

**PAXTON CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS
KEITH COUNTY DISTRICT 51-0006**

HIGH ABILITY LEARNER PLAN

DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Paxton Consolidated School District is to foster and empower a community of lifelong learners.

DISTRICT HAL PHILOSOPHY

The High Ability Learner Program will assist the Paxton Consolidated School District in its commitment to develop the strengths unique to all learners.

DEFINITION OF HIGH ABILITY LEARNER

“A learner with high ability is 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.” [as defined in Revised Statutes of Nebraska 79-1107(3)].

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: The Paxton Consolidated School District will serve high ability learners.

Objective 1.1: The District will use various instructional curriculum patterns [further outlined in the Description of Services section] to integrate learning opportunities provided in the HAL program with objectives of the regular classroom curriculum to address the needs of high ability learners:

Objective 1.2: The District will address the affective curriculum needs of the high ability learner by including personal/social awareness and adjustment, academic planning and performance, and vocational and career awareness, investigation and planning.

Objective 1.3: Contingent upon available funding and staffing, the District will offer extracurricular opportunities that may include, but not be limited to the following: Future Problem Solving, Quiz Bowl, History Day, FBLA, and Accelerated Reader.

Goal 2: The professional staff of the Paxton Consolidated School District will receive information to enable them to meet the needs of high ability learners.

Objective 2.1: The professional staff of the District will receive a copy of the District plan for learners with high ability at the beginning of each school year.

Objective 2.2: The professional staff of the District will review the characteristics of high ability learners at the beginning of each school year.

Objective 2.3: The professional staff of the District will be able to design and implement classroom experiences which utilize the talents of high ability learners.

Objective 2.4: The professional staff of the District will be able to assess the work and progress of high ability learners.

Objective 2.5: The District will provide staff development concerning the characteristics and needs of the high ability learner as well as methods for assessing their work and progress. Such training may include explanations of the instructional methods listed in the Description of Services section as well as awareness of multiple intelligences, brain dominance theory, learning styles and the affective needs of high ability learners.

Objective 2.6: The District will inform the professional staff of seminars and conferences related to the high ability learner.

IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

The Paxton Consolidated School District employs a multiple criteria assessment in order to identify high ability learners. The non-standardized assessment is a teacher observation form on which the K-12 teachers list those students who best fit the characteristics of the high ability learner. The number of times a student's name appears on the observation form is the total non-standardized score.

The number of tallies a student receives on the observation form is added to the student's best standardized achievement test score of the past three years. This total score is ranked from the greatest to the least to identify the top ten percent of the district's high ability learners.

The District will apply the multiple criteria assessment to all students in grades 2-12 in the spring. Since students in grades K-1 do not take a standardized test, there will be no district-wide screening in grades K-1. Students who exhibit abilities superior to their age peers shall be provided appropriate experiences by their classroom teacher.

The District may consider additional information in the form of self, parent, or peer nominations when identifying learners of high ability. *Any transfer students who have been formally identified by their previous school district as a high ability learner, will also be considered a high ability learner in the District.*

The District will maintain an ongoing review of the identification method to accommodate students who develop at different rates and whose interests may change as they mature.

The District administration, within the first thirty days of the school year, will make available to classroom teachers an initial list of K-12 students who meet district criteria for learners of high ability.

The District administration, within the first thirty days of the school year, will make available to parents or guardians of identified learners with high ability, information about how their child has been identified and in which areas their child has high ability.

APPEAL PROCESS

Grievance Procedure of the Paxton Consolidated School District For High Ability Learners

It is the policy of the Paxton Consolidated School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, or handicap, in its educational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of Federal Law. As a student of Paxton Consolidated Schools you are protected from discrimination in these areas.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you may make a claim that your rights have been denied. This claim or grievance may be filed with the chairperson of the High Ability Learner Committee.

You will be asked to write down the actions, policies, or practices which you believe are discriminatory. Once you have filed your grievance, you will be asked to meet with those persons who would be involved in correcting the policies, practices, or programs that you believe are discriminatory. If there is not agreement, you may appeal the grievance to higher authority.

You may also file a complaint of illegal discrimination with the Director of Region VII Office for Civil Rights, 601 East 12th St., Room 248, Kansas City, MO 64106 or call (816) 426-7278 at the same time you file the grievance, during or after use of the grievance process, or without using the grievance process at all. If you file your complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, you must file it in writing no later than 180 days after the occurrence of the possible discrimination.

