

HIGHLY CAPABLE PROGRAM: 2190P

Federal Way Public Schools (FWPS) has adopted Highly Capable Services as its instructional model for K-12 students who have been identified as highly capable and has a clear commitment to equity and diversity of opportunity for all students.

I. 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. Outstanding abilities are seen within students' general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain. These students are present not only in the general populace, but also are present within all protected classes.*

*A protected class is a group of people who share common characteristics and are protected from discrimination and harassment under federal and state laws. Protected classes defined by Washington State Law include: age, sex, race and color, religion and creed, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, disability and the use of a trained dog guide or service animal, and honorably discharged veteran or military status.

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 their chronological 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 focus.

II. Identification Process

The district identification process will apply equitably to all enrolled students and families present in FWPS. The District will review identification procedures and data to ascertain whether overall numbers of identified students reflect the demographics of FWPS.

Referrals: The District will conduct universal screening at second and fourth grades to find students who may be identified for highly capable services. The purpose of universal screening is to include students who traditionally are not referred for highly capable services. A referral process is available for all grade levels not being universally screened, and referrals may be submitted by teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. The District will make

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available annually translated versions of: a referral form, a list of characteristics of highly capable learners, and informational sheets at all schools as well as on the district website. Translations will be provided in the top 8 languages. School will also include information about the opportunity to refer students and available services through their school newsletters and during student-led conferences.

Assessment: The District will obtain written or electronic parental permission prior to conducting assessments to determine eligibility for participation in its Highly Capable Program (HCP).

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 testing through the universal screening process 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 student's unique needs and capabilities. The assessment criterion consists of both qualitative and quantitative instruments and may include: NNAT3 Naglieri Cognitive Assessment, SBA, iReady (ELA & Math), and WIDA.

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

- a) Districts must use multiple objective criteria to identify students who are among the most 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 consideration of criteria benchmarked on local norms, but 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; and
- d) To the extent practicable, 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 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.

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Identification: A multi-disciplinary selection committee composed of a district administrator, psychologist, or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results, a teacher, and any additional professionals the District deems desirable, will review data that has been collected for each of the referred students.

The multi-disciplinary 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:

1. A preponderance of evidence from the profile data demonstrating that a student is among the most 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; 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 and/or academic achievement.

The District will:

1. Notify parents of the students selected. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the process to exit a student from the program, the information on the District's program, and the options that are available to identified students.
2. Obtain parental permission to place identified students in the program before any special services and programs are provided to the student.

III. Appeal Process

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the multi-disciplinary committee's decision. Individuals appealing the multi-disciplinary committee's decision must submit a completed appeal form on or before the stated deadline to request a review of the identification decision. In order to be considered, the appeal must contain a written explanation indicating why the appeal is being filed, including specific new information that could impact the decision by the multi-disciplinary committee.

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Any additional assessments must be initiated by the multi-disciplinary committee. Assessments conducted by any agency other than FWPS will not be considered in the appeals process. The multi-disciplinary committee's final decision will be communicated in writing to the person filing the appeal on the student's behalf.

IV. Exit Process

A parent/guardian may request that a student be withdrawn from highly capable services. In such cases, the parent/guardian will make the request at the building level, and the building principal and/or designee will forward the request to the Highly Capable Program Director. After a review by the selection committee, if a parent/legal guardian still wishes to decline further services for his/her student, the student will be exited and will no longer receive highly capable services.

V. Leaving or Re-entering the District

If a student with the highly capable designation moves to a new district and then returns, his/her highly capable designation remains, and highly capable services will resume according to the receiving building's available service-delivery options. If a student identified for highly capable services in FWPS moves to a different community, the new district may choose to review the student's available assessment data and may choose to administer additional assessments to determine eligibility.

VI. New Enrollments in the District

A student who was previously enrolled in another district or state, whether identified as highly capable or not, and who missed the most recent referral window in FWPS may be referred to the Highly Capable Services Department within 30 business days from the first day of school. In such cases, the parents/guardians will be informed of the student's status within three months of enrollment.

VII. Implementation of Services

Elementary: In grades K-5, service-delivery options include but are not limited to differentiation, enrichment, and/or acceleration. Elementary schools will annually establish a Highly Capable Scholar Learning Plan (SLP) for each highly capable identified scholar in collaboration with parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student. This plan will outline goals, identify services, and monitor student progress over the school year. The services determined could be delivered in a general education, cluster-grouped classroom or small-group instructional setting based on student numbers, student needs, staffing, and/or available resources. Additional enrichment opportunities may be provided as an extra-curricular opportunity.

Secondary: In grades 6-12, service-delivery options include but are not limited to differentiation, enrichment, and/or acceleration. Secondary schools may provide the service-delivery options

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through one or more of the following means: general education classrooms, advanced programs, extra-curricular clubs and academic competitions, course acceleration, and/or partnerships with outside agencies.