

January | 2020



Advanced Learning Task Force

Final Report and Recommendations



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Advanced Learning Task Force

Final Report



Introduction

Background

As Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has changed over the years from a system that bussed children across the ship canal to promote desegregation in the 1970s, to the onset of school choice in the 1980s, returning to the prioritization of high quality neighborhood schools in the early 2000s, the question and debate over services and programs for students enrolled in SPS who perform at high standards has persisted.

In 1983, the Education Resources Information Center described the then named, Individual Progress Program (IPP) in Seattle Schools, as the “approach designed to serve extremely advanced gifted students (grades 1 through 9) in the Seattle area.” In the years to follow until today, the self-contained model has been part of the learning culture. Coupled with Spectrum programs that placed segregated classrooms in some neighborhood schools, Seattle Schools had established programs for advanced learners based in an original design developed in response to the ‘white flight’¹ that occurred in the ‘70s and ‘80s.

Over nearly four decades, as school leaders have sought to provide accessibility and diversify classrooms once reserved for identified advanced learners and services in self-contained Spectrum classrooms, site by site change began to occur. Families who valued the self-contained model have consistently advocated for the continuation of these unique, ‘cohort’ services. Consequently, due to the maintenance of our design based in inequitable practices of origin and other barriers to racial equity, such as the emergence of racial bias within standardized tests, non-school day testing, and complex testing and identification practices, our processes have historically favored students who identify as Caucasian/White, Asian, and Multi-racial, and classrooms have grown less and less proportionately diverse.

The District has convened multiple task forces, conducted two comprehensive program reviews (2007 and 2016) and has engaged in multiple community forums with various stakeholders to identify how best to serve students who demonstrate academic ability above and well above standard. Most of the recommendations from these task forces were implemented but lacked elements addressing the program’s inherent and structural racism.

In July 2012, Seattle Public Schools adopted Policy No. 0030 Ensuring Racial Equity and Academic Excellence and professional learning around anti-racist policies, practices and student impacts began around the district. The Seattle community and our families began to demonstrate

¹Furfaro, Bazzaz; [What's Next for Seattle Schools Gifted Programs; The Seattle Times; Oct. 22, 2019;](#)
Bazzaz; [Seattle Public Schools Leans on History to Change its Gifted Education Program. Here's What the Archives Show;](#)
The Seattle Times; Nov. 13, 2019

discomfort with the racial gap disparity in classrooms and in schools now affiliated with today's dominant delivery model for highly capable services known as the Highly Capable Cohort (HCC). With the onset of Racial Equity Board Policy No. 0030, the SPS community of staff, students and families began to reexamine current policies, procedures and practices in anti-racist and culturally responsive impacts, including advanced learning.

Our current data regarding students receiving services who are identified as highly capable is disproportionate to the student populations who attend our school classrooms each day. To meet the tenets of Board Policy No. 0030 which prioritizes equitable and barrier-free access to high-quality learning experiences for every child, current practices must be interrupted and an authentic examination of our commitments and priorities must occur as we courageously step forward to innovatively address the learning needs of gifted and highly capable children across all races and socio-economic status groups; whether performance is currently demonstrated in existing metrics or through other means of assessment and evaluation as it pertains to potential, characteristic and ability.

Initiating Change

In May 2018, the Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools established an Advanced Learning Task Force (ALTF) to review and make recommendations to the Superintendent and School Board related to the policies, procedures, and practices of advanced learning programs and highly capable services. The task force work was to support the District's efforts toward equitable access to advanced learning as directed in School Board Resolution No. 2017/18-10. In addition, and as a further and critical catalyst for change, the Seattle School Board adopted and unanimously approved the District's new Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence* in May of 2019. Our bold and courageous plan is designed to prioritize and unapologetically address the needs of all children and most intentionally our African American males and children of color furthest from educational justice. The ALTF embraced the new Strategic Plan and worked to develop recommendations that would ultimately align and support the District and community-wide effort for change.

