

# MTSS AND HIGH ABILITY: RISING ABOVE THE CORE CURRICULUM

**Cindy Sheets**

**[cindysheets@aha-learners.org](mailto:cindysheets@aha-learners.org)**

**Marcia Law**

**[marcialaw@aha-learnrs.org](mailto:marcialaw@aha-learnrs.org)**

# POWERPOINT AVAILABLE

- <http://aha-learners.org>
- <http://cindysheets.weebly.com>
- Live Binders

“Learning is  
forward progress from  
point of entry”

Susan Winebrenner

# RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION



- Meeting the needs of students
- IDEA
- ALL children learn and achieve to high standards
- All children need to show growth

# CORE PRINCIPLES OF RTI

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Principle One</b>   | All children can learn and achieve high standards if given access to a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and research-based instruction.       |
| <b>Principle Two</b>   | Intervening at the earliest indication of need is necessary to ensure student success.  |
| <b>Principle Three</b> | A comprehensive system of tiered interventions is essential for addressing the full range of student needs.                                       |
| <b>Principle Four</b>  | Student results improve when ongoing academic and behavioral performance data inform instructional decisions.                                     |
| <b>Principle Five</b>  | Collaboration among educators, families, and community members is the foundation for effective problem solving and instructional decision-making. |
| <b>Principle Six</b>   | Ongoing and meaningful family engagement increases the successful outcomes for students   |

# CHANGE

Which students  
need services?

to

What services  
do students need?

# Thinking Points

- What is happening (or not happening) in your own district/school?
  - Are high ability students being included in MTSS
  - Do you feel that they should be included?
- Do teachers have the necessary support to include high ability students?
  - Training
  - Materials
  - Administrative support
- Could MTSS initiatives benefit in the identification process for gifted services?
- Who is on the building/district MTSS team?

# WHERE DO HIGH ABILITY STUDENTS FIT?

MTSS



Intensive Support



Extra Support



Core Curriculum

# CORE CURRICULUM



For high ability and gifted students, quality Core Curriculum is necessary, but not necessarily sufficient.

# CURRICULUM - INSTRUCTION

Differentiating  
Curriculum

**VS**

Differentiating  
Instruction

High ability learners need  
varying levels of support,  
just as do those students who  
are struggling.



- Every child deserves to learn every day –
- Our challenge is to meet them where they are and move them forward

High ability students often understand and can perform the skills we're planning to teach

- Research shows that some students already know 40-50% of the material to be presented at grade level, experience no differentiation in the classroom 85% of the time, (Reis, 2007) and that they retain new information and skills better when the pace is quicker and there is less repetition. (Rogers, 2008)

In fact, children with extremely high ability typically learn in **one to three repetitions** what it takes the average student ten or more repetitions to learn.

In more extreme cases, they learn it when the teacher says it—or **they may already know it!**

# UNIVERSAL SCREENING

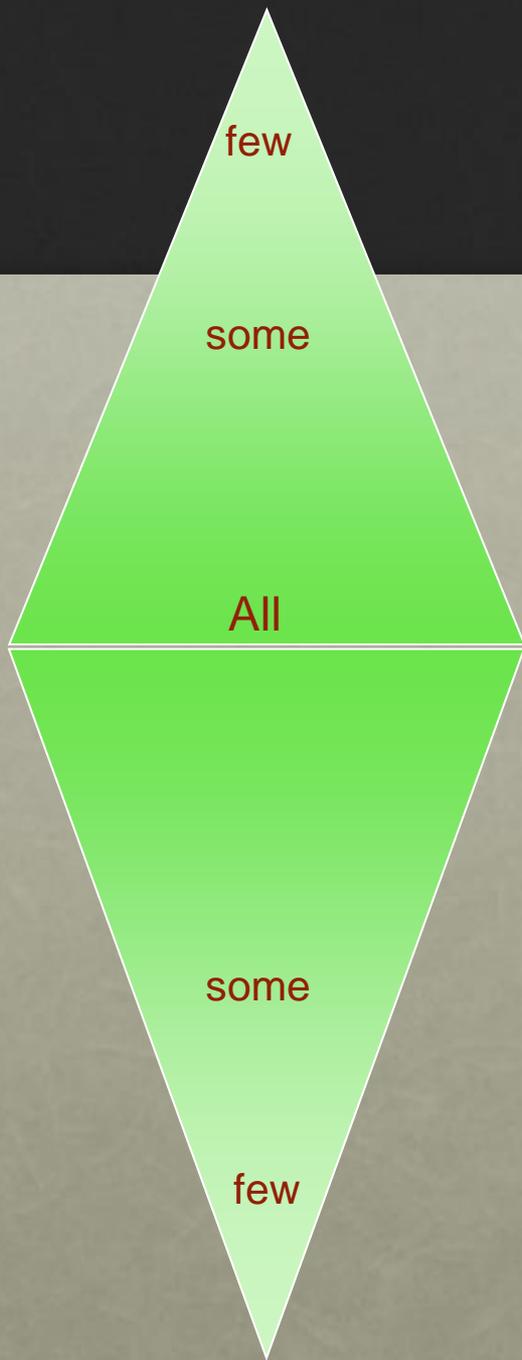
- How would screening look for high ability learners?
  - Measures of cognitive ability
  - Academic screenings
    - Problems with criterion referenced tests with limited ceilings – many state tests
    - Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA)

