

Report of the Audit of the
Lebanon Community School Corporation's
High Ability Programs (HAP)

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Executive Summary

In designing this program audit, it was important to gather data from immediate stakeholder groups (students, teachers, administrators, parents) using multiple data gathering modes (questionnaires, direct observations, interviews, review of written materials). Combined, the process allows for a triangulation of data. Consequently, while virtually all of the data received were reflected in the report with minimal translation by the researchers, the analysis focused mostly on areas in which there was some pattern. For example, ideas expressed only one time might have been noted, but they would not be given weight equal to an idea that was conveyed by many and across multiple groups. The following summary emphasizes ideas that had considerable support.

Compared to approximately 40 audits and evaluations of educational programs and schools conducted previously, the summary of the audit of Lebanon Community School Corporation Program for High Ability Students shares similarities with many of those programs. At the same time it offers some unique qualities. The LCSCPHAS is clearly in transition, moving toward practice that would be considered best practice.

Conclusions

The Big Picture

On the whole, the feedback from the various stakeholder groups about the HAP was positive. Therefore, specific concerns raised should be considered against that backdrop. Characterizing the feedback, it is clear that there was considerable range in the responses with the majority of responses being slightly positive to very positive. Within that pattern, given the many smaller issues being rated, only a few raised enough concerns to discuss them as a major finding. In the following major findings, many issues were collapsed to portray the more important considerations. Five major findings follow:

I. Identification

Feedback from virtually every stakeholder group expressed some concern about the identification process. The nature of the concerns fell into three different categories.

A) The first is a general concern that the process has not been rigorous enough in the past and has included too many nongifted students. However, some complained of the opposite, that the identification process included too few of the gifted students. The recent Indiana Department of Education change to a definition that moves away from gifted and talented to high ability seems to have exacerbated some of the concerns about identification.

B) The second concern about identification was that it confused high ability students with high-achieving students.

C) The third concern was an identification-by-subsequent educational placement series of concerns. For example, some believed that all high ability elementary students should be placed in the Hattie B. Stokes Academy, while others believed they should be in their home elementary

school. Most like having the options of the Academy and their local elementary school. This issue spills over into individuals' beliefs about the nature and needs of high ability students. Still, some argued that the social and emotional needs of gifted students would be better met (in some cases) in their local elementary school, and (in some cases) the Academy. The identification-by-subsequent educational placement series of beliefs also emerged in middle school and high school. The adults expressed wide-ranging views about the construct of high ability, then offered myriad views of how the middle school and/or high school should identify them, place them and service them. While many of the adults expressed positive views about their individual child's growth, they still offered wide ranging suggestions for improvement.

II. Communication

The accumulation of wide-ranging views expressed by stakeholders on many topics, along with personal observations by the research team, combined to make issues associated with communication across and within groups a major finding. A researcher conducting an audit always enters into a program at a unique point during its history. That fact is especially salient in this case. The recent history of the LCSC's efforts to accommodate high ability students reveals earlier decisions and practices that its stakeholders have responded to. A clear example is the curriculum at the Academy. Several people raised issues about the appropriateness of a limited number of students receiving instruction in string instruments and foreign language. Some concerns were focused on perceptions of equity, while others complained of a mismatch between what the students' academic needs were based on their having been identified as high ability (formally a gifted) students. These examples are included because the researchers found that many of the stakeholders operated with misinformation about each of these commonly expressed concerns.

Other manifestations of issues of communication were noted. Some parents focused on a desire to have more information about aspects of the High Ability Program services and to have that information in a timely manner. Some identified currently held events to inform families about the opportunities for High Ability Services for elementary students as needing to be reconsidered. They noted that, in its current form, the informational meetings pitted schools against each other. This sentiment was expressed by a subset of the overall parent group.

III. Curriculum

Many stakeholders expressed ideas for changing the curriculum at the specific level of schooling about which they were concerned. Using the language of gifted education, desire for more rigor, more course options, and more enrichment were noted. These suggestions were more common to the middle school, and to a lesser extent the high school, than the elementary schools. Many were generally pleased with the curriculum of the school their children attend.

IV. Models

A less well-defined set of suggestions/concerns can best be described as interests in models being used other than those currently employed. For example, some felt that the local elementary model that utilizes examples of curriculum differentiation in heterogeneous

classrooms should give way to a more Academy-like experience. Others, mostly parents whose children were in the programs located in elementary schools outside of the Academy and a few teachers who teach outside of the Academy, expressed a desire to eliminate the Academy and decentralize the high ability services. Their arguments were based on concerns about continuity and elitism. The group expressing this idea was small. As the recommendations offered in the next section of this report are met, issues associated with continuity across programs and most concerns about elitism will be successfully addressed. Even with full implementation of the recommendations, the researchers have learned that issues of elitism among some cannot be redressed within the confines of a gifted program's services. For some, the mere existence of a high ability program is evidence of elitism. The data in this audit did not uncover a significant level of concern about elitism equaling the existence of high ability programs, rather they tended to emerge from an individual's notion of what was fair within the services offered at individual sites.

V. Transitions & Continuity

In most school corporations, the transitions students make across levels of schools are somewhat difficult for both the students and the faculty who teach them. This situation is true for LCSC as well. The students' transitions from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school were noted by many as difficult. Because this phenomenon exists whether or not efforts at accommodating the needs of gifted students are attempted by the schools, one must be cautious in attributing the transition issues to high ability programs. Those who provided these concerns did not tend to express the issues in extremely serious terms. Rather, they generally noted that they assumed that making these transitions is naturally difficult. A few noted concerns specific to their student and in a couple of cases indicated that the difficulties were at least somewhat due to programmatic issues with the high ability studies efforts.

The data analysis revealed that some of the issues are actually those of continuity across the high ability programs. It is common to find in school corporations that elementary programs have a relatively consistent model for high ability education; these programs tend to emphasize potential and work across subject areas. High schools often use honors courses, AP courses and myriad competitions and extracurricular activities as their high ability program offerings. Their high ability program offerings are typically based on an achievement model, and much less based on early assessments of potential, as is often true for elementary programs. Middle school programs may struggle to meet the needs of high ability students due in part to the age group they focus on, traditional assumptions about what is in the best interest of children developmentally, and beliefs of individual faculty and administrators about the nature and needs of high ability students. In essence, middle schools often operate without a conception of giftedness that is consistent with either elementary schools or high schools. Complicating their efforts are the increasingly complex scheduling problems with which middle schools contend. This phenomenon was seen to some degree in the LCSC.

Recommendations

Based on the data collected, a number of recommendations are offered. To understand them, it is important to note where the LCSC Program for High Ability Students is developmentally. It is

clear that efforts to bring the program into compliance with contemporary best practices of the field of gifted education are ongoing. This is confirmed by evidence of a self-assessment being conducted with state field coach Pat Gerber (see **Appendix E** for a copy of the Self-Assessment form used to guide practice), the work of the Broad-Based Planning Committee (see **Appendix D** for the members of that group), and documents reviewed during the audit process. The LCSC is also bringing their practices into compliance with the Indiana Department of Education's rules about providing services for high ability programs. The IDOE change has primarily been to replace our state's conception of gifted and talented to that of one based on high ability. It is within this positive growth and obvious commitment to create a best practices environment that the recommendations are offered. It should be noted that the efforts of the LCSC to date preceded the recent law requiring high ability students to be identified and serviced. This is not true for all school corporations within Indiana.

- 1) Continue the development of a single conception of high ability services that can be applied with equal utility across all grades. This may take another year or so of work from the BBPC. The field coach should be helpful to this end.
- 2) Once the conception is complete, provide training about its application to all stakeholder groups in the LCSC. The goal should be that everyone in the LCSC understands what is being done and why. While there may remain some who disagree with the basic conception because it will be rooted in best practice research, it will provide the community with a clear understanding of why specific models are in place, the nature of the overall and site-specific curriculum, and the hard choices that must be made due to issues of geography, resources and personnel.
- 3) Make decisions about how to bring all high ability practices in line with the conception of high ability studies developed. For example, the questions about whether a foreign language or strings should be offered at the Academy and not in other high ability programs located in the elementary schools should be addressed in this manner. Continuity of philosophy without rigid allegiance to doctrine can work. The fact that LCSC has seen fit to offer both programs (a self-contained program, Academy and differentiation, site-specific efforts) is laudable. What exists within the programs themselves does not have to be exactly the same to be equitable. It should, however, be based on best practices in gifted education. Using best practice under a single conception of high ability education will create continuity. In the cases of foreign language and strings being offered at the Academy and not in other locations, the challenge to the LCSC is to discern whether it is best practice to offer them as part of high ability services. The two major national organizations in the field, the National Association for Gifted Children and The Association for the Gifted, have espoused a position that schools should offer services that are identified as educational needs specific to children's academic abilities. This provides direct guidance as a heuristic to answer questions about any aspects of services. If the students at the Academy have evidence of needs in these areas, then offering the services are consistent with best practices. If not, then it might be considered a perquisite for being in the program and that falls into recruiting and/or issues of politics, not educational best practices. It is possible that the LCSC might want to continue these opportunities for those reasons. That decision is outside of this audit.
- 4) Provide specific, ongoing training to teachers and other employees of the schools about curriculum differentiation. Information sessions for parents may be warranted as well.

This step is important, as research has consistently shown that teachers often express support for the concept of curriculum differentiation, even claiming to engage in it. Unfortunately, the research consistently shows that in fact they do not regularly engage in actual differentiation practices. Evidence of this phenomenon was observed in the LCSC.

- 5) Continue to develop communication mechanisms to reach all stakeholder groups. The sharing of information will necessarily be somewhat pedantic at times; other times it may need to be more discussion based. A single individual should be identifiable by all stakeholder groups as the person responsible for the High Ability Programs. This declaration is more a function of communication than changing responsibilities.

Introduction

Several months ago, Ms. Diane Scott contacted Dr. Tracy L. Cross to inquire whether he would be interested in conducting an audit of the Lebanon Community School Corporation Programs for High Ability Students (LCSCPHA). She noted that his work in a similar capacity for another school corporation led to her request. Dr. Cross met with Dr. Taylor and Ms. Scott to discuss their interest and to seek an agreement for the project. Subsequent to the initial meeting, a proposal from Dr. Cross was submitted and was approved to go forward. For the past five months, data gathering, data analysis and report writing have been ongoing. The report that follows is the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Cross and his team (Andrea D. Frazier, Athena M. Decanay, and Dr. Jennifer R. Cross).

An audit attempts to provide a three-dimensional view of a particular program under consideration. It is an educational tool to help guide practice based on data, usually provided from a professional from outside the school corporation. In this audit, data were gathered from several different stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, administrators) in the LCSCPHA. The types of data included: interviews, observations, and responses to questionnaires. An audit differs from a comprehensive evaluation primarily in scope, depth and costs. Evaluations tend to be much more expensive in time and money and attempts to offer in-depth analysis. Another common difference is that audits tend to be conducted during the life of a program when sufficient evidence has accrued that the program is viable, but still may need improvements or enhancements. It is with that understanding that this audit was conducted.

It should be noted that Ms. Scott was essential to this audit. She sent every document requested by the researchers; she collected all the questionnaire data; scheduled the interviews with parents, administrators and faculty; and assisted in many of the other aspects of the data

gathering process. No evidence of anything being held back was witnessed. She deserves appreciation for her tireless efforts to see this project through.

The following report includes data from several hundred people. The data have been organized and presented in summary form to assist the reader. All data collected are included in this report. The figure below was created to illustrate the nature and type of data collected on which the conclusions and recommendations are based.

	Dr. Cross	Dawn Frazier	Athena Dacanay
Interviews	Superintendent, Curriculum Director, two groups of parents, one group of elementary school liaisons, all principals, one group of middle school students	6 Hattie B. Stokes teachers, 8 Lebanon High School teachers, 8 high school students	3 Central School teachers, 3 Harney School teachers, 6 Lebanon Middle School teachers, 6 middle school students
Observations		<p>Hattie B. Stokes:</p> <p>Observed 5 classrooms (One 2nd/3rd grade class, two 4th grade classes, two 5th grade classes. 4 of the 5 classes were self-contained classes for the high ability students)</p> <p>Lebanon High School:</p> <p>Observed 8 classes total (IU Literature; Honors US History; Honors Geometry; Honors English 9, 10, and 11; AP</p>	<p>Central School:</p> <p>Observed 3 classrooms (2nd, 4th, and 5th grade classes)</p> <p>Harney School:</p> <p>Observed 2 classrooms (3rd and 5th grade classes)</p> <p>Lebanon Middle School:</p> <p>Observed 5 classes (Math 7, English 7,</p>

		Statistics, AP Calculus)	Science 6, Social Studies 7, Social Studies 8, Social Studies 6, Math 6); Observed 2 classes for 20 minutes (Science 6 and Social Studies 7)
Discussions		Impromptu conversations with students and teachers as visited classrooms.	Impromptu conversations with students and teachers as visited classrooms.

The first section offers narrative descriptions of the direct observations of the research team of several schools in the LCSC.

General Observations of the Schools Visited

Hattie B. Stokes Elementary

Hattie B. Stokes seems a relatively new school building. The paint seems fresh on the walls, the building seems free from wear. The space is clean and well-cared for. There is a life-sized wagon in the front foyer that is an interesting conversation piece and an intriguing homage to Indiana's history. There are children's drawings in many of the school hallways. The building is well-lit, the classrooms seems spacious, the furniture seems well cared for. The office area also mirrors the same degree of care. Many of the classrooms visited had a small number (approximately 5) of computers in one area of the room. Teachers used the wall space in individual classrooms to display the work of their students or to communicate with them about key elements about academic disciplines.

