DANVILLE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

Danville Community School Corporation

High Ability Program Manual

THE DANVILLE DIFFERENCE

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Updated September, 2026

CORPORATION OVERVIEW & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission

In keeping with the mission of Danville Community School Corporation to effectively meet the needs of all students, rigorous programs are provided for high ability students whose general intellect and academic achievement are significantly beyond their peers. These programs provide differentiated curriculum and instructional strategies, especially designed to help gifted learners meet their individual potential.

Belief Statements

- We believe in supporting our high ability students by providing them with appropriate opportunities to reach their full potential.
- We believe that high ability students can be found in all segments of our population
- We believe that high ability students have needs that require special services.

Definition of High Ability

In accordance with Indiana Code (IC) 20-36-1, Danville Community School Corporation defines a high ability student as one who performs or shows the potential for performing at an outstanding level of academic accomplishment in math, language arts, or both when compared to other students of the same age, experience or environment; and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.

Broad Based Planning Committee and Program Evaluation

Each school year a group of stakeholders (educators, school counselors, administrators, parents, students, and community members) meet to discuss the Danville Community School Corporation High Ability program. This Broad Based Planning Committee meets yearly to examine the mission of our schools and determine if the high ability program is meeting the needs of these exceptional learners. Programming effectiveness is examined, goals are developed, state requirements are reviewed and revisions to this plan are discussed and adjusted as needed.

Characteristics of a High Ability Student

Although there are many definitions of giftedness, according to the National Association of Gifted Children, gifted children do have many common characteristics. It is important to note, however, that there is a distinction between a child who is bright or high-achieving and does well in school versus a truly gifted child. This chart distinguishes some of those characteristics.

A Bright/High Achieving Child	A Gifted Child
Knows the answers	Asks the questions

Is interested Has good ideas	Is highly curious Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail; elaborates
Top group	Beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes the assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates new designs
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technician	Inventor
Good memorizer	Good guesser
Is alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with learning	Is highly self-critical
Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity

GENERAL PLACEMENT INFORMATION

Timeline for Placement Decisions

Level	Time Frame	Activity	Person(s) Responsible

All Levels	July - August	1. Students new to DCSC will indicate on enrollment paperwork previous participation in High Ability programming. 2. Students making appeals or requesting an evaluation for possible placement in High Ability programming will participate in screening testing. 3. Prior to the school year, notification is sent to parents of 1st - 8th grade students who participated in screening testing to indicate results and placement.	Parents District Coordinator
K - 11	August	All students take the IXL Diagnostic Assessment for baseline data purposes.	Teachers
Grades K, 2, 5	Winter	Schools administer the CogAT to all students as a measure of student ability.	Building Coordinators
K - 11	Mid January	All students will take the IXL Diagnostic Assessment as a measure of student achievement.	Teachers
Grades K-11	May	1. Students with CogAT scores at or above 96th percentile in reading, math, or both OR scoring at or above the 96th percentile on the IXL Diagnostic assessment in reading, math, or both, will be considered for the High Ability program. 2. Students identified will be placed and remain in the High Ability program unless an exit process is completed. 3. Notification is sent to parents of 1st - 11th grade students to indicate results and placement. 4. Parents who wish to appeal the high ability decisions may submit an appeals form to the District High Ability Coordinator.	HA Identification Committee District High Ability Coordinator

Identification Process

The Danville Community School Corporation screens students in grades K, 2, and 5 for high ability or potential for high ability through the use of a CogAT assessment and every year using an IXL Diagnostic assessment. Data from the IXL Diagnostic test (ability screener) and CogAT (age level potential for high ability screener) is used to select students. All students who score in the 96th percentile or higher are identified as high ability. Students in the 94th and 95th percentile range receive a SIGS (Scales for Identifying Gifted Students) assessment and may be identified based on a review by a committee with a score at the 94th percentile or higher. We identify students in one of the following areas: Math Only,

Language Arts Only, or General Intellect (scores high in both Math and Language Arts). Select students may be included in High Ability classes based on their results in rank order.

- This data is shared with the Indiana Department of Education, so the department can track the data of our high ability students.
- Students may be identified as high ability in off testing years at teacher recommendation. In this case past scores on CogAT and IXL will be reviewed. Students will also be given the SIGS (Scales for Identifying Gifted Students) to make a determination.

Program Descriptions by Grade Level

Kindergarten
Students who are identified will work within a high ability cluster group to encourage progress in English/language arts and math above grade level for the remainder of the kindergarten year as well as first grade.

1st grade - 2nd grade
Students are placed into a cluster group for 1st grade and second-grade language arts and math concentration. The curriculum in this clustered room covers grade-level standards as well as follows a written curriculum that is differentiated by rigor and acceleration.