# PROGRESS MONITORING

- Frequent
- May look different from typical progress monitoring at lower end
  - Portfolios of work, above level testing

High ability students who have already mastered content need supports to continue to be challenged by **new learning, both** within the classroom and with more **intensive support** which may be **outside of the general classroom.**





few

← Intensive Support

some

← Extra Support

All

← Core Curriculum

some

← Extra Support

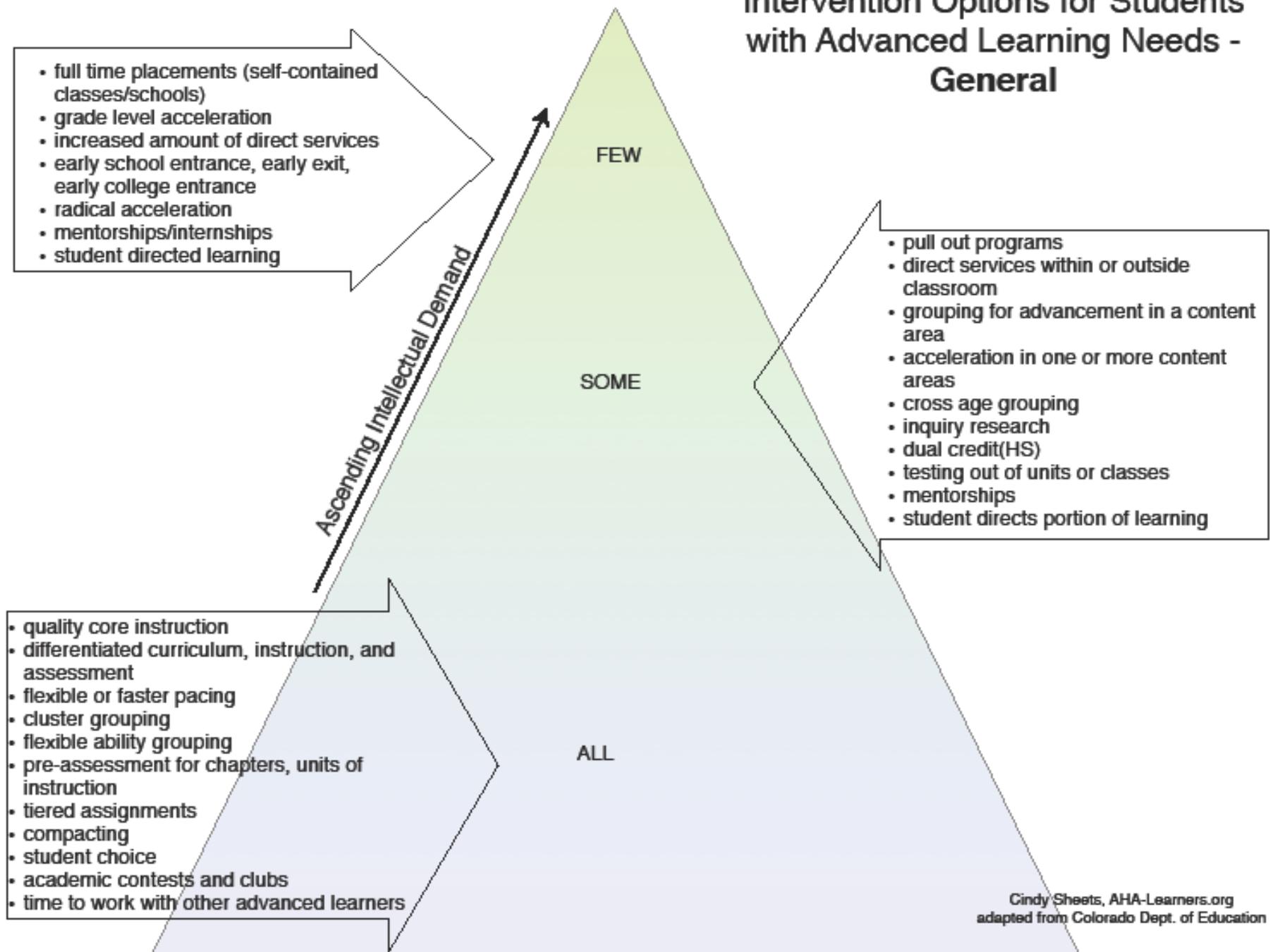
few

← Intensive Support

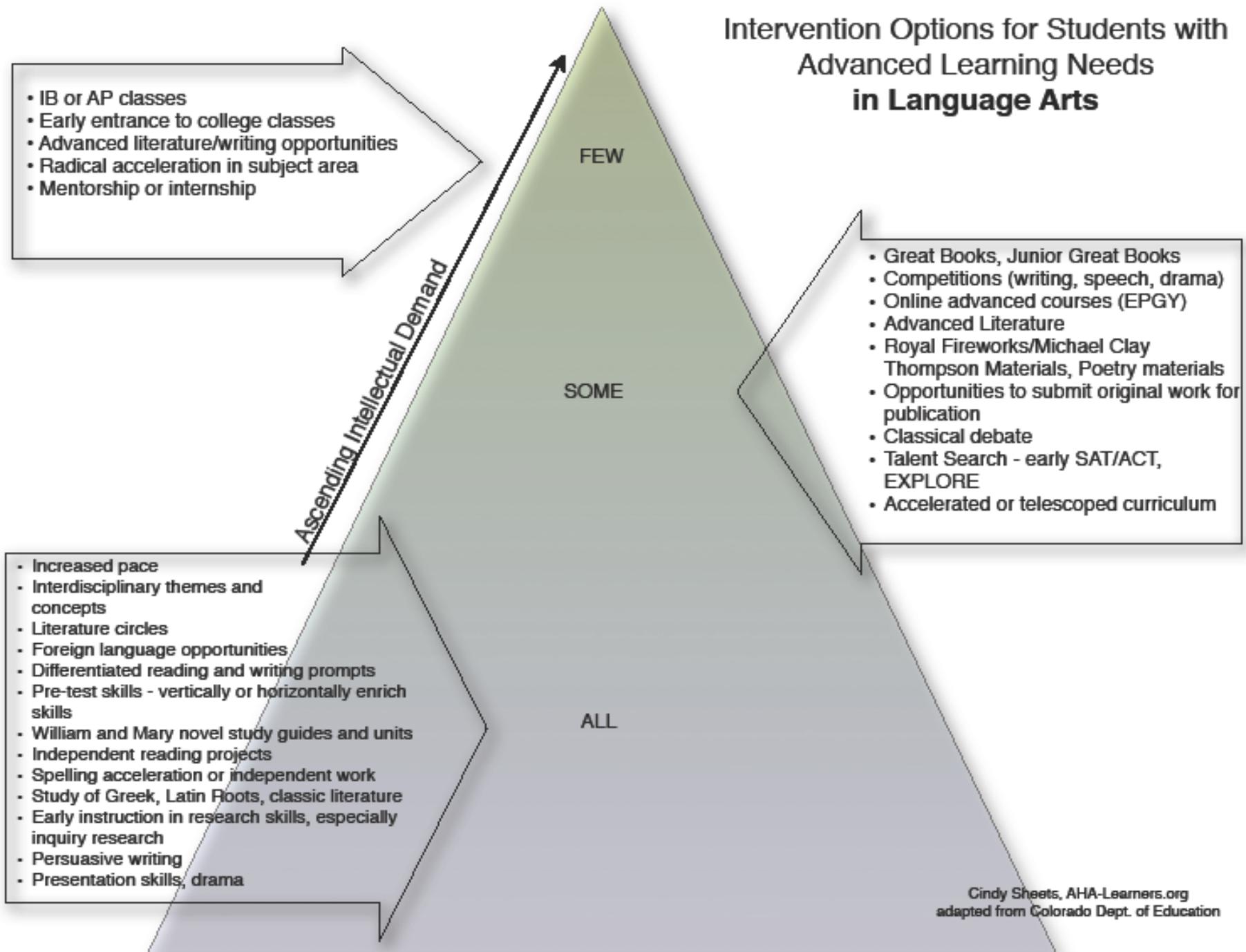
WHAT ARE THE SUPPORTS AND  
INTERVENTIONS NEEDED FOR  
HIGH ABILITY LEARNERS?

How do we make sure that students don't miss out on the opportunity of learning "how" to think, and how to develop a repertoire of learning strategies?

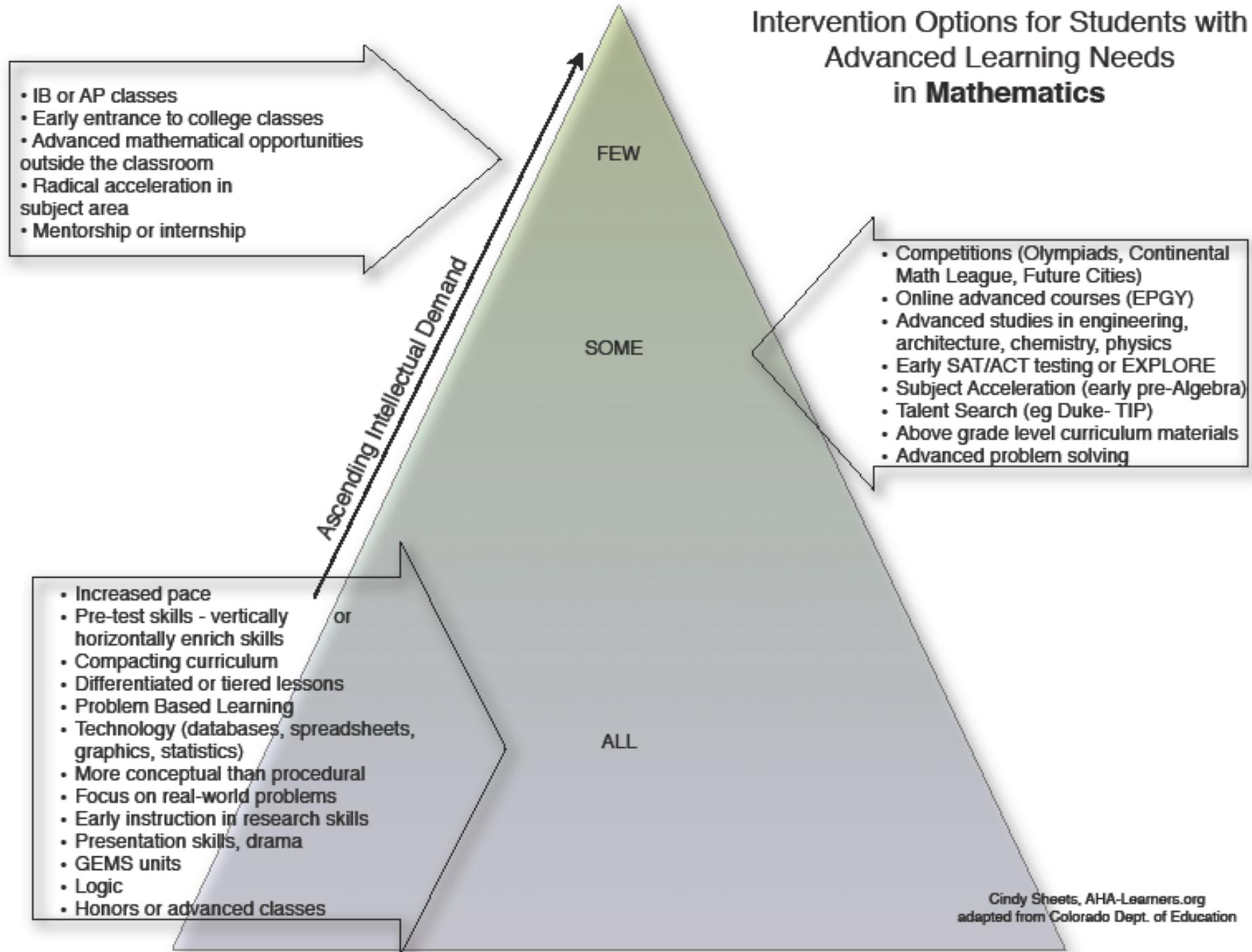
# Intervention Options for Students with Advanced Learning Needs - General



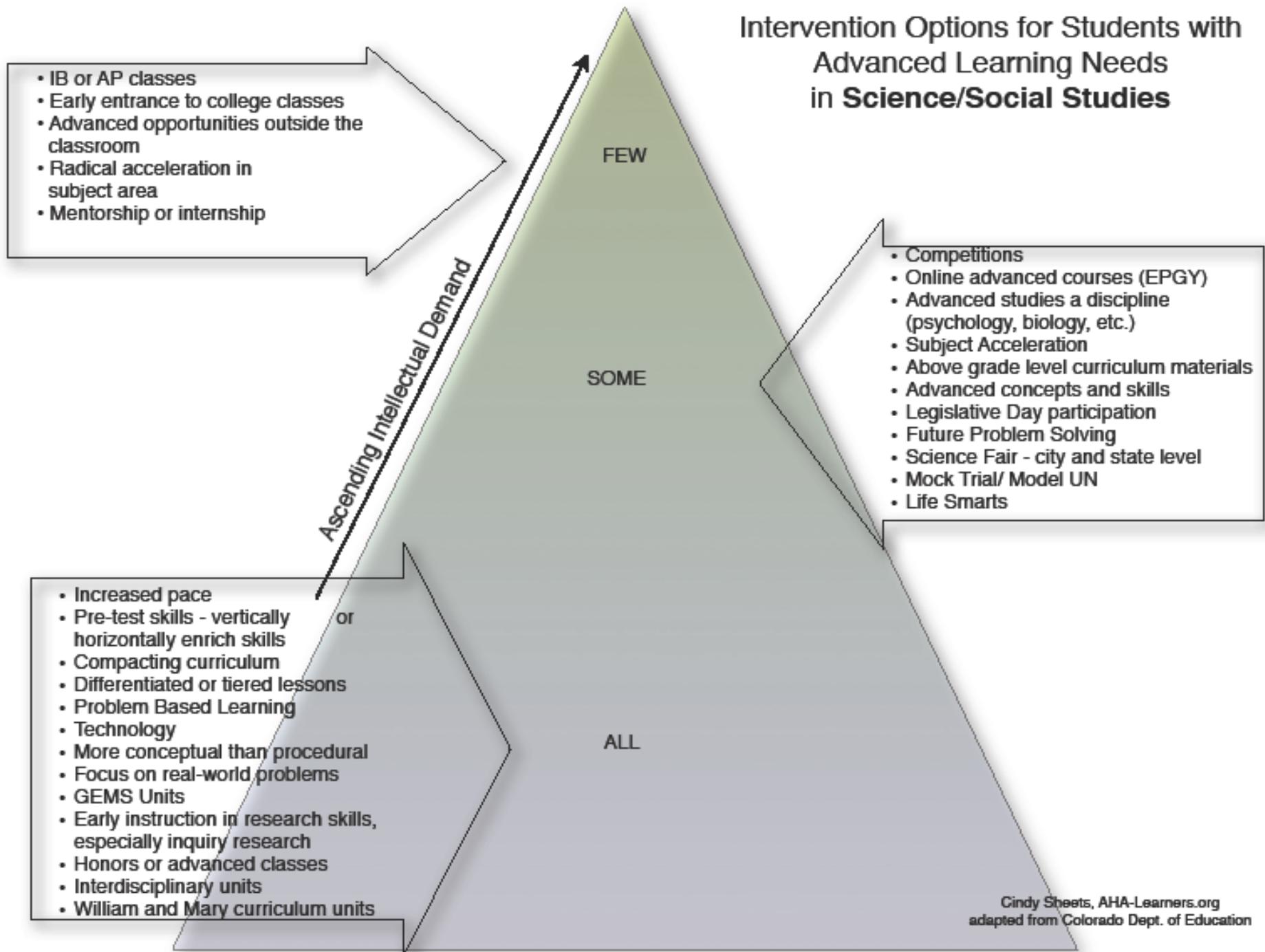
## Intervention Options for Students with Advanced Learning Needs in Language Arts