Central Elementary School

Central Elementary School's office area and conference room were well lit and spacious enough for small group meetings. Its school faculty lounge was roomy and yet had a cozy ambiance. Office furniture in both rooms was tasteful and well cared for. Central's halls were decorated

with children's work and informative bulletin boards and posters. The sizeable high ability classrooms were decorated in similar fashion. Each classroom was equipped with a good library collection, a projector, a couple of computers, and a math scanner. Classrooms were adequately lit with artificial and natural light and were well-ventilated. Classroom furniture was appropriately sized for grade levels. At least one U-shaped table was available in each classroom for small group discussions.

Harney Elementary School

Inside the yellow brick walls lined with 6-panel windows, Harney Elementary School building's administration office greets its visitors. The clinic was adjunct to the office area. The school's conference room was furnished with a mini-refrigerator and was large enough to comfortably fit approximately 10 people. The school's hallways were reasonably lit and clear of clutter. The classrooms visited were well-ventilated and had ample lighting, a good deal of floor space, and good sound proofing. Classroom furniture was appropriate for each grade level. The classroom walls were crammed with children's work, classroom announcements and reminders, and posters demonstrating various content areas. The centrally located, well-stocked and spacious library had whole classes and individual students taking advantage of its resources.

Lebanon Middle School

A security desk is located near the main entrance of the middle school. Directly behind it is a large office area housing the reception desk, building administrators' offices, and a spacious conference room. Office furniture was comfortable and functional. The middle school had a welcoming atmosphere with white light, high ceilings, and tidy hallways. It had a large auditorium and cafeteria. The classrooms were grouped and the lockers color-coded according to grade level. Each grade level had a strategically located computer pod equipped with at least 30 computers and one printer. Desks were available in these computer centers for group discussions and Title-I sessions to take place. The classrooms had ample lighting and ventilation. Each observed classroom was equipped with a projector, television, and DVD player. Decorations varied from classroom to classroom, ranging from nearly bare walls to walls crammed with Purdue posters, informational posters on content areas, student work, and reading quotes. Some teachers maximized space by utilizing the ceiling to hang and display their students' creations.

Some classrooms were organized and well-kept while others were organized chaos. Although classes vary in size, each child has their own workspace and materials (i.e., chairs, desks).

Lebanon High School

The high school seemed both new and old, though well maintained. Some of the hallways were lined with putty-colored bricks. It could remind a person of architectural choices from the 70's. The office area and conference room near the front of the school seemed new additions. The classrooms visited did not have much evidence of modern technology, other than a television bolted on a wall near the ceiling. The décor for the classrooms seemed dependant on the personality of the teacher. One classroom shouted at those who visited. There was vibrant artwork on the walls, compelling quotes scrawled in black paint, and hand-painted silhouettes of famous people from our country's history. Another classroom was devoid of artwork save a few posters about colleges and the academic discipline. Quite a few other rooms were somewhere in between. Consistently, the rooms were well lit and clean. The books, desks, and other class materials seemed in good condition.

The figure below illustrates some general observations and the sources for those observations.

	Classroom observation	Interviews and chats with teachers	Interviews with students	Observation of facility	Parent interview	School documents	Interview with principals	Interview with superintendent & Curriculum director
Strong student engagement	X						X	X
Student-directed investigation and learning	X		X					
Focused definition of giftedness		X			X	X		
Strong parent support					X		X	X
Positive teacher community		X						
Teacher enjoyment of work with students	X	X						
Integration of diversity (thought, experience, racial/ethnic) into curriculum	X							
High expectations for student academic achievement	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Positive engagement of girls in math	X							

	Classroom observation	Interviews and chats with teachers	Interviews with students	Observation of facility	Parent interview	School documents	Interview with principals	Interview with superintendent & Curriculum director
Students working in groups that match learning level	X							
Students working in heterogeneous ability groupings	X							
Classroom discussion	X							
Strong community between students and teachers	X	X	X				X	
Welcoming physical environment	X			X				
Teacher and/or administrative support of program		X			X		X	X
Lack of teacher and/or administrative support of program	X	X						
Respectful debate part of classroom procedure	X							
Involvement of student knowledge base as springboard for learning	X	X						

	Classroom observation	Interviews and chats with teachers	Interviews with students	Observation of facility	Parent interview	School documents	Interview with principals	Interview with superintendent & Curriculum director
Support of working through ambiguity in learning	X							
Encouragement of positive social development (class rules, rules of engagement in discussion, social support)	X	X	X					
Training in methodologies appropriate for academically gifted students		X						
Teacher flexibility	X		X		X	X	X	X
Desire to tap into visual and/or kinesthetic learning styles	X							
Teachers ask for and expect students to utilize inductive and deductive reasoning	X							
Teachers work to employ higher-level reasoning (evaluating, synthesizing, analyzing, etc).	X				X	X	X	X

	Classroom observation	Interviews and chats with teachers	Interviews with students	Observation of facility	Parent interview	School documents	Interview with principals	Interview with superintendent & Curriculum director
Differentiation of curriculum within each classroom	X			X	X	X	X	X
Awareness of issues related to gifted students' social and emotional development		X			X	X	X	X
Creative and interesting products whereby students to display their learning and success				X				
Integration of technology	X			X				
Lack of attention to the development of basic/foundational skills		X	X					
Classroom management plan was clear and effective	X	X		X				
Lesson did not encourage students to seek and value multiple modes of investigation and problem solving.	X				X			

	Class-room observation	Interviews and chats with teachers	Interviews with students	Observation of facility	Parent interview	School documents	Interview with principals	Interview with superintendent & Curriculum director
Support of the emotional development of high ability students				X	X	X	X	X
Low representation of ethnic/racial diversity amongst students	X							
Low representation of ethnic/racial diversity amongst faculty	X	X						

Class Observation and Interview Protocol

Before each day of observation and interviews, the researchers would meet at the administration office to talk over last-minute details with the administrator of the high ability program. During those meetings, the researchers would distribute upon schools to observe for the day amongst themselves. The administrator would provide the researchers with the schedules for classroom visits and/or interviews.

Instrument: The William and Mary Classroom Observation Scales, Revised.

The form used for the observation is The William and Mary Classroom Observation Scales, Revised. The form is divided into two broad areas: General Teaching Behaviors and Differentiated Teaching Behaviors. Differentiated Teaching Behaviors is further divided into Accommodations for Individual Differences, Problem Solving, Critical Thinking Strategies, Creative Thinking Strategies, and Research Strategies. There are comments sections under each subsection and a master comment section at the end of the observation chart. See **Appendix C** for a copy of the observation scale.

Observation Protocol

Observations in classes lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. During observations, a researcher sat in an inconspicuous location in the room. Some teachers permitted her being inconspicuous; others introduced the researcher to the class and explained a bit about her purpose. The researcher took notice of the materials on the walls and the activities of the students. Based on her understanding of the specific items under each subsection of the observation scale, she judged whether a behavior was *effectively present, somewhat effectively present, ineffectively present, or not observed*. She marked an X in respective boxes as a means of mapping her observations onto the form. She also jotted field notes on the forms recording thoughts about the classroom activity and/or to explicate more fully rationales for observations made.

Some teachers provided copies of materials they were covering with their class. Moreover, during some classroom visits, if the situation permitted, the researcher would walk around and talk with the students to find out what they were doing. She asked something like, “What is that you are working on?” The students would proceed to describe the activity and sometimes would

divulge how they felt about the lesson plan for the day. During other classroom visits, she would talk with the teachers about their plan for the day and/or their feelings about teaching. As the day progressed, class materials, observations and classroom discussions with the students and teachers would inform what was recorded on the observation form.

Finally, walking the halls between scheduled observations allowed the researcher the opportunity to attend to the aesthetics of the school.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with teachers, parents, administrators, and students. Before interviews with teachers and students, the researcher would seek consent to tape the interviews. Teachers and students consented to being taped. Semi-structured or open-ended interviews were conducted to prompt the respondents to discuss the high ability program. Clarifying questions were asked when needed.

Debriefing

At the end of each day, the researchers and the administrator for the high ability program would momentarily debrief to clarify issues raised during the day. The researchers conducted a more in-depth debriefing after the observations and interviews were completed.

Questionnaires

Several stakeholder groups received questionnaires developed by the researchers. Ms. Diane Scott carried out the administration process to be sure the questionnaires were sent to the appropriate parties and, once returned, that Dr. Cross received them. Below is Ms. Scott's description of the process used to collect these data.

April 23, 2008

The HA Parent Questionnaires were mailed with a cover letter stating the procedures for returning the completed forms along with the April 30th due date. An envelope was also included for parents to return the questionnaires to their school liaison or the Curriculum Office.

April 23, 2008

The HA Student Questionnaires were distributed to the schools along with a list of HA student names and an email explaining the procedures. April 30th was the stated due date.

April 29, 2008

The HA Student Questionnaires were distributed to the high school along with a list of HA student names and an email explaining the procedures. May 2nd was the stated due date.

April 30, 2008

The HA staff questionnaires were distributed to all LCSC teachers and administrators along with a cover letter stating the procedures and the May 5th deadline.

Throughout the month of May, the completed questionnaires were mailed to Dr. Cross as they arrived every few days.

High Ability Questionnaire Process

Building	Number Sent	Number Sent
	Students	Parents
Academy	46	46
Central	20	20
Harney	6	6
Perry-Worth	2	2
Stokes	7	7
LMS	141	141
LHS	196	196
Certified Teachers	245	
Administrators	17	

Brief Analysis of the Numeric Ratings from the Questionnaires

Students

Elementary students are generally very positive about the High Ability Program (HAP). They feel they are learning and learning how to analyze. They also think HAP has helped them be more responsible. A quarter of students at Central and the combined schools of Hattie B. Stokes (HBS), Harney, and Penny Worth (PW) do not believe the HAP has made them more excited about learning, whereas most students at Hattie B. Stokes Academy (HBSA) believe it has. Students at HBSA were more likely than at these other schools to say they are able to talk about their ideas and feelings.

Students at Central and HBSA believe their teachers like to teach in HAP “a lot,” but those in the combined schools of HBS, Harney, and PW have less enthusiastic ratings, with 42% saying their teacher enjoys teaching in the HAP “some.”

Fewer students at HBSA than at other schools consider the work to be “not hard,” indicating greater challenge at HBSA. HBSA students spend more time on homework than students in the other elementary schools.

Middle school students generally like the HAP and feel it has helped them be more responsible and confident. The two areas that do not get the highest ratings are the challenge (how difficult is schoolwork?) and the teacher(s) liking to work with the students. Middle school students want more opportunity to talk in class about ideas and feelings and to study the things they like.

High school students generally think the HAP has made them more excited about learning. The 10th grade seems to have some specific issues, however, that may be related to difficulty of the work. These sophomores say the HAP has not made them more excited about learning, but tend to rate most items consistently with the other students, except for the difficulty of schoolwork item. Only 7% consider the schoolwork not difficult, compared to much higher percentages in the other grades. In all other categories, the 10th grade is comparable to the other grades. No problem areas are evident besides this 10th grade concern.

Teachers

Middle school teachers (n=11) seem to have very different opinions of HAP than their elementary and high school counterparts. They are very positive in most regards, indicating that the program is successful at helping students be more organized and responsible, express creativity, ideas, and feelings, and generally fulfilling student needs. Although they appear quite pleased in most regards, middle school teachers are most critical of the methods used to select students, with 80% indicating the method is poorly suited.

A fairly consistent 30% of elementary and high school teachers rate items negatively.

Many teachers indicate that they do not believe HAP helps students be better evaluators of their work.

Parents

Elementary parents at HBS and HBSA appear to be most pleased with the HAP. Central parents are less likely to think the HAP made their child more excited about learning than parents at HBS and HBSA. Central parents were also less likely to think their child can study what they like, to the extent they desire, or to express their creativity.

Although middle school parents appear to be generally pleased with the HAP, not all feel their child is more excited about learning because of it, nor do all think their child gets to study what they would like to the extent they would like. Parents of middle school students are positive about the HAP organization and the challenge it provides to their child.

High school parents, while pleased overall with HAP, do not consider it to be very challenging for their child. These parents also gave the lowest ratings of suitability of the method for selecting HAP students, with more than half indicating the method is not suitable.

Lebanon Elementary Schools Report (students)

(Note: The three schools with samples too small to report individually – Hattie B. Stokes, Harney, and Penny Worth – were combined to retain anonymity of responses.)

