

**DEFINITION – HIGHLY CAPABLE**

“Highly Capable” students are defined as those 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 the student’s 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 are present 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 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/or focus.

**PROGRAMS FOR HIGHLY-CAPABLE STUDENTS**

The following procedures will be employed to refer, assess and identify students for access to a variety of appropriate program services through a continuum of services for students from kindergarten to twelfth grade.

**REFERRAL**

Referrals are accepted by community members who may include, but are not limited to: teachers, other staff, parents/guardians, and students. Nominators will complete the district’s referral form to refer a student to be considered for highly capable services and subsequent placement in appropriate services and/or programs.

**ASSESSMENT**

The District will obtain written parental permission prior to conducting assessments to determine eligibility for participation in its Highly Capable Programs (HCP).

Students identified for further testing through the screening process will be assessed using multiple objective criteria. The assessment process will be based 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 measures. Students will be selected based upon evidence that they:

- Have exceptionally high cognitive ability
- Demonstrate exceptionally high academic achievement
- Consistently exhibit behavioral and learning characteristics associated with exceptional creativity and problem-solving

**SELECTION**

A multi-disciplinary selection team will be composed of a District administrator, psychologist or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results, ~~and~~ a teacher, and/or any additional professionals who the district deems desirable. The Hi-Cap Multidisciplinary Team will review individual student assessment profile data. The selection decision is based on:

- A preponderance of evidence from the profile data demonstrating that a student is among the most highly capable;
- Evidence of clear need for highly capable services.

Parents/guardians will receive an explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the appeal process, an explanation of the procedures to exit a student from the program, information on the district's continuum of services and the options available to identified students. Parents/guardians of referred for identification will be notified of their student's status.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

The District will make a variety of appropriate services available to students who are identified in grades K-12. See Hi-Cap Handbook for specific information.

Once services are started, a continuum of services will be available to identified students in grades K-12. The District will periodically review services for students to ensure that the services are appropriate.

**APPEAL PROCESS**

Parents/Guardians may appeal the decision of the Multidisciplinary Committee. An appeal must be based upon one of the following conditions:

- **A condition or circumstance believed to have caused a misinterpretation of the testing results.** i.e., incorrect birthdate or grade level used in calculating the student's score
- **An inequitable application of the identification procedures.** i.e., the applicant's proficiency with the English language.
- **An extraordinary and temporary circumstance that negatively affected the validity of the test results.** i.e., a traumatic event or physical distress immediately preceding the test.

If you believe one of these conditions applies to your child, you will need to submit an appeal that includes any of the following items and information within 10 days of notification of qualification results to the Hi-Cap Coordinator at 111 Bethel Street N.E., Olympia, WA 98506. The letter should include your name, address and phone number as well as your child's name, grade and school:

- Letter of support from the parent/guardian providing compelling information demonstrating the test scores are not representative of the child's abilities.
- Teacher recommendation and current sample of work.
- Copy of most recent report card.
- Previous scores from achievement and ability tests.
- Pertinent information supplied by a school or license psychologist.
- A written explanation of any extraordinary and/or temporary circumstance that negatively affected the validity of the test results (i.e., applicants proficiency with the English language, traumatic event or physical distress immediately preceding the test.

- Any additional supporting evidence you feel would justify your child being reconsidered based on the State’s definition of *“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.”* (WAC 392-170-035)

Appeals are reviewed by an Appeals Committee that consists of a psychologist or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results, principal, teacher and any other professionals the District has chosen to place on the committee. All submitted documents are closely and carefully reviewed. The Committee is looking for evidence that the results of the testing are not a true representation of the child's abilities. Parents/Guardians will be notified with recommendations for one of the following:

- Identification of student as “most highly capable”
- Referral for next year’s screening
- Not eligible for the Highly Capable Program

The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

**EXIT PROCEDURES**

A parent/legal guardian may request that the student be withdrawn from the services or a student may voluntarily withdraw from the program by completing an exit process form.

If the parent/legal guardian desires to withdraw the student from the program, the student will be exited from the program. If the parent/guardian wishes to reinstate a student, the multi-disciplinary selection committee will determine eligibility.

**REPORTING**

Identified students will be assigned the appropriate CEDARS Gifted value(s) in the District’s student information system for 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).



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*Revised..... November 17, 2014*