The primary responsibility of the ALTF was to provide Seattle Public Schools with parental and community perspectives on advanced learning programs and highly capable services, including shared goals, mission and vision, understanding of historical and current operation, and plans regarding programs and services, identification, testing and eligibility.

During their 18-month term, the ALTF embarked on a journey that would include a re-examination and re-envisioning of how Seattle Public Schools serves students who bring the aptitude, potential, and ability for above and well above performance against state standards. This work was anchored in, and built upon, our commitments as set forth in state law and Board policy. Additionally, in March of 2019 our 5-year Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*, provided key priorities to which the work of the task force and subsequent outcomes and recommendations would need to align.

The task force considered and developed recommendations based on inequities found within and across advanced learning systems, structures, and current practice. They examined historical and current procedures, analyzed student representation and outcome data, and explored for understanding the priorities communicated in the Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*. Using data collected through varied sources including school leader and parent surveys, community surveys, and school/community meetings, the task force correlated shared values



and beliefs as they worked with an elevated sense of urgency around the *whole child* needs of students of color furthest from educational justice and anchored in the laws of the state.

To determine the content of recommendations, the task force spent several months exploring practices in other districts across the state and nationwide, examined current research and evidence-based structural and instructional practices, and studied the diverse continuum of learning needs for students who demonstrate potential for advanced performance as well as those demonstrating exceptional performance well above standard.

The ALTF also spent several sessions learning about students with unique learning needs for which current services and identification practices are inadequate (outliers) as demonstrated by disproportionate representation² in programs or in reported dissatisfaction of services received from families, school leaders and school staff. Early in the process, the ALTF members demonstrated a commitment to evaluate and explore innovative and creative approaches to meet the academic, social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students who demonstrate the need for and potential benefit from advanced learning services.

² Our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan prioritizes equitable access and high-quality learning experiences for children furthest from educational justice; children historically underserved (HUS) with particular emphasis on African American children. Board Policy No. 0030 communicates the districts commitment to promoting, sustaining and providing 'barrier free' access to services.

Students Identified as Highly Capable as Compared to District Enrollment

Compiled 9/24/2019

Race/Ethnicity	Highly Capable identified N=4896	District Enrollment 10/1/2018
Black/ African American	1% (N=82)	14.5% (N=8016)
White/Caucasian	67% (N=3288)	48% (N=25898)
Hispanic/Latinx	5% (N=221)	12.3% (N=6825)
American Indian/ Alaska Native	N=less than 10	0.5% (N=277)
Asian	12% (N=610)	13.8% (N=7623)
Two or More Races	14% (N=688)	11.7% (N=6464)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	N=less than 10	0.4% (N=232)

The Work of the Task Force

The ALTF convened from June 2018 to December 2019 and devoted more than 150 hours of working together during 23 formal sessions as well as multiple subgroup study and planning sessions. The work over the course of 18 months focused primarily on these areas.

Adopting a Vision and Mission for Advanced Learning in Seattle Public Schools

The mission, vision, and commitments recommended by the Advanced Learning Task Force provides the foundation and framing for the policy and procedural recommendations to follow. They reflect the priorities and values of The Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*, input from families, district staff and community, and align to the commitments of Board Policy No. 0030. This document, by the ALTF, communicates a clear frame and vision within which future policies and procedures should be designed in order to equitably identify and serve all students who will benefit from advanced and highly capable programs and services; most especially our children who have been historically underserved and those children of color furthest from educational justice.

Defining and/or Re-developing Advanced Learning and Highly Capable Services

The charge of the ALTF was to explore and develop recommendations that would result in policy and procedures to safeguard and promote access to advanced learning services through more equitable identification practices. Our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*, prioritizes equitable access and high-quality learning experiences for children furthest from educational justice. Throughout the recommendations are the intention and theme that Seattle Public Schools prioritize practices and deliver services based on the learning need of the student as determined by multiple data sources and within school-based collaboration. Instructional decision-making linked to a school's Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) is envisioned to drive advanced learning services based in the story, strength, and need of each child.

