



Connecting-Engaging-Growing

Elwood Community School Corporation

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Elwood Community Schools Corporation High Ability Handbook

Elwood Community Schools High Ability Mission Statement

Elwood Community School Corporation (ECSC) recognizes that some students perform at, or show the aptitude to perform at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in mathematics and language arts; and that these students are found in all cultural, socio-economic, and ethnic backgrounds. ECSC is committed to identifying students through systematic, on-going procedures, and providing high ability learners with a supportive, differentiated and rigorous learning climate that enables students to meet their full potential as lifelong learners and contributors in our ever-changing global society.

High Ability Definition

The state of Indiana defines a high ability students as one who “performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain when compared to other students o the same age, experience, or environment; and is characterized by exceptional gift, talents, motivation, or interests.” At Elwood Community School Corporation, we identify students in three domains: general intellectual, language arts, and math.

Program Overview

Elwood Community School Corporation is committed to effectively meeting the educational needs of all learners. A rigorous, differentiated core curriculum provides appropriate challenges for the majority of students. High ability learners will be provided with a differentiated curriculum that is beyond the regular classroom curriculum and is focused on the academic, social and emotional needs of high ability students. All teachers who provide services to high ability students will participate in on-going professional development and will collaborate with the High Ability Coordinator to help ensure that individual student needs are being met.

Identification

Indiana schools are “required to identify students with high ability in the general intellectual and specific academic domains and provide them with appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction in core content areas, K-12”. The Identification Committee for each building consists of at least one building administrator, teacher, and the high ability coordinator. Assessments used for identification must include a measure for performance (norm-referenced achievement measure) and a measure of potential for performance (norm-referenced ability measure). ESCS uses the CogAt assessment and NWEA to meet these state requirements.

Elwood Community School’s identification process is as follows:

Kindergarten

- Spring of Kindergarten: **All students** will take the CogAt Assessment.
 - Students scoring at the 9th Stanine (percentile ranking: 96-99) and/or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher on the CogAt Quantitative subtest or the CogAt Quantitative/Non-verbal composite will be identified as High Ability: Math.
 - Students scoring at the 9th Stanine (percentile ranking: 96-99) and/or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher on the CogAt verbal subtest will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts.
- Spring of Kindergarten: **All students** will take NWEA.
 - Students scoring at the **96th percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** will be identified as High Ability: Math, High Ability: Language Arts, or, if qualifying in both, as High Ability: General Intellectual.

Grade 1

- **All students** will take NWEA three times a year: beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end of the year.
- Students scoring at the **96th percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** in reading and/or math will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts or High Ability: Math.
- Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying.

Grade 2

- Spring of Second Grade: **All students** will take the CogAt Assessment.
 - Students scoring at the 9th Stanine (percentile ranking: 96-99) and/or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher on the CogAt Quantitative subtest or the CogAt Quantitative/Non-verbal composite will be identified as High Ability: Math.
 - Students scoring at the 9th Stanine (percentile ranking: 96-99) and/or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher on the CogAt verbal subtest will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts.
- **All students** will take NWEA three times a year: beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end of the year.
 - Students scoring at the **92nd percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** in reading and/or math will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts or High Ability: Math.
 - Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying.

Grade 3-4

- **All students** will take NWEA three times a year: beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end of the year.
- Students scoring at the **92nd percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** in reading and/or math will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts or High Ability: Math.

- Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying.

Grade 5

- Spring of Fifth Grade: **All students** will take the CogAt Assessment.
 - Students scoring at the 9th Stanine (percentile ranking: 96-99) and/or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher on the CogAt Quantitative subtest or the CogAt Quantitative/Non-verbal composite will be identified as High Ability: Math.
 - Students scoring at the 9th Stanine (percentile ranking: 96-99) and/or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher on the CogAt verbal subtest will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts.
- **All students** will take NWEA three times a year: beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end of the year.
 - Students scoring at the **92nd percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** in reading and/or math will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts or High Ability: Math.
 - Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying.

Grade 6

- **All students** will take NWEA three times a year: beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end of the year.
- Students scoring at the **92nd percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** in reading and/or math will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts or High Ability: Math.
- Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying.

Grades 7-8

- **All students** will take NWEA three times a year: beginning of the school year, mid-year, and end of the year.
- Students scoring at the **92nd percentile** or higher **on two consecutive NWEA assessments** in reading and/or math will be identified as High Ability: Language Arts or High Ability: Math.
- Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying.

Grades 9-12

High ability learners will be offered placement in Honors English and/or Honors Math, Advanced Placement (AP) classes, dual credit (college credit) courses, and other similar advanced learning courses based on the student's identified area of high ability.

Results from the 8th grade ILEARN and spring NWEA assessments will be used to determine which students should be encouraged to enroll in the AP and dual credit (college credit) courses. While these courses are open to all students that have met the prerequisites, identified high ability students are specifically encouraged to enroll.

