

Advocacy Handbook



**Presented by the
Indiana Association for
the Gifted**

Second Edition

www.iag-online.org

Acknowledgements

Advocacy is not a one-person job. It takes an interested, informed, and passionate group of people to make things happen. The Indiana Association for the Gifted (IAG) is fortunate to be associated with others who share our advocacy goals. It is through the hard work and dedication of many that we will be able to ensure the quality of education to which our gifted children are entitled.

Here are just a few of the people who lent an extra hand to the efforts of this guide and advocacy in Indiana:

We would like to thank our colleagues at the **California Association for the Gifted** for sharing their wisdom and expertise to the first edition of this publication. Several pages and the Glossary were originally adapted for Indiana from their *Advocacy in Action Handbook*.

We offer much gratitude to **Dr. Karen B. Rogers** for her empirical studies which provide the data that confirm the need for special programming for gifted children. Dr. Rogers is the author of *Re-Forming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Gifted Child* (2002) and was the keynote speaker at the 2004 IAG/ IDOE conference. We are thankful for her permission to use her work in this guide as well as her on-going work in the field of gifted education.

And finally, you the readers. We offer our thanks in advance for all of your past, current, and future work in advocating for gifted children.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

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Rationale

The Indiana Association for the Gifted Advocacy Handbook for gifted and talented education has been created for everyone who believes that more must be done educationally and systemically to ensure that our most capable children advance in their intellectual, academic, and social development. While the initial concern of one person may be for one child needing different educational services to meet his or her needs, the bigger picture soon becomes apparent. All children need to have their academic and affective needs met if they are to realize their potential. We must change the culture and operation of Indiana schools to provide opportunities for academic advancement and flexibility according to individual need.

We know that...

Children with exceptional academic potential exist in all groups and socio-economic levels.

Potential does not develop into talented performance unless nurtured.

Indiana youth have talent, but the talent is not being fully developed, K-12 in all districts or for all who need services. Advanced opportunities must start in the child's earliest school experiences, i.e. preschool and kindergarten, to establish high performance patterns. Highly capable children, given only grade-level curriculum, learn unfortunate lessons, e.g. that school is easy; that little work is required to do well; that study skills are unnecessary; and that if you are smart, you should not have to work hard.

For students with high ability and limited resources, the public school is their only hope for developing academic talent.

Just because all students do not need services for high ability (or Limited English Proficiency or special education) does not mean services should be denied to those who do.

Students who can attain higher educational levels will earn more and contribute more to Indiana's economy.

To ignore these instructional needs is to deny students with high abilities their development and Indiana their future productivity and leadership.

Therefore the purposes of the handbook are to:

- Broaden the base of active participation in Indiana's advocacy movement to ensure that **all** high ability learners have equal opportunity to be educated to their fullest potential.
- Provide information on how an individual can become an effective advocate for meeting the needs of gifted and talented children.
- Describe the structure of the educational system in Indiana as it relates to education for high ability students in order to inform advocacy efforts.

High Ability Students in Indiana

Who are these students?

The Indiana code talks of gifted and talented (G/T) programs, but the definition of the students involved talks of “High Ability” students. “Exceptional Learners” are defined as being those with disabilities as well as those with high abilities.

Indiana Code Definition of High Ability Student:

“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. (IC 20-36-1-3)

The term “gifted” is not defined in Indiana Code and is associated in some states with specific standardized assessments and associated requirements. “Talented” generally refers to the demonstration of giftedness through talented performance. “High Ability” is a broader term that includes gifted learners but may include others who are the top learners in their environments.

What does this definition mean?

The important concept in the Indiana definition is that the student is identified as being of high ability when compared with others in his environment, of his age, and of his experience (e.g., similar level of income, similar ethnic group, similar language, etc.). The definition indicates the student must perform at an outstanding level OR show the potential for that level of performance. The Indiana Code lists the areas or domains of aptitude and talent to include general intellectual, general creative, specific academic, technical and practical arts, visual and performing arts, and interpersonal. While all of these areas are important, it is a requirement of Indiana schools to identify students with High Ability in the domains of the General Intellectual and/or Specific Academic areas, and to provide those students with appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in the areas of core content, K-12. (IC 20-36-2-2)

It is also important to understand that ALL schools and ALL income groups and ALL demographic groups have students who learn more rapidly and have greater depth of thinking than other students. It is the job of the schools to find students with high ability and develop their potential. If a school says there are no such students or none from particular demographic groups, there is a problem with the identification protocol and services provided. In order for potential to develop into talented performance (high SAT’s, passing AP exam scores, etc.), it must be nurtured through advanced opportunities, K-12. If a district does not have high performers at the high school level it is because they did not identify the students with high academic potential and provide them appropriate challenge beginning in the earliest elementary school years. Each district must “grow its own” high performers in all demographic groups.

“We hope to avail the state of these talents which nature has sown as liberally among the poor as the rich but which perish without use if not sought for and activated.” Thomas Jefferson

What We Know About Gifted Students

- The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented conducted a Classroom Practices Survey that found 61% of the third and fourth grade public school teachers surveyed said they had no preservice or inservice training that addressed any gifted education topics. (Archambault, Westberg, Brown, Hallmark, Zhang, Emmons, 1993)
- "Approximately 40-50% of traditional classroom material could be eliminated for targeted students in one or more of the following content areas: mathematics, language arts, science and social studies." (Reis, Westberg, Kulikowich & Purcell, 1998)
- In core subject areas, students with high ability received no differentiated experiences in 84% of classroom activities. (Archambault, et al. 1993)
- The instructional pace used in whole-class teaching is equal to that of students in the 23rd percentile of the class distribution. (Rogers, 1993)
- For each year in school, gifted students should be given the chance to accomplish fifteen to eighteen months of work in academic content areas as compared with the regular curriculum. (Rogers, 2002)
- Acceleration is not inherently damaging socially or emotionally for gifted students. While all decisions should be made individually, as a group, gifted children tend to be more mature than age mates. (Robinson in *A Nation Deceived*, 2004)

High ability services are especially crucial for students of poverty. Children from families with higher incomes have more print resources in the home and more opportunities for enriching educational experiences outside the home. This can produce a gap in readiness for school-related tasks before children enter kindergarten. High ability students from homes with limited resources (or a differing first language) may not be able to demonstrate advanced academic achievement when compared with students of similar ability who have had more enriched outside-of-school experiences. Identification of high academic potential must occur in kindergarten so this talent can be developed into advanced achievement. For high ability students of poverty, the school may be the only place they can receive the enriched curriculum they need.

Without appropriately challenging curriculum, high ability students are denied the opportunity to develop study skills and a work ethic. When given only grade-level curriculum, high ability students do not have to focus, study, or learn how to be organized in order to do well. When academics eventually become challenging, high ability students may not have developed the skills to compete and perform at a high level.

Current Indiana Requirements

What services for high ability students are currently required?

There is legislative language defining a High Ability student and appropriate services (**IC 20-36-1-3**) and there is more specific language in Indiana Administrative Code that defines and elaborates on what is contained the Indiana Code. (511 IAC 6-9.1)

Indiana has a mandate and requires schools to identify and provide services to high ability students. “A governing body shall develop and periodically update a local plan to provide appropriate educational experiences to high ability students in the school corporation in kindergarten through grade 12. (**IC 20-36-2-2**)

Public Law 221, the state school accountability law, requires that School Improvement Plans address the needs of all learners, including exceptional learners.

Beginning in 1994, each school corporation was required to offer Advanced Placement science and math courses for qualified students. While AP courses are not restricted to high ability students, they are advanced academic courses and very useful for students going to college.

The Indiana Department of Education, developed Indiana Standards for High Ability Education to guide school corporations in Best Practice. They also developed user-friendly documents: Identifying Students with High Abilities in Indiana, Service Options for Students with High Abilities in Indiana, and Guiding Students with High Abilities: Social and Emotional Considerations.

Information about these and others programs and services are available at the IDOE website: <http://www.doe.in.gov/exceptional/gt/>

However, decisions regarding details and degree of service for high ability students remain with the local school corporation. As a result, the quality and comprehensiveness of services for the state’s students of highest academic potential varies from districts that provide for no difference in curriculum or pace of instruction to districts that have a full array of services, K-12.

The Indiana Association for the Gifted Position

While Indiana allows local control in the way services are provided, school corporations should have defensible identification plans using appropriate instruments for high ability students, and implement appropriate academic services in areas of core curriculum consistent with Best Practice, K-12.

Indiana Funding for High Ability Education

What funding is provided for High Ability education?

- Budget – Designated line item in state budget 2009-2011 = \$12,936,181
Corporation grants range from \$25,729 to \$172,794 = \$11,820,000
\$11,820,000 – non-competitive grants to 294 public school corporations
- Beginning in 2005, the funding districts receive based upon \$900 per student receiving an Academic Honors Diploma (AHD) must be used for specified costs for AHD courses or the district's program for high ability students.
- There is separate state funding for Advanced Placement exam fees for those students in AP math and science courses.

Is additional funding necessary to provide advanced opportunities?

There are some high ability service designs that require additional funding because they utilize additional personnel, magnet schools, or smaller classes. However, all students need materials and a teacher regardless of their ability and it is possible to plan for and provide services for high ability students with relatively little additional expense. When served appropriately, high ability students are grouped together and taught by a High Ability licensed teacher using more advanced curriculum and instruction. Some instructional service designs might call for the students to be given additional instruction or more sophisticated materials that are beyond the costs associated with grade level materials. In these cases, there would be some additional expense associated with their instruction. But this is not true for all grades or all instructional designs. The way to serve students of differing instructional levels is a local decision in Indiana.