Promote Equitable Identification and Access

Current identification practices for students eligible to receive highly capable services require that any child eligible to participate in programs and services must be referred by parents only. Students engage in cognitive testing which occurs at several sites on Saturdays through the fall. Criteria for participation is measured with two instruments (academic and cognitive), the minimum number required by state law. Finally, teachers are invited to provide a recommendation (not required) and parent input is also considered. In researching various districts in Washington state and across the nation, the practice of determining selection for services separate from the learning experience of the student is atypical. The task force recommendations offer procedural alternatives current practice through the leveraging of multiple data sources already available at every school and within the school day.



Scope

The first year of work for the task force focused on study, analysis, and development of vision, mission and commitments. The final six months focused on development of specific policy and procedure recommendations. Every meeting reached a quorum (minimum ten participants), a tribute to the dedication of the group.

Group study prioritized service delivery models, followed by practices associated with identification and selection. Methods of study varied, and included: pre-meeting readings and tasks, engagement of a school leader panel, summer focus groups with students and school leaders, Advanced Learning staff presentations, and small and large group task force conversation, et.al. As needed and approved by the group, sub-teams of task force members conducted research and reported back to the group.

Knowledge Base and Focus Areas of Study:

- **Current School Board Policies and Procedures, and practice guidance including:**
 - Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity - School Board Policy No. 0030
 - 2019 SPS Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*
 - Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs - School Board Policy No. 2190
 - Supports and Interventions – School Board Policy No. 2163
 - Assessment – School Board Policy No. 2080
 - Washington State School Directors' Association Policy Model
- **Program review reports conducted by the Department of Research and Evaluation including:**
 - Advanced Learning/Spectrum Program Review (conducted June 2017)
 - SPS De-tracking Study (conducted Spring 2019)
- **Review of data:**
 - Student performance data (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), Student Growth Percentiles) for students attending neighborhood schools and cohort schools
 - Teacher recommendation data
 - Referral and selection data by year and demographics
 - Parent and community survey data (collected Fall, 2018)
 - Highly Capable Cohort parent perspective data (collected Summer, 2019)
 - School leader and teacher perspective data (collected Spring, 2017 & Summer, 2019)
- **Learner characteristics typically associated with:**
 - Advanced learners
 - Twice exceptional (2E) students
 - English Language Learners (ELL)
- **Practices, data and implementation results from districts within Washington State, and across the country including but not limited to:**

- Washington State Public Schools: Federal Way Schools, Bellingham Public Schools, Spokane Public Schools, Tacoma Public Schools, Lake Washington Public Schools, Bellevue Public Schools, Northshore Public Schools, et.al.
- National: Miami Dade County Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, Iowa Department of Education, Denver Public Schools, Albuquerque New Mexico Public Schools, Atlanta Public Schools, et.al.

▪ **2013 Highly Capable Task Force Recommendations and Implementation Report**

Racial Equity Analysis

Racial equity, through the lens of Seattle School Board Policy No. 0030, has been central to the work of the Advanced Learning Task Force (ALTF).

In the summer of 2018, the orientation of the task force included anchors, guidance, and frames from state law and the District’s training on the **Racial Equity Analysis Tool** to ground and inform their work.

Exploration of barriers to racial equity and a learning session on “Characteristics of the Advanced Learner & Understanding Implicit Bias” was part of the Study, Inquiry and Ideation phase of the task force.

Throughout the winter of 2019, the ALTF utilized the Racial Equity Analysis Tool questions as well as obtained ongoing and embedded support from the SPS Department of Racial Equity Advancement (DREA) to frame the movement of ideas toward recommendations. Additional racial equity trainings were provided through DREA in January, focusing on the difference between access and inclusion.

As members of the task force researched other states and districts in Washington, they focused on understanding the story of disproportionality and service models in those districts where change action and innovative practices were intended to improve such disproportionality.

In the Spring and Summer of 2019, the task force continued to review and study the established anchors, including Board Policy No. 0030, The Seattle Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*, and state law as they finalized their vision, mission, and commitments.



