

HIGHLY CAPABLE PROGRAMS

Definition

Highly capable (HiCap) 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. HiCap students exhibit outstanding abilities within their general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities, and/or creative productivity within a specific domain.

HiCap 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 refer, assess, and select students to participate in the highly capable program (HCP):

Referral

All students enrolled in the South Kitsap School District are eligible for referral and testing once a year. The district accepts referrals based on data or evidence from teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Persons referring a student for consideration for admission into the program will use the district's referral form.

All district teachers are expected to refer to any child who shows abilities beyond their peers in any academic, creative, or thinking style. Teachers are expected to refer children regardless of background, nationality, race, color, religion, disability, or behavior. Notification of the referral process is through building newsletters, the Highly Capable Program website, school marquees, Parent Square, and the district website.

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.

All 2nd and 5th-grade students in the district are administered a cognitive abilities assessment in the regular classroom during December. Once the screener is administered and evaluated, students whose scores are significantly above peers in any content area, and/or those students who show significantly above grade level on classroom data/assessments, and/or any student referred by themselves, a parent, community member or teacher will be invited to continue through the identification process. The HCP will notify parents/ guardians of referred students, and parents can remove their student from or give permission to continue through the identification process.

Assessment

The district will obtain written, electronic, or verbal parental permission from referred students before conducting assessments to determine eligibility for participation in its HCP.

District practices for identifying the most highly capable students must prioritize culturally responsive and equitable identification, especially for non-dominant populations.

The district will assess students identified for testing using multiple objective criteria. The district must base the assessment process upon a review of each student's capability as shown by multiple criteria, from a wide variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each referred student's unique needs and capabilities. The assessment criterion consists of both qualitative and quantitative (district may select one or both) instruments and may include: cognitive ability tests, general ability tests, intellectual ability tests, benchmark assessments, summative and formative assessments, teacher/ parent/ community member comments, and work samples.

The district must implement the following identification procedures for its HCP.

- a) Districts must use multiple objective criteria to identify students who are significantly highly capable. 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 considerations of criteria benchmarked on local norms. 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.

Qualifying test results will be recorded in the student's cumulative file at their homeschool.

Selection

A multidisciplinary selection committee (MDSC) will review data that has been collected for each of the nominated/referred students. The MDSC is composed of:

- A special teacher (however if a special teacher is not available, a classroom teacher shall be appointed)
- A psychologist or other qualified practitioner with the training to interpret cognitive and achievement test results.
- A certificated coordinator or administrator with the responsibility for the supervision of the district's highly capable program
- Additional professionals, if any, that the districts deem desirable.

The MDSC will evaluate individual student data and make the selection based on:

- (1) A preponderance of evidence from the profile data demonstrating that a student is significantly highly capable;
- (2) Evidence of clear need for highly capable services; and
- (3) Determination of which students would benefit the most from inclusion in the district's program.

A single assessment score or indicator will not prevent a student's selection for the HCP. 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 and intellectual ability and/or achievement.

The district will:

- A. Notify parents of students who have been identified as highly capable. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the procedures to exit a student from the program, information on the district's program, and the options that are available to identified students;
- B. Obtain parental permission to place identified students in the program before any special services and programs are provided to the student;
- C. Schedule a meeting for all parents/ guardians of newly identified highly capable students;
- D. Conduct an annual parent meeting to review each student's educational plan.

Process for Appeal

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the MDSC 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, or intellectual levels or abilities.

Parents/legal guardians must submit the appeal request and supporting evidence to the HCP within 14 school days of the MDSC'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 and may include additional testing. The Appeals Committee is composed of: the Highly Capable Program Coordinator, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning or other district administrator, school psychologist, classroom teacher, and additional professionals, if any, that the district deems necessary.

The decision of the appeals selection committee may include upholding the original decision of the MDSC or reversing the decision of the MDSC.

The appeals committee will decide within 30 school days after receipt of the written request for reconsideration. The HCP will notify the parent/legal guardian of the appeal committee's final decision in writing. 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 14 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 request of a teacher or HCP administrator, the district may initiate the exit process for students who no longer demonstrate a need for HCP services. The MDSC will convene a meeting to review the student's profile to determine if the student qualifies for program services based on assessment data and selection criteria. The MDSC may request additional evidence of student capabilities and/or willingness to participate in the program. If the committee determines that the

student no longer qualifies for HCP services, it may be recommended that the student exited from the program. The parent will be notified in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal's process.

A parent/legal guardian may request that the student be withdrawn from the program, or a student may voluntarily withdraw from the program. A meeting will be convened by the Highly Capable Program Coordinator/Director to discuss the request. If the parent/legal guardian desires to withdraw the student from the program, the student will be exited from the program. The MDSC will determine if identification procedures are necessary for students wishing to reenter the program in the future.

Program Design

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

Elementary Models

Kindergarten -2nd 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 3rd-5th Models

Model 1 – Self contained

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

Model 2 – Enrichment in neighborhood school

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

Middle School Models - Grades 6-8

- HiCap students will 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 HiCap students.
- 8th grade HiCap 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 6-8 additional opportunities:

- Counselors will review and document HiCap student course selection each year with attention to rigor and academic acceleration.
- HiCap students are encouraged to participate in the ASB/Leadership Program, and extracurricular activities offered, including Bridge Builders, STEM Club, and Drama productions. HiCap 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 9-12:

- Counselors will review and document HiCap student course selection each year with attention to rigor and academic acceleration.
- HiCap 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 U.S. History
AP Biology	AP Macroeconomics
AP Calculus	AP Human Geography
AP Chemistry	AP Music Theory
AP Computer Science	AP Physics
AP English Language & Comp. (11)	AP Psychology
AP English Literature & Comp. (12)	AP Statistics AP European
History	AP Languages
	(French, Japanese)
AP Environmental Science	AP U.S. Gov. & Politics
- HiCap 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

Programs as well as extracurricular activities including a variety of Clubs such as Debate, Knowledge Bowl, National Honor Society.

- University of Washington in the High School classes—current offerings include: UW in the High School Astronomy, Spanish, and German.
- 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— Web Design
Athletic Medicine (Beginning and Advanced)	Early Childhood Education
Beginning CAD	Engineering CAD 1&2
Child Development	Marketing 1
Careers in Education [WWU, CWU, OC]	Marketing Work Experience
Commercial Photo	Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power Point)
Digital Media--Flash Animation	Computing Dynamics (IC3)
Work-based-site learning (WBL)	

- Running Start—This is a partnership between the high school and community college- vocational schools.
- 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 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) which includes:

- Number of students served by grade level K-12;
- Student demographic information.
- Data to determine if students who are highly capable met the goals set and if the programs provided met the academic needs of these students;
- Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers and general education staff;
- Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information; and
- Final fiscal report that reports on activities and staff funded by this program.

Program Evaluation - Evaluation is obtained through multiple measures:

- HiCap student and parent surveys, teacher and administrator feedback and meetings with parents and staff.
- Evaluation of grades, district and state assessments, student reflection, program participation.
- Parent and student feedback is also solicited throughout the year during parent-teacher conferences and parent events.

- o Every attempt is made to ensure all communication is sent out to all students and parents.

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