In preparing your grievance you should give thought to the following:

- The exact nature of the grievance, how you believe you may have been discriminated against, and any persons you believe may be responsible.
- The date, time and place of the grievance.
- The names of witnesses or persons who have knowledge about the grievance.
- Any available written documentation or evidence that is relevant to the grievance.
- The actions that could be taken to correct the grievance.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The Paxton Consolidated School District will use various instructional curriculum patterns to integrate learning opportunities provided in the HAL program with objectives of the regular classroom curriculum. These instructional curriculum patterns may include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Differentiated Curriculum** shall mean an adjustment of the regular program as appropriate for the individual learner in terms of content, process, and/or product.
- **Curriculum Acceleration** is when the student moves through the regular curriculum at an accelerated pace.
- **Compacted Curriculum** is a process for assessing the student's mastery of content, eliminating that which has been mastered prior to normal presentation or teaching clusters of needed skills in a reduced time frame, and substituting other studies of interest to the student.
- **Student Grouping** is the use of various organizational formats that meet the learning style and specific curricular needs of individual learners.
- **Mentoring/Shadowing** is the linking of a student with a person with specific knowledge base in a short term or in-depth sharing relationship resulting in a series of learning experiences. This experience may occur within a school setting or on site.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The evaluation of the HAL program will include input from parents, educators, students, and community members by means of the school improvement surveys and the yearly assessment of the related target area goals.

The yearly review will assess program strengths and weaknesses in the areas of student progress, program design, student needs, learning environment, program goals and curriculum, student identification, personnel qualifications, resources, communication, staff development and cost effectiveness.

The District HAL plan will be revised as needed based on the results of the yearly review by the High Ability Learner Committee comprised of school administrator(s), professional staff and community members. Planning will be reflective of research and information regarding learning and learners with high ability.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The District will provide staff development concerning the characteristics and needs of the high ability learner as well as methods for assessing their work and progress. Such training may include explanations of the instructional methods listed in the Description of Services section as well as awareness of multiple intelligences, brain dominance theory, learning styles and the affective needs of high ability learners.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The High Ability Learner Committee, comprised of school administrator(s), professional staff and community members, oversees the implementation of the District's high ability learner plan and its goals, objectives and evaluation process.

The HAL budget is prepared by the HAL Committee and managed by the administration and the District Business Manager.

The teachers and staff of the District implement the instructional curriculum strategies as described in the Description of Services for high ability learners using resources provided by the HAL Committee.

SCALES FOR RATING BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

Directions: For each of the characteristics listed below, list the names of the top three students who best fit that characteristic in your classes. You may list less than three names, but not more than three for each characteristic. Teachers, you may write in the names of students you are currently teaching as well as those students currently in our district who may not be in your classes this year. Please list the student's first and last name on each blank.

1. Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age or grade level; uses terms in a meaningful way; has "richness" of expression. **(learning)**

2. Has rapid insight; tries to discover the how and why of things; asks many probing questions. **(learning)**

3. Is a keen and alert observer; usually "sees more" or "gets more" out of reading material, film, etc. than others. **(learning)**

4. Uses logical problem solving; reasons things out for himself or herself. **(learning)**

5. Becomes very absorbed and involved in certain topics or problems; is persistent in seeking task completion. **(motivation)**

6. Prefers to work independently; requires little direction from teachers. **(motivation)**

7. Likes to organize and bring structure to things, people and situations; tends to direct others when they are around; and or the activity in which he/she is involved. **(motivation)**

8. Generates a large number of solutions to problems and questions; often offers unusual ("way out"), unique, clever responses. **(creativity)**

9. Displays a good deal of intellectual curiosity; ("I wonder what would happen if"); manipulates ideas (i.e. changes, elaborates upon them). **(creativity)**

10. Criticizes constructively; is unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination. Asks "why". **(creativity)**

11. Adapts readily to new situations; is flexible in thought and action and does not seem disturbed when the normal routine is changed. **(leadership)**

12. Likes to participate in art activities; concentrates for long periods of time on art projects. **(artistic)**

13. Is critical of own work; sets high standards of quality; often reworks artistic creation in order to refine it. **(artistic)**

