

Honors Frameworks

High Ability Philosophy

PSOE recognizes that there are high ability students in all racial, economic, and cultural groups who when compared to their peers, perform at an advanced level, or demonstrate the potential to be challenged beyond the standard curriculum in one or more academic domains of math and language arts. PSOE shall provide educational opportunities to encourage high ability students to reach their maximum achievement level at every stage of development. The program for high ability students will be differentiated in depth and breadth with specific enrichment opportunities designed to meet the cognitive and affective needs of the high ability students. PSOE is committed to providing enhanced instruction in addition to the regular curriculum standards in order to challenge high ability learners to reach their greatest potential.

Mission Statement: At PSOE, we empower high-ability students from all backgrounds to reach their full potential in math and language arts. Through tailored enrichment programs and enhanced instruction, we foster excellence and ensure every student's unique abilities are recognized and nurtured.

Definition of High Ability

PSOE recognizes that a high ability student performs at, or shows 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 curriculum in the general intellectual and specific academic domains of math and language arts high ability students are characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.

Goals:

1. PSOE will ensure that all students regardless of race, cultural background, and economic status have the opportunity to be identified for high ability services in every grade level.
2. PSOE will ensure that the curriculum for grades K-8 is aligned both horizontally and vertically to ensure maximum growth opportunities for high ability students at every level of achievement.
3. PSOE will provide services to meet the social and emotional needs of high ability students.
4. PSOE will continually challenge high ability students to strive toward their utmost degree of achievement and ensure that educational growth and success is being met at each level.

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Identification/Academic Growth

CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

Grade level testing for all students takes place in kindergarten, second, and fifth grades. All students will be given the CogAT, 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 honors program. Tests will be administered by the grade level teachers or by the High Ability Coordinator in the Spring of each academic year. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in Verbal reasoning are identified as gifted in Language Arts and are automatically enrolled into the honors program. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in Quantitative and/or Nonverbal reasoning(s) are identified as gifted in Math and are automatically enrolled into the honors program. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in Verbal reasoning and Quantitative/Nonverbal reasoning(s) are identified as General Intellectual and are automatically enrolled into the honors program where they will receive services for both Math and Language Arts.

- 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 an 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.

NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association)

The NWEA test is a norm-referenced achievement measure that provides an estimate of student achievement within a given subject. The NWEA is utilized to measure academic growth in identified students and as a secondary identification tool in the Spring. Identified students will take the NWEA three times a year (beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the year) to provide trackable data to establish growth in their identified subject area. The High Ability coordinator will provide this data to grade-level teachers after each assessment to ensure student growth and to identify areas of improvement. All students should perform at a higher range than their average grade-level peers and should demonstrate continuous growth in their area of identification on the data acquired through NWEA testing.

The NWEA is the achievement portion of the identification process and any students who score in the 80th percentile to the 95th percentile on the CogAT will also take the NWEA in the Spring to ensure proper identification is made. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in the Reading and Language Arts subtest are identified as gifted in Language Arts and are automatically enrolled in the honors program. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in the Reading and Language Arts subtests are identified as gifted in math and are automatically enrolled in the honors program. Students who score in the 96th percentile or higher in the Reading and Language Arts subtest and the Math subtests are identified as General Intellectual and are automatically enrolled into the honors program where they will receive services for both Math and Language Arts.

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- Students whose actual scores on either the CogAT or NWEA subtests fell just below the 96th percentile but whose score band would include this percentile when considering the standard error of measure (found in the manual for each subtest), are further considered for identification by giving their teachers the HOPE Scale to fill out and provide student work samples in the respective subject area.
- The percentage used to identify students on CogAT (80%-95%) will also be used to identify students in NWEA.
 - EX: If CogAt cut score for identification is 96%, then NWEA cut score for identification will also be 96%.
- The High Ability Coordinator will record the relevant designation on the Student Test Number (STN) as HA-LA, HA-Math, or HA-General Intellectual.

Teacher Recommendation

Grade level teachers (grades K-8) can recommend students for the honors program in the Spring. Teachers who want to recommend a student(s) will complete the PSOE Nomination Form (K-2 or 3-8), 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 honors program.

Parent/Stakeholder Recommendation

Parents or stakeholders can recommend students for the honors program at any time during the academic year. The formal appeal for placement may be made in writing by a parent or stakeholder. The appeal form can be obtained in the front office and is submitted for review by the High Ability Committee. Teachers of requested students may be asked to provide the PSOE High Ability Selection Matrix, the HOPE Nomination Scale, and work samples for the recommended student. The High Ability committee will meet to review the data and samples to determine if the student qualifies for placement in the honors program.

Identification Process Committee

The staff members involved in the identification process and in the implementation of the honors ability program are:

- School Director
- Principal
- Curriculum Director
- High Ability Coordinator
- High Ability Cluster Teacher
- High Ability Classroom Teacher
- 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 for high ability students. 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

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educator, student, 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 high ability 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.
 - a. If an intervention is implemented, all participants must agree on a probationary period (no shorter than 9 weeks) to implement interventions.
 - b. 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 PSOE 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 they 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 provided 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.

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

Further Inquiries

For more information about our High Ability Program at PSOE, please contact the front office to make an appointment with the administration.

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