

Highly Capable Programs

The following procedures will be used to refer, assess and select students to participate in the programs:

Referral

Anyone may refer a child to the program, including 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.

Assessment

The district will screen each referred student to identify students who qualify for further assessment.

Prior to conducting assessment(s), the district will obtain written or electronic parental permission.

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 screening process using multiple objective criteria. The district must base the assessment process upon a review of each referred 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: Dibels, WAKids, i.Ready, SBA, Common Formative Assessments, Student Portfolios (K-2), and the cogAT. Students may be tested with the cogAT once within a calendar year.

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.

Testing for Highly Capable services occurs once a year. However, children of military parents who have moved to the district after testing has occurred and who have been referred based on academic performance have the opportunity to be screened for services in August. In addition, with consideration to extenuating circumstances, there is the possibility for screening on a case-by-case basis.

Selection

A multi-disciplinary selection committee composed of a district administrator, psychologist, or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results and a teacher will review data that has been collected for each of the referred students. The multi-disciplinary selection committee 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 responsibility for the supervision of the district's highly capable program; and additional professionals, if any, that the district deems desirable.

The multi-disciplinary selection committee will evaluate individual student assessment profile data. The selection decision is 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 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 ability and/or academic achievement.

The district will:

- A. Notify parents of the student's eligibility for highly capable program services. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the appeal process, an explanation of the procedures to exit a student from the program, the 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;

Program Design

The district will make a variety of appropriate program services available to students who participate in the program. Once services are started, the district will provide a continuum of services to identify students in grades K-12 beginning in the fall of 2014. The district will keep on file a description of the educational programs provided for identified students. The district reviews services yearly for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

Program Goals:

The goals of the program are to provide students with daily opportunities to:

- Maximize their rate of learning and levels of achievement through research-based differentiation;
- Expand their intellectual ability in an environment that places an emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving skills;
- Develop intellectual curiosity, self-directed learning and communication skills through independent research investigation;
- Develop creative productivity through the purposeful design of products intended to have an impact on one or more target audiences;
- Develop and maintain a positive attitude toward school and learning, as well as toward self and others.

Learner Outcomes:

Highly Capable Students will:

- Demonstrate growth commensurate with their aptitude during the school year;
- Demonstrate use of higher level thinking and problem solving skills;
- Use an inquiry process to conduct independent research investigations;
- Use appropriate written, spoken, and media tools to construct and convey new learning through inquiry;
- Learn and use techniques that help in the search for innovative solutions;
- Recognize their strengths, needs, and individuality. They will develop skills to achieve their potential while making meaningful contributions to their classroom, school and larger community.

The district will offer highly-capable students the following programs:

K-2 Differentiation Services

K-2 teachers use small group instruction and activities tailored to students' unique needs to provide learning opportunities appropriate for their academic skill levels.

Cluster Classroom, Grades 3-4

In this placement, eligible students are served in their home schools through the use of cluster classrooms in which a group of other highly capable students are placed together. Their classroom teachers use a variety of methods to provide continuous learning progress, challenge, and enrichment. Examples include, but are not limited to: special projects, online math problem-solving, and small group instruction.

Provisional Cluster Placement, Grades 3-4

After a year of experimentation, for next year and beyond, we are reaching out to students who showed strong potential in the Highly Capable program screening process by creating a new

provisional cluster eligibility. Students with a provisional cluster eligibility will be placed in a cluster with fully eligible students and will need to test with the following year to continue in the program.

Self-Contained Classroom, Grades 3-4

Two self-contained classrooms serve eligible students in grades three and four. In this placement, Washington State's standards-based curriculum has been modified to provide in-depth learning experiences through the use of advanced math and language arts instruction, problem and project-based learning, simulations, Socratic Seminars, technology integration, and challenge in all areas of the curriculum.

Services in a self-contained setting are based on student need and available space. Services in the self-contained setting are not guaranteed, and a student receiving highly capable services in a self-contained setting one year may receive highly capable services in a cluster setting another year.

Advanced Classes, Grades 5-6

Oak Harbor Intermediate School provides advanced level classes for academic areas. In both grades, math is accelerated by at least one grade level. The advanced literacy classes are writing intensive and incorporate techniques and strategies that challenge, extend and enrich the curriculum.

Advanced Classes, Grades 7-8

North Whidbey Middle School provides advanced level classes through accelerated math classes, Honors English Language Arts and Honors Social Studies.

Advanced Classes, Grades 9-12

Highly Capable students in grades 9 through 12 may self-select advanced courses from: Honors and Pre AP Courses, Advanced Placement Courses, College in High School through Central Washington University, or Career Tech Education courses. Procedures for placement in these classes are established at the building level.

Process for Appeal

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision. If your child was ineligible for Highly Capable services, you may appeal the eligibility decision, but not the placement 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 or academic levels and/or outstanding intellectual, academic, or creative abilities.

The appeal request and supporting evidence must be submitted the Department of Teaching and Learning, 350 S. Oak Harbor Street, Oak Harbor, WA 98277 within two weeks of receiving your child's letter of eligibility for Highly Capable services. The district's multidisciplinary selection committee will review the student's file, assessment profile data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal.

The decision of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee may include:

- Upholding the original decision of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee;
- Reversing the decision of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee;

The Appeals Committee will make a decision within five (5) school days after receipt of written request for reconsideration and will notify the parent/legal guardian of the decision in writing. The decision of the committee is final.

Exit Process

Upon the request of a teacher or 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 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. 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 multi-disciplinary selection committee will determine if identification procedures are necessary for students wishing to reenter the program in the future.

Reporting

The superintendent will provide an end-of-the-year report, if required, to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).