		Not at all		Some		A lot	
Has the HAP made you more excited about learning?	Central (n=20)	25%		40%	5%	30%	¼ of Central students are not very enthusiastic, ¾ at least some excitement
	HBSA (n=46)	4%		57%		39%	A majority of students are more excited at least some
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)	27%		53%		20%	Less than ¼ find HAP made them very excited about learning
How much do you get to study things that you like?	Central (n=20)	5%		60%		35%	Nearly all students (95%) say they can study what they like at least some
	HBSA (n=46)	4%		63%		33%	Nearly all students (96%) say they can study what they like at least some
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)	13%		67%		20%	Most students say they can study what they like at least some. The 2 students who said not at all were from Harney.
How much has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	Central (n=20)	5%		40%		55%	Nearly all think HAP has helped them learn to analyze
	HBSA (n=46)	7%		48%		46%	Nearly all think HAP has helped them learn to analyze
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)			53%		47%	All believe it has helped them learn to analyze
How much has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	Central (n=20)	5%		40%		55%	Nearly all (95%) think HAP has made them more responsible

	HBSA (n=46)	11%		28%		61%	Nearly all (89%) think HAP has made them more responsible
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)			53%		47%	All think HAP has made them more responsible
How much has being in the HAP helped you learn?	Central (n=20)	0%		60%	5%	35%	All students think HAP has helped them learn, but 60% only "some"
	HBSA (n=45)	2%		18%		80%	All but 1 student think HAP has helped them learn, with 80% "a lot"
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)			40%		60%	Most think HAP has helped them learn "a lot"
Are you able to talk in your HAP classroom about your ideas and feelings?	Central (n=20)	20%		50%	5%	25%	¾ of students feel they can talk about ideas and feelings only "some" or "not at all"
	HBSA (n=46)	7%		65%		28%	The majority of students feel they can talk about ideas and feelings "some"
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)	13%		67%		20%	The majority of students feel they can talk about ideas and feelings "some"
Has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	Central (n=20)	10%		35%		55%	Nearly all students (90%) feel HAP has increased their confidence
	HBSA (n=46)	7%		37%	4%	52%	Nearly all students (93%) feel HAP has increased their confidence
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)	7%		53%		40%	Nearly all students (93%) feel HAP has increased their confidence
How much does your teacher like to work with you?	Central (n=18)			39%		61%	All students think their teacher likes to work with them at least some

	HBSA (n=44)			52%		48%	All students think their teacher likes to work with them at least some
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=14)			64%		36%	All students think their teacher likes to work with them at least some
Does your teacher enjoy teaching in the HAP?	Central (n=17)			12%	6%	83%	Nearly all students think their teacher likes teaching in the HAP a lot
	HBSA (n=43)			14%		86%	Nearly all students think their teacher likes teaching in the HAP some to a lot
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=12)			42%		58%	Nearly all students think their teacher likes teaching in the HAP a lot
		Not hard		A little		Very hard	
How hard is the schoolwork in the HAP?	Central (n=20)	20%	5%	55%	5%	15%	Most students (80%) think HAP schoolwork is not or only a little hard
	HBSA (n=46)	9%		65%	7%	20%	¾ of students think HAP schoolwork is not or only a little hard
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)	20%		73%		7%	Only one student thinks the work is very hard
		None	30mins- 1 hr	>1 <1.5	1.5- 2hrs	>2 hrs	
How much time do you spend on homework each night, on the average?	Central (n=20)	10%	70%	10%	10%	0%	Most students (80%) spend an hour or less on homework
	HBSA (n=46)	0%	50%		39%	11%	Half of the students spend more than 1.5 hours on homework and half spend less
	HBS, Harney, & PW (n=15)	7%	73%		20%		Most students (80%) spend an hour or less on homework

Middle School Responses

	Not at all	Some	A lot		
Has the HAP made you more excited about learning?	14%	52%	1%	33%	More than half say they are more excited with 1/3 a lot more
How much do you get to study things that you like?	6%	63%		31%	They get to study things they want to some – 1/3 a lot
How much has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	5%	47%		48%	Nearly all say they can analyze better, with 1/2 saying HAP helped a lot
How much has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	7%	36%		57%	Nearly 2/3 say HAP has helped a lot in being more responsible. ~1/3 some
How much has the HAP helped you learn?	1%	33%	1%	65%	Almost all say HAP has helped, with 2/3 saying a lot
Are you able to talk in your HAP classroom about your ideas and feelings?	11%	62%	1%	26%	About 2/3 say they can talk about ideas and feelings some, 1/3 a lot
Has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	7%	40%	3%	51%	Half say it helped a lot and most of the rest say it helped some
How much does your teacher like to work with you?	51%			49%	Split right down the middle – half say their teacher likes to work with them and half say they don't
Does your teacher enjoy teaching in the HAP?	18%		1%	81%	Nearly all think their teacher likes working in HAP

	Not hard		A little		Very hard	
How hard is the schoolwork in the HAP?	14%	1%	64%	5%	16%	The majority don't think it's that hard – only a little
	None		30-1hr	<1.5	1.5-2hrs	2+ hrs
How much time do you spend on homework each night, on the average?	4%		59%	3%	28%	6%
						Most spend ½ hour -2hrs

Lebanon High School Student Responses

	GRADE 9 (n=40)						
	Not at all		A small amount	A moderate amount		A great deal	Fullest extent
1. To what extent has the HAP made you more excited about learning?	8%		18%	58%	3%	10%	5%
Nearly all are moderately excited about learning in the HAP							
2. To what extent do you get to study things that you like?	3%		33%	30%		30%	5%
2/3 feel they get to study what they want somewhat, with a third saying only a small amount.							
3. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	0%		18%	38%		33%	13%
All feel HAP has helped them analyze things somewhat, with almost half saying a great deal or fullest extent.							
4. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	3%		15%	25%		48%	10%
About 2/3 think HAP has made them quite a bit more responsible							
5. To what extent has the HAP helped you learn?	0%		5%	38%		48%	10%
About 2/3 think it's helped them learn							
6. How difficult is the schoolwork in the HAP?	0%	3%	18%	48%		28%	5%
Only about 40% think the HAP is difficult, with the majority thinking it is moderately challenging							
7. To what extent are you able to talk in your HAP classroom(s) about your ideas and feelings?	3%		28%	33%		35%	3%
They seem to have positive impressions about their opportunities to discuss their ideas and feelings, with only 1/3 saying they get little opportunity							
8. To what extent has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	5%		20%	38%		28%	10%
The majority feel it has increased their confidence							

9. To what extent does your teacher like to work with you?	0%	3%	20%	33%		35%	10%
Most (78%) believe their teachers like to work with them at least a moderate amount							
10. To what extent does your teacher enjoy teaching in the HAP?	3%		5%	36%		49%	8%
Most think their teachers like teaching in the HAP							

GRADE 10 (n=42)							
	Not at all		A small amount	A moderate amount		A great deal	Fullest extent
1. To what extent has the HAP made you more excited about learning?	20%		20%	46%		12%	2%
A full 40% are not terribly excited about learning in the HAP (not or small amt)							
2. To what extent do you get to study things that you like?	7%		26%	41%		21%	5%
2/3 feel they get to study what they want somewhat, with a third saying only a small amount.							
3. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	5%		10%	33%		50%	2%
85% feel HAP has helped them analyze things somewhat, with more than half saying a great deal or fullest extent.							
4. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	10%		27%	24%		39%	0%
About 2/3 think HAP has made them quite a bit more responsible							
5. To what extent has the HAP helped you learn?	0%		12%	36%		45%	7%
Almost all think it's helped them learn							
6. How difficult is the schoolwork in the HAP?	2%		5%	33%		45%	14%
Nearly all think the HAP is difficult,							
7. To what extent are you able to talk in your HAP classroom(s) about your ideas and feelings?	5%		10%	36%		38%	12%
They seem to have positive impressions about their opportunities to discuss their ideas and feelings, with only 15% saying they get little opportunity							
8. To what extent has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	12%		24%	29%		29%	5%
The majority (60%) feel it has increased their confidence at least moderately							

9. To what extent does your teacher like to work with you?	2%		12%	24%		44%	17%
Most (68%) believe their teachers like to work with them at least a moderate amount							
10. To what extent does your teacher enjoy teaching in the HAP?	0%		7%	20%		44%	29%
Most think their teachers like teaching in the HAP with 30% saying "fullest extent"							

GRADE 11 (n=44)							
	Not at all		A small amount	A moderate amount		A great deal	Fullest extent
1. To what extent has the HAP made you more excited about learning?	11%		11%	64%		11%	2%
Nearly 3/4 are excited about learning in the HAP							
2. To what extent do you get to study things that you like?	2%		18%	41%		30%	9%
Nearly all feel they get to study what they want somewhat, with 20% saying only a small amount.							
3. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	2%		2%	18%		52%	25%
Nearly all feel HAP has helped them analyze things, with 77% saying a great deal or fullest extent.							
4. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	5%		18%	27%		34%	16%
About 1/2 think HAP has made them quite a bit more responsible							
5. To what extent has the HAP helped you learn?	0%		16%	34%		34%	16%
Almost all think it's helped them learn							
6. How difficult is the schoolwork in the HAP?	0%		5%	34%		43%	18%
About 2/3 think the HAP schoolwork is very difficult, with 1/3 feeling it is only moderately or not difficult.							
7. To what extent are you able to talk in your HAP classroom(s) about your ideas and feelings?	2%		10%	19%		41%	29%
They seem to have positive impressions about their opportunities to discuss their ideas and feelings, with only 12% saying they get little opportunity							
8. To what extent has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	9%		18%	34%		25%	14%
About 2/3 feel it has increased their confidence at least moderately							

9. To what extent does your teacher like to work with you?	0%		7%	32%	2%	27%	32%
Most (68%) believe their teachers like to work with them at least a moderate amount							
10. To what extent does your teacher enjoy teaching in the HAP?	0%		0%	18%	2%	39%	41%
Most think their teachers like teaching in the HAP with 41% saying "fullest extent"							

		GRADE 12 (n=31)						
		Not at all		A small amount	A moderate amount		A great deal	Fullest extent
1. To what extent has the HAP made you more excited about learning?	0%		29%	48%		19%	3%	
About 3/4 feel the HAP has made them moderately or a small amount excited about learning.								
2. To what extent do you get to study things that you like?	7%		29%	29%		26%	10%	
More than 1/3 feel they get to study what they want only a small amount or not at all.								
3. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	0%		7%	29%		58%	7%	
Nearly all feel HAP has helped them analyze things, with 64% saying a great deal or fullest extent.								
4. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	3%		7%	36%		55%	0%	
More than 1/2 think HAP has made them quite a bit more responsible								
5. To what extent has the HAP helped you learn?	3%		3%	42%		42%	10%	
Almost all think it's helped them learn, at least a moderate amount								
6. How difficult is the schoolwork in the HAP?	0%		13%	52%		29%	7%	
About 36% think the HAP schoolwork is very difficult, with more than half feeling it is only moderately or not difficult.								
7. To what extent are you able to talk in your HAP classroom(s) about your ideas and feelings?	0%		13%	10%		48%	29%	
They seem to have positive impressions about their opportunities to discuss their ideas and feelings, with only 13% saying they get little opportunity								
8. To what extent has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	3%		23%	36%		32%	7%	
About 2/3 feel it has increased their confidence at least moderately								

9. To what extent does your teacher like to work with you?	0%		0%	28%		48%	24%
All believe their teachers like to work with them at least a moderate amount							
10. To what extent does your teacher enjoy teaching in the HAP?	0%		3%	37%		30%	30%
Most think their teachers like teaching in the HAP with 1/3 saying "fullest extent"							

		Grade 9 (n=40)					
		None		30 mins-1 hr	1 ½ - 2 hrs		2+ hrs
11. How much time do you spend on homework each night, on the average?		3%		40%	43%		15%
Most students spend 30mins-2 hrs on homework							

		Grade 10 (n=42)					
		None		30 mins-1 hr	1 ½ - 2 hrs		2+ hrs
11. How much time do you spend on homework each night, on the average?		10%	2%	33%	36%		19%
About 3/4 spend 30mins-2 hrs on homework with a few spending more and 10% spending "none"							

		Grade 11 (n=44)					
		None		30 mins-1 hr	1 ½ - 2 hrs		2+ hrs
11. How much time do you spend on homework each night, on the average?		0%		23%	36%		41%
About 3/4 spend more than 1/1/2 hrs on homework, with almost half spending more than 2 hrs							

		Grade 12 (n=31)					
		None		30 mins-1 hr	1 ½ - 2 hrs		2+ hrs
11. How much time do you spend on homework each night, on the average?		0%		45%	36%		19%
Most students spend 30mins-2 hrs on homework, with 19% spending more than 2 hrs.							

Parent Responses

		Never/ Not True	Seldom/ Partially True	Half Time/ Somewh at True	Usually/ Generally True	Always/ True	
1. Extent to which HAP has made your child more excited about learning.	Central (n=9)	0%	22%	11%	56%	11%	
	HBS (n=13)	0%	0%	0%	85%	15%	
	HBSA (n=9)	0%	0%	0%	78%	22%	
	LHS (n=23)	1%	22%	30%	35%	9%	
	LMS (n=57)	5%	7%	21%	44%	23%	
Parents from HBS and HBSA feel their child is more excited about learning because of the HAP, but fewer at Central and the Middle School think so. Fewer than half of parents of high school students feel it has made their child excited about learning.							
Extent to which HAP has helped your child become a better evaluator of his or her own work	Central (n=9)	0%	33%	33%	22%	11%	
	HBS (n=13)	0%	0%	39%	46%	15%	
	HBSA (n=9)	0%	0%	11%	67%	22%	
	LHS (n=23)	0%	22%	22%	35%	22%	
	LMS (n=55)	2%	13%	16%	36%	33%	
A majority of parents feel their child has become a better evaluator of his/her work through the HAP, with HBS and HBSA parents most likely to have this opinion.							
Opportunity to select topics for study which are of interest to your child.	Central (n=8)	25%	13%	50%	13%	0%	
	HBS (n=13)	0%	8%	8%	39%	46%	
	HBSA (n=9)	0%	0%	0%	67%	33%	
	LHS (n=23)	0%	30%	39%	22%	9%	
	LMS (n=56)	9%	18%	29%	38%	7%	
HBS and HBSA parents were most likely to feel their students have an opportunity to study what they like, with Central parents more likely to disagree. One-third of parents of high school and middle school students feel their child does not have an opportunity to study what they are interested in.							
Opportunity to pursue topics to the extent your child desires.	Central (n=8)	25%	13%	38%	25%	0%	
	HBS (n=13)	0%	8%	0%	54%	39%	
	HBSA (n=9)	0%	0%	22%	33%	44%	
	LHS (n=23)	0%	26%	44%	17%	13%	
	LMS (n=56)	9%	16%	26%	2%	45%	5%
Parents of Central students appear to be less satisfied with their child's opportunity to pursue topics to the extent they desire at the other elementary schools. A majority of parents of high school students (70%) feel this is seldom or half of the time true. About half of parents of middle schoolers feel their child generally is able to pursue topics as much as they want.							
Extent to which HAP has helped your child to think critically.	Central (n=9)	11%	11%	11%	56%	11%	
	HBS (n=13)	0%	0%	8%	31%	62%	
	HBSA (n=9)	0%	0%	0%	56%	44%	
	LHS (n=23)	0%	9%	17%	48%	26%	
	LMS (n=57)	4%	4%	28%	39%	26%	
About 2/3 of Central parents feel HAP has helped their child think critically, compared to nearly 100% of the other elementary school parents. High school parents are also generally in agreement that HAP has helped their child think critically, Most middle school parents think so, but a higher percentage than in the other schools are less in agreement.							
Extent to which HAP has helped your child to organize his/her thoughts.	Central (n=9)	11%	11%	33%	44%	0%	
	HBS (n=12)	0%	0%	17%	50%	8%	25%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%	0%	33%	33%	33%	