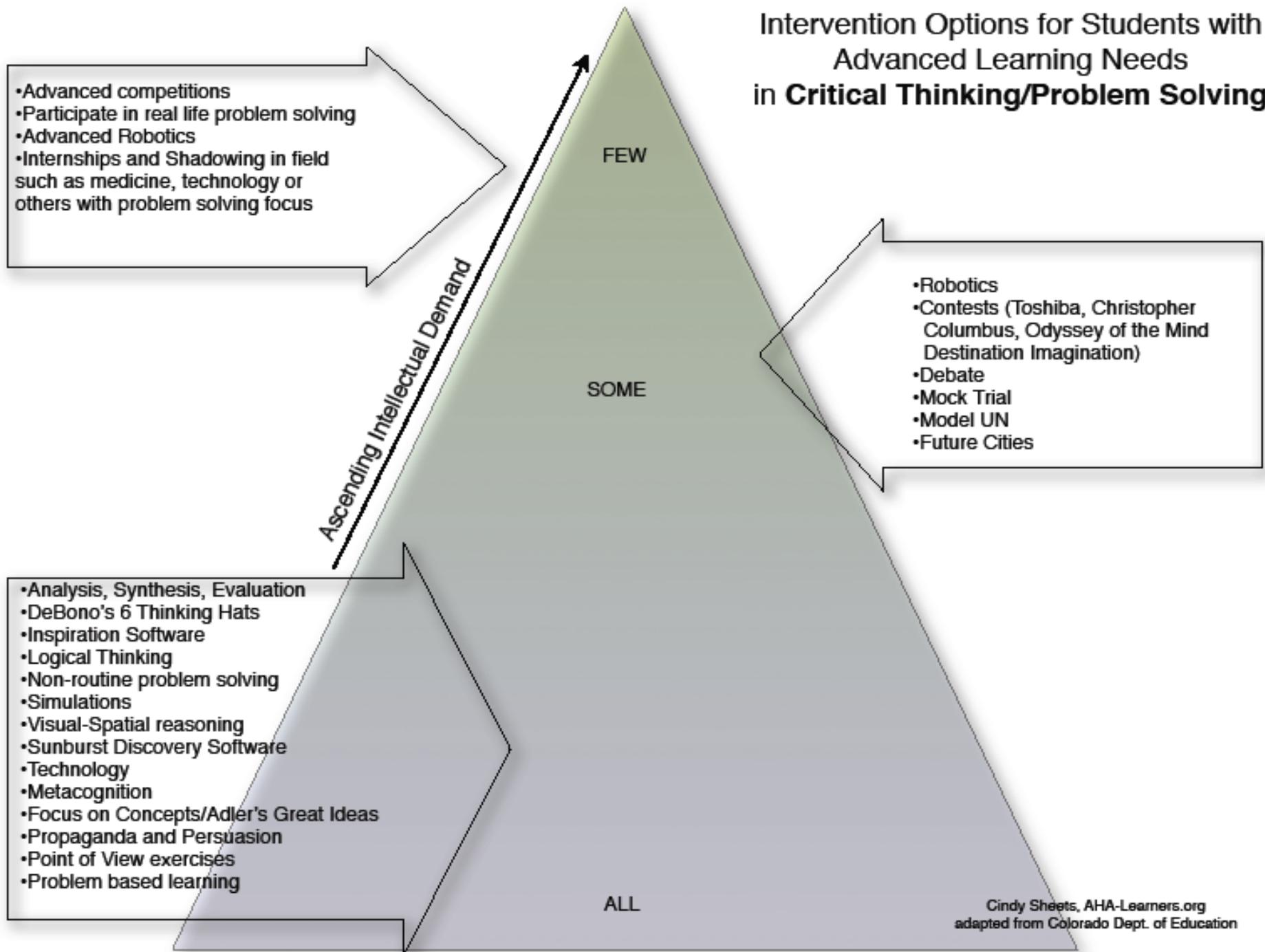
# Intervention Options for Students with Advanced Learning Needs in Mathematics