The Indiana Association for the Gifted Position

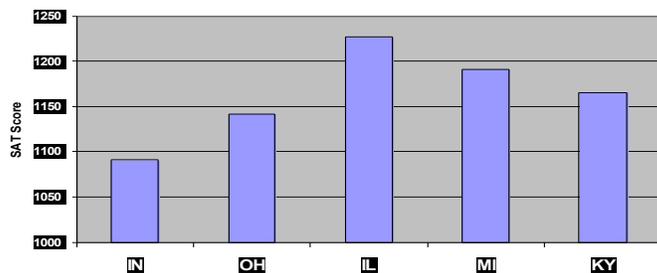
While additional funding would assist schools in developing quality services with appropriately trained teachers, the Indiana Association for the Gifted views “lack of funding” as a hollow excuse for schools not to provide services for students with high ability. All students deserve a free and appropriate public education. There are many services that require little additional funding, just flexibility in meeting individual needs and/or a willingness to re-structure existing patterns of instruction to meet the academic needs of advanced learners.

How Indiana Compares

What about Indiana curriculum standards and standardized tests?

Indiana's curriculum standards are recognized as being very good. However, one problem is there is no state-funded way to measure student achievement above grade level standards, nor compare students to others nationally. ISTEP+ is a status measure; it measures only mastery of grade-level curriculum standards. The purpose of assessment is to inform instruction, but current measures do not tell us how much the high ability student already knows.

In Indiana, 66% of students take the SAT. Participation rates and Indiana scores have gone up in the last 10 years. This is good news. It is hard to use SAT scores fairly to compare states with differing test-taking patterns. However, College Board data shows that scores for Indiana students having parents with graduate degrees lag significantly behind scores for similar populations in surrounding states. In other words, Indiana students with the most highly educated parents (graduate degrees) are not scoring as well as students with well-educated parents living in nearby states. In all fairness, a few Indiana schools do a fine job, but whether to identify high ability students and offer advanced opportunities are local decisions. Services are inconsistent at best. It is likely that Indiana's aggregate statistics would improve (and have greater appeal for economic investment) if all schools provided more opportunities for students to advance., K-12. (www.collegeboard.org)



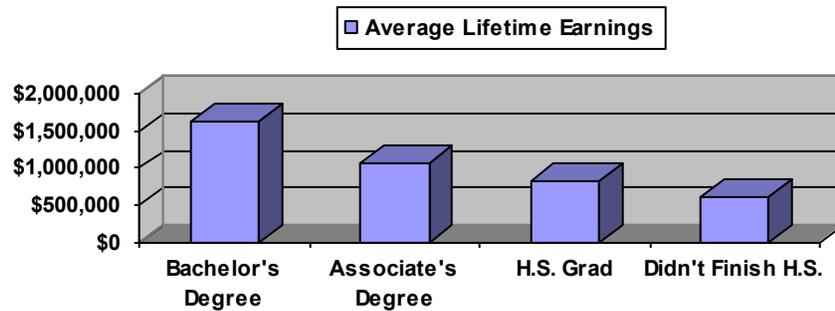
Math Preparation and College Success

- Nationally, first-generation college-bound seniors in 2005 who had taken precalculus had an average SAT score of 1035 compared with an SAT average score of 873 for those students without precalculus. (College Board, 2005)
- 33% of Indiana 8th graders take algebra compared with 47% in high performing states. (Measuring UP, 2008)
- 31% of Indiana SAT takers have taken trigonometry compared with 46% nationally. (College Board, 2005)
- 26 of every 100 Indiana 9th graders end up graduating from college. (Indiana Commission for Higher Education)
- Indiana ranks 42nd among states in the percentage of its population that has completed college.

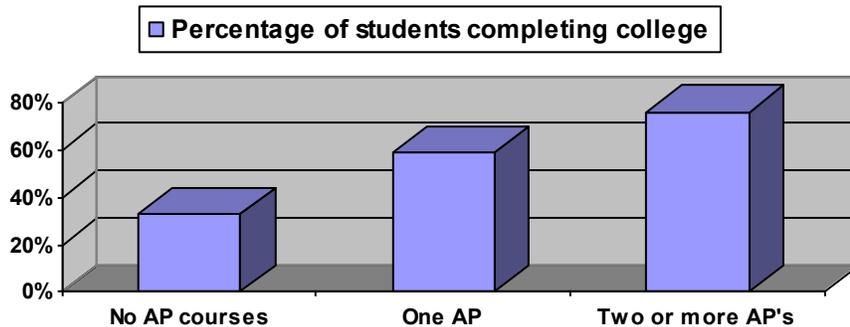
It has been shown that successful preparation in higher level math courses in high school is one of the two best predictors of college graduation. To prepare significantly more 8th graders (and 7th graders) to begin algebra in middle school, Indiana must provide opportunities to advance beyond grade level math in elementary school.

Why should Indiana promote college completion for its population?

According to the Indiana Career and Postsecondary Advancement Center, on average, people with college degrees earn 60 percent more than people with high school diplomas. College graduates make nearly twice as much money in a lifetime as high school graduates. A college degree provides more career options and increases job security.



Taking Advanced Placement courses in high school and scoring a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP exams is the other predictor of college graduation. Adelman’s study “Answers in the Toolbox: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor’s Degree Attainment,” published in 1999 by the U.S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, provides this data:



However, in order to be successful in rigorous AP courses, able students must have had previous experience with advanced curriculum.

Indiana has supported Advanced Placement by funding math and science exam costs for students for more than 15 years. This is exemplary. Participation in AP in Indiana has improved, but the number of graduating seniors with at least one AP score of 3, 4, or 5 at some point in their high school career is *still less* than all neighboring states. (AP Report to the Nation, College Board, 2010)

What can Indiana do to improve college completion and the Indiana economy?

Indiana can improve the percentage of students successfully completing college, increase student lifetime earnings, improve Advanced Placement pass rates, and improve the Indiana economy by offering advanced curricular offerings to able students, K-12.

The Indiana Education Roundtable, the Indiana Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Indiana General Assembly have worked together to increase the rigor of the Indiana graduation requirements. This represents great leadership. The new requirements allow credits in math and other subjects to be earned by advanced learners prior to high school and recognize advanced performance on standardized tests (SAT, ACT, AP, IB).

Post Secondary Enrollment Program – (IC 20-30-11) The purpose of a high school/ college dual enrollment program is to allow high school students to experience college work realistically, provide an easier transition from high school to college, promote rigorous academic pursuits, and to provide a variety of options to high school students capable of doing college work. Such a program is not intended to replace or substitute coursework available at the high school, but rather to enhance the educational opportunities available to students while in high school. The IAG is supportive of this program and would support allowing high ability students to participate prior to grade 11 or 12, and for the state to encourage this option through economic support.

The Indiana Association for the Gifted Position

The Indiana Association for the Gifted supports early access to high school courses for capable middle school students, expanded Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate programs, and state support for post secondary/ dual enrollment opportunities.

The Indiana Association for the Gifted supports removal of age-restricted access to advanced academic opportunities and/or seat time requirements for academic credit or graduation. Individuals who can demonstrate proficiency in course content or subject areas should be granted appropriate credits and gain access to higher level classes or early graduation.

No Child Left Behind and High Ability Students

How does the No Child Left Behind Act affect high-achieving students?

Once a student crosses the No Child Left Behind proficiency bar, the school has no incentive to encourage further improvement. The school can ignore the high-achieving student and still win NCLB or AYP approval. These children are not necessarily left behind, but they are left out. This is not the intent of NCLB, but it is the result.

IAG proposes a more productive modification, **No Child Left Out (NCLO)**. In addition to groups of students in schools meeting minimum “cut scores” on assessments of grade level curriculum, IAG advocates assessing school effectiveness by measuring student academic growth over time. It should be a goal for all children to make Individual Annual Growth (IAG!). With the Student Test Number (STN) in Indiana, a continuum of standards in the core subject areas and annual testing, Indiana has the capability to baseline each student’s knowledge of subject matter standards when they enter the system. Annual testing would show whether they had met grade level standards, but it could also show the amount of growth from the previous year. The new growth model in Indiana still has the grade level ceiling, so the potential to assess real growth for students who are either above or below grade level performance is limited.

We should join other states in supporting the use of a Full Spectrum Growth Model. Indiana would have to find a way to measure all students on the continuum of standards, not just on grade level, so that students who achieve above grade level (or below grade level) can have their progress measured as well. All children would be assessed, including exceptional learners of all types. We could keep the intent of No Child Left Behind and Public Law 221 but improve the result for exceptional learners.

The Indiana Association for the Gifted Position

The Indiana Association for the Gifted supports a Full Spectrum Growth Model for assessing school



IAG Supports

The following statements are not inclusive of all positions that would be supported by the Indiana Association for the Gifted; these address some current educational issues for Indiana.

- We need to assess academic potential in the earliest grades. Identify top talent in all demographic groups in kindergarten and first grade. All kids may not have had an early childhood that fostered academic readiness, but they may still have high ability. High ability students from all groups need their talent nurtured early for their own development and to establish patterns of high achievement.
- We need a way to assess where top ISTEP performers actually function. Measures with a ceiling that assess only grade level standards give no information for instruction for those whose learning level is above grade level.
- We need to measure individual student growth over time.
- We need to prepare students to be successful in AP, IB, or dual enrollment with the course(s) fulfilling college requirements for both college and high school credit. This preparation will ensure college success, graduation and future economic contribution. To be ready for such rigorous experiences, students need challenging, advanced opportunities beginning in kindergarten.
- We must remove ceilings and barriers and provide incentives for those who can advance. If a student can demonstrate competency, he/she should get the credit and be able to move on to a harder course. Those who can demonstrate proficiency in state requirements for Academic Honors and want to enroll in college early should be able to go with an Indiana Academic Honors diploma.
- We must look for ways for students to advance and excel. This will require flexibility with rules and placements.
- We must provide professional development for educators who plan and deliver services for students with high abilities.
- We require differentiated services for students of high ability. All children have a right to an appropriate public education. Local decision involves HOW to provide services and encouragement for top learners. Service models may differ depending on local school size, location and resources. We should support greater accountability for academic growth of identified high ability students.
- We need a system for identifying math talent early, and then developing mathematical thinking, problem solving skills, early algebra and greater participation in high level mathematics. Global competition is focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); we need more students in the high-tech pipeline. Enriched, accelerated math for those who are able will prepare more for success in the STEM disciplines.