	LHS (n=23)	0%		17%		26%		39%		17%
	LMS (n=56)	2%		11%		27%		46%		14%
HBS and HBSA parents agree that HAP has helped children organize their thoughts, but Central parents less so. A majority of high school and middle school parents feel HAP has helped in this regard.										
Extent to which HAP has helped your child to develop more individual responsibility.	Central (n=9)	11%		22%		11%		56%		0%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		8%		42%		50%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		11%		56%		33%
	LHS (n=23)	0%		17%		17%		44%		22%
	LMS (n=56)	5%		7%		21%		43%		23%
Most parents feel that the HAP has made their child more responsible.										
Extent to which your child's HAP has helped your child develop a sense of control over his or her future.	Central (n=7)	14%		29%		14%		14%		29%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		33%		42%	8%	17%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		11%		33%		33%		22%
	LHS (n=23)	4%		13%		17%		44%		22%
	LMS (n=56)	4%		11%		25%		36%		25%
Most parents feel HAP has helped their child develop a sense of control over his/her future.										
Appropriateness of the way the HAP is organized.	Central (n=6)	17%		17%		33%		17%		17%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		17%		67%		17%
	HBSA (n=9)	11%		11%		22%		33%		22%
	LHS (n=23)	22%		30%		22%		17%		9%
	LMS (n=56)	4%		13%	2%	36%		34%		13%
Few Central parents responded to this question, and the few responses were widespread. HBS parents were most positive about HAP organization and high school parents least. Middle school parents appeared primarily satisfied with HAP organization.										
		Never/ Not True		Seldom / Partial ly True		Half Time/ Some what True		Usually/ General ly True		Always/ True
Suitability of the way by which students are selected for the HAP.	Central (n=8)	13%		25%		38%		25%		0%
	HBS (n=11)	0%		0%		18%		27%		55%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%	11%	56%		11%		22%
	LHS (n=23)	9%		44%		22%		17%		9%
	LMS (n=55)	4%		13%	2%	36%	2%	33%		11%
Lowest ratings of student selection suitability were among the high school parents, with most other parents at least mostly approving.										
Degree to which your child was challenged by the HAP.	Central (n=9)	11%		22%		0%		67%		0%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		0%		33%		67%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		0%		56%		44%
	LHS (n=23)	0%		26%		26%		30%		17%
	LMS (n=57)	2%		2%		16%	2%	51%		28%
Challenge was rated lowest by the high school parents and highest by HBS parents. Others appear to feel the HAP is challenging.										
Opportunities for our child to express his or her ideas and feelings.	Central (n=7)	29%		14%		0%		57%		0%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		8%		25%		67%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		11%		44%		44%
	LHS (n=23)	0%		26%		35%		26%		13%
	LMS (n=56)	4%		14%		14%	2%	38%		29%
The few Central parents responding were split on whether their children have opportunities to express themselves. While most middle school parents felt their children have opportunities, nearly 20% did not. Nearly a third of high school parents felt their child										

seldom could express feelings, but HBS and HBSA parents appear fairly satisfied.									
Extent to which HAP has helped your child develop his or her self-confidence.	Central (n=9)	11%		11%		11%		56%	11%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		8%		42%	50%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		11%		11%		33%	44%
	LHS (n=23)	9%		26%		9%		39%	17%
	LMS (n=57)	2%		9%		30%		32%	28%
The majority of parents in all age groups feel their child's confidence has been boosted by HAP.									
Opportunity for your child to develop a relationship with his or her HAP teacher.	Central (n=8)	25%		0%		13%		38%	25%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		0%		25%	75%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		0%		33%	67%
	LHS (n=23)	4%		22%		17%		44%	13%
	LMS (n=56)	4%		14%		21%		29%	32%
Two Central parents do not feel their child can develop a relationship with her/his teacher, but other elementary parents do feel they can. More than half of middle and high school parents feel their child can develop a relationship with his/her teacher.									
Opportunity for your child to express creativity.	Central (n=9)	11%		11%		44%		33%	0%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		0%		17%	83%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		0%		44%	56%
	LHS (n=23)	0%		17%		26%		26%	30%
	LMS (n=55)	4%		9%	2%	18%		40%	27%
HBS and HBSA parents feel their child can express creativity, but Central parents are less likely to believe so. A majority of high school and middle school parents believe their child can express creativity.									
Extent to which teachers in the HAP take personal interest in your child.	Central (n=8)	25%		0%		0%		38%	38%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		0%		0%	100%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		0%		33%	67%
	LHS (n=23)	0%		30%		22%		30%	17%
	LMS (n=57)	5%		12%	2%	25%	2%	25%	28%
Two Central parents do not feel teachers take a personal interest in their child, but all other elementary parents do. A third of high school parents think teachers seldom take an interest, while a majority of middle school parents (57%) believe they do.									
Extent to which your child's teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects.	Central (n=8)	13%		13%		0%		25%	50%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		0%		17%	83%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		0%		33%	67%
	LHS (n=23)	0%		17%		26%		35%	22%
	LMS (n=57)	2%		9%		25%		33%	32%
Teacher enthusiasm appears to be most obvious to HBS and HBSA parents, with Central parents close behind. Parents perceive teachers to be enthusiastic less of the time in middle and high school, but more than half find the teachers enthusiastic.									
Your overall rating of the HAP in terms of fulfilling your child's immediate educational needs.	Central (n=9)	11%		11%		11%		44%	22%
	HBS (n=12)	0%		0%		8%		58%	33%
	HBSA (n=9)	0%		0%		22%		33%	44%
	LHS (n=23)	4%		17%		26%		44%	9%
	LMS (n=56)	0%		5%		34%		38%	21%
Most elementary parents feel HAP at least usually fulfills their child's immediate educational needs. A majority of middle and high school parents feel their child's needs are being met.									

Open Ended Questions: Parents

The next section provides an analysis of the answers to the open ended questions from the parents.

The process for analyzing open-ended comments from parents follows:

The comments were divided into groups by school level. Analysis was handled separately for parents with children in the middle school and high school. The elementary comments were divided up such that parents with children in Hattie B. Stokes were in one group, and the other elementary schools were combined together. The elementary schools were divided in part to highlight the experience of parents with children involved in the self-contained program.

The parents were asked to respond to four open-ended questions:

- (a) What can your child do now that he or she could not do before participating in the HAP? Academically? Socially?
- (b) How do you think attending the HAP will affect the remaining time you child has in school?
- (c) If you had the power to change the HAP, what would you do?, and
- (d) You have been very helpful in answering these questions. We have covered a lot of ground. Is there anything you would like to say to the director of the High Ability Program?

The comments to these questions were read over several times. Underlying themes that seemed the most paramount were listed. Comments that represented the themes developed were marked. A few parents with more than one child in the HAP turned in more than one survey. If a parent provided the same statements on more than one survey, only one set of those comments were included in analysis. Also, a theme developed generally consisted of at least two parents voicing similar view points. Stand-alone comments did not constitute a theme. A frequency count was conducted to determine the number of parents who contributed comments to the themes created. The frequency count is reported along with the themes and descriptive evidence of the themes from the data. Because of the propensity for parents to contribute to more than one theme when responding to the open-ended questions, the frequency count for the number of parents

contributing to a theme may not reflect the number of parents per group who participated in the audit.

Hattie B. Stokes

A total of 21 parents provided feedback on the Lebanon Community School Corporation Program for High Ability Students Parent Form from Hattie B. Stokes Elementary School.

In no particular order, the themes that arose from the data were the following,

- (a) Parents value the program at Lebanon generally and at Stokes particularly
- (b) The teaching staff at Hattie is appreciated
- (c) Elitism/worry about perception of program
- (d) Curricular improvements/recommendations
- (e) Transparency
- (f) Call for consistent leadership for the high ability program
- (g) Concern about transition to middle school. Parents wary, unsure of the ID process at the middle school or generally
- (h) Students have grown socially because of the program
- (i) Students are thriving academically

Parents Value the High Ability Program at Lebanon Generally and at Stokes Particularly

Eight of the 21 parents made mention of the value of the program in their child(ren)'s academic life and for the school corporation. Comments ranged from encouragement to "keep up the good work" to announcements about the importance of the program for their youth.

As one parent stated,

Thank you for offering this comprehensive program. The all-the-time advanced classroom is an amazing improvement over the two-hours-a-week program which was in place when I was a student at Lebanon.

A second parent noted,

Having the option of a self-contained HA classroom is a huge advantage for this school district. I would hope that the admin. would work to see that this continues.

The Teaching Staff at Hattie is Appreciated

This theme is similar in spirit to parents applauding the teaching styles that encourage academic and/or social growth in children. This particular theme was developed based on six parents making special mention of particular teachers or the importance of the teaching staff en masse in helping the goals of the program gain traction with youth.

Examples of these comments include, “ HA teachers in self-contained classrooms have been excellent!” and “I think any child with the great tools and great teachers...can reach their potential.”

Elitism/Worry About Perception of Program

Three parents were concerned that parents, teachers, and students who participated in the high ability program generally and Hattie B. Stokes program particularly were vulnerable to accusations of elitism. Two parents were particularly worried about these accusations being leveled against the children who participated in the program. They exhorted the school corporation to “...remove the perception that it [HAP] is elitist” and to “...accept the Academy and the HAP, not single out these children.”

Curricular Improvements/Recommendations

Approximately half of the parents (i.e., 10 parents) offered recommendations for curricular changes in response to the last two questions of the survey. Responses ranged from the endorsement of smaller classes, to the worry that a “constrictive” scheduling protocol could potentially impede the educative aims of the teaching staff, to encouraging the maintenance of programs like foreign language at the elementary level. One parent felt teachers should be

trained in best practices in working with students along the “spectrum” of learning differences, one parent urged that the access to technology in the classroom be enhanced, and two parents felt the youth in the Stokes program would benefit from educative programming about character building and social development.

One parent supplied,

We would encourage the HAP teachers to challenge students to the best of their ability and teachers should be given freedom and resources to do this.”

Transparency

Four parents encouraged more communication between the leadership of the high ability program and parents. One of the parents would welcome an explanation for how the high ability program maps onto state standards, and options put forward to enhance transparency about decision making include periodic newsletters and public, easily accessible information about the “ID procedure, curriculum, personnel, etc. for K-12.”

One parent argued,

It would be helpful to have a more specific appeals process as well as an identification process. Why is this information not listed on the LCSC website? Is it a secret process? I think this lack of transparency has led to a lot of elitist misconceptions about HA students-particularly those in the Academy.

Call for Consistent Leadership for the High Ability Program

Four parents contend that leadership for the high ability program has been inconsistent. They call for a “go-to” person that would advocate for the high ability program for the district, facilitate coherent implementation of a district-wide curriculum for high ability students that pushes their educative growth and development, and communicate a consistent message and answers questions about issues like identification and curriculum.

“Lack of consistent/knowledgeable leadership at the admin. level has been a problem. Over 5 yrs. there have been probably 6-8 administrators who, at one time or another, have been the go-to people for the GT program.”

Concern About Transition to Middle School

Four parents seemed concerned that the transition to middle school and high school would interrupt the educative services offered to their children. Three of the four parents wondered whether their child would be placed into the high ability program at the middle school level. They did not seem clear which artifacts would be included as evidence for their child's continued involvement in the high ability program. One parent questioned the validity of the "recommendation process", another parent called for a clear, written explication of the identification process at the middle school, and one other parent hoped that input from the fifth-grade teacher would be sought as a means of making the case for admittance for their child into the high ability program at the middle school level.

Students Have Grown Socially Because of the Program

Eleven parents spoke positively of the program bolstering the social development of their children. Seven of the parents were appreciative of their children being able to engage in small group work with "like-minded" youth in class. Parents spoke warmly of childhood friendships that have been formed and the growing willingness by their child to follow as well serve as the leader in group interactions. According to the parents, their children were navigating needed intellectual challenge from peers, sometimes for the first time. One parent stated, "Socially he no longer feels like the complete 'odd man out' & is learning how to better interact." Two parents stated that their children were seeking to develop their artistic talent as a vehicle for communicating with others, and their children growing in confidence and being willing to distance themselves from the weighty pursuit of perfectionism gladdened several parents.

Finally, one parent lauded the work of the teaching staff in helping her child thrive socially:

"My daughter has blossomed in the Academy Program. Her biggest challenges have been social, and her teacher has done an amazing job helping her socialize."

Students are Thriving Academically

All but one of the parents spoke of the growth in the academic acumen of their child due to participation in the Stokes program. Several parents spoke of the program being a "springboard" for a future that includes college. They seemed confident that the hard work their

child(ren) were engaged in would provide the building blocks necessary to adjust comfortably to collegiate academic demands. Other parents felt the experience at Stokes were preparing their child to grow in their mastery of academically rigorous tasks. Parents note that children have grown in their capacity to manage their time effectively, to juggle competing academic demands, to be tenacious, and to think critically. Children were learning at an individual pace, avoiding boredom, and developing greater interest in academic areas like math, science, social studies, and reading. Parents seemed heartened by their child becoming excited about learning and being challenged in ways commiserate with their academic abilities.

As one parent confirmed,

He now has the ability to work at or above his level. He was being forced to work years below before which lead to frustration & depression....He previously was on a path of hating education & everything that went with it.

Central Elementary, Harney Elementary, and Perry Worth Elementary Schools

A total of 13 parents provided feedback on the Lebanon Community School Corporation Program for High Ability Students Parent Form from Central Elementary ($n = 9$), Harney Elementary School ($n = 3$), and Perry Worth Elementary School ($n = 1$). One parent from Central felt she/he could not contribute via the open-ended comments, so 12 parent forms comprised the data set for the two elementary schools.

