Example Schools  
High Ability Learner Program

Revised 2020, Revised 2020

**Nebraska, Rule 3 Definition**

“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.”

**K-12 HAL Philosophy**

Example Schools recognizes that each student is a unique. We strive to provide high-quality instruction to all students and also take into account their individual needs.

The purpose of the High Ability Learner program is to provide an inclusive environment and create opportunities for students to develop talents in their domain of strength while focusing on the specific affective, social, and academic needs of gifted and talented students.

The High Ability Learner program is designed to identify students in grades K-12 who exhibit high performance capabilities and foster talent in students that display potential. Appropriate services shall be provided to these students.

**Definition of High Ability Learner**

Examples schools uses an inclusive definition of “High Ability Learner” in an attempt to include as many students as possible, and is based on the Case for Excellence (1993) and ESEA (2001). The definition is as follows:

“High Ability Learners are children who perform or show potential to perform in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment.”

**HAL Program Goals & Objectives**

The goal of the HAL program is to provide a differentiated program that will meet the needs of our districts’ high ability learners. The program will strive to:

* Identify students who demonstrate potential abilities of high performance in recognized areas of giftedness.
* Provide advanced learning opportunities for all students.
* Provide education services that meet the needs of all high ability learners.
* Provide professional development opportunities to staff in order to promote a better understanding of the needs of high ability learners, and the services available to meet those needs.
* Follow the identification procedures as outlined in the district identification plan for high ability learners.
  + All staff members shall be made aware of the identification procedures.
* To meet the students’ intellectual, social, physical, and emotional needs.
  + Within the regular classroom a variety of instructional techniques including but not limited to compacting, alternative assignments, advanced placement, contract learning, differentiated curriculum, and independent studies will be used as necessary.
  + Within the regular classroom flexible grouping, including but not limited to ability, achievement, cluster, and cross-age grouping will be provided as necessary.
  + Enrichment programs will include but are not limited to within-class enrichment, whole class enrichment, before and after school enrichment, field trips, school-wide enrichment, learning centers, extracurricular programs, community sponsored programs, and pull-out services.
  + The counselor will be available to assist teachers and students in meeting individual needs.
  + To evaluate student program option choices on an individual basis at the discretion of the classroom teacher in conjunction with the HAL coordinators.

**HAL Identification Procedures**

The districts’ identification process shall include multiple criteria in an effort to be inclusive rather than exclusive in the HAL program. Target (achievement data, IQ testing, etc.) and non-target (observations, portfolios, work samples, etc.) instruments shall be used for identification. The identification procedures will be consistent with the definition of the districts’ high ability learner program, and shall measure diverse abilities.

**HAL Screening Process:**

All students in Example Schools will be screened in grades K-12 for our district’s high ability services based on the following:

* In 3rd grade, all students will be administered the CoGAT for Universal Screening.
* MAP Reading and/or Math Achievement test scores of 90th percentile or higher
* Teacher Perception Ratings using a HAL characteristic form
* Self, parent, peer, and teacher nomination forms
* IQ Testing upon request

Students who have a score at the 90th percentile or higher on the Fall Reading and Math MAP test and/or the Winter Reading and Math MAP test will be considered for gifted and talented services.

* Other indicators may be included: other test scores, checklists, and etc.

After the screening process, students will be placed in a candidate pool. These candidates will complete a self-rating scale, teachers will complete an identification form, and parents will complete a parent form. After examining all of the data in a matrix, a determination will be made. If it is determined that the student will not be eligible for gifted services, a team must meet to review all of the data to ensure the correct decision is being made and send a letter to the parent or guardian.

**Selection Process:**

Candidate Eligibility:

Once forms have been completed, rubrics will be converted to a point system and percentages tabulated. Students must score at or above the 90th percentile on two of three forms.

Visual and Performing Arts Qualification:

Teachers may refer to HAL committee students with additional talents in visual and performing arts. Teacher will complete a nomination form (see Appendix). Students will submit a portfolio for committee review with a qualifying teacher input (Ex. Art teacher will review art portfolio)

Additional Nominations:

Teachers who feel a student is in need of the high ability program may submit teacher referrals and recommendations. Extraordinary potential evidence can be advocated by using a teacher recommendation form (see Appendix).

Notification:

Parents, guardians, or other persons exercising legal or actual charge or control over a child, and teachers shall be notified as to those students who have been identified for the high ability program.