“WHEN WE FOCUS ON ENSURING RACIAL EQUITY IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, UNAPOLOGETICALLY ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS OF COLOR WHO ARE FURTHEST FROM EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE, AND WORK TO UNDO THE LEGACIES OF RACISM IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM...”

SPS STRATEGIC PLAN: *SEATTLE EXCELLENCE*



Outcomes

On July 9, 2019, the ALTF unanimously approved and formally recommended the Vision, Mission, and Commitments (VMC) for Superintendent approval. The VMC were first presented to the Board and Superintendent in November 2018.

On August 20, 2019, the ALTF approved three foundational recommendations to inform the revision of School Board Policy No. 2190. The ALTF developed these recommendations anchored to School Board Policy No. 0030, Washington State Highly Capable Law, and aligned content and recommendations to the priorities of the 2019-2024 SPS Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*.

On December 10, 2019, the ALTF formally approved 50 procedural recommendations aligned to the foundational recommendations approved in August 2019. The recommendations, in their entirety are provided in this report and are categorized by application to include procedural recommendations for identification practices, delivery of services, structure and accountability.

Moving Forward

The stage is now set for the Advanced Learning department to move the work forward, aligned with the SPS Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*, and clearly articulated in the Vision, Mission and Commitments as well as the foundational and procedural recommendations.

Along with departments across Seattle Public Schools, the Advanced Learning department is dedicated to gathering practitioners, family members, and community members together to develop, implement, and monitor outcomes of a new model aligned to these recommendations that will benefit all students and better meet the needs of every student in our care.

The Highly Capable Racial Equity Services Advisory

The call for a new Highly Capable Racial Equity Services Advisory (HC/RESA) was shared with the SPS community in December 2019. Over one hundred (100) people applied for the 26 positions to be filled on this advisory team with the following purpose:

- Embrace the role of advisors to the District as they develop and implement the systems, structures and resources designed to support students with advanced learning needs;
- Understand the work of the Advanced Learning department and central office leaders as they present revisions to District policies to the school board and procedures related to advanced learning equity practices and systems to the superintendent;

- Understand the recommendations of the Advanced Learning department and their Practitioners Work Group as they develop a model/models for identification and services in consideration of the ALTF commitments and recommendations;
- Advise the Advanced Learning department regarding next steps of development and implementation;
- Monitor progress and outcomes of recommendations implemented and,
- Serve as a two-way conduit of information to SPS families and community members.

Timeline

Spring, 2020 is the target date for the sharing of the work of these teams to our community and school board and will include updated policy and superintendent procedures along with detail of a new model of identification based on student need for services.

The 2020-2021 school year will include supporting the current system while piloting the new model that will include significant professional development and support.

Families with students currently enrolled in an elementary Highly Capable Cohort program will complete their elementary years within the existing HCC program, while the new model is implemented and phased in, as feasibility and funding allow.



"WHEN I DID WELL IN AN HONORS CLASS, I FELT WAY BETTER...BECAUSE IT'S MORE DIFFICULT THAN A REGULAR CLASS. AND THEN NEXT ON THE TRAIL IS AP...SO YOU GET THAT BOOST THAT'S LIKE, OKAY, I CAN DO AP. YOU GET THAT CONFIDENCE".

Student of Color talking about access to Honors
Detracking Efforts in Seattle Public Schools
Preliminary Case Study of Integrated Honors at Garfield High School
(Phase I Research)



Vision, Mission and Commitments

Vision:

All students receive the academic challenge and whole child support needed to develop their full potential.

Mission:

The Advanced Learning department actively disrupts the institutional racism and other systemic inequities that limit access to advanced learning opportunities. The Advanced Learning department ensures that students who need, or show potential to benefit from, enhanced and/or accelerated instruction within, and across, disciplines are served according to their unique strengths and needs, with a focus on those furthest from educational justice.

