

Blair Community Schools

High Ability Learner Program (Revised 2026)



High Ability Learner Program - According to the Nebraska Revised Statute Sec. 79-1107 (3)

“Learner with high ability means a student who gives evidence of high performance capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, or artistic capacity or in specific academic fields, and who requires accelerated or differentiated curriculum programs in order to develop those capabilities fully.”

Blair’s HAL Philosophy

Blair Community Schools recognizes the individual characteristics of the student and strives to advance to the fullest all aspects of the student’s development.

Screening and identification, program options, and placement are planning components of the program for high-ability learners which can aid these students in their attempt to develop their abilities to optimum levels.

Blair’s Operational Definition

At this time, the Blair Community Schools identifies learners with high ability as students who show evidence of high performance ability in intellectual and academic areas.

HAL Program Goals & Objectives

The HAL programs in our schools offer a wide variety of academic courses and activities to enrich the curriculum established by the Blair Community Schools. The High Ability Learner program is designed for high ability students who wish to be challenged through academic colloquiums and special activities. The program also nurtures the social/emotional development of the high ability students as they discover and come to terms with their limitless potential.

- ☐ Identify and provide services to students who demonstrate potential abilities of high performance in intellectual and/or academic areas
- ☐ Provide services for identified students that incorporate curriculum adaptations, teaching methods, activities, and/or instructional materials designed to meet the needs of high-ability learners
- ☐ Provide guidance and counseling services to meet the needs of high-ability learners

- Communicate the various aspects of the program for high-ability students to staff, students, and the community
- Evaluate goals, activities, materials, procedures, and recognize student accomplishments

HAL Identification Procedures/Process

At this time, Blair Community Schools identifies learners with high ability as students who show evidence of high-performance ability in intellectual and academic areas. Initial screening of all students takes place at the end of 2nd grade and continues yearly through the 8th grade. Instruments that may be used to identify high-ability students in our district are outlined below.

Nomination for the High Ability Learner Program

Blair Community Schools recognizes five different paths for nomination of a student for further review of criteria and for potential identification for the high-ability program:

- ✓ Scholastic aptitude measures
- ✓ Standardized achievement tests
- ✓ School achievement records
- ✓ Teacher nomination
- ✓ Participation in a gifted program in another school district

Identification for the High Ability Learner Program

Blair Community Schools utilizes the following multiple criteria for identification of intellectually and academically gifted high-ability learners in reading, math and logic. Nominated students must meet three (3) of the following criteria to be officially identified in any domain:

HAL IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

Blair Community Schools utilizes the following multiple criteria for identification of intellectually and academically gifted high-ability learners in reading and math. Nominated students must meet three (3) of the following domain-specific criteria to be officially identified in that domain:

HAL READING SERVICES CRITERIA

Norm-referenced, standardized reading test:

Two scores at 95th percentile or higher within 3 years. One can be 2nd grade, one must be 3rd grade or higher.

CogAT Verbal:
95th percentile or higher

SAGES Lang. Arts:
90th percentile or higher

SAGES Verbal Reasoning*:
90th percentile or higher

OMS GPA in Lang Arts:
4 quarters in a row of 4.0
or
SIGS Lang Arts:
75th percentile or higher

HAL MATH SERVICES CRITERIA

Norm-referenced, standardized math test:

Two scores at 95th percentile or higher within 3 years. One can be 2nd grade, one must be 3rd grade or higher.

CogAT Quantitative:
95th percentile or higher

SAGES Math:
90th percentile or higher

TOMAGS:
90th percentile or higher

OMS GPA in Math:
4 quarters in a row of 4.0
or
SIGS Math:
75th percentile or higher

HAL LOGIC SERVICES CRITERIA*

CogAT Non-Verbal Reasoning:
95th percentile or higher

SAGES Non-Verbal Reasoning:
90th percentile or higher

SAGES Verbal Reasoning:
90th percentile or higher

SIGS GIA:
75th percentile or higher

***Blair Community Schools began identifying for Reasoning HAL with the Class of 2031 in the spring of 2023.**
For students prior to the Class of 2031, the SAGES Verbal Reasoning can be used as an identifying criteria for Reading HAL identification.

Additional Program Services, Options, and Strategies (including but not limited to)

Acceleration
Curriculum Enrichment
Flexible Grouping
Curriculum Compacting
Advanced Placement
Independent Study Opportunities
Dual Enrollment
Cluster Grouping
Mentorships/Shadowing
Extra-Curricular School Offerings
Counseling & Guidance
Career Exploration
Pull-Out

Evaluation

Evaluation of the HAL program shall be conducted using any of the following measures: data review, surveys, and interviews. Information gathered will be used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the HAL program and how we can improve. Student needs, program design, curriculum, learning environment, student identification, staff development, and other resources will be evaluated.

Staff Development

BCS certified personnel will be made aware annually which students have been identified and are included in the program, along with their domain of identification (math and/or reading).

Teachers will be encouraged to attend seminars and conferences related to high ability learning (NEGifted, ESU, etc.)

Management Plan

The HAL program is led by HAL facilitators. These facilitators will work with administration, teachers, parents and students to meet the needs of High Ability Learners and will be responsible for yearly programming and budgeting for the HAL program.

Appendix

[Acceleration Guidelines](#)
[Acceleration Flow Chart](#)
[Acceleration Request Forms](#)
[Discontinuation of Services](#)