Transfer Students

Students who transfer into Elwood Community Schools with documented high ability placement will be identified as high ability students at ECSC. Current assessments given at ECSC (CogAt or NWEA) will be used to determine if high ability placement is fitting for the student at ECSC or if the student would be appropriately challenged through regular educational programming and services.

Appeals Procedure

A parent, teacher, student or administrator may appeal a placement decision on behalf of a student who does not meet the requirements for the high ability program. Requests for appeals are to be made within the first two school weeks following parent

notification. An Appeal Form must be completed by the concerned individual and be submitted to the High Ability Coordinator.

The High Ability Coordinator will meet with the building principal, teacher(s) and counselor to review student data. Additional qualitative data in the form of teacher rating scales or in-house math and language arts performance tasks may be necessary to determine identification for students whose scores fall just below the qualifying percentile guidelines but within the standard error of measure of qualifying. If it is found that the student requires additional testing to reach a conclusion, the SIGS Assessment will be administered. The appeals committee will then meet to review the new student data.

Parents will receive written notification of the decision within one week of the committee's meeting date. The appeal process is the final determination of a student's status.

Exit Procedure

As students progress through the varying levels of school, students previously identified as high ability at the primary or intermediate level may no longer be in need of high ability services and be appropriately challenged in the general classroom setting.

If a student, parent, or teacher believes a high ability placement for services is no longer appropriate, he/she may initiate Exit Procedures. A committee made up of parent(s), teacher(s), school administrator, counselor, and the High Ability Coordinator will meet to examine issues of concern and discuss interventions that may be implemented. Improvement steps will be identified and a timeline no less than one grading period will be set to implement interventions. At the conclusion of the probationary period, the committee will reconvene to determine the success of the plan. If the student shows progress with the Improvement Plan, additional supports can be added if necessary to continue the placement. If the interventions have not assisted the student in being successful, then the student may be exited from the program.

Students may be re-evaluated if the following occur:

- Falling below the 85th percentile on NWEA assessments in the student's identified area: Math, Language Arts, or General Intellectual.
- Not meeting the 9th stanine or achieving a standard age score of 125 or higher in the student's identified area of high ability on CogAt assessments.

- Difficulty keeping up with class work, challenges, and expectations of the high ability program.

Curriculum and Instruction

Elwood Elementary School

Grades K-2

- Cluster groups for high ability learners.
- Instruction is presented at the appropriate level through flexible grouping and differentiated instruction, focusing on math and reading.
- Acceleration and enrichment activities are provided.

Elwood Intermediate School

Grades 3-6

- Cluster groups for high ability learners.
- Instruction is presented at the appropriate level through flexible grouping and differentiated instruction, focusing on math and reading.
- Acceleration and enrichment activities are provided.

Elwood Jr. High School

Grades 7-8

- Honors courses and advanced mathematics courses are offered for students in grades 7-8.
- High ability learners will be offered placement in advanced English and/or advanced math based on the student's area of high ability.
- 8th grade students may take Algebra 1.

Elwood High School

Grades 9-12

- Honors courses, dual-credit, Advanced Placement (AP) and specialty area courses are available to all qualifying students.
- Distance Learning classes are available.
- Students may participate in mentorship and internship programs.

Counseling and Guidance

Elwood Community School Corporation supports the unique socio-emotional needs of all students. ECSC also recognizes that children with high abilities may have additional affective needs resulting from their increased capacity to think beyond their years, greater intensity in response, combinations of unique interests, personality characteristics, and conflicts that are different from those of their age level peers. All counselors and social workers receive training regarding the characteristics of students with high abilities. This information is shared with parents, teachers, and administrators as needed.

Counselors and teachers in grades K-8 conduct activities from the Second Steps program. Counselors and teachers are familiar with the needs of high ability learners and provide support through individual responses and counseling services. A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) exists in each school and provides checks and interventions tailored to students' individual needs.

In grades 3-8, counselors and teachers provide instruction and discussion opportunities on college and career readiness. Academic counseling increases in the high school where four-year school course plans are developed, GPAs are introduced, and students are prepared for the next steps of life whether that be college or career.

Professional Development

Professional development will support both general and high ability teachers. The High Ability Coordinator and the K-12 teachers who are assigned to provide core content instruction for students identified as having high ability will be provided with additional professional development to ensure all staff possess an in-depth knowledge of high ability education. Professional development will include, but is not limited to:

- Understanding the identification process
- Differentiating instruction
- Supporting social and emotional needs

Program Evaluation

Elwood Community School Corporation is dedicated to providing effective services to students of high ability. Program evaluation will be conducted annually to ensure that

the high ability program is consistent with the program's philosophy, goals, and standards. The High Ability Broad-Based Planning Committee will serve as an advisory forum for discussion of current research and how to use available resources to best meet the needs of our high ability students.