3rd - 8th grade
Students are identified each year for high ability placement. In English/Language Arts, students are clustered together for their instruction. The curriculum in this clustered room covers grade-level standards as well as follows a written curriculum that is differentiated by rigor and acceleration. In third grade, students identified in mathematics are accelerated one year of math instruction. The curriculum in this Honors Math class is differentiated by rigor and acceleration.

9th – 12th grades (Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science)
Students are identified each year for high ability placement. At the high school level, we offer a variety of classes to meet the needs of our high ability population. Honors classes, AP courses, and Dual Credit courses are available for student selection and offer rigorous coursework meant to prepare students for college and career. High ability students will be encouraged to take rigorous coursework including Honors, AP and ACP classes. Parents will be contacted if an identified student is not signed up for one of these courses before removing them from our services list.

Programming for Students not Formally Identified as High Ability

- In considering data about children's achievement, we recognize that in Danville Schools, we have many students who score strongly (perhaps even occasionally in the 94th percentile range and above) in math and or reading on NWEA, but who are not identified as high ability, or gifted. These students are certainly high achievers, but may not meet Danville's criteria for gifted identification when multiple data points are considered.
- Our philosophy in DCSC is to use formative assessment thoughtfully and often to match appropriately-challenging curriculum and experiences to every child, consistent with his or her abilities and leading to maximum growth. If that should ultimately lead to a high ability designation for a child, that is only one of many avenues to ensuring continuous progress and challenge so that we do not put ceilings on any child's learning. We have many ways to meet student needs for acceleration--including

grouping for instruction within classrooms, regrouping for instruction across classrooms or grade levels, providing additional enrichment projects and resources, using leveled and guided reading groups, using curriculum compacting and contracts for various units, creating options for independent learning, using student-driven inquiry on projects of choice/interest, involving other school professionals, and adjusting pace/expectations/materials, etc. It is not uncommon for parents to envision that the only way to meet a child's needs is through testing and high ability placement. In fact, we meet the needs of

highly-able students in the Danville Community School Corporation on a daily basis in many different ways unique to each child.

- Classroom Placement: High achieving students are placed in classrooms with teachers who are trained in differentiation. The grade level curriculum is often differentiated to provide deeper and broader experiences for these more advanced learners.
- Students may fill high ability classes due to test results in rank order. These decisions are re-evaluated annually as new test data and classroom performance information become available.

New Student Identification

- Has your child already qualified in another school district as a High Ability student? During online registration, please indicate your child's participation in a High Ability program in another district, and the high ability coordinator will review your child's records and make a placement decision that is best for your child, consistent with our local norms for identification. This may or may not be a high ability placement.
- If your child has not qualified previously for a High Ability program, they will be tested utilizing the established DCSC Identification Process. If you feel that your child should be considered for High Ability placement between our formal testing years, please complete an appeals form, and a review can be completed.

Placement Appeals

K-12 parents and teachers may appeal the placement committee's decision by completing an appropriate appeal form within two weeks of the high ability parent notification date. This appeal must be in writing and include reasons why the student should be reconsidered. A high-ability identification team will review the appeal and any relevant qualitative data to make a final decision for further testing. Administration of alternative norm-referenced ability and/or achievement measures will be offered at no cost to the family if evidence indicates prior results may not reflect the student's ability. Parents will be notified after the committee considers the appeal for possible placement.

Guidance and Counseling

Elementary, K - 4

Kindergarten through fourth grade students increase their understanding of themselves through reading and discussion of materials dealing with issues such as perfectionism, hiding one's abilities, taking appropriate risks, and accepting differences. These students are also taught organizational techniques, time management strategies, and study skills that help them become more effective students. For students with chronic study or management problems, assistance can be provided through the high ability teacher or school counselor. Lessons may be addressed to the whole class, if appropriate, so that our youngest learners are growing in their understanding of high ability education.

Middle School, 5 - 8

Individual assistance is provided for middle school highly able students having social or emotional difficulties.

Strategies for organization and time management can be continued at the middle school level by each high ability teacher or the grade level counselor. Counselors are also available to work individually with students who have difficulties with the social issues related to their giftedness. Motivation, perfectionism, etc., can all be addressed through individual and small group counseling sessions.

High School, 9 -12
The high school guidance department works with students in scheduling appropriately challenging classes or by introducing the student to alternative educational providers. Guidance counselors are available for individual counseling for students in grades 9 - 12. College and career counseling takes place for all students and includes course selection targeted to these individualized long-term goals.

