

## Ability Grouping vs. “High Ability” Identification

Southeast Fountain Elementary believes in creating the most challenging and productive environment for every student, regardless of socioeconomic factors. SEFE believes that variations of ability grouping at each grade level is essential to maximize the learning potential of every student. *However, being placed in a given ability group does not automatically qualify a student for high ability services.* Students who are identified as “high ability” and qualify for the gifted program at SEFE have met additional criteria that is explained below.

### **Ability Grouping:**

Students are grouped by ability *and/or readiness level*. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes.

Examples of ability grouping at SEFE:

- Class placement based on initial screening in Kindergarten
- Grouping in content areas based on exceptional performance on assessments for mastery of grade level standards (1-6)
- Grouping based on Dibels reading levels and/or M Class math scores (K-3)
- Small group workstations within individual classrooms (K-6)
- Departmentalization and rotation groups (4-6)

### **“High Ability” Identification:**

Students who have performed at or have shown the potential to perform at an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one domain when compared with other students of the same age, experience, or environment; and is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests (Indiana Code: 20-36-1-3).

Identified as “high ability” based on a multifaceted assessment program that *ensures the student is not identified simply by traditional assessments because of economic disadvantage, cultural background, underachievement, or disabilities* (Indiana Code 20-36-2-2).

### **Multifaceted Assessment Program at Southeast Fountain Elementary (per Indiana Code):**

- Standardized intelligence test = CogAT online
- Standardized achievement test = ISTEP, Dibels
- Periodic unit assessments for mastery of grade level Indiana standards
- Teacher recommendation based on observation of classroom performance and behaviors

*\*Please note that all assessment categories are reviewed to make a final decision on identification, however a minimum CogAT standard age score (IQ) of 116 initiates the review.*