's true that teachers try to challenge all students and do the best they can, they are frequently unfamiliar with the needs of High Ability children and do not know how to best serve them in the classroom. The National Research Center on High Ability and Talented (NRC/GT) found that 61% of classroom teachers had no training in teaching highly able students, limiting the challenging educational opportunities offered to advanced learners.

**Myth:** That Student Can't Be High Ability; He's Receiving Poor Grades.

**Truth:** Underachievement describes a discrepancy between a student's performance and his actual ability. The roots of this problem differ, based on each child's experiences. High Ability students may become bored or frustrated in an unchallenging situation, causing them to lose interest, learn bad study habits, or distrust the school environment. Other students may mask their abilities to try to fit in socially with their same-age peers. No matter the cause, it is imperative that a caring and perceptive adult help High Ability learners break the cycle of underachievement in order for them to achieve their full potential.

**Myth:** All Children Are High Ability.

**Truth:** While all children are special and deserving, not all children have exceptional academic gifts that required additional support in school. Interestingly, most people readily accept that there are children in performing arts or athletics whose talents are so far above those of others their age that they require additional or different training or coaching. It is important to understand that these same characteristics apply to academically High Ability students who need support and guidance to reach their full potential.

Myth: High Ability Education Programs Are Elitist.

Truth: High Ability education is not about status; it is about meeting student needs. Advanced learners are found in all cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups. However, not every school district offers services for High Ability students, even though there are High Ability students in every district. In many states, only affluent districts can afford to offer High Ability education programs and services in the absence of federal and state funding.

Myth: High Ability Students Are Happy, Popular, and Well Adjusted In School.

Truth: Many High Ability students flourish in their community and school environment. However, some High Ability children differ in terms of their emotional and moral intensity, sensitivity to expectations and feelings, perfectionism, and deep concerns about societal problems. Others do not share interests with their classmates, resulting in isolation or being labeled unfavorably as a “nerd.” Because of these difficulties, the school experience is one to be endured rather than celebrated. It is estimated that 20-25% of High Ability children have social and emotional difficulties, about twice as many as in the general population of students.

Myth: This Child Can't Be High Ability; He Is In Special Education.

Truth: Some High Ability students also have learning or other disabilities. These “twice-exceptional” students often go undetected in regular classrooms because their disability and gifts mask each other, making them appear “average.” Other twice-exceptional students are identified as having a learning disability and as a result, are not considered for High Ability services. In both cases, it is important to focus on the student’s abilities and allow them to have challenging curricula in addition to receiving help for their learning disability.

\*\*\*Excerpts taken from National Association for High Ability Children (NACG):  
Myths About High Ability Education. [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

## MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix N: Bright Child vs. High Ability Learner

All descriptors represent a continuum of behaviors rather than extremes.

<b>Bright Child</b>	<b>High Ability Learner</b>
Knows the answers	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Is attentive	Is mentally and physically involved
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail, elaborates
Is in the top group	Goes beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
Requires 6-8 repetitions for mastery	Requires 1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates a new design
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Is a technician	Is an inventor
Enjoys straightforward sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity
Is alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical

## MCSC HA Program Policy - Appendix O: Characteristics of High Ability Students

Characteristic	Possibly Problematic Classroom Behavior
Early reading and/or quick mastery of reading	May be impatient with reading instruction, resist doing worksheets, and insist on reading own material which may be years above grade level.
Learns new things quickly and easily	May exhibit boredom and frustration when others do not catch on as quickly, not being allowed to move on or do something else. May be frustrated with group work when others are not as capable.
Has extensive vocabulary, background knowledge in a particular area, or memory of detail	May dominate discussions and refuse to listen to others' contributions. May argue in a sophisticated way.
Grasps math concepts quickly; solves problems involving critical thinking; is intuitive; enjoys logic and puzzles	May resist doing repetitive computation drill needed by others. May correctly or incorrectly jump to an answer without careful attention to detail. May make careless errors, have trouble with legibility of writing, refuse to do homework, and incorrectly assume all will be as easy as the first examples. May work problems in unconventional ways
Interested in some things in depth. Grasps Big Picture, concepts, and forms connections.	May work hard in a new area of interest or just one subject, allowing other areas to suffer. May be impatient with others who do not see how things are connected and with material not at the right level of complexity.
Has a more intense energy level, activity level, or ability to concentrate; talks fast.	May seek active inquiry or be so completely involved with a task that he/she becomes frustrated with having to change tasks. Could seem overactive, stubborn or uncooperative with poor self-regulation.
Extremely sensitive and/or introverted	May cry easily, prefer to work alone, may not readily participate orally, may (incorrectly) appear to be immature in social development. May be upset by student cruelty to others or to teacher becoming upset with the class. May be overly sensitive to others' remarks, but also be able to deliver stinging criticism

Thinks differently; is creative	May appear different and/or rebellious or may experience social isolation. May be a daydreamer. May ask tangential questions and seem off track. May question authority.
Great sense of humor	Great sense of humor
Curious, observant	May be off task and have difficulty disengaging to change activities
Perfectionistic	May set unrealistic standards for self and others, be overly concerned with details, be rigid in work routines. May find true-false or multiple choice questions frustrating in their lack of precision; may be argumentative and correct every small error made by others.
Displays interest in complex games, fantasy, non-fiction	May prefer to play with older children or adults. (May also prefer to play with younger children whom he/she can organize into activities.) May become involved in fantasy worlds or science fiction.
Likes to observe before participating	May have difficulty with change and become anxious with new situations. Likes to be in control and know all the rules or details of the assignments. May be uncomfortable with open-ended assignments and ambiguity.
Sensitive to environment	May object to loud noises, bright lights, odors, or have many allergies.
Demonstrates leadership potential	May be considered bossy and unable to accept input or share control of ideas
May have different friends in different activities or venue	May have positive relationships but lack a “best” friend for all areas; may consider him/herself unpopular as a result of not being in one “in” crowd.