Summary:

Remove ceilings and barriers to advancement.

Promote flexibility to meet individual needs.

Identify and nurture talent early in ALL demographic groups.

Assess individual annual growth.

Provide advanced curriculum for those who are ready.

Provide professional development for educators; follow Indiana Standards for High Ability Education.

What Makes an Effective Advocate?

Effective advocates are:

- **Well informed** regarding their subject and armed with information supporting their goals. While decision-makers expect professionals to have special knowledge about gifted education, this expectation is not necessarily true for parents. Anecdotal information from parents is most effective.
- **Knowledgeable about their constituency.** While advocates are usually speaking for themselves, they are sometimes authorized to speak as representatives of an organization. An advocate must be aware of the difference.
- **Resourceful** in finding information and gaining access to decision-makers
- **Quietly persistent;** do not be afraid to ask questions.
- **Clear** about what action you want
- **Imaginative** in suggesting solutions
- **Respectful** of others' points of view
- **Politically aware**
- **Tactful**
- **Enthusiastic** and pleasant
- **Well organized** and accurate in your reporting and note taking.
- **Articulate;** prepare your main points and speak succinctly.
- **Knowledgeable** about the power hierarchy and other issues that may be central
- **Sensitive** to others' reactions
- **Accurate and not exaggerating**

Effective advocates must do their homework ahead of time if they wish to influence policy decisions and legislation. Such homework includes being sure that requests are specific and proposals are well documented. In addition, it is important that advocates know the assignments, areas of expertise, and areas of interest of school officials and other decision-makers.

Decision-makers are obligated to be aware of all sides of an issue, and they must look at the total educational picture when making decisions. Therefore, effective advocates are prepared to respond to possible criticism and explain why high ability services should be high priority.

Advocacy will be more successful when the advocate has knowledge, good sense, good humor, and good manners.

Local Level Advocacy

STEP 1 Get to know and communicate with teachers and other local educators interested in high ability education, as well as parents of gifted students.

STEP 2 Become an active participant at the school site.

Visit classrooms, talk with teachers. Volunteer! Ask for specifics of the GT program. Talk with the principal or administrator in charge. Attend school or district high ability program meetings. Help define the school goals for high ability programming and services. Find ways to support goals with resources of people, time and money. Form a parent support group or committee. Make sure teachers and parents of gifted children are on each of the school's improvement teams, school-site councils, and the local Parent Teacher Association.

Does the school and local public library have publications on the education of gifted and talented children?

A. Become Informed About Schools and Requirements. An effective advocate is well informed.

1. Know state requirements. The state of Indiana requires that schools identify students according to a Multifaceted Student Assessment Plan and provide appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction for identified students K-12. It provides grants to school corporations for use in providing high ability services. To obtain the grant money, a school corporation must follow the IDOE reporting and budgeting requirements.

One of the requirements is that the school corporation must maintain a document called a Level of Services Program Plan, and must make this document accessible for public review. This document outlines the high ability services provided by the school corporation. A complete view of Rule 511 may be found at <http://doe.state.in.us/exceptional/gt/legislation/legislation.html>

Another requirement is that the school corporation has a Broad Based Planning Committee (BBPC) which serves to oversee the planning and implementation of high ability programs. Interested parents should volunteer to serve on this committee. Whether or not you serve, you should find out what is happening on this committee. If high ability services are not being developed and improved via this committee, contact the committee's chairperson and find out

The Multifaceted Student Assessment Plan means that students must be selected using more than one method or criterion, and that the process must include potential-based assessment (such as IQ), performance-based assessment (such as an achievement test), and other criteria, such as qualitative indicators. It is important to find ways to find all students of high ability, including students from all cultural groups, all socio-economic levels, with disabilities, and with Limited English Proficiency.

2. Gather information about your school. Call the school corporation office and ask who the G/T Coordinator or contact person is. Introduce yourself; tell this person that you suspect your child might have high abilities and you are interested in learning more about what your school system has to offer.

- a. Learn about the district G/T Plan. Ask for a description of the district program for gifted or high ability students. Ask to review the Level of Services Program Plan.
 - b. Visit the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) Website <http://doe.state.in.us/exceptional/gtgrants/gtgrants.html> for G/T grant data. Look up your school corporation and review what they have submitted to the state as their data. Contact your school corporation's G/T coordinator with any questions.
 - c. Learn about your school corporation. Visit the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE) website and look at other relevant information about your school corporation. Go to www.doe.state.in.us; click on K-12 School Data; click on Data for One School; enter your school corporation name. Review the statistical profile, the benchmarks, and the Annual Performance Report. Learn about your district's and school's ISTEP scores, SAT scores, Advanced Placement statistics, number of students going to college, percentage of students identified as gifted.
Compare your school and district to the top ten in the state. Compare your school and district with other area schools and schools with similar demographics but higher SAT scores, more students involved in AP courses, and more extensive G/T programs. The purpose of this comparative review is to determine whether or not your school district offers more or less than other area schools and other similar schools.
(Note: Even if your children are in the elementary grades, it is important to look at SAT and AP statistics. A school corporation must lay the groundwork in the early grades for students to be able to take AP courses in high school. Schools that have large numbers of students taking AP courses probably are taking the appropriate steps in the lower grades to prepare their students for rigorous study.)
3. Review the information and chart out for yourself what is offered and when. If you need help with finding this data, help is available to IAG members.
- a. At what grade level are children screened to determine if they might need services for high ability? Research indicates that the sooner a gifted child is identified and served, the better.
 - b. Are they re-screened at higher grade levels? Children do not develop at the same rate. Especially at the lower grade levels, a gifted child may not be identified when first tested. This is especially true in gifted children who are not early readers.
 - c. What about children who move in after the screening takes place? Are students identified at middle school or high school? All gifted students in the corporation deserve to be identified and served.
 - d. What criteria are used to determine who receives services? It should be a multi-faceted assessment.
 - e. What services are actually provided? Use the Indiana Standards for High Ability Education as a benchmark for determining the quality of the services provided. These program standards can be found at <http://doe.state.in.us/exceptional/gt/whatsnew.html>.
 - f. How many teachers have a G/T License, meaning that they are specially trained to

teach gifted students? Trained teachers and coordinators are the foundation of good gifted programs.

g. Does your school have a Program or is it merely making Provisions?

- Provisions are fragmentary, unarticulated, and temporary activities, which are neither followed-up in any meaningful way nor preceded by any meaningful lead-in activity.
- Programs are clearly articulated and are comprised of these components: Needs Assessment, Definition, Identification Plan, Goals, Program Organization, Staff Selection and Training, Curriculum Development, and Evaluation.

4. Compare the information you have gathered with what you know is required.

Ask questions to fill in your understanding of the local program. If you have questions about local compliance or even if you do not, volunteer to be a part of the local BBPC to help the program develop and become all it should be. Remember, the goal is not to alienate school personnel, but to work with them to meet the students' needs.

STEP 3 Form or join an advocacy group.

If you want your school district to start, change, or expand a program, organization is the key to effective advocacy. If there is no program, parents teacher, administrators, and/or community member can:

- Organize themselves and agree upon appropriate educational goals.
- Find out about programs in neighboring districts.
- Identify individuals who may know the superintendent or a board member.
- Identify a group to visit the superintendent to present a proposal for a program or a program review.
- If necessary, visit each school board member to advocate for his or her support for the proposal.
- Fill the boardroom with potential members: teachers, parents, and their children, once the proposal is brought to the board for discussion and vote. Have data available should questions be raised or inaccuracies may find their way into the board's discussion.
- Research the benefits of providing services to gifted and talented students, and be prepared to counter negative criticism.
- Follow the "Chain of Command."
 - a. If dealing with your child's specific needs, start with his teacher or counselor (if applicable). It also may be appropriate to work with the building principal.
 - b. If dealing with general G/T program issues, start with G/T coordinator.
 - c. Broad Based Planning Committee (BBPC)
 - d. Superintendent
 - e. School board
 - f. Indiana Department of Education (IDOE)
 - g. Indiana General Assembly
- Hire a consultant if you need assistance.

STEP 4 Become aware of the duties and responsibilities of your local Board of Education and how they are implemented.

The people elected to serve on the local public school board are no less important for the future of high ability education in your area than the governor and the legislators in Indianapolis. School board members are faced with the necessity of making difficult educational decisions. It is imperative that advocacy at this level be well planned and coordinated if high ability programs are to provide quality educational experiences that survive over time. Each local community may be at a different level of development in meeting the needs of gifted and talented students. An effective advocate must become aware of local issues and concerns affecting educational decisions.

STEP 5 Become an advocate with the local Board of Education.

As a member of the community you can become an effective advocate to the local Board of Education members by:

- **Familiarizing yourself** with what is required by law.
- **Finding out** what is available in other, similar-sized districts.
- **Conducting a needs assessment** by finding out what is going on for gifted students and then deciding what you would like to see happen.
- **Asking the district superintendent or a board member to request a presentation to the board on the gifted program or some aspect of the program**, have opportunities to speak with students, and see the program in action.
- **Providing a fact sheet** on the history of state and local programs.
- **Having students make presentations** related to specific topics or experiences.
- **Eliciting interest in and support of the program** before a crisis develops.
- **Talking informally with board members.** Information about specific district program successes are always of interest to board members.
- **Citing anecdotal information on program “graduates.”** Where do they go to school? What do they accomplish in school or beyond? Do they attribute part of their success to participation in the program? Such individual, local-level information is enormously impressive to board members faced with hard decisions.
- **Monitoring board meetings.** A parent, identified with a IAG lapel button, or label, could be present at most board meetings. The parent(s) should be sure to sign in at the visitors’ register. Not only will this keep members aware of an advocate’s interest in gifted education, but it will also help the advocate communicate with members of the board about their district responsibilities, concerns, and problems related to gifted programming.
- **Helping to elect board members.** Interview candidates prior to election as to their viewpoints toward the education of gifted students.
- **Sending a letter or e-mail to board members** telling them about your child’s experiences and your appreciation for the board members’ interest and support of gifted programs. The frustrating reality is that parents or community members with complaints are heard from far more often than those with compliments, thus distorting the board’s perception of programs.