In the Advanced Learning Department, we will:

- Eliminate racial disproportionality in all facets of advanced learning services, from eligibility to participation to outcomes.
- Design services and processes to reveal potential and remove barriers to accessing advanced learning offerings.
- Apply advanced learning opportunities equitably to establish consistent practices and minimum offerings across all schools.
- Offer engaging and challenging curriculum delivered with high-quality, effective instruction.
- Provide a variety of accelerated and enhanced instructional models that serve learners with atypical needs.
- Support social-emotional needs of students accessing advanced learning offerings.
- Deliver high-quality professional development for relevant staff to achieve these commitments.

Recommendations

Introduction

The following foundational, policy recommendations and subsequent procedural recommendations are designed in alignment to the recommended vision, mission, and commitments for advanced learning in Seattle Public Schools. The intent of the three foundational recommendations is to inform and guide revision of Board Policy No. 2190 and to inform procedural development that will result in specific guidance for central office and school-based practices. Additionally, procedural recommendations were developed in alignment to the policy recommendations to ensure future practices related to services, structures, accountability, identification, testing and appeals processes are free from bias and other system inequities that have resulted in unmitigated barriers for potential advanced learners and their families. Descriptions, details, and specifics were developed intently to inform next steps toward future procedural development and resulting implementation.

The task force gathered with diverse community voice within the charge to examine, learn and ultimately inform necessary updates to School Board Policy No. 2190. This work represents a component of the collective effort by the district to meet the tenets and commitments to our equity-based initiatives grounded in the Strategic Plan: *Seattle Excellence*.

The District will consider and assess all recommendations provided for feasibility, system readiness, implications for implementation and fiscal requirements. The publishing of the following recommendations provided by the ALTF does not bind Seattle Schools to implementation.

Recommendation Process Description

Task force members deliberated and provided direction through multiple means, including conversation, online survey, post-meeting “exit tickets”, dot-voting, and participation in app-based polling at meetings. Meeting time was consistently structured to accommodate small group conversation to maximize engagement of all voices. Small group debriefs and final decision-making occurred with the whole group.



Policy Recommendations³

The following foundational recommendations to SPS School Board Policy No. 2190 were voted on and approved on August 20, 2019:

#1: To realize the vision, mission, commitments, and recommendations of the task force, the District must commit to establishing procedures consistent with state guidelines as well as Policy No. 0030, and prioritization of equitable access to advanced learning services, including but not limited to:

- Using multiple sources of data to identify student needs for advanced learning services (Align to Policy No. 2080 - Assessment).
- Delivery of an array of equitable services framed within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) at every elementary, middle, and high school and alternative placements, as needed to meet the needs of students. (Align to Policy No. 2163 - Supports & Interventions).
- Use of equitable assessment practices that are accessible to and evaluate the needs of all students (Align to Policy No. 2080 Assessment and Policy No. 0030 - Race/Equity).

#2: We recommend prioritizing equitable identification of low-income students and students historically underserved (FED 7, Twice Exceptional (2E), single domain, outliers, et.al) in Seattle's approach to advanced learning services and eliminating racial disproportionality in all facets of advanced learning services.

#3: We recommend procedures and practices designed to support and hold every school accountable for providing a consistent array of equitable advanced learning services.

[APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Policy Recommendations Formal Vote 8/20/19: Yea 12, Nay 0, Abstain 1](#)

³ The recommendation language and terms henceforth in this report have been written and language approved by the ALTF. No changes to recommendation content have occurred during the editing process.

