

## HIGHLY CAPABLE PROGRAMS

### Definition

Highly capable students are students who perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environments. Highly capable students exhibit outstanding abilities within their general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain. These students are present both in the general populace and within all protected classes.

Students who are highly capable may possess, but are not limited to, these learning characteristics:

- (1) Capacity to learn with unusual depth of understanding, to retain what has been learned, and to transfer learning to new situations;
- (2) Capacity and willingness to deal with increasing levels of abstraction and complexity earlier than other peers;
- (3) Creative ability to make unusual connections among ideas and concepts;
- (4) Ability to learn quickly in their area(s) of intellectual strength; and
- (5) Capacity for intense concentration and/or focus.

The following procedures shall be employed to find students who may qualify for potential highly capable services:

### Referral

The district will conduct universal screenings at two elementary grade levels to find students who may qualify for potential highly capable services. Referrals must be available for all grade levels not being universally screened, and may be submitted by teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Persons referring a student for consideration for highly capable services will use the district's referral form.

### Screening

The district will select a grade level to implement universal screening procedures for each student. Universal screening must occur once in or before second grade, and again in or before leaving elementary, either fifth or sixth grade. The purpose of universal screening is to include students who traditionally are not referred for highly capable services. Students discovered during universal screening may need further assessment to determine whether the student is eligible for highly capable services. The district will consider at least two student data points during universal screening, which may include previously administered objective standardized, classroom-based performance, cognitive, or achievement assessments, or research-based behavior ratings scales.

Referral forms are available electronically on the District website, and emailed directly to every classroom teacher, principal, office coordinator, and counselor in the district. Hard copies of forms are available at every school office during referral season.

## **Assessment**

The district will obtain written, electronic, or verbal parental permission prior to conducting additional assessments for highly capable screening. The district practices for identifying the most highly capable students must prioritize equitable identification of low-income students.

The district will assess students identified for further consideration through the universal screening process. Students will be assessed using multiple objective criteria. The district must base the assessment process upon a comprehensive review of each student's capability as shown by multiple criteria, from a wide variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each student's unique needs and capabilities. The assessment criterion consists of both qualitative and quantitative (district may select one or both) which may include cognitive ability tests, general ability tests, intellectual ability tests, benchmark assessments, summative and formative assessments, teacher, parent, or community member comments, and work samples. All collected data will be compiled into a centralized record, providing a complete profile of the student's abilities throughout the assessment process.

The district must have identification procedures for their highly capable services that are clearly stated and implemented by the district using the following criteria:

- A. The district must use multiple objective criteria to identify students who are determined to need services. Multiple pathways for qualifications must be available and no single criterion may disqualify a student from identification.
- B. The district must base highly capable selection decisions on criteria local and national norm benchmarks. The district will not use local norms as a more restrictive criterion than national norms at the same percentile.
- C. The district will not use subjective measures, such as teacher recommendations or report card grades to screen out a student from assessment or to disqualify a student from identification. However, the district may use these data points alongside other criteria during selection to support identification.
- D. To the extent practical, the district must give screening and assessments in the native language of the student. If native language screening and assessments are not available, the district must use a nonverbal screening and assessment.

The district will record qualifying test results in the student's cumulative file.

Any screenings or additional assessments will be conducted within the school day and at the school the student attends. On a case-by-case basis and with the consent of the parent or guardian, the district may offer student screenings or additional assessment opportunities during the summer, outside of school hours, or at an alternative site.

## **Selection**

A multidisciplinary selection committee composed of a district administrator, psychologist, or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results, and a teacher will review data that has been collected for each of the referred students. The multidisciplinary selection committee is composed of:

- A. A specialized teacher, a teacher trained in delivering highly capable instruction (however if a specialized teacher is not available, a classroom teacher shall be

appointed).

- B. A psychologist or other qualified practitioner with the training to interpret cognitive and achievement test results.
- C. A certificated coordinator or administrator with the responsibility for the supervision of the district's highly capable services.
- D. Additional professionals, if any, that the district deems desirable.

The multidisciplinary selection committee will evaluate the results of the universal screening, any further individual student assessment, and any available district data and make the selection decision based on:

- A. A preponderance of evidence from the profile data demonstrating that a student requires accelerated learning and enhanced instruction and is significantly highly capable.
- B. Evidence of clear need for highly capable services.