STEP 6 Encourage other community members to become involved.

Many people in the local community other than school board members can also significantly influence decisions at all levels related to education. Some people to consider contacting and involving in advocacy efforts are:

- **Elected community leaders** such as councilmen or women, and members of county Democrat and Republican Central Committees. An elected official who is willing to speak or write on behalf of gifted education carries the weight of several parents and educators writing them. Gifted education is a non-partisan issue.
- **People interested in education** who may be your friends or neighbors and who have close ties to members of the school board, state legislature, or other elected and non-elected leaders in your community.
- **Leaders in the various ethnic or minority communities.** One of the most powerful actions of gifted advocates can take is to find and enlist advocates among these communities.
- **Parent Teacher Association members** and other school leaders. It is best to choose those to whom most school board members listen and respect.
- **Teachers** in regular classrooms.
- **College and university professors and officials.**
- **Corporate officials.** Business and industrial leaders are becoming increasingly concerned with the U.S. position in the world regarding innovative leadership and research and development. For this reason, many are becoming more interested and involved in enhancing elementary and secondary education programs.
- **Leaders in other organized groups.** The Association of American University Women (AAUW), League of Women Voters, chambers of commerce, Lions, Rotary, and groups which support the arts are just a few of the many organizations that can have a positive interest in and effect on improving educational opportunities.

Reaching out to members of the broader community not only opens the way for others to advocate for gifted and talented programs, but also may create unexpected and vital educational opportunities for children in local programs. Students who can become constructively and actively involved in the community are their own best advocates.

Finally, remember to follow these advocacy tips.

- Use good sense, good humor and good manners.
- Be professional in your approach and respectful of others' points of view; be articulate and tactful.
- Be aware of the decision-making process and chain of command in the organization, and act accordingly.
- Prepare well for your meetings; be well-organized and accurate in your reporting. Do not exaggerate and do not be emotional, but provide specific examples and anecdotes to illustrate your points.
- Be calmly persistent and do not be afraid to ask questions.
- Be prepared with practical suggestions and reasonable goals for progress.

What You Might Say...

During the course of your correspondence, you are likely to be asked a plethora of questions. These inquiries frequently center around the age-old question, “Why should gifted children receive special services?” Here are few sample questions backed by well-informed answers provided by Professor of Gifted Studies at the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, MN, Dr. Karen Rogers.

Possible responses

They Say...	You Say...
Ability grouping isn't a “picture” of the real world. Students need to learn to get along with others at all levels of ability.	Actually, as adults, we are grouped by the jobs we take, the amount of education we acquire, and we are most likely to group ourselves with others who are about as smart as we are and who share common interests with us. We rarely experience “mixed-ability” grouping in the adult world.
Ability-grouping is elitist and undemocratic.	If careful placement in groups has taken place, such that one's actual level of ability or performance is the major criterion for placement, then it is an equitable strategy. The point of being grouped is to be learning at the level one is capable of. One group is not “better” than another, just more appropriate for meeting specific educational needs. If one group gets a reputation as “better,” then the school needs to deal with this additional issue.
The “good” teachers get the “good” students. The lower ability students get the “bad” teachers.	Being in the high achieving group does not mean the students are “good” or “better” than others-just different. Teacher selection is at issue here not grouping itself. Administrators should match teachers to the students with whom they work best. Why are inadequate teachers allowed to even be in the school system?
Ability grouping removes role models that “at risk” students need to succeed/	Schunk and Bandura have shown that a person chooses a role model from those who they perceive to be similar to themselves in capability but who are experiencing some success. Rarely does a low achieving student choose a gifted child as his or her role model.
Ability grouping is racist.	The general tracking research has documented that there are significantly fewer than expected minority children (except Asians) in higher achieving groups and significantly more than expected minority children in lower achieving groups. This is not the fault of grouping or placement, but may reflect how ability or achievement is being measured. It may be more important to change the measures and placement procedures than to eliminate the groups themselves.

What You Might Say...Possible Responses *(continued)*

They Say...	You Say..
It's rigid; once you're in one group level, you can't move up.	For full-time ability grouping (tracking), this is true. But this doesn't have to be the case with other forms of grouping by ability or achievement level. Regular monitoring of students' for them to move from group to group within the school year as topics and units of instruction change.
Low-level students' self-esteem is damaged, sometimes irreparably.	The Kulik studies have established that just the opposite is true. In low track classes, low ability students are less likely to be intimidated by the fast thinkers and will be afforded more chances to be called on and to answer questions.
Grouping is espoused only by the politically and socially powerful parents of high ability students.	Actually, the parents of gifted children are a lot less well-trained and less well-organized for advocacy than are parents of special education children. Parents of gifted children are often regular volunteers and supporter of the school and therefore may be seen to have a direct influence on school decisions. They have very little political power, as shown by the number of states in the U.S. which have no mandate that gifted children be served and which don't require specialized training for teachers who work with children.
Without brighter students in a class, the quality of discussion goes way down.	Bright children are sent to school to be fully educated, not to act on behalf of the teacher or make a teacher's life or discussion quality more positive. Their needs to learn are every bit as important as the needs of other children. To prevent them from leaving a classroom so that they can receive special needed services is an exploitation of their abilities for the benefit of the teacher and the rest of the class.

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Rogers, K. (2002). *Re-forming gifted education: How parents and teachers can match the program to the child*. Scottsdale, AZ: Great Potential Press.

Benchmarks for Services for High Ability

Review the Big Picture to know your main goals.

1. Encourage your school to find ways to meet individual needs and allow advancement.
2. Support G/T Licensure for the program planner and those providing direct instruction.
3. Encourage your district to self assess using the Indiana Standards for High Ability Education and set up a plan for improvement.
4. Support revision of district policies to allow flexibility according to proficiency or need
 - Early entrance to kindergarten
 - Grade skipping (Iowa Acceleration Scale is helpful in decision making)
 - Subject skipping
 - Multi-age grouping
 - Dual enrollment
 - Credit by examination
 - Early matriculation to college
5. Use the district Broad Based Planning Committee (BBPC) to determine:
 - Who should be served?
 - How will they be identified?
 - What services can be provided?
 - How will the services work?
 - When can district curriculum be developed and articulated for high ability students?
 - How will value and services be evaluated?

G/T Programming Essentials

- Differentiated environment (grouped with other high ability students for instruction)
- Differentiated curriculum (content)
- Differentiated instructional practices appropriate for high ability learners (process & product)
- Differentiated Assessments (projects, products, assignments)
- Differentiation within program to meet a range of needs
- G/T Licensed teachers

Make a Difference

The Importance of Advocacy

Although high ability identification and services are mandated in Indiana, advocacy efforts are imperative and must be unceasing at the local and state levels. If decision-makers perceive high ability education as having a strong advocacy base, it becomes easier for them to support program improvement efforts and more difficult for them to cut funds and programs.

Making continuous efforts to support and improve the education of high ability students is of paramount importance both for the individuals involved and the society at large; advocacy must become part of our daily social and professional interactions. These interactions present opportunities to educate others and support appropriate opportunities for all learners. Others oftentimes become active supporters of gifted and talented education as a result of their contact with a passionate advocate.

The success of advocacy efforts is dependent on those who are informed about the education of gifted and talented students and who will assume the responsibility of communicating this information to others.

Goals of Advocacy

- Ensure the implementation of quality programs for high ability students.
- Disseminate information regarding the unique needs of gifted and talented students.
- Provide an ongoing support base to ensure that district and state policies are changed to address the needs of high ability students in Indiana.
- Demonstrate that programs with certain characteristics can and do make a difference for high ability students.
- Urge local, state, and federal officials to give high ability learners equal priority and attention in the development of education programs.
- Increase awareness that quality programs for high ability learners have the effect of upgrading programs for all students.
- Ensure that students of all ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural groups have an equal opportunity to be identified as having high ability.

How to Begin

Advocate for meeting the needs of one child.

Advocate for meeting the needs of all high ability students in one class/subject/school.

Advocate for improving services for all high ability students in one district.

Advocate for improving services for all high ability students in Indiana.

Advocate for improving services for all high ability students in the nation.

Advocacy at the State & National Level

Steps to becoming an effective advocate at the state and national levels

Informed and active statewide involvement in advocacy for the gifted continues to be the major factor in increasing governmental commitment to improving education for our most advanced learners. As one becomes more involved in advocacy efforts, it becomes evident that what is happening at the state and national levels often affects local decisions as well.

STEP 1 Believe in the power of individual effort.

Face-to-face contacts with elected officials, as well as letters, telephone calls, faxes, and emails sent to your legislators' local offices, to Indianapolis, and to Washington, D.C., containing irrefutable information are effective instruments of political influence. The individual citizen is a very powerful force in political reality. Individual citizens have always had the option of telling their senators or legislators precisely how to vote on policy issues, but most of the population does not exercise this constituent's option. Grass roots advocacy, however, can encourage people to become involved in policy decisions.

Most legislators are not aware of details about Indiana's high ability programs. In fact, many may know few specifics about educational programs in general. This is to be expected because, while all legislators have their own areas of specialty in legislative affairs, those specialties are not always in the area of education. Therefore, legislators, as well as most people in other fields, tend to relate to school matters on the basis of their own experiences or those of their children or friends' children. Many have not had direct contact with the public schools in years.

STEP 2 Get to know your elected legislators.