**Exit Policy:**

Written approval shall be received from the student, parent, and teacher, with a written narration of the reason(s) for exiting the high ability learner program. Students shall be dismissed from the high ability program if they refused to attend class, routinely do not complete assignments, and voice dissatisfaction with the gifted program. The school counselor, and principal will be informed before such measures occur, and the high ability coordinator, guidance counselor, and principal will meet with the student to discuss reasons for dropping out of the program. Contact in regards to these matters will be made with legal guardians or parents.

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

Acceleration

Curriculum Enrichment

Flexible Grouping

Curriculum Compacting

Advanced Placement

Advanced Elective Classes

Independent Study Opportunities

Dual Enrollment

Cluster Grouping

Mentorships/Shadowing

Extra-Curricular School Offerings

Counseling & Guidance

Career Exploration

Pull-Out

Push-In

**Evaluation**

Annual evaluations of the HAL program shall be conducted by using any of the following measures: surveys, interviews, and program evaluations aligned to AQueSSTT. 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**

School staff shall receive training which will include, but is not limited to areas such as HAL characteristics, social and emotional needs, identification, curriculum, assessment techniques and instructional strategies.

Teachers will be encouraged to attend seminars and conferences related to high ability learning (i.e. Nebraska Association for Gifted conference, ESU workshops, Webinars, etc.).

Teachers, counselors, and administrators will be made aware annually, which students have been identified and are included in the program.

**Management Plan**

The High Ability Learning program will be lead by Mrs. Smith, the director of HAL Services. Mrs. Smith will ensure the quality of training and implementation within the schools. She will work with principals and other administrators collaboratively in order to build relationships and create a positive environment to foster the needs of High Ability Learners.

**Appendix**

Nomination Forms

**Appendix**

**Self-Rating Nomination Form**

Student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Answer the following questions briefly.*

1. In which subjects or courses do you do superior work?
2. What are areas, topics, or activities in which you have special or strong interest?
3. What do you like to read and learn about?
4. Is your school work easy? How do you feel when it’s difficult?
5. Do you like to solve problems?
6. If you could create a class that you would enjoy taking, what would it be and what would you learn in the class?

*Read the statement and check the box under the one that fits you the best*.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **Almost Always** | **Quite Often** | **Sometimes** | **Not Often or Never** |
| I have strong convictions about things. |  |  |  |  |
| When I believe in something, I work to promote it |  |  |  |  |
| I listen to both sides of the issue before I make up my mind. |  |  |  |  |
| I have self-confidence. |  |  |  |  |
| I am able to say my opinions in public. |  |  |  |  |
| I usually am satisfied with the decisions I make. |  |  |  |  |
| When I am criticized for some action I have taken, I can usually go about my work. |  |  |  |  |
| I like to be in charge of events. |  |  |  |  |
| I am able to see what materials are needed to complete a project. |  |  |  |  |
| I am able to see the sequence of steps necessary to complete a project. |  |  |  |  |
| When I am convinced of something, I have courage to act for it. |  |  |  |  |
| I often lead in projects. |  |  |  |  |
| When I see somebody who is a leader, I think that I could do as well as that leader. |  |  |  |  |
| I can speak to persons in authority. |  |  |  |  |
| I have energy to complete projects that I am interested in completing. |  |  |  |  |
| I can understand the viewpoints of others. |  |  |  |  |
| I am willing to change my mind if new facts suggest that I should change my mind. |  |  |  |  |
| I get anxious and excited and am able to use this energy to complete a task. |  |  |  |  |
| I am able to work with many types of persons and personalities. |  |  |  |  |
| I usually understand the plot of a story or play or the main point in a conversation. |  |  |  |  |
| I am willing to try new experiences when these seem wise. |  |  |  |  |
| I know when to lead, to follow and to get out of the way. |  |  |  |  |
| I admire people who have achieved great things. |  |  |  |  |
| I dream of the day and time when I am able to lead myself or others to great accomplishments. |  |  |  |  |
| I feel at ease asking people for help or information. |  |  |  |  |
| I can be a “peacemaker” if I want to be. |  |  |  |  |

Adapted from Roets, Lois F. (1992). “Leadership.” Des Moines, IA: Leadership Publishers, Inc. as published in “Procedures for the Identification of High-Ability Learners” by the Nebraska Department of Education (1997).