In no particular order, the themes that arose from the data were the following,

- (a) Identification
- (b) Child thriving academically
- (c) The effectiveness of the high ability program is questioned
- (d) Social/Emotional needs of youth
- (e) “Us Versus Them”: Academy Participants and Participants in High Ability Programs at Home Schools
- (f) Ideas to enhance communication with Parents

Identification

Two parents argued that the identification protocol may be narrowly defined by test scores or influenced by the parental pressure on administration. They called for the inclusion of characteristics like past performance and motivation when making the determination for which children to bring into the high ability program. A third parent wondered whether the later identification of his/her son would contribute to knowledge gaps in the future. They worried that the late identification of their child in the fifth grade may lead to their child feeling “lost” or “struggling” in the advanced math course in the sixth grade and subsequently falling through the cracks.

Child Thriving Academically

Eleven parents felt the high ability program had contributed to their child thriving academically or would continue to challenge their child in the future. Three parents lauded their child’s growth in math, and one parent was gladdened by his/her child performing well on the ISTEP and reading above grade level. The high ability program is credited with bolstering one’s child’s academic self-confidence, enhancing self-reliance, and preparing children to be academically competitive in middle school, high school and college. Some parents noted that the program has helped their child develop perseverance and bolster intellectual curiosity.

As one parent noted,

Academically, my child’s self-confidence has increased. She is not afraid to ask questions and look for answers....I think my child will be able to expand on her interests and develop a plan of action for college.

The Effectiveness of the High Ability Program is Questioned

Four parents had several questions about the effectiveness of the high ability program in general or at their respective elementary schools. One parent noted that though the high ability program offered more than other school systems, what was made available to their child was not as promised. In a similar vein, one parent could not credit the program with bolstering their child’s development academically, and one parent did not feel the high ability program provided a curricular program that was tailored to meeting the educative needs of high ability youth.

“Opportunities to excel or advance in special areas of interest or achievement are very limited....We do not see any challenges being offered above what the mainstreamed students are offered.” A fourth parent noted that they had only recently come to understand how the high ability program benefits their son.

Social/Emotional Needs of Youth

Two parents spoke expressly to the potential of their child feeling isolated due to involvement in the high ability program. One parent argued that involvement in a mixed-ability class would stave off feelings of isolation, and the other parent noted that feelings of isolation and stress could be worrisome.

“Our experience is that it [the high ability program] will, at times, isolate my child and cause stress. I do feel that this child (our 2nd) will be better at handling these situations but it will still be a challenge.”

“Us Versus Them”: Academy Participants and Participants in High Ability Programs at Home Schools

Two parents argued that the presence of the Academy contributes to a feeling of inequality. One parent urged parents whose children attended the Academy to not try to “sell their program to our family”. This parent did not feel families who kept their youth at their home school were treated as “equals” with families and youth involved with the Academy. The second parent felt the Academy benefited youth and families that were presently advantaged “culturally and economically” and created arbitrary divisions. “In my experience, the existence of the Academy fosters an unhealthy ‘us vs. them’ dynamic and ghettoizes students who attend.” This parent further attributed the performance of youth who attended the Academy to class size.

Ideas to Enhance Communication With Parents

Two parents advanced ideas for ways communication can be enhanced with parents. One parent recommended newsletters that kept parents apprised of what was occurring for students at different grade levels and/or different schools while the second parent requested a information session about the high ability program at the middle school level for those students near the transition to middle school.

Lebanon Middle School

A total of 54 parents provided feedback on the Lebanon Community School Corporation Program for High Ability Students Parent Form from Lebanon High School. Two parents did not include feedback via the open-ended comment section of the form, and three parents had more than one child in the high ability program at the middle school level and supplied original feedback for each child. Thus, despite 2 parents not providing comments, 54 parent forms comprised the data set for the middle school.

In no particular order, the themes that arose from the data were the following,

- (a) Identification
- (b) Homework
- (c) Teachers
- (d) Program is a positive for the youth involved
- (e) Programmatic recommendations
- (f) Social/emotional development and needs of youth
- (g) Effectiveness of program questioned
- (h) Critique of administration/liasons
- (i) Transparency/Communication encouraged

Identification

A total of 8 parents commented on the identification process for the high ability program. One parent discouraged the identification of youth in elementary school. Four parents noted that the identification process has left out some students or runs the risk of leaving out students. Two of these parents felt the identification protocol was overly narrow. They argued that some students may be poor test takers, navigating disabilities that may mask identification or should include behavioral criteria. "I think the HAP leaves out children who are on the borderline of getting in

these classes...I have another child who is dyslexi[c] but has an IQ of 121. He is not allowed in HAP classes because of reading.”

One parent felt her son was withheld from the program despite her son earning the same scores as other students accepted into the program and also noted that that protocol may be overly stringent for parents. In particular, she questioned the necessity of parent essays for student enrollment in a science program. Two parents noted the import of the parent in identifying youth for the high ability program. One of the parents felt parent input should be given more weight in identification decisions, while the other parent questioned the identification protocol because the parent and the child completed legwork to involve the child in the high ability program.

Homework

Six parents made special mention of the amount of homework children received. The parents were in consensus that the level of homework seemed overly much. As one parent stated, “These kids sit in school for 7 hours a day & then have to come home & spend 1-3 more on school work. They need to be allowed to be kids!” Three of the six parents felt the amount of homework was meant to delineate high ability status rather than the curriculum offered, “I am sometimes concerned that the HA program at the MS is ‘more’ – more projects, more homework, etc.- challenging the students time-management skills, but not necessarily their intellectual skills.”

Teachers

Twenty parents offered feedback about the teachers. One parent argued that the knowledge and experience of the teaching staff ought to be sought to help steer the high ability program. Another parent felt the teaching and counseling staff needed to work more closely together to synchronize services for the youth part of the program. Seven parents were troubled that the math teaching staff may not be reaching their kids. One parent was concerned the teaching style in a math class may not be appropriate, a further parent felt a different math text needed to be utilized. Math problems seemed difficult for youth to understand, and one other parent felt the teaching staff should be supported to pursue additional professional development. “While we are not stating that the teacher is not passionate about teaching; we are concerned about the style of

instruction. What may work for one child may not for another. Our child's math test scores (national) do not match the struggle that he has had with the subject this year."

Twelve other parents included general comments that centered on the teaching staff having more time to address issues like enhancing the writing of youth and being prepared to handle diversity within a classroom. Some parents worried that teachers may decide to move forward with a curricular plan at the expense of learning, and one parent made mention of the Indiana's standardized testing impacting teaching style. "My impression of Lebanon's HAP program is most of the teachers, merely plough through the text book, hoping to get the right scores for ISTEP and MAPS".

Finally, three parents were concerned by some of the comments made by teachers. All three worried that some in the high ability program were being "belittled" by a teacher during the course of an academic day. Two pointed to disparaging remarks made by teachers and a third parent felt the educative needs of their son were being made secondary to meeting the needs of the class.

Program is a Positive for the Youth Involved

Forty-four parents wrote that the high ability program was benefiting their children and/or would benefit their children in their academic futures. A number of parents felt the high ability program was succeeding in challenging youth and thus staving away boredom. "Being in the HAP prevented my son from developing lazy study habits. He is better prepared to take challenging HS courses than he would have been. He did not have to wait for the curriculum to catch up w/him. Therefore, school is rarely boring." Another parent stated that his/her son "seems to be continually improving in his ability to organize his thoughts and extrapolate information. HAP has taken him to new heights, new ideas. He enjoys moving at a faster pace...." Many parents felt their child's continued involvement in the high ability program was a positive means of keeping their youth invested in their learning in high school and beyond; 13 parents felt the program was key to helping their child prepare for college, and an additional seven parents felt the program was necessary for success in high school generally or in high ability courses in high school particularly. Some parents have noted that due to involvement in

the high ability program, their children are better able to manage time, think critically, plan appropriately to manage large projects, stay true to their academic selves, and be responsible.

One parent stated,

She takes school seriously & is very organized & focused. HAP allows her to be the person she is while learning with others like her.

Programmatic Recommendations

Twenty parents supplied recommendations for changes the high ability program could make. Nine parents endorse more choice being implemented into the high ability program. Some parents felt choice could be implemented via projects based in personal interest. Others felt more choices should be offered through in an increase in the number of high ability courses offered. “The school allows acceleration in math. However, some HA might also be well served by acceleration in other subject areas.”

Several parents felt attention needed to be devoted to the math, science, and social studies curriculum, adding a foreign language, helping children master the mechanics of effective writing. Other recommendations include teaching children to master the rigors of a demanding project (i.e., organization, time management, and team work), building in smaller classes, lessening the focus on grades or grade point average, reinstated the lunch time seminars, and explicating the options available to youth after middle school.

“HAP needs to give kids tools for HAP learning. EX.-Projects, esp. group projects are assigned, but the tools of how to do such projects. How to budget out time, how to coordinate with people you just met at school. Those kind[s] of tools are rarely if ever discussed. These are more important than actual subject matter and need to be addressed.”

Social/Emotional Development and Needs of Youth

Thirty parents commented on the social and emotional development of their child vis-à-vis the high ability program. Fourteen parents felt the program had enhanced their child’s self-confidence. Children seemed more keen to speak in front of an audience of their peers, defend their viewpoints, and/or just feel more capable. Several parents noted that the program put their

children in contact with other children that were similar to them. Their children were enjoying the friendships they were developing, partly because they were no longer the “weird” one. A parent stated her daughter “...was very shy as an infant and toddler. Being surrounded by other HA children who are very outgoing and verbal has helped her be more social.” One parent noted that the program was encouraging their son to “experience challenge/frustration and [the] joy of overcoming them”; another parent felt the high ability program was helping his/her daughter develop “tact and responsibility”.

Four parents were either ambivalent about the impact of the program on the social and emotional health of their children, “I don’t think it has helped or not helped,” or did not feel the program was impacting their child positively. One parent, in reference to perfectionism, worried, “Perfectionism is a high skism of HAP kids & making them more nervous children is not helpful.”

Effectiveness of Program Questioned

Three parents questioned whether the program offered enough challenge for their child. All of the parents seemed to feel that there was little difference between the high ability program and the general education program. “The HA program in the Lebanon School district has very little to do with her abilities. I think that they provide her with normal work and direction that any other child receives. Her tasks are just at the 7th grade level rather than the 6th grade level. I have never witnessed my child being asked to perform work that is over and above the type of work her friends who are not labeled as high ability perform.” One of the parents declared that he/she was considering withdrawing their child due to the lack of academic rigor.

Critique of Administration/Liaisons

Seven parents offered a critique of the management of the high ability program by administration and/or liaisons. One parent worried that administrative decision making “watered down” the program to accommodate students who did not learn material as quickly as his/her child, and another parent felt the high ability program should focus energies toward meeting “two objectives at a time”. A third parent endorsed the development of a leadership position whereby the person was endorsed in high ability studies and had some input into curriculum developed by teachers.

Transparency/Communication Encouraged

Five parents felt communication or transparency could be enhanced about the high ability program. “Do everything you can to help people understand the ID process for HA. I know this is hard to do- things change & develop and you have a lot on your plate. And HA parents can be a demanding bunch to say the least. You’re doing good work (don’t let them grind you down!); keep working on communication!”

Lebanon High School

A total of 23 parents provided feedback on the Lebanon Community School Corporation Program for High Ability Students Parent Form from Lebanon High School. Three parents did not provide any feedback via the open-ended comment section of the parent form, so 20 parent forms comprised the data set for the high school.

In no particular order, the themes that arose from the data were the following,

- (a) Call to increase student involvement
- (b) Transparency
- (c) Children thriving academically
- (d) The effectiveness of the high ability program is questioned
- (e) Social/emotional needs of youth
- (g) Programmatic recommendations

Call to Increase Student Involvement

Five parents felt the high ability courses should be made available to any student who desires them. While two of the parents were pretty succinct, “Make it more available to more students”, one parent connected the lack of availability to elitism and a second parent felt the students should not be withheld from moving ahead. A third parent felt students should expressly have access to high ability courses in the math and science academic areas.

“I HATE the current system of “enrolling” students in advanced courses. Let kids take courses if they want to try it. If they don’t succeed they will fall back to regular classes...we are denying far too many the ability to move ahead!”

Transparency

Four parents urged communication be enhanced. Three of the four made particular mention of enhancing communication about the identification process. Parents were calling for more information about the selection process and the curriculum for high ability courses. One parent also noted that the information provided online about the high ability program seemed limited and warned that parents moving to the area may not think highly of the level of information provided on the LCSC website. A parent connected increased communication about the selection process with further establishing credibility, and one other parent endorsed a meeting with the selection committee to talk over the honors courses offered at the high school and to attain guidance about courses the adolescents should pursue.

One parent avowed,

I would open up the lines of communication with the parents. We are totally in the dark about the selection process. It’s like it’s a big black mystery-the big secret about who gets in & why. I would love to see what “they” look at & how my daughter is rated & compares to those who do/do not get selected.

Children Thriving Academically

Fifteen parents stated that the high ability program was providing the means for which their child could thrive academically. Parents felt the program was helping prepare their child for college, leadership, and meeting challenges head on. The program is credited with helping children see nuance, become better organized, more confident (especially when speaking in front of a group), work successfully independently and in groups, think critically and live into higher expectations. Several parents noted the program was challenging their youth academically and one parent felt the program was helping their child to learn to value an education.

One parent declared,

Its building a leader that will understand they have the ability to choose their future not have their future chosen for them.