Procedural and Practice Recommendations⁴

Services Recommendations

Preamble: All ALTF members want to serve students who need highly capable services well and provide them with the resources and support needed for academic and personal growth. We all support the recommendation that every neighborhood school should provide a robust array of evidence-based, culturally responsive advanced learning services to all students who show need for or potential to benefit from such services, supported by professional development and resource allocation from the District. We further agree that alternative placement(s) must be created to serve students with highly individualized learning needs. After much research, consideration, and debate, we continue to have varying views about the role of a self-contained cohort in the future and whether it should be large or small and our recommendations reflect our diversity of perspectives on this issue.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services Preamble Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 12 Nay 1 Abstain 2

#1: Strengthening Services at Neighborhood Schools: We recommend that:

- Decision-making practices and delivery of services align to the District MTSS framework; identifying, targeting, and delivering services informed by District and classroom data and responsive to the unique needs of students.
- The District will commit to provide equitable enriched tier one services for all students, as well as tier 2 and 3 supports designed to elevate, accelerate, and respond to more intensive needs.⁵
- Schools shall follow a standard procedure for routine and systematic review of outcome data. This review should also evaluate whether all racial disproportionality is being eliminated in all facets of advanced learning services, from identification to participation to outcomes.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #1 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 14 Nay 0 Abstain 1.

#2: Immediate Actions Once Student Needs Are Identified: We recommend that once student's needs for, or potential to, benefit from Advanced Learning services are identified:

- Students receive appropriate, tiered instruction at their level of proximal development immediately, regardless of the structures established for testing/selection.
- Parents/guardians are notified and engaged.
- Students receive a learning plan (tier 3 service need only) that acknowledges their strengths, needs, and preferences.
- Schools will report participation in services and partner with central office to review student's participation in tiers 2 and 3 to ensure that there is proportionate participation

⁴ Results of voting are highlighted in red in addition to being described via text. Abstentions do not count toward voting results.

⁵ See Services Appendix 1 for an Example of Tiered Services



across tiers, using the Fed 7 categories and focusing on historically underserved students of color and especially African American students.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #2 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 0 Abstain 2.

#3: Work towards a goal of equitably serving most students identified as needing HC services in their neighborhood schools, with alternative placements available for a smaller set of students whose highly individualized needs are not and cannot realistically be met in their local schools per a set of objective criteria.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #3 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 9 Nay 6 Abstain 0.

#4: Hold the District and neighborhood schools accountable to provide consistent HC services, with strong support from the District, and offer self-contained services for students in an alternative setting who are identified as needing or potentially benefiting from HC services, in a racially equitable, anti-racist, culturally responsible, neuro-diverse, and economically diverse cohort.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #4 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 1 Abstain 1.

#5: Creation of Opt-In Pilot Programs for Advanced Learning Services at Neighborhood Schools:

Do not remove any current service models until there are a set of systems and structures in place that have been shown to effectively serve students. We recommend creating an opt-in pilot program (for all schools who choose to participate), starting an initial phase as soon as possible, for delivering advanced learning services at a selection of neighborhood schools across the District, both Title I and not Title I. Such a pilot would require the District to:

- Create a list of success criteria and go-forward thresholds in advance, including such criteria as Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) math and English Language Arts (ELA) scores, program climate surveys and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) surveys from participating families.
- Compare program performance of the cohort vs. the pilot programs. If pilots at all schools meet predetermined thresholds of performance, (e.g., within X percentage points on each program success criterion), that could be used as an indication to expand that service delivery model district-wide and that the cohort model in its current form is not needed.
- Allocate additional resources to Title I schools compared to other schools to provide needed HC services.
- As part of the pilot, potentially offer an established, advanced learning framework--such as International Baccalaureate (IB)--at the elementary and middle school level as a vertically-aligned service offering option, funded by the District.
- Develop a plan in case the pilot is unsuccessful, so we avoid reverting to the status quo.

Participants in the pilot will include students identified as needing HC services but preferring to participate in a neighborhood pilot, as well as those identified under the new criteria.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #5 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 11 Nay 4 Abstain 0.

