

Highly Capable Programs

As part of Wellpinit School District's commitment to student learning, we are offering opportunities for learning enrichment through the K-12 Highly Capable Program.

Definition

The Wellpinit School District believes that highly capable students are 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 students' 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 K-12.

Highly capable students perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environments.

Learning characteristics include, but not limited to:

1. The capacity to learn with unusual depth of understanding, to retain what has been learned, and to transfer learning to new situations.
2. The capacity and willingness to deal with increasing levels of abstraction and complexity earlier than their chronological peers.
3. A creative ability to make unusual connections among ideas and concepts.
4. The ability to learn quickly in their area(s) of intellectual strength.
5. The capacity for intense concentration and focus.

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

Nomination

The nomination process for inclusion (and/or exclusion) from services for the highly capable is as follows:

- Any teacher, parent/guardian, or community member who has knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student for entry into Wellpinit's Highly Capable Program. Students may self-refer themselves. Referrals are permitted and accepted based on data or evidence from teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Nominators will use the district's nomination form to refer a student to be considered for admission in the program.
- Annually, the district will notify the public (parents and students) in multiple ways of any identification activity.
- Clear, current data and evidence will be taken into account to screen students for eligibility. As indicated by WAC 392-170-055, students may also be found to be ineligible for services.

Screening

In the fall of their second, sixth and ninth grade year, all students in Wellpinit Schools will be given the CogAT aptitude screener as well as students who have been referred for eligibility. This screener will help to identify students who should be considered to receive further assessment to see if they qualify for Highly Capable Program services. The screener will not disqualify a student from identification

Screening criteria may include the following:

- CogAT aptitude screener

Assessment

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

Nominees identified for further testing through the screening process 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 both qualitative and quantitative (district may select one or both) instruments and may include:

- CogAT
- Academic Achievement
- Teacher and parent recommendations
- Evidence of highly capable learning characteristics
- Cognitive test scores
- MAPs
- DIBELS
- SRBCSS (Renzulli Scales)

To the extent practicable, screening and assessments must be given in the native language of the student. If native language screening and assessments are not available, a nonverbal screening and assessment must be used. 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. The multi-disciplinary selection committee 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.

In making a selection decision, the multi-disciplinary selection committee must:

- a. 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. Highly capable selection decisions must be based on consideration of criteria benchmarked on local norms, but local norms may not be used as a more restrictive criteria than national norms at the same percentile.
- c. Subjective measures such as teacher recommendations or report card grades may not be used to screen out a student from assessment. These data points may be used alongside other criteria during selection to support identification, but may not be used to disqualify a student from being identified.
- d. Identify a clear need for highly capable services and
- e. Determine 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 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, 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 provide to the student.
- C. Schedule a meeting of all such parents; and
- D. Conduct an annual parent meeting to review each student’s educational plan.

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 significantly advanced cognitive or academic levels and/or outstanding intellectual academic, or creative abilities.

The appeal request and supporting evidence must be submitted to: **Elementary, Middle, High or Alliance School Principal(s)** within **10** school days of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision notification.

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 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 **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 Appeals Committee is final. Students may be referred again after one calendar year.

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 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 proved to those 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 once a year for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

The district will offer highly capable students the following programs:

- A. For Highly Capable students in kindergarten through fifth grade:
The primary elementary program is based on an inclusion model focused on differentiated learning opportunities in classes where students have options for how they can show their understanding and in-depth studies of particular learning goals and curriculum topics. Each student will have an individual Accelerated Learning Plan. Teachers use their knowledge of

highly capable characteristics and needs to individualize learning plans for students who are ready to accelerate or who have specific learning needs that are different than the general grade-level curriculum.

B. For Highly Capable students in 6th-8th grades.

At the middle and high school levels, highly capable support services generally include differentiation in all classrooms, great elective offerings at each school, and adaptations to the general curriculum or acceleration as needed based on learning plans created with the school staff. In the middle and high schools all teachers are encouraged to use their knowledge of highly capable characteristics and needs to best support their students. Teachers are encouraged to use an interdisciplinary curriculum developed around higher order reasoning, constructing meaning through inquiry, advanced content and concepts, and relevant issues and themes. Many cognitive learning models are employed, such as concept mapping with literature and vocabulary webs. Each student will have an individual Accelerated Learning Plan.

C. For Highly Capable students in 9th-12th grades.

At the middle and high school levels, highly capable support services generally include differentiation in all classrooms, great elective offerings at each school, and adaptations to the general curriculum or acceleration as needed based on learning plans created with the school staff. In the middle and high schools all teachers are encouraged to use their knowledge of highly capable characteristics and needs to best support their students. Teachers are encouraged to use an interdisciplinary curriculum developed around higher order reasoning, constructing meaning through inquiry, advanced content and concepts, and relevant issues and themes. Many cognitive learning models are employed, such as concept mapping with literature and vocabulary webs.

Additional opportunities will be available through offered AP courses and when available College in the High School courses. Each student will have an individual Accelerated Learning Plan.

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 special 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.

Adoption Date:

Wellpinit School District

Classification: Priority

Revised Dates: **04.08; 12.11; 09.13; 06.14; 03.15; 08.18**