A single assessment score or indicator will not prevent a student's selection for highly capable services; however, individual pieces of evidence, if strong enough, can indicate that the student would benefit from these services. If properly validated tests are not available, the professional judgment of the qualified district personnel shall determine eligibility of the student based upon evidence of cognitive, academic, or achievement.

The district will:

- Notify parents of students selected. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the procedures to exit a student from highly capable services, information on the district's services, and the options that are available to identified students;
- Obtain parental permission to provide identified students highly capable services before any services are provided to the student;
- Hold an informational meeting for all parents/ guardians of newly identified highly capable students;
- Annually review each HiCap students' educational services.

### **Process for Appeal**

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the multi-disciplinary selection committee's decision. Individuals appealing the selection committee's decision must submit a completed appeals form or letter requesting review of selection/placement decision. The written request must include reasons for the appeal and, to support reconsideration, provide additional evidence of significantly advanced cognitive, academic levels and/or outstanding intellectual, academic, or creative abilities.

Parents/legal guardians must submit the appeal request and supporting evidence to the Highly Capable coordinator within 10 school days of the multi-disciplinary selection committee's decision notification.

The district's appeals committee will review the student's file, assessment profile data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal. The Appeals Committee is composed of: the Highly Capable Coordinator, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning or other district administrator, school psychologist, teacher, and additional professionals.

The decision of the multi-disciplinary selection committee may include:

- Upholding the original decision of the multidisciplinary selection committee or reversing the decision of the multidisciplinary selection committee.

The appeals committee will make a decision within 30 school days after receipt of written request for reconsideration. The Highly Capable coordinator will notify the parent/legal guardian of the decision in writing. If no other appeal is available, the decision of the appeals committee is the final decision. If an additional appeal is available, the parent/ legal guardian may appeal the decision of the appeals committee to the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning or designee in writing within 10 school days of receipt of the appeals committee decision. The Executive Director of Teaching and Learning or designee will decide within 30 school days after receipt of a written request for reconsideration. The decision of the Executive Director or designee is final.

### **Exit Process**

Upon the request of a teacher or a highly capable administrator, the district may initiate the exit process for students who no longer demonstrate a need for highly capable services. The multidisciplinary selection committee will convene a meeting and invite parent/guardian to review the student's profile to determine if the student qualifies for services based on assessment data and selection criteria. The multidisciplinary selection committee may request additional evidence of student capabilities. If the committee determines that the student no longer qualifies for highly capable services, it may be recommended that the student be exited from services. The district will notify the parent in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal process.

A parent/legal guardian may request their student no longer receive highly capable services. A meeting will be convened by the Highly Capable Coordinator/Director with the parent/guardian to discuss the request. If the parent/legal guardian desires to withdraw the student from Highly Capable services, the district will stop providing Highly Capable services to the student. The multidisciplinary selection committee will determine if identification procedures are necessary for students wishing to resume Highly Capable services.

### **Service Models**

The district will make a variety of appropriate highly capable services available to highly capable identified students. Once services are started, the district will provide a continuum of services to highly capable students in grades K-12. The district will keep on file a description of the educational services provided for identified students. The district reviews services annually.

The district will offer highly capable students the following services:

#### **Elementary Models**

All Highly Capable students are encouraged to participate in afterschool activities/ clubs like Destination Imagination, Girls run, and other STEM and leadership opportunities as they are offered throughout the school year.

#### **Kindergarten - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

- Kindergarteners identified for enrichment after the 1st trimester will receive differentiated instruction in their original classroom.
- 1st -2nd grade students who were identified in the prior school year will be clustered together with one teacher at their grade level as possible at their regular school. Cluster teachers will provide differentiated instruction, activities and assignments.
- All 2nd graders will be screened to determine future highly capable identification and services. (See referral process above.)

## **Grade 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Models**

### **Model 1 – Self Contained**

- Highly Capable students in grades 3 - 5 are invited to attend a full day self-contained Highly Capable class with all other identified Highly Capable students at a designated school.
- Within that school, classes will be created -based on current numbers of identified Highly Capable students.
- Highly Capable students will have one teacher all day; recess and lunch with grade level peers.
- Highly Capable students will have PE/music/library just as other classes do within the building.
- Transportation will be provided; Highly Capable school now becomes "home" school for Highly Capable students.
- Teachers are under same supervision/schedule as all teachers in that building.