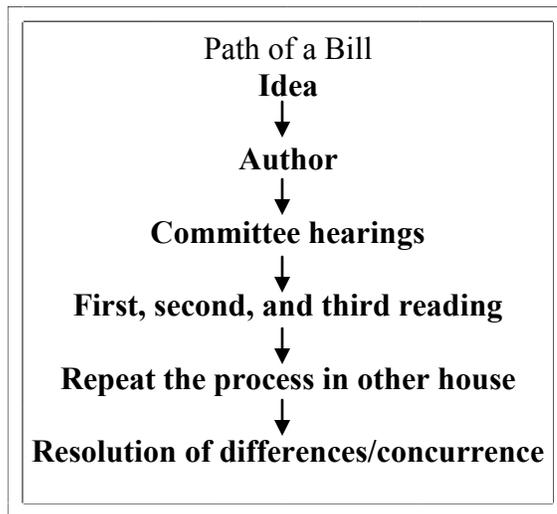
In the beginning, gaining access to busy legislators may seem formidable and sometimes threatening, but they do want to know and respond in a positive manner to their constituents. It's best not to wait for a crisis to occur to make contact. Good news about program effectiveness is always welcomed. Often, when programs are going well, advocates forget to inform or give thanks to those at the state level who made it possible. Introduce yourself to a newly elected legislator. Whether you supported this winning legislator or not, get acquainted. Political party is not important as high ability education is a nonpartisan issue. Meeting your legislator is best done before the activities of the new session begin, when there is usually more time to talk. However, you can meet or talk at any time. Legislative sessions begin in January and adjourn in the spring; fall is a good time to find your senator or assembly person in the local area. Also, most legislators are in Indianapolis only 3 to 4 days a week. Friday is often the best day to contact legislators in their "home", local, offices.

Use the first meeting to get acquainted and establish yourself as a credible resource on high ability education. If you intend to focus on a particular issue, let your legislator's office know this at the time you schedule a meeting. Your contact with your legislator at the local level is effective because you are a constituent dealing with local needs. Take advantage of every opportunity that arises during the year. Stay informed of your legislator's planned visits or town meetings in the district and try to attend them. *(Continued on the next page.)*

When attending a function where a legislator appears, reintroduce yourself and state the cause you advocate. Legislators frequently have specialized mailings on broad interest topics. Ask your legislator to put you on the education mailing list or committee. Again, don't overlook the importance of establishing yourself with your local legislator's staff. You can become a primary resource to them.

STEP 3 Maintain informed contact with your legislators.

Hundreds of bills pass through the Indiana legislature each year, and the pressures upon each legislator are great. Therefore, advocates must maintain close contact with this legislative process. The timing of advocate input is critical. If, however, members of the advocacy movement have not worked continuously at home with their decision-makers, then any last-minute input may not be as effective.



House Education, Senate Education, House Ways & Means, and Senate Finance are the standing committees of greatest importance to educational issues. While your local legislators may not serve on these committees, they have opportunities to influence committee members and to cast their votes when the bill reaches the floor of the respective houses.

STEP 4 Follow the interpretation and implementation of the law.

The need for advocacy **does not end with the enactment of law**. Laws are often very general, ambiguous, and sometimes in conflict with other laws. Further interpretations are made by other governmental agencies so that the laws can be implemented. For these reasons it is important to follow the law into its implementation stages.

Hoosiers can visit the legislature in person or keep abreast of activity via the Internet at www.in.gov/legislative. You can read bills, contact your representative or senator via email, watch floor debate and some of the committee meetings. You can visit committee meetings and testify for or against bills. Committee schedules are posted on the legislative website, showing the bills to be heard, and the time and location of the meeting. Most committees are on the first or second floor of the Statehouse, although sometimes the meetings are in the Chambers or other places within the Statehouse. To call your legislator, call the House at (317) 232-9600 or (800) 382-9842; call the Senate at (317) 232-9400 or (800) 382-9467.

Making an Effective Contact

Letters from constituents are extremely important to decision-makers; most of them do want to know what the people they represent think about issues. The zip code of the writer is often the crucial element in ensuring that the letter is read by the official or responsible aide because of the importance of keeping informed about their constituents' opinions. A large number of letters from constituents in support of, or in opposition to, an issue has significant impact. When educational issues are being considered, letters from parents may often be more persuasive to legislators and other decision-makers than are those from educators.

Essential components of a letter to your elected official

Officials and their staff pay careful attention to their mail since it often conveys the major body of public and voter sentiment on pending legislative activity. Here's an outline to follow when writing a letter to your elected official.

1. **Introductory paragraph**

Give a reason for your letter, stating the title and number of existing or pending legislation, if appropriate.

2. **Communicate reasons** why this legislator should act in support of your bill. These reasons might include historical facts, logic, data, credible opinion, personal experience, and/or weaknesses of opposing points of view. ***Your facts must be accurate.***

3. **Letter closing**

Restate the action you are seeking.
Ask for the official's commitment.
Express appreciation for considering your views.
Indicate willingness to help.
If you can arrange it, invite the official to visit your classroom or school.
Provide your address and phone number.

Tips to Increase the Effectiveness of Your Letter

1. **Be courteous, constructive, and reasonable**, or you will lose credibility and the reader's good will.
2. **Your facts must be accurate.** Be careful not to give exaggerated or misleading information that might embarrass your decision-maker in front of his or her colleagues. If you know the source of your information, cite it.
3. When appropriate, **send copies** of your letter to key consultants and legislative staff.
4. **Write your letter in your own words.** Form letters or photocopied cards do not produce interest or results.
5. **Use your own stationery and stamps.** Unless you are an authorized spokesperson for your place of employment, never use your work time or materials for advocacy purposes.
6. If you are representing a group, **state your office or area of responsibility** and use the organization's stationery.
7. **Be neat.** Type if your handwriting is hard to read. Grammar and punctuation are not as important as your ideas, but do spell names correctly.
8. **Include a copy of a reliable article** supporting your point of view whenever possible.
9. **Send a letter of appreciation** after you have received the support you requested.

Timing is important

When a bill is moving through the legislative process, the timing of your letter, phone call, or visit is important. Send letters, e-mails, or faxes to:

- Your own senator and/or representative when a bill is being formulated. If this is occurring before the Indiana General Assembly begins in January, ask to meet with him/her in your area.
- Your own committee member (if applicable) or the committee chairperson when a bill is in a particular committee.
- Your own senator or representative alerting them to the bill’s movement and re-emphasizing your position on the bill.

If time is short, a fax can be sent or a phone call made. Staff in most legislator’s offices do keep a log of constituent letters, faxes, e-mails, and calls made to them about pending bills.

To find out your legislators at all levels, go to www.vote-smart.org and enter your 9 digit zip-code. For Indiana legislation relating to high ability education, you should look for your member of the Indiana Senate and the Indiana House of Representatives. Click on their entries to find out more about which committees they serve on. In the House, advocates for high ability services are primarily interested in the Ways and Means Committee and the Education Committee. In the Senate we are interested in the Education Committee and the Finance Committee. If your representative or senator is not on one of these committees, they are still important allies and can support high ability education from their respective Floor when the bill is called for a final vote. They could also influence other legislators on the relevant committee.

<p>State Legislators The Honorable (full name) Indiana Senate or House Representatives The State House Indianapolis, IN 46204 <i>Dear Representative (or Senator) (name)</i></p>	<p>State Board of Education President State Board of Education Room 229, The State House Indianapolis, IN 46204 <i>Dear President (name)</i></p>
<p>Member of Congress The Honorable (full name) The United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515 <i>Dear Congressman (or woman) (name)</i></p>	<p>State Superintendent of Public Instruction State Superintendent of Public Instruction Room 229, The State House Indianapolis, IN 46204 <i>Dear Superintendent (name)</i></p>
<p>U.S. Senator The Honorable (full name) The United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20515 <i>Dear Senator (name)</i></p>	<p>Governor The Honorable (full name) The Governor of Indiana The State House Indianapolis, IN 46204 <i>Dear Governor (name)</i></p>

Sample Letter

YOUR NAME
YOUR ADDRESS AT HOME INCLUDING ZIP
YOUR PHONE
YOUR EMAIL

January 16, 2006

The Honorable James Merritt
Indiana Senate, The State House
202 West Washington
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Senator Merritt:

I just wanted to ask for your upcoming support for SB 112, introduced by Senator Meeks.

DIGEST OF SB112 (Updated January 12, 2005 3:53 pm - DI 71)

Academic honors diploma awards. Requires a school corporation to use money received as an academic honors diploma award for expenditures directly related to the school corporation's academic honors diploma program and program for high ability students. Requires a school corporation to report to the department of education how the award money was spent.

Senators Breaux, Rogers and Long added as coauthors

In our need to make sure all students attain minimal competency, there has been little focus on meeting the needs of Indiana's most able learners. We know:

- Children with exceptional academic potential exist in all groups and socio-economic levels.
- Potential does not develop into talented performance unless nurtured.
- Students from poverty and/or isolated areas have fewer opportunities for advanced experiences outside the school day.
- **For students with high ability and limited resources, the public school is their only hope for developing academic talent.**
- Just because all students do not need services for high ability, Limited English Proficiency, or special education does not mean services should be denied to those who do.
- To ignore these needs is to deny students with high abilities their development and Indiana their future productivity and leadership.

Again, thank you for your support of Senate Bill 112. Please call on me any time for information related to education for high ability students.

Sincerely,

Are You Already an Advocate?

Advocacy takes a variety of forms. For example:	Yes	No
1. If you are a parent, do you regularly talk with your child about whether or not he or she is happy and challenged in school?		
2. If you are a teacher or other educator, do you communicate on a regular basis with parents and administrators to explain how you differentiate curriculum and instruction and why it is important to do so?		
3. Have you written a letter, made a phone call, or sent an e-mail or fax to a legislator on behalf of high ability students?		
4. Have you made contact with a school board members regarding the high ability students in your district?		
5. Have you attended a school board meeting or district parent meeting in support of high ability students?		
6. Have you expressed appreciation for your local high ability program to your district superintendent?		
7. Have you expressed your support and appreciation to a local teacher and/or site administrator for the high ability services that have been particularly interesting and challenging?		
8. Have you helped in your area to increase community awareness of the needs of gifted children?		
9. Have you joined an organization that supports gifted education?		
10. Have you helped to publicize (in ways including contacting local newspapers and other media) the positive activities or aspects of high ability programs?		
11. Have you volunteered your time on behalf of high ability education?		
12. Have you attended seminars, workshops, or conferences to improve your knowledge of gifted education or shared the information with teachers, parents, or administrators?		

