



WWPS Highly Capable Programming

Program Descriptions, Referral Form and Permission to Test

Referral Packet Due Dates:

Grades K-8, February 18, 2025

The annual selection process for in-district students typically takes place in late spring. Following the testing and selection process, all parents will be notified in writing of the results of the process.

*Parents/guardians of **students in 1st, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade** should be in contact with their child's teacher(s) during conferences to determine if Highly Capable testing is recommended.*

*Students selected for Highly Capable programming in **grades 3-7** will begin services at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year.*

PROGRAMMING DESCRIPTIONS

Walla Walla Public Schools' Highly Capable Program programming focus on two domains: 1) general intellectual growth and exploration and 2) specific academic content areas. The specific academic focus areas are mathematics, science, language arts and social studies. Students identified as Highly Capable are offered the following:

- Students identified as Highly Capable in kindergarten through second grade are served through the Response to Intervention (RtI) model in their home schools. The elementary principal or designee will work with classroom teachers to provide appropriate accelerated/enhanced learning opportunities. Kindergarten through second grade classroom/program options could include, but are not limited to: alternative activities, enrichment activities, flexible group learning, independent projects, advanced lessons, online or supplemental instruction. Students who qualify for highly capable identification in kindergarten or first grade will participate in the full cognitive ability test in second grade to ensure the review team has the most current information to determine whether Explorers programming matches identified highly capable areas.
- For third through fifth grade, Highly Capable identified students, some may be served in Explorers, a one day per week pull-out program focusing on enriched academic experiences. Identified Highly Capable students receive services under the RtI model at their home schools depending on the area(s) identified as Highly Capable.

Explorers programming is designed for students who are:

- Academically advanced and demonstrate high intellectual capacity
 - Independent learners who thrive on progressively challenging opportunities
 - Able to utilize advanced problem-solving skills
 - Needing in-depth study of curriculum matched to their demonstrated skills and capabilities
 - Adaptable to advanced pacing at a higher level than a regular classroom
 - Adaptable to being bussed to a different location one-day a week, and out of the general education classroom one day a week
- Middle school Highly Capable services are incorporated into the school day through specific classes. Students are involved in inquiry-based lessons, group problem-solving settings, independent investigations and group discussions. Middle school Highly Capable students also have an opportunity to take different levels of math and science classes based on their ability, test scores and recommendations from teachers.
 - Students identified as Highly Capable and transitioning to ninth grade will meet with high school counselors (or principal's designee) for the purpose of course selection and access to advanced instruction. Teachers of high school Highly Capable students will know who has been identified and will be provided with professional development and/or instructional suggestions through the high school RtI team. Services for high school students can include, but are not limited to, honors or Advanced Placement classes, Running Start or independent study.
 - Previously identified transfer students, with proof of program acceptance from another school district, are placed according to their educational needs in the academic focus areas of mathematics, science, language arts and social studies.

DEFINITION OF A HIGHLY CAPABLE STUDENT: Highly capable children and youth perform at or show the potential for performing at a significantly advanced level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment; and generally possess 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) Ability to make unusual connections among ideas and concepts;
- (4) Ability to learn very quickly in their area(s) of intellectual strength;
- (5) Capacity for intense concentration and/or focus.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGHLY CAPABLE STUDENTS

- Learns new material faster, and at an earlier age, than peers.
- Remembers what has been learned, often making review unnecessary.
- Is able to deal with concepts that are too complex and abstract for age peers.
- Has a passionate interest in one or more topics; would spend all available time learning about that topic if s/he could.
- Does not need to watch the teacher to hear what is being said; can process more than one task at a time.
- Is very intense. Gets totally absorbed in activities and thoughts; may be reluctant to move from one subject area to another; may insist on mastering one thing before starting another. May experience periods of such fierce concentration that he is literally unaware of what is going on around him.
- Prefers complex and challenging tasks to “basic” or “busy” work. May change simple tasks or directions into more complex ones to keep interested.
- Has many, and sometimes unusual, interests, hobbies, and collections. May have a passionate interest, such as dinosaurs, that has lasted for many years

Appeals

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the Highly Capable selection committee’s decision. Appeal forms are available in the district Teaching and Learning Department (509-526-6733).

Individuals appealing the selection committee’s decision must submit a completed appeal form requesting review of selection/placement decision. Grounds for appeal include, but are not limited to, errors in scoring, testing bias against students who are members of a protected class, and special circumstances including unique, untestable characteristics evident in student performances or products. The written appeal request must include reasons for the appeal and any supporting documentation.

The appeal request and supporting evidence must be submitted to the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning within ten school days of receiving the committee’s decision. The selection committee will review the student’s file, assessment data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal. A recommendation will be made to the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning and his/her decision will be communicated to parent/legal guardians in writing. This decision is final.

Change of Services

State law mandates that identified Highly Capable students maintain that designation through grade 12. However, students who exit the Explorer Program (elementary pull out and middle school classroom models) will continue to be served in their home schools through the RtI model. Students have a right to discontinue the Explorers Program but will not be placed back into the program within the same school year. Students who do not actively participate in the program, or demonstrate behaviors that interfere with the learning experience of other students within the program will be reconsidered for placement. This action would involve the teacher, student, parents, school principal and/or administrator with responsibility for the supervision of the district’s Highly Capable program.

Grades K-8

WALLA WALLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS HIGHLY CAPABLE TESTING PERMISSION FORM

Highly Capable programming (K-12) is offered for those students who demonstrate exceptional ability, exceed grade level standards in literacy and/or math, demonstrate exceptional creativity, and possess strong motivation to excel.

Please complete this page and the parent questionnaire by the date corresponding to your child's grade level (dates on front of this packet), and return to your Learning Specialist or Middle School Counselor.

Student Information

Name of Student		Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)	
School	Homeroom Teacher		Grade
Primary language spoken by the student			
Primary language spoken in the home			
Please check the boxes below that apply to your student:			
Title 1 / LAP	YES	NO	English Learner (EL)
504 Plan	YES	NO	Dual Program
IEP	YES	NO	<i>If Yes to Dual, what side?</i>
Other Information :			YES NO YES NO ENG SPN

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Parent / Guardian Name			
Parent / Guardian Mailing Address			
Parent / Guardian E-mail Address			
Home Phone	Cell Phone	Work Phone	
Nomination initiated by:	Teacher	Parent	Administrator
			Other (Specify)

Parent Permission for Testing

I give permission to test my child to determine eligibility and/or possible placement in the Walla Walla Public Schools Highly Capable program.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

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Parent/Guardian Questionnaire for Highly Capable Programming

Student Name _____ Current School _____
 Current Grade Level _____

Please print or type responses and use pronouns instead of your child's name.

Step 1: Check the appropriate box: occasionally, frequently, consistently Step 2: Give an example for each	occasionally	frequently	consistently
My child surprises me with his/her knowledge. Give an example:			
My child is intellectually curious and asks thoughtful questions Give an example:			
My child shows advanced math and/or literacy skills Give an example:			
My child can focus on a particular topic for an unusually long period of time. Give an example:			
My child comes up with imaginative and/or unusual ways of doing things. Give an example:			

Does your child have a special need, such as a learning disability, you want to communicate? _____
 If yes, please explain on the back.

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