

Paramount Online Academy Framework for Flexible and Accelerated Programming

Philosophy

Paramount Online Academy (POA) recognizes that high-performing students may need a more flexible school schedule. POA provides educational opportunities to encourage high-performing students in grades four through eight to reach their maximum achievement level. The program for these students will be offered through either synchronous or asynchronous accelerated lessons, with specific enrichment opportunities designed to meet the cognitive and affective needs of the students.

POA recognizes that high-performing students perform at, or show the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment and whose educational needs and individual growth capabilities are above grade level.

Instructional Tracks

Students may be placed on an accelerated synchronous (live instruction) or asynchronous (independent study) track. The track a student is placed on is determined by several factors, including, but not limited to:

- The student's reason for attending POA
- The content area in which the student is identified as high ability
- The student's historical performance data

Asynchronous Track

The asynchronous track is designed for students who need a more flexible school schedule. Students will utilize Google Classroom to work on accelerated coursework at the student's academic level in math and/or language arts. Coursework will be done independently using Khan Academy lessons that align with Indiana state standards. A certified teacher will monitor the student's progress and will touch base with the student at least once each week.

Synchronous Track

The synchronous track is designed for students who still want or need a traditional school schedule. Students are placed in the next grade level course in the area in which the student is identified. Students follow that grade level's schedule, engagement plan, and homeroom requirements.

The course follows the same cyclical framework for typical instruction. Instruction moves through: (1) Mini-lesson with an informal assessment to demonstrate mastery, (2) traditional work with accelerated or enriched materials that reiterate the standard(s), (3) an assessment of concept, (4) an extension of concept tied to real-world application or problem-solving application that could also be an additional form of assessment.

Algebra I

Eligible students in grade eight may take Algebra I for high school credit using either track.

Identification

A student may be placed in POA's flexible accelerated program through one of the following:

- Parent request upon enrollment
 - POA High Ability Committee will make the determination based on historical performance data
- Previous high ability identification from another school
- CogAT test scores

CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

The CogAT is a norm-referenced aptitude measure which assesses the students' learned reasoning abilities in three areas (Verbal, Nonverbal, and Quantitative) and qualifies students for placement in the program. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in verbal reasoning are identified as gifted in language arts. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in quantitative and/or nonverbal reasoning(s) are identified as gifted in math. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in verbal reasoning and quantitative/nonverbal reasoning(s) are identified as general intellectual.

- Students will be scored using national percentile norms to ensure that the students identified perform above average in identified areas as compared to other students in their grade level of average ability. This is the suggested identification range for small schools and districts.
- Students who are already identified as high ability do not need to take the CogAT again in their identified area(s) if they have been performing successfully in the program to date.

Teacher Recommendation

POA grade-level teachers (grades 3-7) can recommend students for the program in the spring. Teachers who want to recommend a student will complete the nomination form, the PSOE High Ability Selection Matrix, the HOPE Nomination Scale, and provide work samples in the area(s) the teacher is recommending the student for. The high ability committee will meet to review the data and samples to determine if the student qualifies for placement in the program.

Identification Process Committee

The staff members involved in the identification process are:

- Principal
- High Ability Coordinator
- High Ability Teachers
- School Counselor

Broad-Based Planning Committee

The Indiana Department of Education requires the establishment of a broad-based planning committee that meets annually to review the local education plan. The purpose of this committee is to plan and review the continuous development and implementation of the services and programs for high ability students. The committee will have representatives from diverse groups representing the school and community. The committee must include at least one educator, student, parent, and other community member/stakeholder. The committee is an advisory group

that works closely with the PSOE Administrative team in making recommendations about curriculum, professional development, and enrichment resources. This is separate from the Identification Committee.

Exit Policy/Procedure

If a student, parent, teacher, or other stakeholder believes services are no longer appropriate, the exit procedure will be utilized.

1. Arrange a conference with the parties involved, including the high ability coordinator, administrator, parent(s), and the teacher providing services. This conference may be a telephone conference.
 - If an intervention is implemented, all participants must agree on a probationary period (no shorter than 9 weeks) to implement intervention.
 - If the probationary period is not successful, the student can be exited at the end period with a formal review of the student's progress.
2. The principal must sign the documentation giving permission to remove the student from high ability services.
3. All formal documentation must be sent to the high ability coordinator.
4. The POA high ability program may communicate this withdrawal with appropriate stakeholders.
5. A student will not be readmitted to the high ability program during that same school year. A student could still be eligible to qualify for the high ability program during the following school year if the High Ability Identification Committee determines that this would be a beneficial placement. Parents, appropriate school personnel, or other stakeholders may make that formal request for high ability placement during the school year that follows the official exit from the high ability program.

Appeals Procedure

If a parent/guardian believes high ability services are appropriate and would like the school to reconsider high ability identification, the appeals procedure will be utilized.

1. Initial Request: Parents/guardians of any student may complete the [appeals form](#) to outline the specific reasons for the appeal and provide any relevant documentation or evidence to support their case.
2. Review Committee: An appeals review committee composed of the high ability coordinator, teachers, administrators, and relevant stakeholders will meet to thoroughly examine the appeal and provide documentation. This committee will consider the student's academic performance, standardized test scores, teacher recommendations, and any other pertinent information provided.
3. Assessment: If necessary, the appeals committee may conduct further assessments or evaluations to gain a comprehensive understanding of the student's abilities and educational needs. This may include additional testing, portfolio reviews, or interviews with the student and/or their teachers.
4. Decision and Notification: Following a careful review process, the appeals committee will render a decision based on the merits of the appeal and the available evidence. The decision will be communicated in writing to the student and their parents/guardians, outlining the rationale behind the decision and any next steps or actions to be taken.

5. Timeline: Appeals procedures have 4 weeks to consider the appeal and communicate the decision once the form has been submitted.

High Ability Placement Reevaluation

In the event that a student is placed in an honors classroom and is receiving honors services but is not identified as gifted and talented in language arts, math, or general intellectual, and that student is not achieving according to BOY data, qualitative data, or teacher expectations, the following steps will be followed:

- I. The high ability classroom teacher notifies the high ability coordinator and administration about the concern.
- II. Administer the CogAT for a secondary data source.
- III. The high ability coordinator and administration will set up a meeting with the parents and outline options for a general education setting that would best benefit the student's academic needs.