

Highly Capable Programs

The following procedures will be employed to nominate, assess and select students to participate in the elementary program:

Nomination

Anyone may nominate a student to the program, including teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Nominators will be sent the district's nomination form to recommend a student for consideration in the program.

Assessment

The district will obtain written parental permission prior to conducting assessments not normally administered to all students to determine eligibility for participation in its Highly Capable Program (HCP).

Nominees will be assessed using multiple objective criteria. The assessment process shall be based upon a review of each nominee's capability as shown by multiple criteria, from a wide variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each nominee's unique needs and capabilities. The assessment criterion consists of quantitative instruments and may include Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and /or Renzulli Scales.

Test results will be recorded in the student's cumulative file.

Selection

A multi-disciplinary selection team 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 nominated students. Based upon the preponderance of evidence, and a clear need for program services, they will select those students who would receive the most benefit from participating in the program. The district will:

- A. Notify parents of students who have been selected. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, program options and the appeal process; and
- B. Obtain parental permission to provide services and programs before any program services are provided.

Process for Appeal

Parents and legal guardians have the right to appeal the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision. Individuals appealing the Committee's decision must submit a letter requesting review of the placement decision. The written request must include reasons for the appeal and, to support reconsideration, 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.

The appeal request and supporting evidence must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision notification. Please address the letter to: Highly Capable Program; Student Services Center, Room 9; 10903 Gravelly Lake Drive SW; Lakewood, WA 98499-1341.

The District Appeals Committee will review the student's file, assessment profile data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal. Appeals are reviewed by a District Appeals Committee that consists of an administrator, psychologist, principal, and teacher. 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. The decision of the Committee may include:

- Upholding the original decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee.
- Reversing the decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee.

A decision will be made by the Committee within ten (10) school days after receipt of written request for reconsideration. The parent/legal guardian will be notified of the decision in writing. The decision of the District Appeals Committee is final.

Non-English speaking parents may request an interpreter by calling (253) 583-5150, to request a district interpreter be present at the appointment with the District Appeals Committee.

Exit Process

The exit process may be initiated for students who no longer demonstrate a need for highly capable program services. A request may be made by a teacher or program administrator for highly capable student identification and placement discontinuation. 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 be recommended that the student exited from the program. The parent will be notified in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal's process.

A parent/legal guardian may request that the student be withdrawn 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 student will be exited 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.

Program Design

The district will make a variety of appropriate program services to students who participate in the program. Once services are started, a continuum of services will be provided 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 for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

The district will offer highly capable students the following programs: accelerated learning opportunities; and academic grouping arrangements that provide intellectual and interest peer group interactions.

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) which includes:

- Number of students served by grade level K-12;
- Student demographic information;
- 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;
- Number and content of professional development activities provided for program teachers and general education staff;
- Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information; and
- Final fiscal report that reports on activities and staff funded by this program.

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