

Warsaw Community Schools

High Ability Definition

Warsaw Community Schools Mission

OUR MISSION is to inspire and equip all students to continuously acquire and apply knowledge and skills while pursuing their dreams and enriching the lives of others.

Indiana Definition (Article 36. IC 20-36-1 Sec. 3)

“High ability student” means a student who:

- (1) performs at or shows the potential for performing at an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain when compared with other students of the same age, experience, or environment; and
- (2) is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation or interests.

Warsaw Community Schools recognizes that:

- High ability students are found in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic populations
- High ability students have different cognitive and social/emotional needs that must be addressed in order for them to reach their potential

Identification Process

Warsaw Community Schools students are identified for high ability programming using data from measures of potential and achievement. This data is utilized to indicate which students qualify to receive services to enrich or accelerate their acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Kindergarten

All students in kindergarten will participate in the *Cognitive Abilities Test* (CogAT) as a universal screening for potential. A student will automatically qualify as high ability when he or she earns a score in the 96th percentile or above in language arts and/or math. A student must earn scores in the 96th percentile or above in both language arts and math to be identified as high ability in the area of general intellect.

For kindergarten students who earn a score in the 85th-95th percentile on CogAT, Warsaw Community Schools will use normative data from the NWEA assessment to identify high academic achievement. Kindergarten students who achieve in the 98th percentile or higher on the math and/or language arts sections of NWEA will qualify as students with high abilities.

Second Grade

All students in 2nd grade will participate in the *Cognitive Abilities Test* (CogAT) as a universal screening for potential. A student will automatically qualify as high ability when he or she earns a score in the 96th percentile or above in language arts and/or math. A student must earn scores in the 96th percentile or above in both language arts and math to be identified as high ability in the area of general intellect.

For 2nd grade students who earn a score in the 85th-95th percentile on CogAT, Warsaw Community Schools will use normative data from the NWEA assessment to identify high academic achievement. 2nd grade students who achieve in the 96th percentile or higher on the math and/or language arts sections of NWEA will qualify as students with high abilities.

Sixth Grade

All 6th grade students' NWEA results will be reviewed as a universal screening tool. Any 6th grade student who earns a score in the 96th percentile or above will automatically qualify as high ability in language arts and/or math.

For 6th grade students who earn a score in the 85th-95th percentile on NWEA, Warsaw Community Schools will seek parent permission to complete the CogAT. Students earning scores at or above the 96th percentile will be identified as high ability in language arts and/or math.

Students who slightly miss the cut-off scores or who are English Language Learners may participate in a third path to qualify, which includes teacher rating scales and consideration of other testing and classroom data (WIDA Access, Fountas and Pinnell, etc.).

Middle and High School Students

Once the 6th grade identification is completed, students do not need to requalify for high ability services. Honors and Advance Placement (AP) classes are considered high ability services. NWEA results will continue to be monitored, as well as PSAT results for tenth graders. If data suggest that students should be newly identified or exited from high ability services, parents will be notified by the Assistant Director of Special Services.

Testing Schedule

End of October-Early November: 2nd grade CogAT testing

Beginning-Mid February: Kindergarten CogAT testing

NWEA assessments take place 3 times per year: late fall, winter and spring

Mid March: 6th grade CogAT testing

March/April: all data collected, including teacher and other testing data

April: Identification committee meets to consider all data and determine students who qualify for high ability services, including invitation to the multi-age classrooms at Lincoln Elementary

Identification will be completed by May 1. Parents and schools will be informed by May 30.

Move-In Students from Other Districts

Students who move from other schools may have been identified using differing methods and cut-off scores than those used within Warsaw Community Schools. This includes other schools in Indiana, as the state regulations allow for districts to determine their own procedures.

Students who move into Warsaw Community Schools with high ability identification from another school corporation may submit testing data to be reviewed by the identification committee. If the data is sufficient, eligibility will be confirmed by the committee. If the data is not sufficient, the student will participate in the next round of testing with their grade-level peers.

Appeals Process

Universal screening for high ability is utilized in Warsaw community schools (NWEA is given to all K-10 students three times per year and CogAT given to all K and 2nd grade students) and the data is reviewed annually, eliminating the need for parent requests or teacher referrals for high ability identification.

If a parent or teacher has evidence that supports off-level testing (i.e., CogAT administration in 1st, 3rd, 4th or 5th grades), this evidence will be considered by the central office team. Grades and ISTEP+ results alone will not be considered sufficient evidence, as both demonstrate performance at grade level.

To request additional testing or pursue an appeal, parents must submit evidence and a cover letter stating the rationale for the request to the Assistant Director of Special Services.