14. Shows a sustained interest in music—seeks out opportunities to hear and create music. **(musical)**

15. Perceives fine differences in musical tone (pitch, loudness, duration, timbre) and can reproduce melodies accurately. **(musical)**

16. Is adept at role-playing, improvising, acting out situations “on the spot.” **(dramatic)**

17. Commands and holds the attention of a group when speaking; is able to evoke emotional response from listeners—can get people to laugh, to frown, to feel tense, etc.; may be able to mimic the way people speak, walk, gesture. **(dramatic)**

18. Can find various ways of expressing ideas so others will understand. **(communication)**

19. Is technologically adept; knows a great deal about computers and can utilize technology effectively. **(technology)**

20. Displays exceptional ability in the following areas:

Social Studies _____

Mathematics _____

Science _____

Language Arts _____

Reading _____

Adapted from *Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students* by Joseph S. Renzulli / Linda H. Smith / Alan J. White / Carolyn M. Callahan / Robert K. Hartman

Creative Learning Press, Inc. P.O. Box 320, Mansfield Center, Connecticut 06250

August 22, 2017

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____:

In compliance with Rule 3 from the Nebraska State Department of Education, the Paxton Consolidated School District has developed a multiple criterion approach to identify students of high ability. The State of Nebraska and the Paxton Consolidated Schools define a learner with high ability as “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 services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to develop those capabilities fully.”

Your child, _____, has been identified as a learner of high ability according to the identification assessment as established by the Paxton Consolidated Schools High Ability Learner Committee. Enclosed is a copy of the *Scales for Rating Behavior Characteristics of Students*, which was used as part of the identification assessment. Your child was noted for demonstrating the following characteristics as numbered on this form: (list #s of the characteristics). In addition to the behavior characteristics assessment, your child’s highest standardized achievement test score (from the last three years) in reading, language, math or science was also part of the high ability learner identification assessment.

We will continue to work with the faculty of Paxton Schools to address the needs of the high ability learners within the classroom. Paxton Consolidated Schools offer many activities and instructional methods to benefit the high ability learner. These are listed on the back of this letter.

There is a parent organization in Nebraska, which focuses on the needs of high ability learners. The Nebraska Association of the Gifted (NAG) holds a statewide conference annually. For more information view its website: <http://www.negifted.org>. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us at Paxton Consolidated Schools.

Sincerely,

Sheri Chittenden, HAL (High Ability Learner) Coordinator

Paxton Consolidated Schools Activities

Level 1: For All

Creative & Critical Thinking
Higher Level Questioning
Accelerated Reader
Independent Projects
Staff In-service Benefits All Students
Curriculum Revisions/Updates
Textbooks/Equipment/ and
Technology Purchase Plans
Accommodation of Learning Styles
Technology Access
Art Education

Level 3: For Some

Advanced Academic Classes
Complex or Extended Projects
School to Career
Community Presenters
Mentorships
Distance Learning Courses
Student Council 7-12
Science Olympiad 6-12
Future Problem Solving 6-12
Mid-Plains Inter-High Scholastic Contest

Level 2: For Most

School Competitions
Computer for each student 6-12
School Competitions
Performing & Visual Arts
Band, Chorus, Drama, Speech
Academic Quiz Bowl
Differentiated Curriculum
Elem Student Led Conferences
Portfolios
FFA 9-12
Field Trips
World Language Offered 9-12
Reading Mastery K-5

Level 4: For a Few

Higher Level Courses
Distance Learning College Credit
Online College Credit
UNL Math Day
NLS (Nebraska Leadership Seminar)
COLT (FFA Chapter Officer

Leadership Training)

HAL Yearly Review

The yearly review of the High Ability Learner Program will assess program strengths and weaknesses in the areas of student progress, program design, student needs, learning environment, program goals and curriculum, student identification, personnel qualifications, resources, communication, staff development and cost effectiveness.

Rate the following areas of the high ability learner program from 1-4.

A rank of 1 indicates the greatest area of concern.

Schoolyear: _____

_____ Student Progress

_____ Program Design

_____ Student Needs

_____ Learning Environment

_____ Program Goals

_____ Curriculum

_____ Student Identification

_____ Personnel Qualifications

_____ Resources

_____ Communication

_____ Staff Development

_____ Cost Effectiveness

Action plan to address greatest areas of concern: