Middle School High Ability Learner Program

Three levels of service for **H**igh **A**bility **L**earners are provided for identified middle school students in Millard Public Schools.

I. District-Level Service: This level of service consists of programs and curricula that are offered to students in all buildings, namely seminars and curriculum units in core classes. Seminar topics may change from year to year depending on availability of resources and content area expertise.

6th Grade Seminars

- **Orientation** - At the beginning of the school year, HAL students will meet to get acquainted with each other and the building HAL facilitator. An overview of the middle school HAL program will be presented.
- **Architecture** - This seminar provides a study of architectural styles, presentations by local architects, and a tour of Omaha landmarks with unique architecture.
- **Celebrate Creativity!** - Students attending this event at the Joslyn Art Museum choose from workshops presenting art, music, and drama activities sponsored by the Omaha Symphony.
- **Engineering** – Students will learn how forces, materials, loads, and shapes can impact the stability of structures.
- **Forensics CSI -** Students study crime scene investigative techniques and learn how science can help solve crimes.
- **Geology -** Students will explore a rock outcrop, explore a variety of fossils, and meet a geologist.
- **Lauritzen Gardens** – Papermaking, Origami, & Drawing – Students will spend a day at the botanical Gardens learning how to make paper, create origami, and how to produce sketches of the areas within the gardens.
- **Wildlife Biodiversity Seminar at the Wildlife Safari Park** – Students will explore similarities and differences of animal and plant life of prairie, woodland, and aquatic biomes at Henry Doorly Zoo's Wildlife Safari Park.
- **Writers' Workshop** – Students will participate in creative writing exercises and various types of writing: shape poems, haiku, cinquains, descriptive genre, etc.
- **Zoo Studies** – Students will participate in activities to broaden their awareness of ocean life and conservation, swamps, and deserts.

7th Grade Seminars

- **Advanced Theater** – This full-day advanced theater workshop will provide students an opportunity to explore theater topics. The workshop also includes a tour of the Rose Theatre building and a question and answer period with a theater designer.
- **Architecture -** Students visit the Durham Museum to study the art deco period in American architecture. Students also learn about Frank Lloyd Wright and create replicas of some of his most famous designs.
- **Engineering** – Participants will use their math skills and higher-level thinking skills to complete building activities related to engineering.
- **Forensics – CSI –** Study crime scene investigative techniques and learn how science can help solve crimes. Guest speakers enhance the experience with visual presentations.

- **Genetics** – Students will learn about human genetics and inheritance of blood. They will perform a DNA extraction lab and participate in activities that demonstrate random selection of genetic traits.
- **Lauritzen Gardens** – Papermaking, Origami, & Drawing – Students will spend a day at the Botanical Gardens learning how to make paper, create origami, and how to produce sketches of the areas within the gardens.
- **Writer's Workshop –** Students will work with published authors to enhance their own writing skills.
- **Zoo Studies** – Student will complete field study activities on different types of animals including tigers, gorillas, and rain forest animals.

8th Grade Seminars

- **Advanced Forensics –** Students will use skills of observation, problem solving, technology, medical science, mathematics, and communication to study the field of forensic science.
- **Advanced Genetics** – The seminar will lead students in an investigation of human genetics, inheritance of blood types and color blindness.
- **Advanced Theater** – This full-day advanced theater workshop will provide students an opportunity to explore theater topics. The workshop also includes a tour of the Rose Theatre building and a question and answer period with a theater designer.
- **Engineering**
  - **Engineering Day at UNL -** Students visit the University of Nebraska - Lincoln campus and meet with UNL College of Engineering students to learn how forces, materials, loads and shapes can impact the stability of engineering. Students also can participate in a discussion panel with University students.
  - **Peter Kiewit Institute Day @ UNO -** Students visit the UNO campus and tour the Peter Kiewit Institute and various engineering labs. They work with PKI students to learn how forces, materials, loads, and shapes can impact the stability of engineering.
- **Expanding Your Horizons** - This event is for 8th grade girls only. Students are exposed to careers in math and science through hands-on workshops.
- **Mock Trial** - Students spend their first day touring the federal courthouse and working with local attorneys to acquaint themselves with the process of a jury trial. On the second day, students prepare and present an actual mock trial case.
- **Writing Workshop** - 8th grade students with an interest in writing will have the opportunity to work with local authors, learning new techniques and sharing their writings.
- **Zoo Studies -** Students will study ocean conservation in the aquarium, dissect an albatross pellet, learn about different careers the zoo offers, and study DNA through strawberry DNA extraction.

II. Building Level Service: This level of service consists of programs offered to students at the building level. These can include clubs, contests, and competitions. These opportunities may vary per middle school, but could include some of the following:

Acting Workshops
Dram Cluba
Science Club
Duke University Talent Search
SAT/ACT Vocabulary Building
Quiz Bowl
Writing Club
Math Counts

Game Club
Craft Club
Youth-2-Youth
Spelling Bee
Photography Club
Volunteer Club
History Day
Language Club
Computer Club
Chess Club
Sister City Club
Care Club

III. Classroom-Level Service: This level of service is provided in the classroom in a heterogeneous environment. Differentiation is an approach to planning and teaching that addresses the needs of all learners. Differentiation involves varied approaches to curriculum, instruction and assessment. Educators adapt content (what is taught), process (how it is taught), and product (what the student does) to the unique learning needs, readiness, interest and learning style of each student.

Curriculum Units

Language Arts: Students may qualify for participation in the middle school HAL language arts program through previous HAL identification and/or recommendation. The program consists of curriculum extensions based on the existing language arts curriculum in reading nonfiction, writing, reading literature, and grammar that is delivered in a heterogeneous language arts classroom setting.

Accelerated Math Courses: Students qualify for middle school accelerated math courses with qualifying scores on Millard's Mathematics Placement Test and the Orleans-Hanna Math Aptitude test given in the 5th grade at the student's elementary building. The Orleans-Hanna test measures aptitude, a prediction of a student's readiness to learn algebra. It is not a measure of previously studied math content. This aptitude test has proven to be a better predictor of appropriate placement than previous methods. The accelerated math courses are as follows:

- **Integrated Math III (Pre-Algebra):** Students study number theory, operations with rational numbers, scientific notation, solving one-step and multi-stem equations and inequalities, statistics, ratio, proportion, percent, geometry and coordinate graphing. This course prepares students to take Algebra.
- **Algebra:** This course is designed for students who have mastered the basics of arithmetic and pre-algebra, and who understand mathematics in a more abstract form. This is a typical first-year algebra course and would be the appropriate mathematics course for most college-bound freshmen.
- **Geometry:** Students learn traditional geometric facts, applications of those facts, and the axiomatic method used to derive those facts.

Science and Social Studies: Through pretesting and/or interest surveys for each unit in the curriculum, students may qualify for extension opportunities. These opportunities consist of activities and labs that go beyond the general classroom learning to enhance concepts and skills to stretch learners.