The Effectiveness of the High Ability Program is Questioned

Four parents questioned whether the program has contributed to the academic lives of their youth. One parent felt his/her child was going “downhill”, and another parent said, “I really do not see any difference this program has had on my child. He/She would have been a straight ‘A’ student without the ‘title’.” A parent supplied that she/he could not see whether the academic programming for the high ability youth differed from the programming offered to the general student body. “High Ability, Gifted, or whatever label is put on a student is worthless unless it is backed up with specific programs for them.” A fourth parent noted that self-contained classes have not been substantiated as beneficial for high ability youth. Students who participate in “cluster groups have as much or more success than [students in] self-contained [programs].”

Social/Emotional Needs of Youth

Seven parents provided insight into whether social and emotional needs were being met by the high ability program. Two parents lauded the program for enabling their child to feel the wherewithal to attend social gatherings and to engage with youth who sought to achieve at the same level as their son/daughter. Two parent did not feel that social and emotional needs were addressed at the high school level and one made special mention of stress their child may be laboring under. Three parents felt that counselors and teachers could be doing much more to help their children develop socially. One parent felt that teaching training could counter underachievement and bolster interest in academic subjects. Two parents felt counselors trained to work with high- ability youth could help students work through social problems, and one of these parents said she/he would “educate the administration and staff that a student that has High Abilities is not always as mature as their peers.”

As one parent noted,

Someone besides parents needs to inform & encourage HAP students.

Programmatic Recommendations

Nine parents offered suggestions for programmatic changes. Two parents felt students should pursue individual academic interests formally. One parent offered that this individual program could be tracked onto educational and programmatic concerns. Two parents felt high ability courses should be weighted. One parent argued that weighting courses made it more possible for students to get into the Top 20, and one parent felt class weights should be available for students from the 9th through the 12th grades. Two parents advocated for more diverse course offerings; the rest of the suggestions are pretty eclectic. Other suggestions include ending block scheduling, aiding students in “test taking skills,” providing more one-on-one time with teachers, and rescinding honors credit for nonacademic courses.

The following section patrons the teachers' responses in the questionnaire

Teacher Responses

		Not at all	A small amount	A moderate amount	A great deal	Fullest Extent
Extent to which HAP helped students become better evaluators of their work	Admin (n=6)	0%	33%	33%	33%	0%
	Elem (n=21)	29%	24%	19%	10%	19%
	LMS (n=11)	18%	18%	36%	27%	0%
	LHS (n=41)	29%	7%	44%	17%	2%
Elementary teachers do not fully agree that the HAP helps students become better evaluators of their work. More than half of middle and high school teachers believe it helps.						
Extent to which curriculum allows students to select topics of interest	Admin (n=6)	17%	17%	17%	33%	17%
	Elem (n=22)	23%	9%	36%	9%	23%
	LMS (n=11)	0%	27%	27%	46%	0%
	LHS (n=43)	23%	9%	33%	30%	5%
Most teachers (>60%) think students can select what they are interested in.						
Extent to which HAP lets students pursue topics to depth they desire.	Admin (n=6)	0%	33%	33%	17%	17%
	Elem (n=22)	23%	9%	32%	14%	23%
	LMS (n=11)	0%	27%	55%	18%	0%
	LHS (n=43)	21%	16%	26%	28%	9%
Middle school teachers are most likely to say students can pursue topics to the depth they desire, while high school and elementary teachers do not always agree.						
Extent to which HAP has helped students think critically.	Admin (n=6)	0%	33%	33%	33%	0%
	Elem (n=22)	18%	9%	36%	14%	23%
	LMS (n=11)	0%	0%	46%	46%	9%
	LHS (n=42)	21%	12%	29%	31%	7%
A majority of teachers (>60%) believe HAP helps students think critically. About a third of elementary and high school teachers do not agree.						
Extent to which HAP has helped students organize thoughts.	Admin (n=6)	0%	33%	0%	67%	0%
	Elem (n=22)	14%	5%	55%	5%	23%
	LMS (n=11)	0%	0%	82%	18%	0%
	LHS (n=42)	21%	10%	41%	29%	0%
Most teachers, especially at the middle school level, think HAP helps students organize their thoughts. About a third of high school teachers and 20% of elementary teachers do not think so.						

Extent to which HAP has helped students develop more individual responsibility.	Admin (n=6)	0%		33%		17%		50%		0%
	Elem (n=22)	18%		23%		27%		9%		23%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		9%		73%		9%		9%
	LHS (n=41)	24%		10%		32%		27%		7%
More than a third of elementary and high school teachers do not believe HAP helps students develop individual responsibility, while another third believe that it does quite a bit. Most middle school teachers believe that HAP helps in this regard a moderate amount.										
Extent to which HAP has helped students develop a sense of control over their futures.	Admin (n=6)	17%		17%		33%		33%		0%
	Elem (n=21)	24%		24%		29%		0%		24%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		18%		55%		27%		0%
	LHS (n=42)	26%		5%		24%		38%		7%
Teachers in the higher grades are more likely than those in elementary schools to believe that HAP has helped students develop a sense of control over their future, particularly in the middle school.										
Degree to which your students were challenged by HAP.	Admin (n=6)	17%		17%		33%		17%		17%
	Elem (n=22)	14%		18%		36%		0%		32%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		0%		55%		46%		0%
	LHS (n=41)	24%		2%		38%		29%		7%
Most teachers, particularly at the middle school level, believe the HAP challenges their students.										
Extent to which HAP provides opportunities to express their ideas and feelings.	Admin (n=6)	17%		17%		17%		50%		0%
	Elem (n=22)	14%		14%		36%		9%		27%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		9%		55%		36%		0%
	LHS (n=43)	21%		12%		33%		30%		5%
About a third of elementary and high school teachers believe HAP does not provide much (or any) opportunity for students to express ideas and feelings. A majority of elementary (72%) and high school (68%) teachers believe students can express ideas and feelings, compared to 91% of middle school teachers.										
		Never/ Not True		Seldom / Partiall y True		Half Time/ Somewh at True		Usually/ Generally True		Always/ True
Extent to which HAP has helped your students develop self-confidence.	Admin (n=6)	17%		17%		0%		50%		17%
	Elem (n=22)	14%		14%		32%		18%		23%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		0%		64%		36%		0%
	LHS	20%		12%		37%		29%		2%

	(n=41)								
The majority of teachers at all levels believe that HAP helps students develop self-confidence, particularly at the middle school level. About a third of elementary and high school teachers disagree.									
Extent to which HAP provides opportunities for your students to develop a relationship with you.	Admin (n=6)	17%		17%		17%		33%	17%
	Elem (n=22)	14%		18%		32%		5%	32%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		0%		36%		55%	9%
	LHS (n=41)	24%		12%		27%		32%	5%
About a third of elementary and high school teachers do not feel there are many opportunities for students to develop a relationship with them, but all middle school teachers believe there are such opportunities.									
Extent to which HAP provides opportunities for your students to express creativity.	Admin (n=6)	17%		17%		0%		67%	0%
	Elem (n=22)	14%		5%		46%		5%	32%
	LMS (n=11)	9%		0%		18%		55%	18%
	LHS (n=40)	23%		8%		43%		25%	3%
Most (>70%) of all teachers believe HAP students can express creativity.									
Extent to which teachers in the HAP take a personal interest in their students.	Admin (n=6)	0%		0%		0%		67%	33%
	Elem (n=21)	10%		5%		24%		29%	33%
	LMS (n=11)	0%		9%		18%		64%	9%
	LHS (n=42)	17%		7%		26%		36%	14%
Most teachers (>75%) believe HAP teachers take a personal interest in their students. High school teachers seem to have greatest reservations about this, with ¼ responding that teachers take little interest.									
Your opinion of the suitability of the method by which students are selected for HAP.	Admin (n=6)	0%		0%		17%		50%	33%
	Elem (n=21)	5%		29%		33%		24%	10%
	LMS (n=10)	20%		60%		10%		10%	0%
	LHS (n=36)	3%		17%		25%		53%	3%
Middle school teachers seem to have the greatest reservations about the way students are selected for HAP, with 80% responding that it is not suitable. Few teachers consider the method to be fully suitable.									
Your overall rating of the HAP in terms of fulfilling your students immediate educational needs.	Admin (n=6)	0%		17%		17%		67%	0%
	Elem (n=21)	5%		19%		33%		19%	24%
	LMS (n=10)	0%		20%		40%		40%	0%
	LHS (n=35)	3%		14%		23%		49%	11%
Most teachers (>76%) believe that HAP is at least moderately successful in meeting students immediate educational needs.									

Note: Analysis is not reported for the small number of administrators.

The following section portrays the teachers' responses to the open-ended questions

Middle school teachers (n=11) seem to have very different opinions of HAP than their elementary and high school counterparts. They are very positive in most regards, indicating that the program is successful at helping students be more organized and responsible, express creativity, ideas, and feelings, and generally fulfilling student needs. Although they appear quite pleased in most regards, middle school teachers are most critical of the methods used to select students, with 80% indicating the method is poorly suited.

A fairly consistent 30% of elementary and high school teachers rate items negatively.

Many teachers indicate that they do not believe HAP helps students be better evaluators of their work.

The teacher comments were divided into groups by school level. The analysis was handled separately for teachers of children in the elementary, middle school, and high school. The elementary comments were further split into two groups – classes in a self-contained program and classes with cluster grouping.

Overall distribution within groups was as follows:

Not classified - 2

Self-contained program – 6

Elementary classes with cluster grouping - 18

Middle School –11

High School – 51

Total Respondents: 88

The teachers responded to three open-ended questions:

1. What can your students do now that they could not do before participating in HAP?
Academically? Socially?
2. If you had the power to change HAP, what would you do?
3. Is there anything you would like to say to the director of the High Ability Program?

Unidentified Grade Level/ School Building

Two teachers' response sheets were not clearly indicative of which grade level or school building they originated from. In order to avoid misclassifying their answers, they were grouped separately.

One of the teachers raised a concern over the identification process - opposition to early identification, importance of teacher nomination, and interpretation and practical use of assessment results, "*Stop giving standardized tests to 5+6 year olds. Allow teachers to nominate students who 'need' to be tested. Fix an assessment that is useful to the teachers if they have to administer and score it, they should be able to use info from it. Share the results and what they mean with teachers (we have no idea).*"

The other respondent also made reference to a change in the identification process by reconsidering the current standardized tests being used.

Academy

There were six (6) respondents from the self-contained program. Only three teachers responded to the first question. They reported that they had seen positive changes in leadership, motivation, and self-initiated learning. Academically, they noticed students performed at an accelerated pace and at higher levels.

Three teachers gave various suggestions: evaluate the HA identification process, "*give classes more freedom to enrich their studies*", and create a pamphlet orienting parents on the unique

services offered at the Academy. A fourth teacher requested for more opportunities, support and resources to be made available to general education classrooms.

Praise was offered by two teachers about the HAP. One teacher expressed appreciation for attention and services being given to the HA group instead of just the At-Risk group. The other teacher who strongly believed in the HAP, remarked, "*I think this program is a must!*"

Other Elementary Schools

Five of the 18 (28%) respondents indicated they did not have HA students in their classes. One teacher had pointed out that his/her students were unaware of belonging in a HAP.

According to responses from nine teachers (69% of 12), HA students improved their ability to understand challenging math concepts and had better grades in Math and Reading. Similar to views of teachers from the Academy, they also noticed students working more independently and being more motivated and competitive. Their HA students showed appreciation of contributions made by children of other abilities. Teachers also reported their students feeling safe in an environment of intellectual peers sharing similar interests. This is evidenced by more successful handling of perfectionism, and good communication and association among the HA students. On the other hand, issues were raised regarding the identification process, class size, inclusion of HA with general education, and improved communication among the members of the Broad-Based Planning Committee (BBPC). Changes suggested to the identification process were the use of different assessment measures, implementation of early identification, and appointment of knowledgeable/ certified persons as decision-makers for the HAP. Smaller class sizes and cluster grouping were also suggested.

The only four comments intended for the HAP director fell on different points of a continuum. On one end, some teachers felt they should not nominate students to the HAP. Then, other teachers were discontent about not having teachers' opinions of the HAP heard. Some of the teachers were concerned about misallocation of funds (too much in the Academy, not enough for general and special education). And, at the other end, being praised for "*meeting the needs of HA students by establishing the Academy*".

Lastly, an administrator expressed discomfort over *“being evaluated on the ability to get a Blue Ribbon School level when the highest achieving students are harvested to another building. It will always look like the home school cannot provide the same quality of education. Data shows that this is not true.”*

Middle School

Six of the 11 (55%) respondents observed a difference in students from the HAP. Teachers witnessed the students’ improved critical thinking, communication and writing skills, aptitude to use modern technology, independence, and ability to meet more challenges. Socially, the students had more effective group dynamics and problem-solving skills, a strong sense of community with their peers, and experienced less social anxiety in the middle school environment.

Eighty-two percent (9 of 11) of the Middle School teachers gave suggestions on revamping the HAP. One teacher’s dissatisfaction with the HAP was apparent: *“Get rid of the Academy and the elitist attitude it fosters in the students.”* Other teachers offered less drastic changes. Three teachers indicated the need to make changes in the identification process – distinguishing between high achievement and high ability, improving screening process and selection of students, and increasing transparency with parents and faculty about HAP criteria and appeals. Teachers also asked for more support and incentives in teaching HA students and more opportunities for professional development. One teacher suggested implementation of a pull-out system, while another alluded to development of better exit procedures. One also suggested allowing more creativity in the classroom, saying, *“High ability students should not receive more work, just different work. Opportunities to be creative, when not given frequently, become less and less desirable. Students begin to be anxious [about] that the grade they will receive and the correctness of the response which greatly inhibits the creative impulse.”*

Parallel concerns were voiced to the director – worries on HA identification, professional development, and communication between parents, faculty, and administration were reiterated. A teacher proposed the addition of a creative/ fine arts component to the HAP.

High School

Twenty-one out of 51 respondents (41%) indicated non involvement in the HAP.