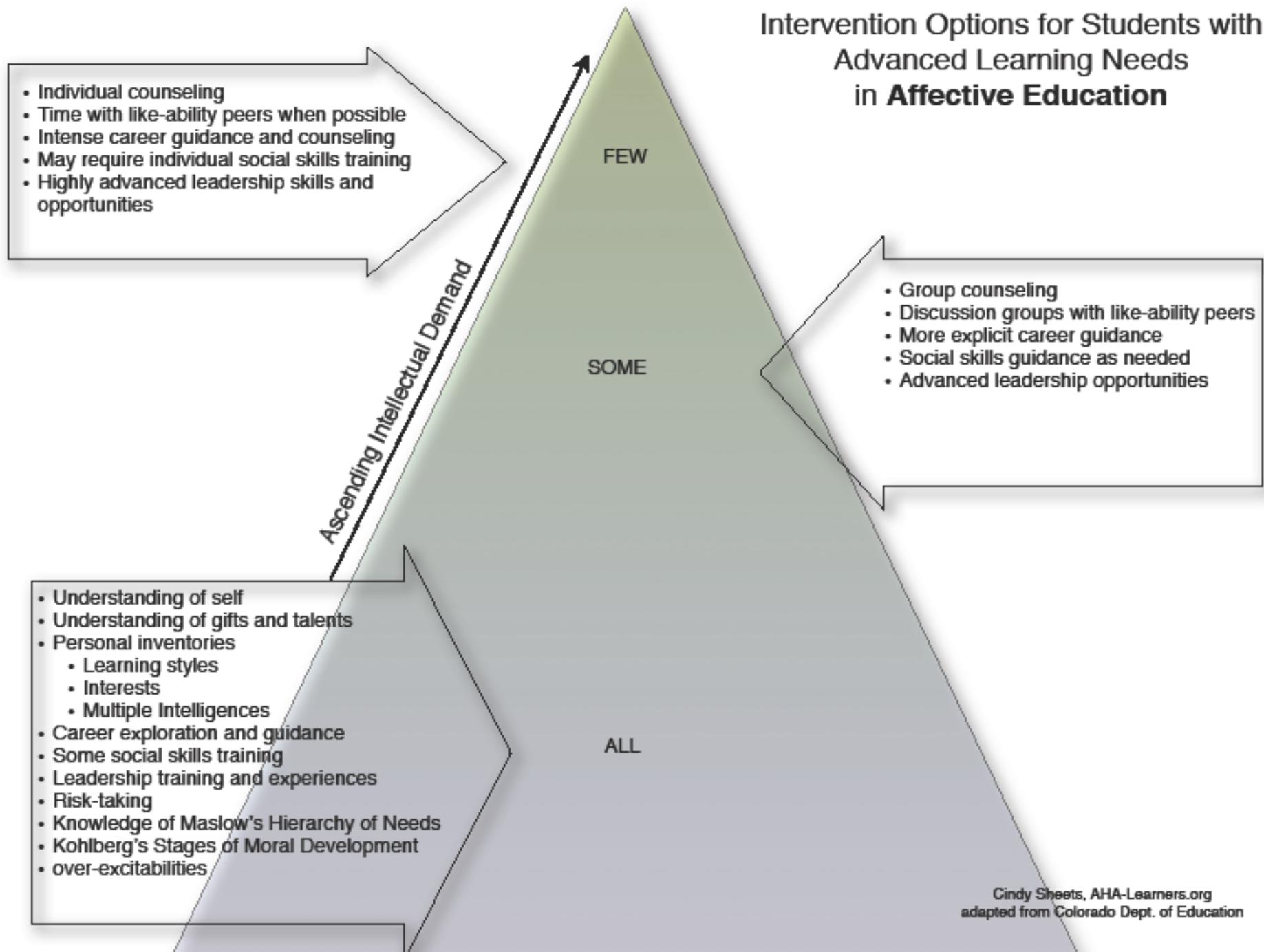
## Intervention Options for Students with Advanced Learning Needs in **Science/Social Studies**



## Intervention Options for Students with Advanced Learning Needs in **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving**



## Intervention Options for Students with Advanced Learning Needs in **Affective Education**



# Two of the Most Effective Interventions for High Ability Students:

- Choice
  - Involve the student in determining the interventions
- Time with other high ability students

# WHERE'S THE RESEARCH?



- Best Practices
  - Dr. Karen B. Rogers'
  - Sally Reis
  - Joyce Van Tassel –Baska
  - Mary Ruth Coleman
- NAGC WOW webinars with a focus on RtI (MTSS)

# COLLECTING EVIDENCE OF NEED: HARD DATA

- Students who are score in the top 5% or at 90%tile or above on group testing
- Classroom assessments
- Pre-testing
- Out of level testing
- Formative and Summative assessments
- Norm referenced – criterion referenced
- Need unlimited ceilings

# SOFT DATA

- Student Response to
  - Extension activities
  - Higher level thinking activities
  - Complexity of assignments
  - differentiated activities
- Participation in outside activities
  - Contests
  - Clubs and after school activities
- Portfolios
  - Samples of work from various core areas
  - Written, audio, video, photo
- Rubrics
- Interviews
- Independent study results

# USES OF DATA

## Hard and Soft Data

- To assess intensity of need
- To assess current instructional levels
- To determine need for interventions
- To determine need for continued interventions
- To monitor effectiveness of intervention
  - progress monitoring