**Teacher High Ability Learner Nomination Form**

**Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Teacher’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**What words best describe the student’s thinking process?**

**Imitative Independent Creative Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Please √ appropriate box*** | **Almost Always** | **Quite Often** | **Sometimes** | **Not Often or Never** |
| **Advanced Language** | Uses multi-syllable words and has a large vocabulary for age level |  |  |  |  |
| Re-words his/her language for younger or less mature children |  |  |  |  |
| Explains how unrelated things are similar |  |  |  |  |
| Uses rich imagery; unusually descriptive |  |  |  |  |
| Uses similes, metaphors, or analogies to express insights |  |  |  |  |
| Uses precise language of a discipline |  |  |  |  |
| **Analytical Thinking** | Demonstrates complex or abstract thinking |  |  |  |  |
| Analyzes tasks |  |  |  |  |
| Notices a surprising depth of details about surroundings |  |  |  |  |
| Takes apart and reassembles things or ideas with skill |  |  |  |  |
| Expresses relationships between past and present experiences |  |  |  |  |
| Makes up songs, stories, or riddles about experiences |  |  |  |  |
| Organizes collections of things uniquely; likes to plan or arrange things |  |  |  |  |
| **Meaning Motivation** | Is philosophical; pursues issues atypical of age peers |  |  |  |  |
| Asks surprisingly intellectual questions |  |  |  |  |
| Is curious; experiments |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrates an unexpected depth of knowledge in one or more areas |  |  |  |  |
| Exhibits intense task commitment and energy when pursuing interests |  |  |  |  |
| Remembers; shows an extraordinary ability to process and retain information |  |  |  |  |
| Is independent |  |  |  |  |
| **Perspective** | Interprets another’s point of view insightfully |  |  |  |  |
| Shows dimension, angle or perspective in art, writing, math solutions or problem solving |  |  |  |  |
| Creates complex shapes, patterns or graphics |  |  |  |  |
| Interprets past, present, and future ramifications |  |  |  |  |
| Is attuned to the aesthetic characteristics of things |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Please √ appropriate box*** | **Almost Always** | **Quite Often** | **Sometimes** | **Not Often or Never** |
| **Sense of Humor** | Says or does something indicating a sense of humor beyond age expectation |  |  |  |  |
| Catches an adult’s subtle humor |  |  |  |  |
| Uses humor to gain approval or ease tension |  |  |  |  |
| “Plays” with language, uses puns and figurative language for humorous effect |  |  |  |  |
| Develops humorous ideas to an extreme; “flights of fancy” or absurd humor |  |  |  |  |
| **Sensitivity** | Exhibits intense concern for human issues |  |  |  |  |
| Expresses empathy |  |  |  |  |
| Displays a strong sense of fairness and justice |  |  |  |  |
| Expresses high expectations of self and others |  |  |  |  |
| Senses discord or dissatisfaction |  |  |  |  |
| **Accelerated Learning** | Learns new things quickly with minimum repetition |  |  |  |  |
| Creates or interprets symbolic representations |  |  |  |  |
| Read and interprets passages at an advanced, fluent level |  |  |  |  |
| Offers complex interpretations beyond age-expected knowledge |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrates an unexpected mastery of complex math and science concepts |  |  |  |  |
| Applies mathematical operations with sophisticated mastery |  |  |  |  |
| Accesses data from a variety of resources with ease |  |  |  |  |
| Creates products which seem advanced for age-level expectations |  |  |  |  |
| Categorizes by multiple, often less-obvious attributes |  |  |  |  |
| Increases rate of learning after introduction and exposure |  |  |  |  |

**Please indicate the level at which the student is currently working in most subject areas:**

**At Grade Level 1 Grade Above 2 or more Grades Above Unable to**

**Evaluate**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommended for** | **General Intellectual Ability** |
| **Recommended for** | **Specific Academic Aptitude in the area(s) of**  **English/Language Arts Mathematics** |

