

# **GREENWOOD COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION HIGH ABILITY PROGRAM K-12**

## **DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT FOR HIGH ABILITY PROGRAM:**

The Greenwood Community School Corporation 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. The Corporation 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. The Greenwood Community School Corporation 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.

## **DISTRICT DEFINITION OF HIGH ABILITY STUDENT:**

The Greenwood Community School Corporation 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 (or subjects related to specific honors classes at the middle and high school levels). High ability students are characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.

*\*High ability definition taken from the Indiana Code.*

## **HIGH ABILITY PROGRAM GOALS:**

- **Goal #1:** The Corporation 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.
- **Goal #2:** The Corporation will ensure that the curriculum for grades K-12 is aligned both, horizontally and vertically to ensure maximum growth opportunities for high ability students at every level of achievement.
- **Goal #3:** The Corporation will provide services to meet the social and emotional needs of high ability students.
- **Goal #4:** The Corporation 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.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SERVICES:**

**Elementary:** The REACH (high ability) program is an integral part of the district's plan to educate all students. It is the goal of the Greenwood Community School Corporation to provide an exemplary high ability program designed to supply students with quality experiences consistent with their learning characteristics and ability levels through differentiated instruction that includes opportunities for cluster grouping, flexible grouping, compacting, acceleration, enrichment, problem solving, and creative thinking. In kindergarten, students are initially screened for possible high ability identification through the Cognitive Abilities Screening Form (CogAT), and then, candidates are further tested through the Cognitive Abilities Test (full battery), and if additional data is needed, achievement measures and quantitative checklists are used for determining potential high ability placements. Students are then reassessed at the end of second grade (or at other points throughout their elementary careers if requested by a teacher or parent) through aptitude and achievement testing as well as by qualitative indicators. Students identified as high ability are placed in cluster classrooms with a teacher designated to work with high ability learners. The teacher will be responsible for differentiating instruction when appropriate to meet the cognitive and affective needs of high ability learners. Students in grades 1-5 will be provided opportunities to enrich the curriculum and delve deeper into grade level subject matters. Enrichment opportunities (which may include accelerated curriculum in some instances) will be planned based on each student's identification status and successful academic growth levels while progressing throughout the program services. Fourth and fifth grade high ability students will participate in the intermediate model of instruction for language arts and math (based upon identification status) meaning that they will be placed in a high ability class specified for those particular subjects.

Early entrance to kindergarten may be considered if parents complete an application to appeal the current statewide entrance dates. Please contact the administration office to determine specific cutoff dates and to learn when applications are due for the upcoming school year. Once the application has been received, the child will then participate in a screening program that consists of aptitude testing and qualitative indicators. After the data has been obtained, a committee that consists of an Elementary Administrator, the Director of Student Services, and the Title I Literacy Coach will meet to review data and make the final determination as to the status of the application.

A request for grade skipping may be made by a parent or staff member by directly speaking to the building Principal. Grade skipping is up to the discretion of the building Principal with input from the High Ability Coordinator and Director of Student Services, and will be determined after all available data has been analyzed.

**Middle School:** Advanced honors classes are offered at the middle school for grades 6-8 in the core subjects of math, language arts, and science. Qualified students are scheduled into classes per relevant data and assessment information obtained from the elementary schools that includes ISTEP+ scores, aptitude data from the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), grades, teacher recommendations, and subject specific placement tests (when applicable). Students may be placed in Algebra 1 in grades 7 or 8 if it is deemed developmentally appropriate for a particular child. A Guidance Counselor will be assigned to each student to guide the academic career path.

**High School:** Students in grades 9-12 may self-select courses based on their own academic strengths and interests as long as they have obtained the necessary grade requirements and prerequisite course work. High ability students will be assigned a Guidance Counselor to assist in preparing a four-year plan that is traditionally considered as preparation for college bound students. Counselors will provide guidance for students and parents to ensure that high ability learners are enrolled in honors classes and Advanced Placement/university courses (that may include dual credit) in the subjects of math, language arts, science, foreign language, and history. These advanced classes will provide challenging and rigorous academic course work to best prepare students for collegiate classes and professional careers. Opportunities for academic challenges may include the pursuit of an Academic Honors Diploma.

In addition, all of the Greenwood Community School Corporation schools have competitive academic teams. Students will be notified periodically throughout the school year of opportunities to qualify and participate on academic teams.

