



# Nebraska Department of Education

300 Centennial Mall South ♦ Lincoln, Nebraska ♦ 68508

## High Ability Learning

February 2021

---

### NEW Vision and Mission!

When I first started as the HAL Specialist, it was clear to me that in order to provide leadership for the state, we must first establish a common goal. After many months of workshopping, receiving feedback, and wordsmithing, I am EXCITED to release the mission and vision for High Ability Learners in the state of Nebraska! The vision and mission are as follows:

#### Vision:

**All gifted and talented students in Nebraska have meaningful opportunities for academic and personal growth commensurate with their abilities as well as career development to actualize their full potential and become lifelong learners who are college, career, and civic-ready.**

#### Mission:

**Locally identified high ability learners (HALs) benefit from targeted services and opportunities to develop their unique talents and demonstrate consistent growth. High ability learners will have access to a variety of school- and community-based learning experiences and enrichment activities that are also aligned to college and career-ready standards, as well as include families and caregivers as active participants in their programming.**

**Educators who provide direct support to HAL students should consider these foundational elements related to identification, academic content, programming, and equitable access to opportunities.**

- **Appropriate and equitable identification includes:**
  - **the use of multiple measures including informal screenings and formal data**
  - **a focus on areas of strength rather than absence of weaknesses**
  - **an approach that considers the unique contexts in which students learn**



@NDE\_HAL



NDE High Ability Learning @NDE.HAL



education.ne.gov/hal

- Identification of all types of exceptional students including those with high academic, intellectual, creative, and/or artistic ability
- regular engagement with families or caregivers through the process of identification and initiation of services
- alignment with available resources
- **Meaningful, advanced academic content and materials that meet the exceptional needs of HAL students are:**
  - able to be modified for appropriate rigor, flexible pacing, and the use of advanced concepts
  - based on the choices and interests of individual students
  - designed to offer learning experiences that develop critical and creative thinking
  - implemented with fidelity in all areas
- **Instructional materials, programs, and services address specific social, emotional, and behavioral learning (SEBL) needs of HAL and should:**
  - honor the unique social and emotional needs or differences of exceptional learners
  - promote awareness of differing SEBL needs of HAL students
  - target skills that support HAL SEBL development
- **Equitable opportunities and access for students from all backgrounds means that:**
  - ALL schools have a process in place to identify and support high ability learners
  - identification practices and services are culturally responsive and fully inclusive of underrepresented populations
  - identified HAL students, regardless of background or the educational context in which services are carried out, have access to high-quality curriculum, materials, and programs

In addition, we have created a graphic that sums up this information. On the next page, you will see that the vision is at the top. Everything we do supports the vision. The pillars are what we do in order to uphold the vision: Appropriate Identification, Meaningful academic content that is adequately challenging, Programming to address SEL needs, and equitable access and opportunity for ALL students. At the very foundation of everything we have ongoing professional development, awareness of HAL needs, and stakeholder engagement. Without that strong foundation, it is hard to build up from there.

For a shareable PDF version of the mission and vision, see the HAL website: [education.ne.gov/hal](http://education.ne.gov/hal)



@NDE\_HAL



NDE High Ability Learning @NDE.HAL



[education.ne.gov/hal](http://education.ne.gov/hal)

# Vision: HIGH ABILITY LEARNING



The vision for High Ability Learners in Nebraska is to ensure that all gifted and talented students in Nebraska have meaningful opportunities for academic and personal growth commensurate with their abilities as well as career development to actualize their full potential and become lifelong learners who are college, career, and civic-ready.



Appropriate identification

Meaningful academic content that is adequately challenging

Programming to address specific social and emotional needs

Equitable opportunities and access for students from all backgrounds

Ongoing professional development  
Promoting awareness of High Ability Learner needs  
Stakeholder engagement (family, community, etc.)