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Teacher Signature Date**

**Parent High Ability Learner Nomination Form**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*After reading the statement and thinking about your child, check mark the box that is closest to your observations about your child.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Please √ appropriate box*** | **Almost Always** | **Quite Often** | **Sometimes** | **Not Often or Never** |
| Poses unforeseen questions. |  |  |  |  |
| Is curious; experiments |  |  |  |  |
| Is selectively mentally engaged |  |  |  |  |
| Knows without working hard |  |  |  |  |
| Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives |  |  |  |  |
| Interprets another’s point of view insightfully |  |  |  |  |
| Learns new things quickly with minimum repetition |  |  |  |  |
| Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas |  |  |  |  |
| Prefers the company of adults or intellectual peers |  |  |  |  |
| Says or does something indicating a sense of humor beyond age expectation |  |  |  |  |
| Catches an adult’s subtle humor |  |  |  |  |
| Connects concepts |  |  |  |  |
| Initiates projects and extensions of assignments |  |  |  |  |
| Creates products which seem advanced for age-level expectations |  |  |  |  |
| Organizes collections of things uniquely; likes to plan or arrange things |  |  |  |  |
| Takes apart and reassembles things or ideas with skill |  |  |  |  |
| Is intense |  |  |  |  |
| Is original and continually developing |  |  |  |  |
| Enjoys self-directed learning |  |  |  |  |
| Read and interprets passages at an advanced, fluent level |  |  |  |  |
| Guesses and infers well |  |  |  |  |
| Notices a surprising depth of details about surroundings |  |  |  |  |
| Expresses high expectations of self and others |  |  |  |  |
| Displays a strong sense of fairness and justice |  |  |  |  |

Describe briefly your child’s major interests, hobbies, art activities, etc.

What problems, if any, is he/she having in school as a result of ability?

Parent(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current email (that is checked regularly): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Visual and Performing Arts Nomination Form**

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Building \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Referring: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: Parent Teacher Self

**Instructions:** Check the area (or areas) of the visual and performing arts in which you believe the student should be screened for possible gifted identification. Then place a checkmark in the box next to each behavior or attribute you have observed in the student nominated. Write additional observations you think may be relevant on the back of this form or attach additional pages.

**VISUAL ART**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Exceeds** | **Above Average** | **Average** | **Not Known or Below Average** |
| Elaborates on other people’s ideas and uses them as a jumping off point as opposed to copying from  others |  |  |  |  |
| Shows unique selection of art media for individual activity or classroom projects |  |  |  |  |
| Has unusual and richly imaginative ideas |  |  |  |  |
| Composes with unusual detail and skill |  |  |  |  |
| Displays compulsive artistic pursuit |  |  |  |  |

**MUSIC**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Exceeds** | **Above Average** | **Average** | **Not Known or Below Average** |
| Matches pitches accurately |  |  |  |  |
| Is able to duplicate complex rhythms correctly |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrates unusual ability on an instrument including voice |  |  |  |  |
| Has a high degree of aural memory/musical memory |  |  |  |  |
| Displays compulsive musical pursuit |  |  |  |  |

**DRAMA/THEATRE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Exceeds** | **Above Average** | **Average** | **Not Known or Below Average** |
| Readily shifts into the role of characters, animals or objects |  |  |  |  |
| Communicates feelings by means of facial expression, gestures and bodily movements |  |  |  |  |
| Uses voice expressively to convey or enhance meaning |  |  |  |  |
| Easily tells a story or gives a vivid account of some experience |  |  |  |  |
| Regularly seeks performance opportunities |  |  |  |  |

**DANCE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Exceeds** | **Above Average** | **Average** | **Not Known or Below Average** |
| Demonstrates exceptional physical balance |  |  |  |  |
| Performs sequences of movement easily and well |  |  |  |  |
| Communicates meaning and feeling with movement |  |  |  |  |
| Uses his/her body as an instrument of expression |  |  |  |  |
| Volunteers to participate in movement activities and dances |  |  |  |  |

**Permission to Screen/Assess** (Complete only if nominator is a parent of the nominated student)

I give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in screening/assessment for possible identification of giftedness in the visual and performing arts.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student will gather a sampling of work called a portfolio. This should include up to three representative samples that the child has done over the past month or two. Please include the portfolio with this form.

**Peer Nomination Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Who are some kids who always seem to have a lot of good ideas?

2. Who are some kids who can write good stories or scripts?

3. Who are some kids who seem to come up with far-out, crazy, or very unusual ideas?

4. Who are some kids who draw very well?

5. Who are some kids who are very good logical thinkers?

6. Who are some kids who are very good at solving problems?

7. Who are some kids who do very good work in science?

8. Who are some kids who ask many questions?

9. Which of your classmates would you ask to help you with your math?