## **SELECTION PROCEDURE:**

Grade level testing for all students takes place in kindergarten and second grades. In addition, a student could be assessed at any time throughout the elementary career if the data warrants a need for testing, or if a request from a parent/teacher has been approved. A Selection Committee composed of the High Ability Coordinator, Director of Student Services, Administrators, and High Ability Building Coordinators meets to review and evaluate data to determine high ability eligibility in elementary school. In middle school, core subject team teachers meet with the Department Chair and grade level Guidance Counselors to analyze data and determine eligibility for honors classes. At the high school level, students work with their individual Guidance Counselors to self-select honors classes and Advanced Placement/university courses.

## **TIMELINE OF IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES:**

All kindergarten students are assessed for possible REACH (high ability) placement during the second semester of the current school year. All second grade students are assessed during the second semester for possible high ability placement for the following school year. Fifth graders may be recommended for testing in the spring of the academic year before middle school. All middle and high school students will continually meet with Guidance Counselors throughout the school year in order to maintain eligibility requirements for honors and Advanced Placement/university courses. Those students will meet with their individual Guidance Counselors to plan academic courses and finalize schedules in the spring as preparation for the subsequent school year.

## **MULTIFACETED ID PLAN:**

### **Elementary:**

- Aptitude Measure
  - Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Screening Form - All students K, 2, (and can be used for screening at all levels K-5)
  - Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Form 7 – Candidate pool
- Achievement Measure
  - Iowa Basic Skills Test – can be used at all levels (K-5) for additional supporting data for candidate pool
- Qualitative Indicators
  - Kingore Observation Inventory – K
  - Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) – Candidate pool (K-5)
  - Portfolio (work) samples – Candidate pool (K-5)

**Middle School:**

- Aptitude Measure
  - Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Form 7 – Candidate pool of incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders
- Achievement Measure
  - ILEARN (6-8)
  - Cumulative data from elementary school (including scores from writing prompts, reading levels, Acuity, and any other relevant data) (6)
  - Grades (6-8)
  - Benchmark tests (6-8)
- Qualitative Indicators
  - Teacher recommendations (6-8)
  - Portfolio (work) samples (6-8)

**High School:**

- Aptitude Measure
  - PSAT
  - Possible use of AP Potential Tool (9-11)
- Achievement Measure
  - Grades and course prerequisite requirements (9-11)
- Qualitative Indicators
  - Self-nominations (including portfolio samples) (9-11)
  - Teacher recommendations (9-11)

**APPEALS PROCEDURE:****Elementary level:**

The formal appeal of a REACH placement decision regarding a student may be made in writing by a parent, teacher, or other appropriate school personnel. The person requesting the appeal must submit an appeal form, (downloaded from website or obtained from the school office), to initiate the process. It is strongly encouraged that any additional documentation that might substantiate the appeal be presented at this time. All information will be reviewed by the Selection Committee. This committee will be chaired by the High Ability Coordinator and will consist of members that may include the Director of Student Services, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, an Elementary Administrator, and High Ability Building Coordinators. Appeal forms must be submitted directly to the High Ability Coordinator.

Appeals are handled per an individual case scenario. The following timeline will be followed for this procedure:

- An appeal form must be submitted within two weeks after scores have been reported.
- The Selection Committee will review documentation and respond to the person making the appeal no later than fifteen school days after the receipt of the appeal form.
- At the Selection Committee's meeting, committee members will review all data that has been collected.
- The committee may request additional assessments (provided by the school corporation) or data collection, and may interview the student/parents.

The Selection Committee's decisions may include one of the following options:

- Uphold the original decision of the REACH (high ability) eligibility/placement. **All decisions are final**; however, parents and school personnel have the right to request additional testing (once per year) throughout the child's elementary academic career.
- Reverse the decision of the REACH (high ability) eligibility/placement. The High Ability Coordinator is responsible for notifying parents and/or the individual initiating the appeal of the decision within thirty days of receipt of the written appeal. The student will begin receiving REACH services at that time.

*It should be noted that every effort is made to **include** all candidates who would benefit from high ability services rather than exclude students.*

### **Middle & High School Levels:**

- Appeals must be submitted directly to the classroom teacher/Guidance Counselor within two weeks of the beginning of classes each semester.
- The Guidance Counselor, Department Chair, and/or teacher of the disputed class will review documentation and respond to the person making the appeal no later than seven days after receipt of the appeal.
- Staff members involved in the student's educational plan will review all data that has been collected.
- Additional assessments (provided by the school corporation) or data collection may be requested at that time, and relevant staff members may interview the student/parents.