Are you already an effective advocate? Add up your “yes” replies.

- 11 – 14 Advocacy for high ability students is a top priority
- 7 – 10 Advocacy is a high priority
- 4 – 6 Advocacy is a priority
- 2 – 3 Advocacy is a low priority
- 0 – 1 Advocacy is a **very** low priority!

Glossary of Terms

The following glossary was constructed by modifying and adding to a similar glossary published by the California Association for the Gifted. The Glossary appeared in their publication: *The Challenge of Raising Your Gifted Child (1998)*. Each term is followed by the implications of the term as seen by The Indiana Association for the Gifted. The glossary has also been modified to be consistent with the definition of terms as used by the Indiana Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Learners.

This glossary has been designed to present information in this way:

Term	Word or phrase
Definition	The accepted meaning of the term as it relates to both general and gifted education
<i>Implications</i>	The issues, concerns, and considerations of the term as it is applied specifically to gifted students and gifted education

Ability Grouping Grouping students by ability or readiness level. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes. It is not synonymous with "tracking."

IAG advocates the flexible grouping of gifted students. They need to be in groups with other gifted students for some part of their educational program. Ability grouping may take many forms beneficial to gifted learners. (See also Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping and Tracking.)

Academic Excellence Expecting each student to work at maximum level toward a set of external standards as defined by state, district, and/or school. Learning and performing for each student should be at a challenge level commensurate with each student's skills and developed abilities.

The standards of excellence and appropriate challenge for gifted learners should be defined by their abilities and needs, as well as the expectations held for them by experts in various fields, educators, parents, and the community.

Accelerated Learning Pacing students through the curriculum at a rate faster than normal and commensurate with their advanced ability. Students may or may not be formally identified as high ability to participate in some forms of accelerated learning.

IAG supports the use of full- or part-time acceleration as some effective methods to meet the needs of gifted learners. Grade skipping, subject skipping, and compacting the curriculum by eliminating content the student has already mastered are examples of acceleration that allow for expansion of curriculum for gifted students in a non-traditional pattern.

Achievement Test A test, generally standardized, that measures the extent to which a student has mastered the skills and knowledge of a particular area as measured by that test

Advanced Placement Any of 33 classes endorsed by the College board in which in which a secondary student can earn college credit by successfully meeting criteria established by higher education institutions on a nationally given and scored Advanced Placement exam. Students also earn high school credit upon successful completion of the course(s).

IAG supports Advanced Placement opportunities as one method to meet the needs of gifted and other able learners.

Affective Learning Incorporating into the curriculum opportunities for students to address values, attitudes, and appreciations of self and others.

IAG supports the development of the whole child. In addition to academic opportunities, guidance services by a counselor trained in the needs of gifted children should be provided for the gifted to meet psychological and social needs.

Anchoring An instructional strategy that provides meaningful and important independent activities with challenge levels ranging from remediated to accelerated in content and/or enrichment areas. Anchoring activities are used to promote “What’s next” thinking rather than “I’m done,” when students finish at different times due to differentiated instruction.

IAG supports differentiation as a way to meet the diverse learning needs of students both within heterogeneous classes and those in which students are grouped by ability or readiness.

At-Risk Students who may underachieve or who may drop out of school. Unmet economic, physical, emotional, linguistic, and/or academic needs may inhibit a student's ability to learn or attend school. That a gifted student may also be an at-risk student is being more widely recognized. (See also Under-achieving.)

Authentic Assessment Process of evaluating student learning using student products or performance instead of traditional standardized or paper and pencil tests. It allows students to be evaluated with regard to their individuality and creativity.

IAG supports authentic assessment practices for gifted students. (See also Portfolio Assessment, one method of authentic assessment.)

Basic Inclusion As used in Indiana, it refers to students randomly placed in classrooms without regard to their readiness levels, abilities, interests, and /or learning styles.

IAG supports identifying students with high ability and then grouping them with others needing differentiated instruction at a more advanced level.

Behavioral Rating Scale/Checklist: A checklist or scale that reports the frequency or extent to which an individual demonstrates specific actions or characteristics. Caution: When using these for identification, it is important that the items on the scale or checklist be related to the services to be provided.

Between-Class Grouping: The practice of “trading students” among teachers at a particular grade level so that each teacher has a narrower range of abilities for the chosen subject or topic.

Broad-based Planning Committee In Indiana Administrative Code, “Broad-based planning committee” means a diverse group with representation from educators, parents, students, community members, and other stakeholders; organized for the purposes of planning and development of programs for high ability students.

IAG encourages parents of gifted students to become members of their school district’s BBPC.

Cluster Grouping The practice of identifying a small group of academically talented or intellectually gifted students at a grade level and placing them in the same classroom at that grade level with a teacher best-suited and qualified to work with gifted students.

As the percentage of gifted students in a grade level or school increases, cluster grouping the gifted students into one classroom becomes beneficial to the gifted. It allows the gifted child to work during the academic day with other gifted students who share similar readiness levels and abilities.

Collaborative Learning A teaching strategy whereby students are expected to share expertise and effort in order to create a common project/product.

Gifted children need opportunities to share responses with other students of like abilities and/or interests in order to improve and extend their understandings and skills. (See also Cooperative Learning.)

Compliance This term is used to indicate agreement between the school corporation and state requirements for the program components outlined in the Indiana Code and Administrative Rule 511.

Content/ Process /Product The elements of curriculum. Content is the subject matter. Process is the activity that a teacher uses to help students make meaning out of the content included in the curriculum. Product is the output of learning or form of communication such as writing, illustrating, performing, debating, etc.

Gifted students need differentiated content, process, and product. For optimum learning for gifted students, the product should be flexible, the content must be extended in depth and complexity, and the processes should emphasize creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking.

Cooperative Learning The practice of assigning a common task and/or project to a group of students with varying ability levels often reflecting the full range of student achievement and aptitude. The purpose of such learning is to prepare students to live in a democratic society; to help them understand group membership and group dynamics; and to allow them to practice both leadership and follower skills.

IAG supports cooperative learning in some circumstances, but cautions against misuse of the process. Misuse of the process occurs when gifted children are assigned to help others learn rather than being allowed to advance at their own faster pace. (See also Collaborative Learning.)

Core Curriculum The common knowledge and skills to be learned by all students of a particular grade; reading, writing, mathematics, history-social studies, and science make up core curriculum.

IAG believes gifted students must have opportunities that are differentiated from the core curriculum to meet their educational needs. A challenging curriculum for the gifted may require going beyond grade level expectations.

Creativity The human attribute of constructive originality. It is the process of combining what exists into something new. The something new could be procedure, idea, or product relative to the individual. Creativity needs to be nurtured in students to develop the abilities necessary to affect our society with new ideas and solutions to problems.

Fostering creativity should be part of all curricula for gifted students.

Critical Thinking The development of analytical thinking for purposes of decision making. This includes using specific attitudes and skills such as analyzing arguments carefully, seeing others' points of view, and reaching sound conclusions.

Curriculum for gifted must include opportunities to practice critical thinking in conjunction with subject matter acquisition and content mastery. (See also Content/Process/Product.)

Cross-Grade Grouping Students from two or more grade levels with similar readiness levels, interests, and/or learning styles are placed together in a classroom.

IAG supports the use of flexible grouping of students in order to better meet academic needs.

Curriculum & Instructional Strategies Plan: A plan that details how the curriculum and instruction are differentiated in breadth or depth of content to meet the needs of one or more high ability students within the school through activities such as compacting, acceleration, enrichment, and problem solving. It also indicates how the curriculum for high ability students is differentiated from the general education curriculum to promote such things as higher order thinking, decision making, creative problem solving, and effective researching. Ideally this will include a Scope and Sequence or Curriculum Map to show the K-12 articulation of the curriculum for high ability students.

Curriculum Compacting A process used to give students validation for what they already know. It allows students who demonstrate mastery to omit portions of assigned curriculum, or to move more quickly through curriculum than would be typical. Students are thus able to "buy time" which can be used to accelerate content or to pursue enrichment activities while the unit is being taught to other students.

IAG supports the use of curriculum compacting as one means of providing appropriate programming for advanced students. It is important, however, that the "time bought" be used by students to pursue their studies in greater depth and complexity, and to further their own educational goals. Students should not be expected to use the extra time by serving as teachers' helpers, in tutoring less advanced classmates, or in doing repetitive work already mastered.

Differentiation Adapting the curriculum to meet the unique needs of learners by making modifications in complexity, depth, and pacing. It may include selecting, rather than covering all, the curriculum areas dependent on the individual needs of students. However, when differentiating for students with advanced potential, curriculum and instruction should be at an appropriately high level of challenge first, and then can be further differentiated along other dimensions. In Indiana Administrative Code, "Differentiated" means providing tiered levels of services for all educational needs.

IAG believes that curriculum should be differentiated for all students and that in all classrooms there should be multiple paths for success. The major purpose of differentiation for gifted students is to challenge the advanced learner.

Disaggregated Data: Data that is separated by ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, language proficiency, gender, presence of an IEP, or accommodations.

Domain As used in Indiana Code, "domain" includes the following areas of aptitude and talent: general intellectual, general creative, specific academic, technical and practical arts, visual and performing arts, interpersonal. See definitions for each of the domains in this glossary.

Dual/Concurrent Enrollment Students earn credit at two levels while enrolled on one course. While this is usually college credit and high school credit while enrolled in a course of study, it could also apply to receiving high school credit for a course taken while in an earlier grade.

IAG supports dual enrollment as an option for acceleration of learning for gifted students.