Of the 30 teachers who were directly part of the HAP, only 40% (14 of 30) had observed changes in their students, two indicated their students were not affected by being in the HAP, while one revealed always having been exposed to HA (therefore, not being able to detect changes/differences). Teachers indicated the students were able to handle more workload and higher levels of difficulty. A teacher remarked that the students had displayed more of their ability with homogenous grouping. This was supported by several teachers observing an increase in students' confidence, analytical writing skills, creative and critical thinking skills, independent and in-depth learning, and dedication and pride in work.

Three big themes emerged from teachers' ideas on altering the HAP – identification process, communication, and curriculum changes. Similarly, only 40% (14 of 30) of the teachers gave suggestions. With regard to the identification process, suggestions ranging from leniency - *“Let anyone who wants in (to the HAP) to be in. Teachers will have to have the discipline and backup to assign D's and F's when earned,”* to restricted selection - *“Ensure the selection process doesn't allow students who don't have the capabilities needed to be in HA courses,”* to completely doing away with the HAP – *“Go back to students being serviced in their home schools. The data doesn't support a need for a separate academy. Training all of our teachers in gifted education would help ALL students and All teachers,”* and *“Since we have differentiated instruction I really don't think it is necessary to have a separate program for High Ability Students.”*

Teachers communicated the need for teachers to know the final list of identified students at the beginning of each semester. *“I think students in the HAP should be identified to their teachers. I think they should have IEP's. Many HA students are twice exceptional and it would be helpful to me, as a teacher, to know this. There are students who are easily identified and those that are not. Help us out.”* They also expressed dissatisfaction that some of their students (and their families) were made aware of their acceptance or rejection into the HAP only upon receiving their class schedules.

Other suggestions include regrouping children from clusters to self-contained classes, making the curriculum tougher and more rigorous, setting up better monitoring and evaluation schemes to ensure high quality of services in the HAP, and acceleration of students - *“I would allow more or any student to go out for University classes once they have 'topped out' here (in LHS).”* With regard to curriculum, a teacher pointed out that having more difficult content in a course does not merit the label HA class - *“I would also do something other than simply calling our more strenuous classes HA.”* Two teachers raised concern over weighted grades. They expressed interest in eliminating weighted grades for LHS. They reasoned, *“The weighting of courses puts students with moderate interest at best in the challenging courses. This causes frustration on the part of the instructor who assumes interest and the students who seem to lack the motivation to excel in certain courses,”* and *“If students are involved in the program, it should be for altruistic reasons than class rank.”*

Only 10 teachers (20% of 51) took the opportunity to air concerns, opinions, and suggestions to the HAP director. A disgruntled teacher stated, *“Hopefully you are having as much extra work as we have.”* Similar themes emerged - identification (*more work needs to be done as far as why the students are part of the courses*), and communication (*educate the entire staff on the process, goals and expectations of the HAP students*).

Summary and Conclusions

In designing this program audit, it was important to gather data from immediate stakeholder groups (students, teachers, administrators, parents) using multiple data gathering modes (questionnaires, direct observations, interviews, review of written materials). Combined, the process allows for a triangulation of data. Consequently, while virtually all of the data received were reflected in the report with minimal translation by the researchers, the analysis focused mostly on areas in which there was some pattern. For example, ideas expressed only one time might have been noted, but they would not be given weight equal to an idea that was conveyed by many and across multiple groups. The following summary emphasizes ideas that had considerable support.

Compared to approximately 40 audits and evaluations of educational programs and schools conducted previously, the summary of the audit of Lebanon Community School Corporation Program for High Ability Students shares similarities with many of those programs. At the same time it offers some unique qualities. The LCSCPHAS is clearly in transition, moving toward practice that would be considered best practice.

Conclusions

The Big Picture

On the whole, the feedback from the various stakeholder groups about the HAP was positive. Therefore, specific concerns raised should be considered against that backdrop. Characterizing the feedback, it is clear that there was considerable range in the responses with the majority of responses being slightly positive to very positive. Within that pattern, given the many smaller issues being rated, only a few raised enough concerns to discuss them as a major finding. In the following major findings, many issues were collapsed to portray the more important considerations. Five major findings follow:

I. Identification

Feedback from virtually every stakeholder group expressed some concern about the identification process. The nature of the concerns fell into three different categories.

A) The first is a general concern that the process has not been rigorous enough in the past and has included too many nongifted students. However, some complained of the opposite, that the identification process included too few of the gifted students. The recent Indiana Department of Education change to a definition that moves away from gifted and talented to high ability seems to have exacerbated some of the concerns about identification.

B) The second concern about identification was that it confused high ability students with high-achieving students.

C) The third concern was an identification-by-subsequent educational placement series of concerns. For example, some believed that all high ability elementary students should be placed in the Hattie B. Stokes Academy, while others believed they should be in their home elementary school. Most like having the options of the Academy and their local elementary school. This issue spills over into individuals' beliefs about the nature and needs of high ability students. Still, some argued that the social and emotional needs of gifted students would be better met (in some cases) in their local elementary school, and (in some cases) the Academy. The identification-by-subsequent educational placement series of beliefs also emerged in middle school and high school. The adults expressed wide-ranging views about the construct of high ability, then offered myriad views of how the middle school and/or high school should identify them, place them and service them. While many of the adults expressed positive views about their individual child's growth, they still offered wide ranging suggestions for improvement.

II. Communication

The accumulation of wide-ranging views expressed by stakeholders on many topics, along with personal observations by the research team, combined to make issues associated with communication across and within groups a major finding. A researcher conducting an audit always enters into a program at a unique point during its history. That fact is especially salient in this case. The recent history of the LCSC's efforts to accommodate high ability students reveals earlier decisions and practices that its stakeholders have responded to. A clear example is the curriculum at the Academy. Several people raised issues about the appropriateness of a limited

number of students receiving instruction in string instruments and foreign language. Some concerns were focused on perceptions of equity, while others complained of a mismatch between what the students' academic needs were based on their having been identified as high ability (formally a gifted) students. These examples are included because the researchers found that many of the stakeholders operated with misinformation about each of these commonly expressed concerns.

Other manifestations of issues of communication were noted. Some parents focused on a desire to have more information about aspects of the High Ability Program services and to have that information in a timely manner. Some identified currently held events to inform families about the opportunities for High Ability Services for elementary students as needing to be reconsidered. They noted that, in its current form, the informational meetings pitted schools against each other. This sentiment was expressed by a subset of the overall parent group.

III. Curriculum

Many stakeholders expressed ideas for changing the curriculum at the specific level of schooling about which they were concerned. Using the language of gifted education, desire for more rigor, more course options, and more enrichment were noted. These suggestions were more common to the middle school, and to a lesser extent the high school, than the elementary schools. Many were generally pleased with the curriculum of the school their children attended.

IV. Models

A less well-defined set of suggestions/concerns can best be described as interests in models being used other than those currently employed. For example, some felt that the local elementary model that utilizes examples of curriculum differentiation in heterogeneous classrooms should give way to a more Academy-like experience. Others, mostly parents whose

children were in the programs located in elementary schools outside of the Academy and a few teachers who teach outside of the Academy, expressed a desire to eliminate the Academy and decentralize the high ability services. Their arguments were based on concerns about continuity and elitism. The group expressing this idea was small. As the recommendations offered in the next section of this report are met, issues associated with continuity across programs and most concerns about elitism will be successfully addressed. Even with full implementation of the recommendations, the researchers have learned that issues of elitism among some cannot be redressed within the confines of a gifted program's services. For some, the mere existence of a high ability program is evidence of elitism. The data in this audit did not uncover a significant level of concern about elitism equaling the existence of high ability programs, rather they tended to emerge from an individual's notion of what was fair within the services offered at individual sites.

V. Transitions & Continuity

In most school corporations, the transitions students make across levels of schools are somewhat difficult for both the students and the faculty who teach them. This situation is true for LCSC as well. The students' transitions from elementary school to middle school, and from middle school to high school were noted by many as difficult. Because this phenomenon exists whether or not efforts at accommodating the needs of gifted students are attempted by the schools, one must be cautious in attributing the transition issues to high ability programs. Those who provided these concerns did not tend to express the issues in extremely serious terms. Rather, they generally noted that they assumed that making these transitions is naturally difficult. A few noted concerns specific to their student and in a couple of cases indicated that the difficulties were at least somewhat due to programmatic issues with the high ability studies efforts.

The data analysis revealed that some of the issues are actually those of continuity across the high ability programs. It is common to find in school corporations that elementary programs have a relatively consistent model for high ability education; these programs tend to emphasize potential and work across subject areas. High schools often use honors courses, AP courses and myriad competitions and extracurricular activities as their high ability program offerings. Their high ability program offerings are typically based on an achievement model, and much less based on early assessments of potential, as is often true for elementary programs. Middle school programs often struggle to meet the needs of high ability students due in part to the age group they focus on, traditional assumptions about what is in the best interest of children developmentally, and beliefs of individual faculty and administrators about the nature and needs of high ability students. In essence, middle schools often operate without a conception of giftedness that is consistent with either elementary schools or high schools. Complicating their efforts are the increasingly complex scheduling problems with which middle schools contend. This phenomenon was seen to some degree in the LCSC.

Recommendations

Based on the data collected, a number of recommendations are offered. To understand them, it is important to note where the LCSC Program for High Ability Students is developmentally. It is clear that efforts to bring the program into compliance with contemporary best practices of the field of gifted education are ongoing. This is confirmed by evidence of a self-assessment being conducted with state field coach Pat Gerber (see **Appendix E** for a copy of the Self-Assessment form used to guide practice), the work of the Broad-Based Planning Committee (see **Appendix D** for the members of that group), and documents reviewed during the audit process. The LCSC

is also bringing their practices into compliance with the Indiana Department of Education's rules about providing services for high ability programs. The IDOE change has primarily been to replace our state's conception of gifted and talented to that of one based on high ability. It is within this positive growth and obvious commitment to create a best practices environment that the recommendations are offered. It should be noted that the efforts of the LCSC to date preceded the recent law requiring high ability students to be identified and serviced. This is not true for all school corporations within Indiana.

- 1) Continue the development of a single conception of high ability services that can be applied with equal utility across all grades. This may take another year or so of work from the BBPC. The field coach should be helpful to this end.
- 2) Once the conception is complete, provide training about its application to all stakeholder groups in the LCSC. The goal should be that everyone in the LCSC understands what is being done and why. While there may remain some who disagree with the basic conception because it will be rooted in best practice research, it will provide the community with a clear understanding of why specific models are in place, the nature of the overall and site-specific curriculum, and the hard choices that must be made due to issues of geography, resources and personnel.
- 3) Make decisions about how to bring all high ability practices in line with the conception of high ability studies developed. For example, the questions about whether a foreign language or strings should be offered at the Academy and not in other high ability programs located in the elementary schools should be addressed in this manner. Continuity of philosophy without rigid allegiance to doctrine can work. The fact that LCSC has seen fit to offer both programs (a self-contained program, Academy and

differentiation, site-specific efforts) is laudable. What exists within the programs themselves does not have to be exactly the same to be equitable. It should, however, be based on best practices in gifted education. Using best practice under a single conception of high ability education will create continuity. In the cases of foreign language and strings being offered at the Academy and not in other locations, the challenge to the LCSC is to discern whether it is best practice to offer them as part of high ability services. The two major national organizations in the field, the National Association for Gifted Children and The Association for the Gifted, have espoused a position that schools should offer services that are identified as educational needs specific to children's academic abilities. This provides direct guidance as a heuristic to answer questions about any aspects of services. If the students at the Academy have evidence of needs in these areas, then offering the services are consistent with best practices. If not, then it might be considered a prerequisite for being in the program and that falls into recruiting and/or issues of politics, not educational best practices. It is possible that the LCSC might want to continue these opportunities for those reasons. That decision is outside of this audit.

- 4) Provide specific, ongoing training to teachers and other employees of the schools about curriculum differentiation. Information sessions for parents may be warranted as well. This step is important, as research has consistently shown that teachers often express support for the concept of curriculum differentiation, even claiming to engage in it. Unfortunately, the research consistently shows that in fact they do not regularly engage in actual differentiation practices. Evidence of the phenomenon was observed in the LCSC.
- 5) Continue to develop communication mechanisms to reach all stakeholder groups. The sharing of information will necessarily be somewhat pedantic at times; other times it may

need to be more discussion based. A single individual should be identifiable by all stakeholder groups as the person responsible for the High Ability Programs. This declaration is more a function of communication than changing responsibilities.

Appendix

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Appendix A
 Lebanon Community School Corporation
 High Ability Program
 High School Student Form

Please circle the number of the option that best reflects your beliefs about the HAP program.

	Not at all	A small amount	A moderate amount	A great deal	Fullest extent
1. To what extent has the High Ability Program (HAP) made you more excited about learning?	1	2	3	4	5
2. To what extent do you get to study things that you like?	1	2	3	4	5
3. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you learn how to analyze things?	1	2	3	4	5
4. To what extent has being in the HAP helped you be more responsible?	1	2	3	4	5
5. To what extent has the HAP helped you learn?	1	2	3	4	5
6. How difficult is the schoolwork in the HAP?	1	2	3	4	5
7. To what extent are you able to talk in your HAP classroom(s) about your ideas and feelings?	1	2	3	4	5
8. To what extent has the HAP helped you increase the confidence you have in yourself?	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B
 Lebanon Community School Corporation
 High Ability Program
 Teacher Form

Please circle the number of the option that best reflects your beliefs about the HAP program.

	Not at all	A small amount	A moderate amount	A great deal	Fullest extent
1. Extent to which the High Ability Program (HAP) has made your students more excited about learning.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Extent to which HAP has helped your students become better evaluators of their work.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Extent to which the HAP curriculum provides the opportunity for students to select topics for study that are of interest to them.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Extent to which the HAP curriculum provides the opportunity for students to pursue topics to the depth that they desire.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Extent to which HAP has helped your students to think critically.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Extent to which HAP has helped your students to organize their thoughts.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Extent to which HAP has helped your students to develop more individual responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Extent to which HAP has helped your students develop a sense of control over their futures.	1	2	3	4	5

9. Degree to which your students were challenged by HAP.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Extent to which HAP provides opportunities to express their ideas and feelings.