The final decision may include one of the following options:

- Uphold the original decision pertaining to the absence of placement in honors classes or Advanced Placement/university courses (including those with dual credit). **All decisions are final**; however, students may petition to get into the class at a later date by working with their Guidance Counselors to make sure that they are prepared for the course and have met eligibility requirements.
- Reverse the decision of the honors class or Advanced Placement/university course (including those with dual credit) placement. The student's individual Guidance Counselor is responsible for notifying parents/and or the individual initiating the

appeal decision with seven days of receipt of the written appeal. The student will be scheduled into the course at that time.



## **EXIT PROCEDURE:**

### **Elementary Level:**

In the event that a student experiences difficulty in the REACH (high ability) program, does not meet a teacher's classroom expectations, and/or drops below a B average (or the equivalent to a B average on the primary report card) in the specified academic domain for which the student was identified for high ability services, the following procedure is prescribed and may be initiated by students, parents, teachers, or other staff members:

1. The teacher meets with the student to discuss and identify the problem(s).
2. If the problem continues, a conference is arranged with the student, teacher, and parent to develop an action plan that will help the child to succeed. This plan should include goals and strategies to improve the situation and must be implemented under a specific timeline.
3. If, after the specified amount of time, the problem continues to exist, a second conference is arranged with the student, parents, teacher, High Ability Coordinator, Director of Student Services, and any other staff members identified as strategic in assisting the student (i.e., principals, instructional assistants, etc.). The purpose of this conference is to evaluate the progress being made and to make any additional modifications to the action plan.
4. After the procedure outlined above has been followed for a minimum of one grading period, determination may be made that in the best interest of the student's success, it is necessary to exit the REACH (high ability) program. If that decision is made, then a parent signature form is required to formally exit a student from the program. A student will not be readmitted to the REACH program during that same school year. A student could still be eligible to qualify for the REACH program during the following school year if the High Ability Selection Committee determines that this would be a beneficial placement. Parents or appropriate school personnel may make that formal request for high ability placement during the school year that follows the official exit from the REACH program. Requests should be made to the building Principals or the High Ability Coordinator. Fifth grade students will not be readmitted into the REACH program; however, they may be eligible (under criteria set by the middle school) for admission into sixth grade academic honors classes.

### **Middle and High School levels:**

A student who is not performing up to class expectations may be removed from the class/receive a failing grade. The Guidance Counselor assigned to that particular student may meet with the student (and possibly parents at the middle school level) to arrange for a revised course of action plan for subsequent classes. At that time, the Guidance Counselor may deem it appropriate to conduct a meeting that includes the student, parent, teacher, and the High Ability Coordinator. This group would be responsible for advising the student on the best course of action plan to strive toward possibly being readmitted or retaking honors classes and Advanced Placement/university courses.

Regardless of grade level, a student's removal from the high ability program will result in the change being made on the Student Test Number designation.

### **KEY PERSONNEL:**

There are many members of the district's personnel who are involved in the high ability identification process. Teachers, principals, and any staff member may nominate a student for possible high ability identification. In addition, the following personnel will be key to the identification process:

#### **Elementary level:**

- High Ability Selection Committee that includes the High Ability Coordinator, Director of Student Services, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Administrators, High Ability Building Coordinators
- High Ability Cluster Teachers
- Student Services Counselors
- Building Principals

#### **Middle and High School levels:**

- Core Subject Team Teachers
- Department Chairs
- Guidance Counselors
- High Ability Coordinator
- Teachers of Honors and Advanced Placement/University Courses
- Building Principals

The district's High Ability Coordinator must possess a High Ability License. In addition, teachers of high ability cluster classes (elementary level) should receive professional development training in differentiated practices (or hold a High Ability License). Teachers who instruct at the middle school or high school levels must be licensed in the appropriate core subject and should obtain training for professional development services associated directly for working with high ability students that includes differentiated practices used to enhance advanced curriculum, as well as developing skills necessary to deal with the unique social and emotional needs of gifted students.

All Greenwood Community School Corporation educators are committed to providing services that best maximizes students' learning. Educators who work directly with high ability students are encouraged to obtain training and expertise in meeting both, the cognitive and affective needs of those learners.

