

Y. HIGH ABILITY LEARNER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1. District Mission Statement and Philosophy:

Mission Statement: Harvard Public School, in Partnership With Family and Community, Is Committed To Providing Quality Educational Opportunities For All Students To Realize Their Potential As Lifelong Learners

Philosophy of its High Ability Learner (HAL) Program: Harvard Public School believes its Mission Statement mandates that the District recognizes the uniqueness of each high ability and gifted learners and provides for their education needs as appropriate. Furthermore, the District recognizes that its HAL program must be available to all students regardless of race, gender, physical abilities and economic factors and must provide a variety of challenging experiences to help these students reach their potential. In addition, the District knows that a quality HAL program must involve input from its teachers and students and connect with its local community by involving parents and other parties interested in the education of HAL students.

2. Operational Definition of a High Ability Learner:

Harvard Public School's HAL program will recognize high achievers, creative thinkers and gifted learners as High Ability Learners based upon its nomination criteria mentioned below. By assessing evidence of their high performance capabilities in areas such as intellectual development, creativity, artistic capacity, and/or special talents or abilities in specific academic areas, the District hopes to meet the needs of these three unique learners.

Objectives of Harvard Public School's High Ability Learner Program:

- a. To nominate all students (including English Language Learners, students with fine arts abilities and other sub-groups) that meet the criteria as a potential high ability learner learners through multiple assessments instruments available to teachers, parents and students. (see assessment manual for High Ability Learners)
- b. To effectively screen students that have been nominated as potential high ability learners according to the District's nomination process
- c. To develop a communication system between the District and teachers, parents and students which effectively communicates the District's total HAL program and which meets the requirements of Rule 3.
- d. To seek parental input into High Ability activities and educational programs available both locally and statewide.
- e. To provide educational programs involving both enrichment and pull-out strategies which will enable each high ability learner to develop his/her abilities to their fullest potential.
- f. To provide professional development in-services for district staff concerning awareness of the needs, characteristics, identification of high ability learners (including ELL students) and classroom accommodations.
- g. Develop a screening process for removing students from the high ability learner district program when necessary.
- h. To provide a HAL coordinator for the District when adequate funds are available on the district level

4. Identification Criteria used for Harvard Public School's High Ability Learner Program. A committee of teachers, parents and administrators will review the following nomination data:

Step one: Identification and Nomination of a Student as High Ability Learner:

- a. Grades 1-12 teachers and fine arts specialists may refer students as high ability learners through a characteristics checklist and performance appraisals.
- b. Grade 1 HAL students will be nominated by the kindergarten teacher for fall inclusion in the HAL program based on an appraisal form.
- c. Parents may nominate their child as high ability learners by answering a parent questionnaire and performance appraisals.
- d. Transfer students will be added to the District's HAL program based upon HAL data received from their prior school.
- e. Parents may pursue and pay for IQ Testing (Intelligence Quotient Testing) to submit as additional screening data for identifying their child as a high ability learner student.
- f. The District Screening Committee will nominate all grades 1-11 students with an 85 CAT Composite after spring testing.
- g. A student may be self referred as a high ability learner by answering a questionnaire and presenting it to the Committee.

Step Two: Screening Committee will use the following data for selection or removal of a student from the High Ability Learner program:

- a. The student will earn a composite score of the 85th percentile or higher on the California Achievement Test (CAT).
- b. Students who score between the 75th and 84th percentile on the CAT will be nominated with two (2) teacher recommendations from core curriculum classes.
- c. Nomination form presented by a district teacher and fine arts specialists who have knowledge of the student's abilities. Grade 1 students will be nominated by the Kindergarten teacher for fall inclusion in the HAL program.
- d. Nomination forms presented by parents, a student or other parties knowledgeable of a student's abilities by his/her parent or guardian as a high ability learner.

Step Three: Presentation of High Ability Learners to teacher and parents:

- a. By September 25 of each school year: Prepare a list of names of selected high ability learners and give to classroom teacher that will be working directly with an identified student.
- b. By the last school day in May: Notify parents of the identification of their child as a high ability learner and inclusion in the program for the ensuing school year.

5. Appeal Process: Any parent/guardian can appeal the decision reached by the Screening Committee to not include a student in the District's HAL program. Parents wishing to appeal are asked to call the Superintendent at 772-2171 to begin the process.

6. Continuum of Program Services and Professional Development: Professional development opportunities will be provided for the staff to become aware of the unique needs of high ability learners by addressing their affective, cognitive, social and emotional needs. Within the continuum, the following activities and options will be considered: Future Problem Solving, Quiz Bowl, Mentoring, Curriculum Enrichment, Homogeneous Groupings, Compacting Curriculum, Curriculum Acceleration and area offering of HAL activities. In addition, the HAL curriculums and instructional programs used by the District will be research based. The District will try to provide a HAL coordinator when funds are available.

7. Evaluation and Future Planning: Program evaluation will include a team approach including parents, students and educators. Annually, input will be accumulated to provide formative assessment of program goals and objectives. The district program will be continually reviewed and revised to assure alignment with district school improvement plan and NDE Rule 3 requirements. An annual report will be written and available for access by district patrons as well as school personnel.

8. Management Plan/Proposed Budget: HAL funds provided by NDE will be included in the District's budget program under Function Code 1310. These funds will be augmented by District funds. The funds will be spent on HAL activities, supplies and equipment requested by teachers and administrators for classroom purposes. In addition funds will be made available to parental requests for special HAL activities sponsored outside the District.

9. Identification and Nomination forms for teachers, parents, students and other parties available upon request from the Superintendent (772-2171)

A. Teacher Nomination Forms (3): These forms allow teachers to give narrative and anecdotal information to support the nomination of a student for Harvard Public School's High Ability Learner program.

Adapted from Renzulli, J. and S. Reis. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model, A Comparative Plan for Educational Excellence. Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press, Inc.

B. Characteristics of High-Ability Student Check-off Form: This form is for use by teachers and parents or other parties. It includes general characteristics that apply to all high ability students but especially in the areas of creative ability, leadership, and performing arts

Adapted from Identification Checklists: East high School, Lincoln Public Schools and Dade County, Florida Public Schools

C. Parent/Guardian Nomination Form: This form allows parents to give narrative and anecdotal information to support the nomination of their child for Harvard Public School's High Ability Learner program. It allows the Parent to offer information concerning their child's creative, leadership, career and technical or performing arts abilities.

Adapted from Renzulli, J. and S. Reis. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model, A Comparative Plan for Educational Excellence. Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press, Inc.

D. Spotting Talent Early in Minority Students Form (S.T.E.M.S.): This form can be used by teachers or parents to assess the gifted/talented characteristics of minority students

From Pizzat, Paula M. "STEMS, Spotting Talent Early in Minority Students." University of Virginia

E. Student Self-Nomination Form: This form allows a student to give narrative and anecdotal information to support his/her self-nomination for Harvard Public School's High Ability Learner program. It allows the

student to offer information concerning their creative, leadership, career and technical or performing arts abilities.

Adapted from Renzulli, J. and S. Reis. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model, A Comparative Plan for Educational Excellence. Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press, Inc.

F. A self-Rating Scale for Leadership Form (ages 8-18): This form allows a student to assess their gifted/talented characteristics pertaining to their leadership abilities

From Poets, Lois F (1992). "Leadership." Des Moines, IA: Leadership Publishers, Inc., For Primary Scale (ages 4-8) contact: Lois Roets, PO Box 8358, Des Moines, IA 50301