

PROCEDURE -2190P HIGHLY CAPABLE PROGRAMS

The following procedures will be used to refer, assess and select students to participate in the North Thurston Public Schools Highly Capable Program (HCP):

Referral

Anyone, including teachers, other staff, parents, students and members of the community, may refer any student residing within the boundaries of the North Thurston school District using the District's online referral form.

Referrals can be made for students residing outside the boundaries of the District, however, may be assessed a fee for participation in the application process.

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).

The assessment process will be based upon a review of each nominee's capability as shown by multiple objective 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 measures. Assessment measures may include:

1. Cognitive Abilities Tests (CogAT) or similar assessment
2. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) or similar assessment
3. Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (Home and School Ratings Forms) or similar assessments
4. State Assessments
5. District Assessments
6. Other performance data as applicable

Selection

A Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee (MDSC) composed of a District administrator, a psychologist (or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results), a teacher, a certified coordinator or administrator with the responsibility for the supervision of the District's highly capable program and any additional professionals that the District deems desirable, will review data that has been collected for each of the referred students.

The multi-disciplinary selection committee will evaluate individual student assessment profile data and make both the selection decision and service option placement 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 test 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.

Students who reside within the boundaries of the District have priority in placement decisions. The acceptance and continued participation of a student who resides outside the District is permitted if no resident student is denied participation as a result of the non-resident student's participation. District employees whose children qualify for the highly capable program are considered as in-District students.

The District will:

1. Notify parents of the students selected. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification 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.

Process for Appeal

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision of highly capable identification. Program placement decisions are not subject to appeal.

Appeals of identification results are to be based upon the probability of:

1. A condition or circumstance believed to have caused a misinterpretation of testing results; or
2. An inequitable application of the identification process.

All appeals must be submitted in writing, using the Appeal of Highly Capable Identification Form, within fifteen (15) days of the date of the original decision letter and include reasons in support of the fact that one or both of the above conditions occurred.

Appeals should be submitted to the Assessment Department and are reviewed by the Superintendent's designee. Findings are reported in a letter to parents/legal guardians no later than fifteen (15) days after the appeal has been received. The findings are considered final and not subject to further appeal.

Exit Process

Students may be exited from the program for one of the following reasons:

1. A parent/legal guardian may request to withdraw the student from the program. In this case, the parent/guardian should complete and submit the Request to End Placement Form to the District.
2. Upon the request of a teacher or a highly capable program administrator, the District may initiate the exit process for students who no longer demonstrate a need for highly capable program services. The Multi-Disciplinary Selection

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Committee 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 multi-disciplinary selection committee 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 highly capable program services, it may recommend that the student be exited from the program.

Program Design

The District will make appropriate services available to students who are identified in grades K-12. Once services are started, a continuum of services will be provided for identified students. The District will keep on file a description of the educational services provided for identified students. The District reviews services periodically for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate and may require updated cognitive and academic assessments.

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 comply with all required reporting to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Implemented:

February 1, 2019

North Thurston School District