

## HIGHLY CAPABLE PROGRAMS

### Definition

Highly capable students 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)

Highly capable students are present not only in the general populace, but are present within all protected classes. District practices for identifying the most highly capable students prioritize equitable identification of low-income students. Students who are highly capable may possess, but are not limited to, these learning characteristics:

- A. Capacity to learn with unusual depth of understanding, to retain what has been learned, and to transfer learning to new situations;
- B. Capacity and willingness to deal with increasing levels of abstraction and complexity earlier than their chronological peers;
- C. Creative ability to make unusual connections among ideas and concepts;
- D. Ability to learn quickly in their area(s) of intellectual strength; and
- E. Capacity for intense concentration and/or focus. (WAC 392-170-036)

### Services

Colville School District serves identified students a continuum of services from the point of identification through grade 12. Each student's services are reviewed periodically to ensure appropriate placement. The district utilizes an in-class program model that may include enrichment activities, differentiation of curriculum, flexible grouping, choice activities, and secondary course options. For highly capable students, access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction is access to a basic education.

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

### Annual Notification

Information about the Highly Capable Program and application process is available annually on the district website and at district and school offices. The announcement is available in multiple languages.

### Nomination Procedure

The identification process occurs at every grade level every year in the spring. Kindergarten nominations are solicited at the end of the first semester. Nominations at other times of the year are considered on a case-by-case basis. The process for identifying students for highly capable services usually begins with nominations, but may also be initiated as a result of strong performance on standardized tests or other indicators. Nominations may come from any source including teachers, staff, parents, the students themselves, other students, or members of the community. Anyone nominating a student must complete a Nomination Form and submit it to the district office. These forms, which

include the submission deadline, are available on the school district website, at district schools, and at the district office.

### Screening

Each spring second grade students are screened with the appropriate level of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Screener.

### Assessment Process

There is no single prescribed method for identification of students. Nominated students are assessed using multiple measures that may include cognitive ability tests (e.g., CogAT, Otis-Lennon, etc.), achievement tests (e.g., Smarter Balanced, STAR 360, or other standardized tests), formal teacher rating forms (e.g., Scales for Identifying Gifted Students), and other district-approved materials.

### Parent Information and Permissions

Parental permission will be obtained in writing before assessments are conducted to determine a student's eligibility. The parental permission notice shall include explanations of the procedures for identification, program options, and the appeal process. If their child is identified, parents/guardians are required to provide written permission to provide highly capable services for their child.

### Role of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee

The Colville School District Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee (MSC) reviews relevant assessment data to determine the final selection of students to be recommended for highly capable program services. The MSC is comprised of:

- A. at least one classroom teacher with interest and/or training in teaching highly capable students,
- B. a school psychologist,
- C. the district administrator of the highly capable program, and
- D. additional professionals if any, that the district deems desirable.

### Selection Policy and Procedure

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will evaluate individual student assessment profile data and make the selection decision based on:

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

An assessment matrix designed by the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee is used to document and summarize each student's assessment data. Student profile information is gathered and includes information on cognitive abilities, academic performance, and other items of value in the assessment process. An Assessment Summary Report indicates whether the student qualifies or does not qualify for program services. A copy of the summary report is sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and placed in the student's permanent file.

#### Appeal Process and Exit from the Program

Within 10 school days of written notification that a student was not selected for district-provided highly capable program services, the parent/guardian may request an appeal of the decision. This request must be submitted in writing to the district's Highly Capable Program Coordinator and include additional supporting evidence. The Appeal Form is available on the school district website, at district schools, and at the district office. The Appeals Committee, consisting of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee and at least one additional member, will consider all submitted appeals and make a final determination and mail written notification within 30 days of the 10-day appeals deadline. Decisions of the Appeals Committee are final.

A student or parent/guardian may decline services or may request the child be withdrawn from receiving highly capable program services. Once identified, students are eligible to receive services through grade 12. School district personnel may also request a child be reassessed – with parent/guardian permission – through multiple objective criteria to determine whether the program continues to appropriately serve the child's needs.

#### Students New to the District

Information about the district Highly Capable Program will be provided to new students who enroll with the district. Appropriate services for students who received gifted or highly capable program services in a previous district will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

#### 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 school board which includes:

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