# **ELEMENTARY FORMS**

The following forms may be downloaded and used for the REACH (high ability) elementary program.

# REACH PROGRAM

## APPEAL FORM

I understand that my child has not met the necessary criteria for eligibility/placement in the REACH (high ability) program. I wish to submit an appeal based upon the following additional information that I feel may be relevant as a factor in possibly reversing this decision.

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Additional documentation of test scores, grades, etc.:**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Detailed summary of reasons for appeal:**

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*\*See reverse side for a summary of rights and responsibilities.*

- I have received a copy of this Appeals Process and understand my rights to appeal the eligibility status of this student's placement in the REACH Program.
- I understand that this form must be returned to the district High Ability Coordinator at Westwood Elementary by \_\_\_\_\_.  
Address: 899 Honey Creek Road

Greenwood, IN 46143

FAX: (317) 859-4209

- I understand that the High Ability Selection Committee will review documentation and will respond to my appeal no later than fifteen days after receipt of this form.
- I understand that the High Ability Selection Committee may request additional assessments (provided by the school corporation) or data collection and may interview the student/parents or person submitting the appeal.
- I understand that all appeal decisions are final.
- I understand that the High Ability Selection Committee has the right to uphold or reverse the original decision of REACH eligibility/placement.
- I understand that if my appeal is denied, I may request additional testing the following school year (only once per each school year).

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name of person initiating appeal*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Relationship to student*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date received in REACH office*

# **REACH PROGRAM**

## **EXIT POLICY**

It is the goal of the **REACH** (high ability) program that each student achieves his/her maximum potential through enriched learning and advanced academic opportunities. Students must continue to demonstrate academic excellence in classroom performance in order to remain in the program. However, there may be cases when the program is not the best placement for the identified student.

## **EXIT PROCEDURE**

In the event that a student experiences difficulty in the REACH (high ability) program, does not meet a teacher's classroom expectations, and/or drops below a B average (or the equivalent to a B average on the primary report card) in academic progress for the identified domain, the following procedure is prescribed and may be initiated by students, parents, the teacher, or the High Ability Coordinator:

1. The teacher meets with the student to discuss and identify the problem(s).
2. If the problem continues, a conference is arranged with the student, teacher, and parent to develop an action plan that will help the child to succeed. This plan should include goals and strategies to improve the situation and must be implemented under a specific timeline.
3. If, after the specified amount of time, the problem continues to exist, a second conference is arranged with the student, parents, teacher, High Ability Coordinator, Student Services Counselor, and any other staff members identified as strategic in assisting the student (i.e., principals, instructional assistants, etc.). The purpose of this conference is to evaluate the progress being made and to make any additional modifications to the action plan.
4. After the procedure outlined above has been followed for a minimum of one grading period, determination may be made that in the best interest of the student's success, it is necessary to exit the REACH (high ability) program. If that decision is made, then a parent signature form is required to formally exit a student from the program. A student will not be readmitted to the REACH program during that same school year. A student could still be eligible to qualify for the REACH program during the following school year if the High Ability Selection Committee determines that this would be a beneficial placement. Parents or appropriate school personnel may make that formal request for high ability placement during the school year that follows the official exit from the REACH program. Requests should be made to the building Principals or the High Ability Coordinator. Fifth grade students may not be readmitted into the REACH program; however, they may be eligible (under criteria set by the middle school) for admission into sixth grade academic honors classes.

# REACH PROGRAM

## EXIT NOTIFICATION

It is the goal of the **REACH** (high ability) program that each student achieves his/her maximum potential through enriched learning opportunities. However, there may be cases when the program is not the best placement for the identified student. It is realistic to accept that this program may prove not to be in the best interest of some students.

I understand that my child is exiting the **REACH** (high ability) program for the current school year. I also realize that my child may be considered for the **REACH** program at another time throughout his/her academic career at the elementary school, and that I will be notified in writing if that is the case. In the future, my student may be eligible for admittance into academic honors classes at the Greenwood Middle School, as this current course of action will not affect determination of future academic placement.

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*Student Name*

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*Grade*

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*Parent Signature*

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*Date*

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*High Ability Coordinator Signature*

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*Date*

# **MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL FORMS**

Middle and High School levels do not have separate forms designated for each advanced class; however, Guidance Counselors will document high ability eligibility through course schedules. In addition, all high ability students will be noted as receiving high ability services through their Student Test Number designation.