Early Entrance Students begin their elementary school or college education prior to the designated chronological age of entrance.

IAG supports flexible district policies that allow for academic placement according to individual need, ability and readiness.

Early Graduation: Acceleration options have allowed the number of years a student spends in mastering the K – 12 curriculum to be shortened and makes possible early high school graduation.

Early Matriculation: Enrollment in college before completion of the usual seven or eight semesters of high school. This usually involves meeting diploma requirements through a combination of course completions and demonstration of proficiency in one or more required areas.

Elitist Advocating the selection and treatment of people as superior in some way and therefore favored. *IAG believes that promoting challenging programs for gifted students should not be equated with elitism. IAG rejects the idea that providing differentiated learning experiences to gifted students is discriminatory, or that such experiences are a means of separating the gifted from, and/or valuing the gifted above, other types of students. Good gifted programs help students not only fulfill their academic potential, but help them appreciate the contributions and diversity of others.*

Enrichment Activities that supplement the core curriculum. Such activities are generally not specified in the curriculum and are selected by the teacher and/or students in a given classroom.

IAG believes that enrichment opportunities such as field trips, special speakers or demonstrations, special projects, community involvement or enrichment materials such as computers, reference materials, literature books, and arts materials should be provided for all students. Such activities or material acquisitions do not constitute a gifted program or a differentiated curriculum. Enrichment opportunities for the gifted should involve students in interaction with new ideas and topics not ordinarily included in the core curriculum. The interaction should lead to a deeper understanding of the regular curriculum, with new knowledge emerging from the students' own creative efforts. (See also Core Curriculum.)

Equity Fair and impartial learning opportunities and access to good teaching for all students. In order to meet educational needs at all levels of development, these opportunities should encourage and enable all students to develop to their fullest potential.

Equity should allow for learning experiences especially designed to meet the needs of gifted as well as other students with unique learning abilities. IAG believes challenging programs must be provided for all students. Equity in the quality of education each student receives does not mean the "outcome" or standard for each student will be the same.

General Creative One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code. According to Indiana Administrative Code, "General creative" means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to activities, such as problem finding, divergent thinking, flexibility, elaboration, and originality.

General Intellectual One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code. According to Indiana Administrative Code, "General intellectual" means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to a broad array of disciplines.

Gifted and Talented There is no single definition of "gifted" or "talented." In Indiana, each school corporation may determine the identification criteria used to determine who will participate in programs it designs to serve students of high ability.

IAG advocates an inclusive definition of giftedness. However, all identification standards must include multiple and varied criteria and give equity to members of underrepresented populations. Student products, normed/standardized test results, student performance, and observational scales are some of the methods used in identification. Factors which may adversely affect student performance such as economic hardship or linguistic difference must also be considered. Children must be encouraged and allowed to demonstrate a wide variety of abilities and talents that traditionally are not measured by standardized tests. (See High Ability Student and Domain.)

Grade Skipping Students progress through grade level instruction skipping one or more grades.

IAG supports flexible district policies that allow for academic placement according to individual need, ability and readiness; grade skipping is sometimes an appropriate option for a gifted student.

Grading The evaluation of student work by teachers; usually recorded in letter grades or in percentages. *IAG supports grading practices for gifted students that are founded on appropriate assessment techniques and reflect student achievement in a differentiated curriculum. Comparing gifted students' work to the norm of their age or grade peers is limiting to their educational development. Grading practices should be referenced to content and performance standards.*

Guidance and Counseling Plan: The plan outlines the differentiated services within the district to meet the specific affective needs and educational career plans of the students of high ability. It may include topics such as:

- academic program planning,
- career & life planning,
- organization & management skills,
- the meaning of giftedness,
- stress management, and
- individual-, small-, or large- group counseling sessions.

Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping Grouping heterogeneously generally occurs by chronological age level and without regard for the diverse needs of students, their learning styles, or their interests. Homogeneous grouping is based on common criteria such as the students' interests, special needs, or academic abilities.

IAG believes students should be grouped for at least some part of the educational day in an appropriate setting, based on a commonality of the students' intellectual, academic, and/or affective needs. There should be a defined educational experience in this grouping.

High Ability Student In Indiana Code "high ability student" means a student who performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one (1) domain when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment; and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.

Honors Class Classes at the middle school/junior high or high school level in which content, pace, or depth of instruction is accelerated. Traditionally, students who meet prerequisite criteria are accepted into these courses.

IAG believes this is one way to ensure a more challenging and differentiated curriculum. Honors classes should be available for, but not limited to, identified gifted students. It will remain important to ensure that there is a significant level of challenge for gifted students.

Independent Study or Self-Directed Study Allowing students to follow individual or self-selected areas of interest and specific aptitude by designing and implementing their own study plans. Close monitoring by teachers is an essential component of independent study.

Independent study is an appropriate programmatic provision for gifted learners at any level, and necessitates teacher (or other qualified adult) instruction and supervision as integral features of the program.

Individualization Providing a specific program that meets the particular needs, interests, and/or abilities of an individual student for some part of his/her educational experience. It does not mean, however, that every child is working in isolation on a different level or a different subject at all times. It does mean that students are working on levels commensurate with their assessed ability, needs, and/or interests.

IAG believes differentiation and individualization resulting from challenging activities or assignments which are interactive and open-ended in content, process, and/or product can facilitate the education of gifted learners. Individualization may also utilize mentorships, internships, independent research, and/or early college entrance programs.

Individualized Education Plan/Program (IEP): A written document that describes how a student will access a variety of high ability services that may include the use of several service options.

Instructional Scaffolding An apprenticeship approach to instruction which places the teacher in a collaborative, interactive role with students by providing carefully structured and sequenced support as they undertake new and more difficult tasks. Emphasis is on teacher modeling, extension, rephrasing, questioning, praise, and correction rather than on the teacher as evaluator.

Instructional scaffolding is an effective instructional classroom model for classes with gifted students because it allows and encourages a shared exchange of ideas between teacher and students as students take on increasing responsibility for their own learning. The teacher plans and initiates a framework of classroom activities. The planned activities provide opportunities for the students to develop their own purposes rather than simply providing responses to fit into a teacher's predetermined outcome. This methodology encourages higher order reasoning as well as basic skills learning.

Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) A measure of ability or aptitude at a given point in time, comparing children of the same chronological age. It is a test designed to measure one's potential for learning including abstract thinking and reasoning, knowledge acquisition, and problem-solving abilities. Originally it was considered to be the sole way of measuring student ability. Current thinking now accepts I.Q. as one of the many ways to measure a student's academic potential.

IAG continues to support use of IQ tests as one effective method of identification when used with other measures or observations due to the high correlation between most schooling tasks and the cognitive tasks measured by IQ tests.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum A curriculum that is structured to study a topic or concept by gathering and relating information and ideas from multiple disciplines.

IAG believes interdisciplinary learning is one method to differentiate the core curriculum. Making connections or new relationships among disciplines enhances student understanding of the complexity of the content under study.

International Baccalaureate (IB) A rigorous international pre-university course of study, leading to examinations, that meets the needs of highly motivated and academically superior secondary school students. IB has a comprehensive classics curriculum (languages, sciences, mathematics, and humanities) that allows its graduates to fulfill education requirements of various nations. Only schools approved by the IB organization may offer the program. Also, school fees are charged by the IB organization.

IAG supports the International Baccalaureate program as a way of challenging academically gifted students in a program utilizing world-class standards. However, the costs and the approval process may make it a difficult program to implement for many school districts.

Interpersonal One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code. According to Indiana Administrative Code, "Interpersonal" means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to areas, such as leadership, mediation, counseling, and communication.

Learning Styles A student's preference for a mode of learning and/or a type of learning environment. For example, a student could favor auditory learning in an independent learning environment.

IAG believes students should have learning opportunities that introduce them to, and allow them to participate in, a range of multiple and varied modalities, resources, and environments.

Magnet School or Magnet Program Many school districts, especially those with large student enrollments, select individual schools to emphasize particular programs or services. Some magnet programs focus on specific learning areas such as math, science, or performing arts. Others are designed to serve a specific student population such as highly gifted or gifted and high ability students. Since space is usually limited, special entrance requirements may apply.

IAG supports a wide variety of alternative programs so that parents and students can select the most appropriate learning environment for a given child. Schools specifically for the gifted have many advantages for teachers and gifted students.

Mandated Program A legally required program or action authorized by law.

Special Education programs are mandated; Gifted programs in Indiana are not. In order to assure gifted programs in every district, services for gifted students would have to be mandated. Without mandation, on-going advocacy is necessary in each district to initiate and to maintain gifted programs.

Mentor An adult member of the community who can provide expertise and/or advice in a field of study or other community endeavor when matched with a student on a one-to-one basis.

IAG supports mentor programs as one way to meet the needs of gifted students.

Multifaceted Assessment: means collecting and analyzing data to identify the educational needs of high ability students through the following:

- Performance-based assessment, which includes evaluating the performance of students involved in complex learning opportunities usually through the use of achievement tests.
- Potential-based assessment, which includes assessing verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal reasoning to evaluate the potential performance of high ability students. This evaluation can be through the use of instruments, such as standardized intelligence or cognitive ability tests.

Other forms of assessment, frequently descriptive in nature, which include using procedures designed to reduce any assessment biases that may be inherent in other assessment methods. Qualitative measures such as rating scales, portfolios, structured observations or interviews can provide important information about advanced performance or advanced ability if they are selected/designed to provide information about abilities in areas of services provided.

Multifaceted Assessment Plan: outlines the instruments used to identify the needs of students of high ability and measure their progress and must include at least one norm-referenced performance-based measure, one norm referenced potential-based measure, and one other form of assessment.

Multiple Intelligences The theory that intelligence can be expressed in a variety of ways and is not limited to the rational linear mode. The theory commonly associated with Howard Gardner identifies at least seven intelligences: linguistic, musical, spatial, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

IAG advocates the continued exploration and research of intelligence in all its forms of expression to promote better understanding of human potential and service to students. IAG does not believe that attending to multiple intelligences for all children provides enough differentiation for students of high ability.