1 2 3 4 5

11. Extent to which HAP has helped your students develop self-confidence.

1 2 3 4 5

12. Extent to which HAP provides opportunities for your students to develop a relationship with you.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Extent to which HAP provides opportunities for your students to express creativity.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Extent to which teachers in HAP take a personal interest in their students.

1 2 3 4 5

	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	Neither Positive or Negative	Somewhat Positive	Very Positive
15. Your opinion of the suitability of the method by which students are selected for HAP.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Your overall rating of the HAP in terms of fulfilling your students' immediate educational needs.	1	2	3	4	5

17. What can your students do now that they could not do before participating in HAP?
Academically? Socially?

18. If you had the power to change HAP, what would you do?

19. You have been very helpful in answering these questions. We have covered a lot of ground. Is there anything you would like to say to the director of the High Ability Program?

Appendix C

The William and Mary Classroom Observation Scales, Revised Teacher Observation

Joyce VanTassel-Baska, Ed.D. Linda Avery, Ph.D. Jeanne Struck, Ph.D. Annie Feng, Ed.D.

Bruce Bracken, Ph.D. Dianne Drummond, M.Ed. Tamra Stambaugh, M.Ed.

Directions: Please employ the following scale as you rate each of the checklist items. Rate each item according to how well the teacher characteristic or behavior was demonstrated during the observed instructional activity. Each item is judged on an individual, self-contained basis, regardless of its relationship to an overall set of behaviors relevant to the cluster heading.

3=Effective

The teacher evidenced careful planning and classroom flexibility in implementation of the behavior, eliciting many appropriate student responses. The teacher was clear, and sustained focus on the purposes of learning.

2=Somewhat Effective

The teacher evidenced some planning and/or classroom flexibility in implementation of the behavior, eliciting some appropriate student responses. The teacher was sometimes clear and focused on the purposes of learning.

1=Ineffective

The teacher evidenced little or no planning and/or classroom flexibility in implementation of the behavior, eliciting minimal appropriate student responses. The teacher was unclear and unfocused regarding the purpose of learning.

N/O = Not Observed

The listed behavior was not demonstrated during the time of the observation.

(NOTE: There must be an obvious attempt made for the certain behavior to be rated "ineffective" instead of "not observed".)

General Teaching Behaviors				
<i>Curriculum Planning and Delivery</i>	3	2	1	N/O
The teacher...				
1. set high expectations for student performance.				
2. incorporated activities for students to apply new knowledge.				
3. engaged students in planning, monitoring or assessing their learning.				
4. encouraged students to express their thoughts.				
5. had students reflect on what they had learned.				
Comments:				

Differentiated Teaching Behaviors				
<i>Accommodations for Individual Differences</i>	3	2	1	N/O
The teacher...				
6. provided opportunities for independent or group learning to promote depth in understanding content.				
7. accommodated individual or subgroup differences (e.g., through individual conferencing, student or teacher choice in material selection and task assignments.)				
8. encouraged multiple interpretations of events and situations.				
9. allowed students to discover key ideas individually through structured activities and/or questions.				
Comments:				
<i>Problem Solving</i>	3	2	1	N/O
The teacher...				
10. employed brainstorming techniques.				
11. engaged students in problem identification and definition				
12. engaged students in solution-finding activities and comprehensive solution articulation.				
Comments:				
<i>Critical-Thinking Strategies</i>	3	2	1	N/O
The teacher...				
13. encouraged students to judge or evaluate situations, problems, or issues				
14. engaged students in comparing and contrasting ideas (e.g., analyze generated ideas)				
15. provided opportunities for students to generalize from concrete				

data or information to the abstract.				
16. encouraged student synthesis or summary of information within or across disciplines.				
Comments:				
<i>Creative-Thinking Strategies</i>	3	2	1	N/O
The teacher...				
17. solicited many diverse thoughts about issues or ideas.				
18. engaged students in the exploration of diverse points of view to reframe ideas.				
19. encouraged students to demonstrate open-mindedness and tolerance of imaginative, sometimes playful solutions to problems.				
20. provided opportunities for students to develop and elaborate on their ideas.				
Comments:				
<i>Research Strategies</i>	3	2	1	N/O
<i>(It is atypical for these to be observed in one session. Some teachers, however, may use Items #21–25 within a single period to illustrate the full research process to students. Please note those observations in the comments section.)</i>				
The teacher...				
21. required students to gather evidence from multiple sources through research-based techniques (e.g., print, nonprint, internet, self-investigation via surveys, interviews, etc.).				
22. provided opportunities for students to analyze data and represent it in appropriate charts, graphs, or tables.				
23. asked questions to assist students in making inferences from data				

and drawing conclusions.				
24. encouraged students to determine implications and consequences of findings.				
25. provided time for students to communicate research study findings to relevant audiences in a formal report and/or presentation.				
Comments:				

Additional Comments:

Appendix D

Broad-Based Planning Committee 2007-2008						
Lebanon Community Schools						
Central Elementary						
Teacher Representatives	Representatives					
Amy Young	younga@leb.k12.in.us					
Parent Representatives	Address		Zip	email		Phone
Michele Thomas	2306 Terrace Lane, Lebanon		46052	mmtsaw725@yahoo.com		765-483-2390
Catherine Holmes	2805 N SR 39, Lebanon		46052	caiwyn@insightbb.com		765-482-1782
Harney Elementary						
Teacher Representatives						
Teresa Wiley	wileyt@leb.k12.in.us					
April Julian	julianb@leb.k12.in.us					
Parent Representatives	Address			email		Phone
Kelly Zell	1004 Syracuse Drive, Lebanon		46052	zellk@frankfort.k12.in.us		317-374-1914
Jody Fisher	2130 Yosemite Drive, Lebanon		46052	Jody.Fisher@bakerd.com		765-336-9634
Hattie B. Stokes Elementary						
Teacher Representatives						
Heather Burress	burressh@leb.k12.in.us					
Lisa Cooper	cooperl@leb.k12.in.us					

Parent Representatives	Address		email	Phone
Charlene Betts	2132 Cherry Park, Lebanon	46052	buddy2789@sbcglobal.net	765-483-9121
Richard Hornay	549 S 300 W, Lebanon	46052	rhornay@gmail.com	765-894-1203
LCSC Academy				
Chaleen Faulkner	faulknerc@leb.k12.in.us			
Parent Representative				
Anne Patterson	2301 Golfside Drive, Lebanon	46052	annepatterson1@insightbb.com	765-482-6058
Perry-Worth Elementary				
Teacher Representatives				
Helen Adams	adamsh@leb.k12.in.us			
Parent Representatives				
Julie Cupka	2245 N 300 E, Lebanon	46052	julianne_neal@yahoo.com	765-482-7837
Christine Bocoek	1880 N 500 E, Lebanon	46052	gracepainting@aol.com	765-325-9269
Lebanon Middle School				
Teacher Representatives				
Vicki Jackson	jacksonv@leb.k12.in.us			
Nancy Murray	murraynj@leb.k12.in.us			
Parent Representatives				
Jill Morelock	1010 Brookside Drive, Lebanon	46052	jbmorelock@insightbb.com	765-482-5916

Elle Starkey		1355 E 500 S, Lebanon	46052	starkeye@ilines.net		765-482-3065
Lebanon High School						
Teacher Representatives						
Darrell Van Tillburg		vantilburgd@leb.k12.in.us				
Trish Patmore		patmoret@leb.k12.in.us				
Parent Representatives						
Dick Milam		2407 Grant Blvd, Lebanon	46052	rkmilam@in-motion.net		765-482-9820
Bill Conley		2963 Elizaville Rd., Lebanon	46052	bconley@bremc.com		765-483-9108
Student Representatives						
Andrew Miller, Grade 7		Lebanon Middle School				
Anne Kirkpatrick, Grade 6		Lebanon Middle School				
Administrative Representatives						
Kelly Sollman, Principal		Hattie B. Stokes Elementary		sollmank@leb.k12.in.us		
Brad Allen, Principal		Lebanon Middle School		Allenb@leb.k12.in.us		
Kevin O'Rourke, Principal		Lebanon High School		orourkek@leb.k12.in.us		
Diane Scott, Director of Curriculum		HA Coordinator		scotttd@leb.k12.in.us		
SCHOOLS:						
Central Elementary		Harney Elementary		Hattie B Stokes Elementary		
515 E. Williams St.		1500 Garfield St.		1005 S. Hendricks Drive		

Lebanon, IN 46052		Lebanon, IN 46052		Lebanon, IN 46052		
Phone 765-482-2000-Phone		Phone 765-482-5940		Phone 765-482-5950		
Fax 483-3059		Fax 765-483-3062		Fax 765-483-3056		
Perry-Worth Elementary		Lebanon Middle School		Lebanon High School		
3900 E 300 South		1800 N. Grant St.		510 Essex Dr.		
Lebanon, IN 46052		Lebanon, IN 46052		Lebanon, IN 46052		
Phone 317-769-3286		Phone 765-482-3400		Phone 765-482-2000		
Fax 317-769-5236		Fax 765-483-3049		Fax 765-483-3050		


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Appendix E - Self Assessment Checklist for Indiana

Self Assessment Checklist for Indiana Standards for High Ability Education

Field Study Edition 2 – July, 2007

School

Corporation

Date: May 22, 2008

Name: Lebanon Community School Corporation

Completed: April 10, 2008

Group: LCSC Broad Based Planning Committee

Directions: Place a checkmark in one of the four columns according to the degree of evidence of the program component based on a 1-4 scale with (1) being Not Evident; (2) being Some Evidence; (3) being Nearly Complete and (4) being In Place. Scores of 2 and 3 may be due to lack of communication, inconsistency, no recent review, some grade levels but not others, etc.

NE SE NC IP

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Component of a Program for High Ability Education
			√	1. A H/A Services Coordinator must be designated by each school corporation and leads a BBPC. A broad-based planning committee representing educators, families, and community members that meets regularly to assess and support the program.
		√		2. There is a written district mission/philosophy statement and accompanying goals and objectives that address the needs for high ability education programming.
	√	√		3. Written policies and/or procedures exist for student identification, placement, continuation, and removal from services. Procedures should include: family appeals, a requirement for interventions, and a school-family meeting before a student is withdrawn from services.
	√	√		4. A committee of personnel knowledgeable in high ability education, including the HA Services Coordinator, meets at regular intervals to determine eligibility, identification and placement of individual candidates, including transfer students.
	√	√		5. The nomination/referral process is ongoing and includes all students K-12. Nominations for services are accepted from any source. Families and staff receive information annually about the nomination process, including the characteristics of students

- of high ability in domain areas served by the school corporation. The school corporation actively searches for referrals among underrepresented populations.
- √ 6. Selected assessments are valid, reliable and equitable. A multifaceted assessment plan is used to identify high ability students. These assessments are responsive to students' economic conditions, gender, cultural differences, handicapping conditions, and other factors that mitigate against fair assessment practices. Procedures are in place to maintain a database or file system for each nominee.
 - √ 7. A G/T coordinator is licensed in G/T and responsible for all aspects of the program. Alternately, the G/T program has been developed with guidance from an expert in high ability education.
 - √ 8. Teachers who have responsibility for high ability learners in core content areas are licensed in high ability education.
 - √ 9. Written policies and/or procedures are in place allowing for acceleration: including early entrance, grade skipping, subject skipping, dual enrollment, and early matriculation.
 - √ 10. Multiple service delivery options are available at each grade to meet a range of needs of students with high abilities. [Examples of options include ability grouping, resource rooms, self-contained classes, honors classes, magnet schools, etc.] Flexible grouping is used at all grade levels in math and language arts.
 - √ 11. Differentiated curricular experiences are defined and in place at all grade levels, K-12 in math and language arts. Differentiated curriculum is developed at the corporation level, rather than the school level. The curriculum addresses and builds upon the Indiana Academic Standards.
 - √ 12. The program of instruction consists of both advanced content and appropriately differentiated teaching strategies and materials.
 - √ 13. High ability learners are pre-assessed for mastery of basic skills and knowledge. Alternate material is compacted, accelerated, and enriched.
 - √ 14. Teachers of high ability students differentiate, replace, supplement, and/or extend curricula to accomplish higher level learning goals.
 - √ 15. Corporations encourage professional development in high ability education, e.g. workshops, conferences, and college courses. Teacher expectations for working successfully with high ability students are defined and correlated with the corporation's professional development plan.

- √ 16. Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate classes are offered every year in both math and science.
- √ 17. Teachers, families, administrators, and school services personnel are provided with information regarding the characteristics of students with high abilities, their related socio-emotional development, and associated problem behaviors.
- √ 18. A counselor with professional development in the socio-emotional needs of high ability students provides counseling and guidance services.
- √ 19. A complete, written affective curriculum which includes: academic development, career development, guidance in selective college opportunities, and personal/social development for high ability students is developed and implemented.
- √ 20. Each identified student is served based upon his or her individual educational needs. Decisions should reflect the unique learning characteristics, potential and performance levels, interests, and learning style of the student.
- √ 21. The corporation uses multiple strategies to assess student performance; examples include: standardized and criterion referenced achievement tests, questionnaires, checklists, observation scales, interviews and performance-based measures.
- 22. The population identified and served for high abilities reflects the proportional diversity of the school corporation student population. **HA Audit may address**
- √ √ 23. All components of the G/T program are periodically reviewed by individuals knowledgeable about high ability learners and who have competence in the evaluation process. The results are used for continuing program improvement.
- 24. The evaluation report for all educational services involving students with high ability includes both strengths and weaknesses of the program and is accompanied by a plan with implications for improvement and renewal over time. **HA Audit may address**
- 25. The results of the program evaluation are presented to the local Board of Education and accessible to all constituencies of the program. **HA Audit may address**

Totals