@NDE\_HAL



NDE High Ability Learning @NDE.HAL



education.ne.gov/hal

## Spring 2021 HAL Forum



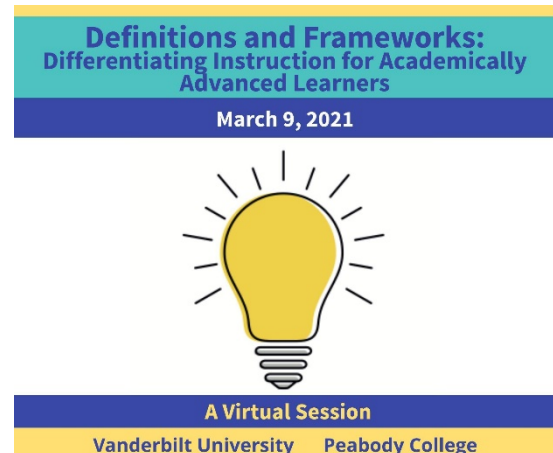
Back by popular demand, the Spring 2021 HAL Forum date has been set! This is a chance for you to connect with colleagues across the state to discuss High Ability Learning. The network we create through continual communication will benefit HAL students all over the state. Share ideas, discuss success and barriers, and just talk about what is going on in your neck of the woods. Come for 10 minutes or stay the whole time! I look forward to seeing you there. It will be held on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-5:00 (CST). Please register in advance with this link:

<https://educationne.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0scu-sqDsuG9We56Sw0MRqAdufnrpZ2nxO>

---

## Vanderbilt Gifted Education Institute Presents - Definitions and Frameworks: Differentiating Instruction for Academically Advanced Learners

One of the top institutions for gifted education in the world, Vanderbilt University, is hosting a professional development opportunity on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Usually held in Nashville, TN, this seminar will be held virtually this year, which poses an excellent opportunity for us in Nebraska! This session is good for HAL facilitators, general education teachers, administrators, and school counselors alike! For only \$179, you will receive a full day of learning from leading experts in the field on differentiation and curriculum for high ability learners. I highly recommend taking advantage of this incredible opportunity.



To register, visit this link: <https://pty.vanderbilt.edu/educators/gei/>



@NDE\_HAL

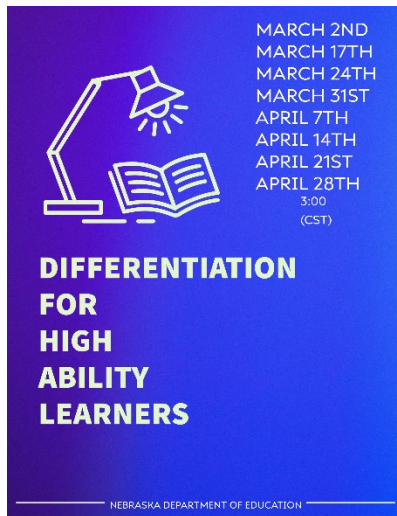


NDE High Ability Learning @NDE.HAL



[education.ne.gov/hal](https://education.ne.gov/hal)

# Spring 2021 Webinar Series: Differentiation for High Ability Learners



Thank you to everyone who attend or watched a session of the Fall 2020 Webinar Series: HAL and SEL. Because of the positive feedback we received, we will be hosting a Spring webinar series focused on differentiation!

The keynote speaker will be one of the top researchers and curriculum experts in the field, Dr. Tamra Stambaugh. Dr. Stambaugh has written several curriculum books, including Jacob's Ladder, units from the College of William & Mary, and the curriculum series from Vanderbilt Programs for Talented Youth. On March 24<sup>th</sup>, she will be discussing differentiation strategies to serve high ability learners in the classroom.

Other sessions include:

- Differentiation for HAL within and MTSS System
- Using Curriculum Compacting
- Push-In Models and Collaboration for HAL and General Education Teachers
- Leading District HAL Services: An Administrative Perspective
- Differentiation Practical Strategies
- Using Creativity for High Ability Learners
- Writing Curriculum for HAL: Experiences of Professionals in Curriculum Building at University of Nebraska Kearney

For more information about sessions and to register, visit <https://www.education.ne.gov/hal/hal-sel-webinar-series/>

## HAL and SEL Webinar Series – Continue to Provide Feedback!

We are still collecting data and survey responses for the Fall webinar series: HAL and SEL. In order to provide an optimal experience for subsequent series, please take the short survey and provide feedback! The survey can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1942Z0Qu9YZK0dMMeSDCHVW4aMMf464K5y-lfEMHz1SM/edit>



@NDE\_HAL



NDE High Ability Learning @NDE.HAL



[education.ne.gov/hal](https://www.education.ne.gov/hal)