Professional Development for Faculty Members

Educators K - 12, are encouraged to attend local workshops on differentiation as they become available. Teachers are invited to attend the state high ability conference and any workshops sponsored through organizations related to high ability studies. Guidance counselors are encouraged to attend any workshops or programming pertaining to the social
and emotional needs of highly able students. Many of our high ability teachers are licensed in high ability instruction as a result of further master's level college coursework completed. High Ability grant funds are utilized each year to increase the number of teachers licensed.

Exit Procedure

Students who are identified do not need to re-qualify from year to year and are served in the high ability program unless concerns about performance or best fit arise. Procedures to exit students from the high ability program involve an initial meeting with parents,
high ability teacher, and the high ability coordinator in making the best decision to meet each child's needs and may be initiated by any member of that team. During the initial meeting, the student's progress to date, and concerns about academic performance will be reviewed. Interventions will be developed collaboratively and documented. After an intervention period of no less than one grading period, a follow-up meeting will take place to review the student's response to interventions and determine future placement.

RELATED ISSUES

Early Admission to Kindergarten

1. A written request for early admission to Kindergarten from the parent or guardian should be submitted to the principal. Accompanying this request should be any information available and pertinent to the early entrance. Information may include age equivalent scores and assessments for the following areas: Cognitive, motor skills, social/emotional adaptive behavior, academic readiness skills, motor development, perceptual development and physical development.
2. Upon receiving the request for early admission, the Kindergarten staff and principal will assess the child. Assessment may include the following areas: Cognitive, motor skills, social/emotional adaptive behavior, academic readiness skills, motor development, perceptual development and physical development.

3. A recommendation will be made to the Superintendent by the principal regarding the child. 4. The Superintendent shall assess whether early entrance is in the best interest of the child. A child coming into the school corporation from an out-of-state Kindergarten program (public or private) or an in-state Kindergarten program (public or private) and who does not meet the Indiana state age-eligibility

requirements, should be admitted to the Kindergarten program, unless it can be determined that enrollment in such a program was intended to circumvent Indiana law.
5. The Superintendent shall advise the principal and the parent of his/her decision.

Grade Skipping

The decision to grade skip a student or to accelerate the student's subject material is a serious one with academic, social, and emotional ramifications. Parents exploring such a possibility should first consult with the child's teacher and building principal. If parents decide to pursue these options, they should submit a letter requesting review of placement to the building principal by the second Monday in May. The building principal, in consultation with the District High Ability Coordinator, shall appoint a review committee for this purpose. To be considered for grade skipping, a student:

● Must have successfully completed the previous grade unless the student is in kindergarten. ● Must be in the top 1 - 2% of all grade level peers as measured by standardized assessment in the specific subject requested for subject acceleration or in all academic areas for grade skipping.

● Must complete all requirements prescribed by the Review Committee, including participation in additional assessments as determined necessary. Outstanding performance is expected on such assessments for subject acceleration or grade skipping to be considered and approved.

APPENDICES

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High Ability Exit Document

The IDOE recommends districts have an exit process in place that should be no less in duration than one semester. This process should include a team composed of the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), administrator(s), counselor(s), and the student. It is recommended that the team meet regularly during this process to determine the optimal course of action to allow the student to reach the highest possible level at every stage of development.

Student Name _____ Date _____

Grade/Class: _____ Teacher _____

Parents: _____

Date of Intervention Plan: _____

Date of last conference: _____

Reason for removal:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Teacher Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Parent Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Final Placement Recommendation: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature(MS/HS only): _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Administrator Signature: _____

Office use only: Received by High Ability Coordinator_____ Date:_____

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DEFINITION OF HIGH ABILITY

A "high ability student" is 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.

PLACEMENT APPEAL

An appeal process is in place in the event the identification team does not place a child in services and a teacher, parent or other person close to the child challenges the decision. An official written appeal using this form must be filled out within two weeks of the high ability parent notification date.

Student Name_____
School Year _____
Student's Grade Level for next year _____
Name of Individual Making the Appeal_____
Relationship to the student _____
Home Address _____
Telephone # _____ (Home) _____(Work)

Review application for placement in: ☐ High Ability English/Language Arts ☐ High Ability Math

An appeal does not re-evaluate student data already considered in the official identification process. Scoring Above Proficiency on ILEARN, high grades, or strong performance on classroom benchmark assessments are not valid reasons for an appeal. The purpose of the appeal is to bring new information to the attention of the committee that could lead to a different decision.

New information provided that demonstrate the child's need for high ability services. (Please attach additional reports or other evidence if applicable.)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Signature _____ Date _____

Return this form via mail, fax or email to the DCSC High Ability Coordinator, Tina Noe, by the date listed in original parent communication.

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