

## **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. Outstanding abilities are seen within 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 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 will be employed to refer, assess and select students to participate in the program:

### **Referral**

Referrals are permitted and accepted based on data or evidence from teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Persons referring will use the district's referral form to refer a student to be evaluated for admission in the program.

### **Assessment**

The district will obtain written parental permission prior to conducting assessments to determine eligibility for participation in its Highly Capable Program (HiCap).

Referred students will be evaluated using multiple objective criteria. The evaluation process shall be based upon a review of each student's capabilities as shown by multiple criteria, from a variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each student's unique needs and capabilities. The evaluation criterion consists of both qualitative (rating scale, narrative, work samples) and quantitative (academic and cognitive assessment scores) data.

Cognitive ability assessment given to all referred students is the CogAT Form 7.

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

### **Selection**

A multi-disciplinary selection team will be composed of: A special teacher (provided that 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 certified coordinator or administrator with the 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 portfolios and make the selection decision based on:

1. A preponderance of evidence from the portfolio 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 HiCap Program; however, individual pieces of evidence, if strong enough, can indicate that the student would benefit from these services. If properly validated test 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:

- A. Notify parents of students who have been selected. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the process to exit a student from the program, information on the district's program and the services that are available to identified students.
- B. Obtain parental permission to place identified students in the program before any special services and programs are provide to the student.

### **Process for Appeal**

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's 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 intellectual ability, academic aptitude and creative or productive thinking.

The appeal request and supporting evidence must be submitted to The HiCap Program Coordinator within *14* school days of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision notification.

The district's appeals committee will review the student's portfolio, assessment profile data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal. The Appeals Committee is composed of: the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning and the Superintendent (or their designee).

The decision of the appeals/multidisciplinary selection 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 Appeals Committee within *14* 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 Appeals Committee is final.

### **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 be exited from the program. The parent will be notified in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal process.

A parent/legal guardian may request that the student be withdrawn 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 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 periodically for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

The district will offer highly capable students support in both the intellectual and social/emotional domains. They will include, but not be limited to, differentiation, acceleration, and enrichment options. A comprehensive continuum of services, spanning K- 12 grade, will be incorporated into the program plan, parent/family communication, and the HiCap Program page on the district website.

### **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 meets requirements and guidelines put forth by OSPI.

**Adoption Date: 1.17**