# Two Elementary Schools



## Highlands

- Typical profile matching the 80/15/5
- About 300 students

## Crestview

- Title I, large number of at risk students
- About 370 students

# Highlands

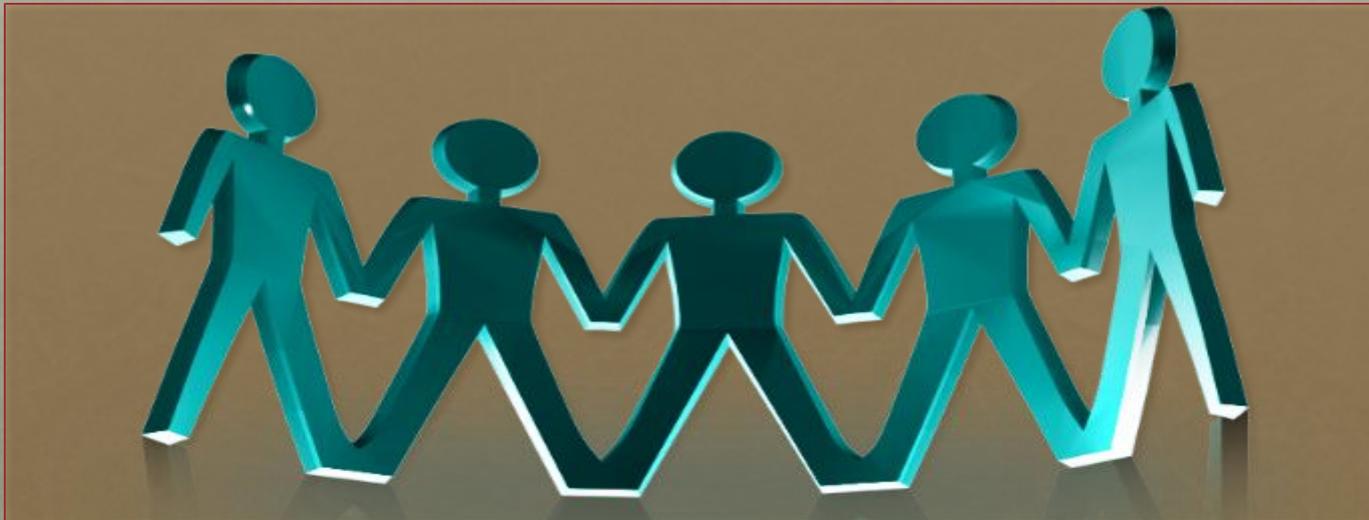
- Two classrooms at each grade level
- Common reading and math core instruction in home class at grade level
- Common “workshop” time
  - Differentiated work based on need and level
  - Tier 2 and 3 individual or small group work
  - Grouping of students within grade level
    - Enrichment
    - Extension
    - Review
    - Independent projects
    - Novel Studies/Literature groups

# Crestview

- Three classrooms per grade level
- Common instructional time on grade level
- Ability grouping within grade level for core reading and math instruction
- “Workshop”
  - Across grade grouping by need
  - Use of specialists for high ability groupings

# \*Scheduling

- Common instructional times at grade level
- Common “workshop” time at grade level
- Common collaboration time



# Twice Exceptional

- May go unnoticed
- Need for enrichment as well as work on strategies for deficits



# Under-Represented Students Children at Promise

- ELL
- Poverty
- Ethnicity
- Under-achieving



“potential for high performance”

Peer group comparison

# WHAT DO TEACHERS NEED?

- Information about the characteristics, needs and best practices for high ability students
- Training in strategies that are successful with high ability learners and how to create curriculum options that work.
- Resources and supplemental materials that do more than repeat already learned skills (more of the same)
- Support from the school team

# What Can Administrators Do?

- Know the research
- Know the strategies
- Help by providing
  - Common instructional time
  - Common planning/collaboration time
- Promote opportunities for classroom teachers to learn more about high ability learners
- Locate materials and resources for instruction of high ability learners

# MTSS: A Good Fit For High Ability Learners?

- Yes
  - Response to student need
  - Universal screening
  - Quality curriculum
  - Differentiation in general classroom instruction
- No
  - The need for interventions may NOT diminish
    - Interventions require more than discreet skills
    - Assessment & monitoring methods differ
    - Reduced need for core curriculum
    - Need to be with academic peers

# RESOURCES AND CREDITS

Dr. Karen B. Rogers

Lessons Learned About Educating the Gifted and  
Talented: A Synthesis of the Research on Educational  
*Gifted Child Quarterly* 2007; 51; 382

Coil's MTSS Progress Monitoring Forms for Gifted  
Learners *Pieces of Learning*

# INFORMATION ON HIGH ABILITY AND MTSS (RTI) MODELS IN OTHER STATES

Thinking Points: Colorado

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/slThinkingPoints\\_MTSS.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/slThinkingPoints_MTSS.pdf)

Iowa response to including gifted in

MTSS [http://www.projectcriss.com/newslinks/12\\_S08\\_MTSS-1.pdf](http://www.projectcriss.com/newslinks/12_S08_MTSS-1.pdf)

Multi Tiered System of Supports

[www.kansasMTSS.org](http://www.kansasMTSS.org)

# CONTACT INFORMATION

[Cindysheets@aha-learners.org](mailto:Cindysheets@aha-learners.org)