### **Model 2 – Enrichment in Neighborhood School**

- Highly Capable students in grades 3-5 may opt to remain at their neighborhood school.
- Highly Capable students will be clustered with other grade level HiCap identified students as available.
- Classroom teachers will provide differentiation within the general education classroom.

## **Secondary Models**

### **Middle School Models - Grades 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>**

- Highly Capable students may be clustered together in a grade level advance language arts and social studies.
- These classes will be taught by a principal-selected teacher with specialized training re-grading teaching Highly Capable students.
- 8th grade Highly Capable students will have priority placement in all available advanced classes. Students will be clustered together by subject as scheduling permits.
- Students who qualify for Math services may be eligible for advance 6, advance 7, and Algebra.

### **Grade 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> Additional Opportunities:**

- Counselors will review and document Highly Capable student course selection each year with attention to rigor and academic acceleration.
- Highly Capable students are encouraged to participate in the ASB/Leadership, and extracurricular activities offered, including Bridge Builders, STEM Club, Destination Imagination, and Drama productions. Highly Capable students are encouraged to take advantage of challenging courses and extracurricular and leadership opportunities that prepare them for rigorous high school and college courses. Activities are subject to change based on the interests of students.

### **Grade 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>:**

- Counselors will review and document Highly Capable student course selection each year with attention to rigor and academic acceleration.
- Highly Capable students are encouraged to take advantage of courses, which if successfully completed, will earn the student high school and college credit. This can help defray the costs of post-secondary education. All courses are taught using a college level curriculum. Course offerings are subject to change.

- The High School and Beyond Plan will be reviewed by advisors and families at student-led and parent conferences each year. Counselors will meet with each identified HiCap student and review credits, future coursework, and personal academic pathway, with attention to rigor and academic acceleration. These conversations will be documented.
- Advanced Placement classes (AP) offering include, but are not limited to:

AP 2D studio art (photo or graphics tech)	AP Macroeconomics
AP Art History	AP Microeconomics
AP Biology	AP Human Geography
AP Calculus AB	AP Music Theory
AP Chemistry	AP Physics
AP Computer Science	AP Psychology
AP Computer Science Principles	AP Statistics AP
AP English Language & Comp. (11)	AP Languages (French, Japanese)
AP English Literature & Comp. (12)	AP U.S. Gov. & Politics
AP European History	AP Research/AP Seminar/AP Capstone
AP Environmental Science	AP Seminar
	AP U.S. History

- College in the High School.
- Running Start- This is a partnership between the high school and community college/vocational schools.
- Highly Capable students are also encouraged to take quality and challenging electives, such as: STEM courses, foreign language and courses that are electives but required for graduation and college entrance.
- They are also encouraged to take advantage of the high school Sports, Music and Art courses as well as extracurricular activities including a variety of Clubs such as Debate, Knowledge Bowl, National Honor Society.
- Tech Prep: Tech Prep courses are designed to prepare students for highly-skilled occupations. Current offerings include:

Accounting	Digital Photo
American Sign Language (ASL) I, II, III	Digital Media
Athletic Medicine (Beginning and Advanced)	Web Design
Beginning CAD	Early Childhood Education
Child Development	Engineering CAD 1&2
Careers in Education [WWU, CWU, OC]	Marketing 1
Commercial Photo	Marketing Work Experience Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power Point)
Digital Media--Flash Animation	Computing Dynamics (IC3) Work-based-site learning (WBL)

- Academic Acceleration Policy 2195. The district will automatically enroll students who meet the state standard on the high school statewide student assessment in the next most rigorous level of advanced courses offered at the high school.

## Reporting

Identified students will be assigned the appropriate CEDARS Gifted value(s) in the district's

student information system for the end-of-year reporting activities.

The Superintendent or designee will provide an end-of-the-year report to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) that includes:

- A. Number of students served by grade level K-12;
- B. Student demographic information.
- C. Data to determine if students who are highly capable met the goals set and if the services provided met the academic needs of these students;
- D. Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers and general education staff;
- E. Evaluation data and, if needed, service/ placement changes that will be made based upon this information.

Revised: February 10, 2010; August 10, 2011; April 1, 2014; January 30, 2015; February 4, 2015, November 7, 2018, Aug 18, 2022, June 8, 2023, March 19, 2025

**Legal References:** Chapter 392-170 WAC, Chapter 28A.185 RCW