

INSTRUCTION

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 refer, assess, and select students eligible for highly capable services:

Referral and Screening

The district offers highly capable services for students who demonstrate both above average aptitude and achievement in verbal and or quantitative skill areas. Public notification of parents and students will be made before any major identification activity.

A pool of eligible students for the screening process will be generated using:

1. Achievement data, including above average or higher on standardized achievement tests like STAR 360, state assessment data, and or teacher consultation form.
2. Aptitude data, including above average or higher on verbal and or quantitative scores of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), and or other standardized aptitude data such as Naglieri, WISC.
3. Evidence of highly capable eligibility documented on a Parent Rating Scale.
4. Evidence of highly capable eligibility documented on a Teacher Rating Scale.
5. Referrals from parents, teachers, community members, and or self-nomination.
6. Teacher consultation form documenting evidence of highly capable eligibility.
7. ELPA 21/ and Spanish CogAT, as appropriate

Referral forms will be completed for each child. Screening and assessment procedures for identification and program options will be explained to parents, and permission to evaluate will be obtained in writing or electronic parental permission.

Assessment

Assessment data and teacher consultation will be reviewed for all referred students. Universal screening happens at kindergarten using Naglieri and first grade with CogAT. Transition to middle school will use recent CogAT that was administered within the last three years.

Multiple pathways for qualifications are available, and no single criterion may disqualify students from identification. In addition, the district practices for identifying the most highly capable students and must prioritize equitable identification of low-income students. The district will not use subjective data to screen out students for possible services. The scores from the above forms and assessment will be compiled in a student profile packet, which is criteria intended to reveal each referred student's unique needs and capabilities. Eligible students will be reviewed by a district multidisciplinary team (composed of the building highly capable coordinator, learning specialist/counselor, administrator, and or classroom teacher), who will complete the student profile packet and make eligibility recommendations.

Selection

A district multidisciplinary selection team (DMST) is composed of a school psychologist or other qualified person to interpret cognitive and achievement test results, a teacher with special training in highly capable education, and a certificated coordinator/administrator. Other qualified professionals may be involved, such as learning specialists, counselors, classroom teachers, and building highly capable coordinators. To identify district's most highly capable students, each individual student's information is reviewed holistically to make decisions based on the district's eligibility criteria developed by the Highly Capable Advisory Team and implemented by district multidisciplinary team 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 highly capable program; 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.

Process for Appeal

Individuals appealing the selection committee's decision must submit a completed appeal form or letter requesting a 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 or 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 in Students Services within ten school days of the multidisciplinary 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 executive director, assistant director, and highly capable program coordinator in Student Services.

The decision of the appeals/multidisciplinary selection committee may include:

1. Upholding the original decision of the multidisciplinary selection committee;
2. Reversing the decision of the multidisciplinary selection committee.

The appeals committee will make a decision within ten school days after receipt of a written request for reconsideration and will notify the parent/legal guardian of the decision in writing. The decision of the appeals committee is the final decision.

Exit Process

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 multidisciplinary selection 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 multidisciplinary 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. The district will notify the parent in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal process.

A parent/legal guardian may request to withdraw the student 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 district will exit the student from the program. The multidisciplinary selection committee 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 to students who participate in the program. Once services are started, the district will provide a continuum of services 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 in the spring for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

The district will offer highly capable students the following programs:

Elementary Students

In a general education classroom, a highly capable coordinator will work with your child's teacher. They work together on services to challenge your child. Those services may include:

- Curriculum compacting
- Special projects
- Differentiated assignments
- Cluster grouping
- Subject acceleration
- Enrichment clusters

A small number of highly capable students have significantly different learning needs. They may thrive in full-time, self-contained classrooms, see below for details.

Middle and High School Students

Students eligible for highly capable services in secondary schools are encouraged to sign up for challenging courses that address their strength area(s). Students receiving highly capable services in secondary math are typically grade-level accelerated one to two grade-levels. Honors, Pre-Advanced Placement (AP), and AP courses are open to students at the secondary level.

Self-Contained Highly Capable Services

Elementary Venture — Highly Capable Classrooms for grades 2-5

These classrooms offer a rigorous academic curriculum addressing both verbal and quantitative strength areas while meeting the specific affective needs of highly capable students. This program is housed at two locations: Emerald Heights and Cottonwood elementary schools.

Middle School Magnet — Highly Capable Classrooms for grades 6-8

These classrooms offer a rigorous integrated program for language arts, social studies, and science within the middle school structure. Students are placed in appropriate math classes.

The magnet program is housed at four locations: Central Kitsap, Fairview, Ridgetop middle schools and Klahowya Secondary 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:

1. Number of students served by grade level K-12;
2. Student demographic information;
3. 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;
4. Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers and general education staff; and
5. Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information.

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