Nomination A referral process for consideration of a student into a specialized program.

The nomination process for gifted programs should allow for administrator, teacher, parent, and self-referral.

Norm-Referenced Test A test used to determine an individual's status with respect to the performance of other individuals on that test. A "norm" group is the large number of examinees who have taken a particular test and whose scores form the basis of the norms. Such a test may be based on national norms, state norms, or local norms. At every level of educational test usage, it is necessary to match the scope of the test with the purpose that test is supposed to perform.

As standardized tests are often used in the screening and identification of gifted students, IAG cautions against the misinterpretation of test results. The question to ask is, "Is the test an appropriate measure to verify a student's gifts and talents?"

Off-Grade Level Tests A test one or more grade, or age, level(s) above the student's actual grade placement or age used to assess a student's ability or achievement.

IAG supports the use of off-grade testing with students of high ability. This practice can demonstrate the student's advanced learning, can be used to determine content needed to be studied, and can be used for appropriate placement.

Open-Ended Question Provides opportunities for more than one "right" solution or answer. Student response is judged by the logic by which the response is explained or defended. Students must be able to recognize tasks without a label, draw upon prior knowledge, generate relevant approaches on their own, and articulate their reasoning.

IAG believes open-ended questions and assignments allow gifted students to respond at a more challenging level.

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) The underlying principle of OBE is that decisions about curriculum and instruction should be based on desired competencies students would demonstrate at the end of their formal education.

IAG supports the basic premise of OBE so long as high standards are maintained, gifted learners are permitted to go beyond grade level expectations, and the required demonstrations are of significant learning. Curriculum must not be limited to prescribed outcomes only.

Peer Grouping A practice which indicates voluntary or assigned matching of students by shared characteristics such as age, ability, need, and/or interest in order to affect teaching and learning.

In a group of intellectual peers, age is not a criteria for grouping. IAG supports cross-age grouping practices.

Portfolio Assessment A collection of student products used to measure student progress and achievement. A collection of student products is often used to evaluate abilities to determine the appropriateness of placement in a program such as visual and performing arts. This practice allows students to demonstrate a wide variety of abilities and talents that traditionally are not measured well by standardized tests. Material in a portfolio may be student selected. (See also Authentic Assessment.)

IAG believes portfolio assessment is an effective way to provide a profile of the gifted learner. It more closely parallels what adults in the "real" world do to exhibit the quality of their work.

Potential-Based Assessment: Evaluating the potential performance of students of high ability through the use of instruments, such as: standardized intelligence tests or tests of verbal, or quantitative reasoning.

Problem-Based Curriculum Problem-based curriculum is a model that enables the learner to solve a problem using knowledge and skills across the disciplines. It enables students to practice critical and creative thinking while researching information and organizing ideas to solve a real-world problem.

IAG believes that a problem-based curriculum can involve the application of strategies and the acquisition of information that stimulates the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students.

Professional Development Plan: The plan describes the opportunities provided by the school district to promote professional growth in all areas of high ability services. This plan may include:

- assistance for personnel to attain university coursework or licensure in gifted education
- district in-services for teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and volunteers;
- staff release time for attending workshops, seminars, conferences, etc;
- resources within the corporation; and
- study groups within the corporation.

Program for High Ability Students According to Indiana Administrative Code, “Program” means educational services differentiated in depth and breadth designed to meet the needs of one (1) or more high ability students through activities, such as compacting, acceleration, enrichment, problem solving, and creative thinking.

Pull-out Program Students with similar readiness levels are pulled from their classrooms on a regular basis to work with each other and a resource teacher to facilitate accelerated and/or enriched learning experiences.

IAG supports the use of pull-out programs if they are daily as one way to enrich or extend learning experiences for gifted students with a caution. It is appropriate if the gifted students are receiving differentiated curriculum and instruction in their core curricular areas through the pull-out experience and/or in other ways. As an occasional or limited time to receive differentiated experiences, it is insufficient as a program for gifted students.

Qualitative Assessment: Measures that provide more descriptive information about a child’s ability or performance in a given area such as portfolio or rating scales. They are not tests.

Rating Scale A scale that reports the frequency or extent to which an individual demonstrates specific actions or characteristics. Often a scale of 1 to 5 is used, or perhaps indicators such as always, sometimes, never. Rating scales may also be used as an alternative form of assessment for evaluation of products and/or students.

Reliability: The consistency of an instrument/test over time; the accuracy and repeatability of a measurement.

Rubric A rubric or scoring guide is an assessment scale. Each interval along the scale represents a specific level of learning from the novice to expert. The levels of learning are accompanied by specific descriptors of the type and quality of work.

IAG believes that rubrics or scoring guides should be used to provide gifted students and their teachers with a clear understanding of what is expected as outstanding work. The highest levels of a rubric or scoring guide can be used to set goals for and define the level of performance of gifted students in a given area.

School Improvement Plans According to Indiana P.L.221, all schools have a School Improvement Team which develops a School Improvement Plan. A plan, reviewed and revised annually, establishes

achievement objectives of the school for a three year period. These achievement objectives must be consistent with academic standards and include improvement in (at least) attendance, percentage of students meeting academic standards under the ISTEP program, and for a secondary school, graduation rate.

The IAG believes each plan must specifically address the learning needs of all students, including programs and services for high ability learners. IAG recommends each team include someone with training in the needs of gifted children so resulting plans will adequately address their needs.

School of Choice Opportunities for parents and students to select a school of attendance.

IAG supports specialized opportunities for both inter- and intra-district student transfers to public educational institutions such as magnet, regional, residential (e.g., the Indiana Academy) or special schools.

Self-Contained Classroom A programmatic term defining a homogeneous setting of students with common needs and/or abilities. The class can include multiple grades or ages.

Research has shown that this model facilitates the education of gifted students when they are also then given appropriately differentiated experiences. This classroom setting allows for differentiated curricula, including multi-disciplinary, individualization, depth and complexity in content areas, as well as pacing that is appropriate to the gifted learner. It also provides the vital interaction among peers necessary for gifted learners.

Specific Academic One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code. According to Indiana Administrative Code, “Specific academic” means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to specific disciplines, such as English language arts, social studies, foreign languages, mathematics, and sciences. Identification of students with high ability in the Specific Academic domains is required in Indiana.

Standards Content standards means the specific academic knowledge, skills, and abilities that all public schools in this state are expected to teach and all pupils are expected to learn in each of the core curriculum areas, at each grade level. Performance standards are standards that define various levels of competence at each grade level in each of the curriculum areas for which content standards are established. Performance standards gauge the degree to which a student has met the content standards and the degree to which a school or school district has met the content standards.

IAG believes that schools must be prepared for gifted students to exceed content standards and have all materials and experiences pre-planned and accessible to facilitate their progress as appropriate.

IAG believes that while performance standards state specific performance goals, it is still necessary to incorporate modification for gifted students including advanced levels of depth, complexity, novelty, and acceleration. The inclusion of these elements in setting standards ensures that gifted students will be provided challenging learning experiences.

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IAG supports specialized opportunities for both inter- and intra-district student transfers to public educational institutions such as magnet, regional, residential (e.g., the Indiana Academy) or special schools.

Self –Contained Classroom: A programmatic term defining a homogeneous setting of students with common needs, in this case a class of high ability students. The class can include multiple grades or ages.

Specific Academic: One of the domains of high ability required to be served. “Specific academic” means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to specific disciplines, such as English language arts, social studies, world languages, mathematics, and sciences.

Stakeholder: Persons with interest in programming for students of high ability; e.g. administrators, school board members, community members, teachers, parents, students.

Standardized Test: A standardized is one that is administered under standardized or controlled conditions that specify where, when, how, and how long students may respond to the test items. Standardized tests should meet acceptable standards for technical qualities in construction, administration, and use.

Subject-based Acceleration: Any option that allows a gifted student to gain exposure to advanced content and skills beyond the average curriculum standards that are expected for a certain age or grade.

Subject skipping: Allows a student to be placed in classes with older students for part of the day in one or more subject areas.

Technical and Practical Arts One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code. According to Indiana Administrative Code, “Technical and practical arts” means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to disciplines, such as vocational-technical education, business technology education, family and consumer sciences, and technology education. This is an optional area of service for high ability in Indiana.

Thematic Curriculum A curriculum which focuses on the study of a topic or concept that is specific, such as "animals," or global, such as "change." The theme serves as an organizing element to provide continuity and "connectedness" for learning.

IAG believes a thematic curriculum that is defined, focused and appropriately differentiated can allow for continuous in-depth learning for gifted students.

Tiering Providing assignments varying in level of complexity/challenge while focusing on the same basic concept or learning experience. This is a type of differentiation.

IAG supports differentiation as a way to meet the diverse learning needs of students both within heterogeneous classes and those in which students are grouped by ability or readiness.

Tracking Fixed groups that are rigidly maintained over time. This word is NOT synonymous with grouping and does not preclude opportunities for special needs groups for any learner at some time.

LAG's position is that no child should be "locked into" an on-going educational program that perceives and instructs him/her in only one aspect of his/her dimensionality.

Twice-Exceptional: Students with needs and characteristics of more than one special population, e.g. gifted and learning disabled.

Underachieving A discrepancy between recognized potential and actual academic performance. The causes of underachievement may be social, emotional, physical, and/or academic.

LAG's position is that a good program serves all of its gifted students, not just those who are achieving. Inappropriate curriculum often has as its consequence the underachieving gifted. Special counseling for underachieving gifted may constitute an appropriate learning opportunity.

Validity: The degree to which a test/ assessment measures what it purports to measure.

Visual and Performing Arts One of the domains of high ability as listed in Indiana Code. According to Indiana Administrative Code, "Visual and performing arts" means understanding facts and concepts, developing skills and generalizations, and evaluating their relationships as they apply to disciplines, such as art, dance, music, and theater arts. It is optional to serve high ability in this domain in Indiana.