#6: Creating an Intentional Potential Transition Plan:

During a multi-year neighborhood school pilot phase, SPS can develop more detailed plans for how it could phase out the self-contained cohort model over time and move to a service model where most students who need HC services are served in neighborhood schools (with a smaller set of students with more intensive needs being served in alternative placements). That plan should include:

- grandfathering of students with existing placements
- likely a phased roll out over time
- time for any boundary changes needed to be planned for and approved
- detailed guidance and support from the central office on how neighborhood schools can and should effectively serve students who need advanced learning services
- clarity on the financial resources needed to do this well

If and when the neighborhood school pilot meets the performance goals, the necessary financial resources are available, and a robust analysis of impacts (as outlined in Recommendation #7), then SPS shall implement a district-wide transition to a more neighborhood school-based service model, with self-contained options only available for students who need highly individualized advanced learning services in alternative placements.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #6 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 12 Nay 1 Abstain 2.

#7: Comparison of Service Models:

The Advanced Learning Department, in conjunction with the Highly Capable & Racial Equity Services Advisory Committee, shall make a comparison of neighborhood school delivery models and self-contained models. This comparison shall be made during the opt-in pilot program and the first two years of improved cohort procedures (including identification practices and professional development addressing culturally responsive teaching practices, inclusive environments, and best practices for differentiating). The comparison will use data collected at least yearly, including but not limited to:

- participation, (i.e. numbers and demographics of students receiving advanced learning services of any type)
- student academic outcomes assessed at their instructional level
- student and family surveys, including measures of social-emotional well-being and satisfaction with program services, in addition to district climate surveys
- staff survey, answering questions such as:
 - Does your school receive adequate support to meet students' advanced learning needs?
 - Are programs visibly distinct by race at your school?
 - How do advanced learning services affect the inclusivity of your school community?
- community survey, answering questions such as:
 - Are Advanced Learning offerings perceived as racist and elitist?
 - Does your school offer high quality instruction?



- cost of implementation
- comparison of outcomes of neighborhood schools to one another to answer the question:
 - Are services being delivered equitably at all types of schools?
 - Do services vary according to school resources (PTA, etc.)

Considering the benefits, burdens, and harms observed in each model, decide whether to phase out broader self-contained services as outlined in SERVICES Recommendation #6, or continue to offer them as one option within an array of fully funded and supported services that include robust services at every neighborhood school.

Notes:

- *In this comparison, academic outcomes for students participating in Advanced Learning services shall be weighed equally with other benefits, burdens and harms.*
- *If neighborhood school services are not performing well⁶ compared to self-contained services, they shall not be discontinued, but resources shall be provided to strengthen them. There will always be some students at neighborhood schools who require advanced learning services, and schools must be equipped to serve them, regardless of whether a self-contained model exists.*

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #7 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 9 Nay 3 Abstain 3.

#8: Develop needs-based, consistent framework (based on WAC #392-170-078) for all students receiving HC services and develop procedures and a procedural guide to frame services and guide all schools in the delivery of enhanced and accelerated, tiered supports to all students, including educating schools as to the contents of the guide. There should also be a consistent reporting for families that tracks growth through provided services and is sent to families at all grading periods.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #8 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 0 Abstain 2.

#9: Alternative Placements for Students with Highly Individualized Advanced Learning Needs: The Advanced Learning Department, in partnership with the Special Education Department, should develop Alternative Placements at elementary, middle, high school, and transition (18-21year old) levels, designed to meet students' highly individualized advanced learning needs, as referenced in IDENTIFICATION Recommendation #6.

- Students who need these service placements require and/or would benefit from advanced learning services and opportunities to learn with true peers in order to have an appropriate education; they also have atypical instruction and/or advanced learning needs, due to asynchronous development with high cognitive and/ or academic ability (e.g.: more than 2 years above same age peers). In addition, they could experience one or more of the following: neurodivergence, learning disability, history of school discipline, history of trauma, and/ or other atypical, highly capable academic and social-emotional

⁶ This statement drafted by the ALTF clarifies intent and will require specification of school performance based in multiple quantitative and qualitative measures. The District understands the intent of the statement to be the ALTF's desire that changes are reviewed and measured for impact and effectiveness.

needs, which would cause alienation and make them socially and academically isolated or in a typical school environment.

- Staff in these service placements shall receive ongoing professional development and coaching to continually improve their ability to deliver high-quality instruction and meet the needs of each exceptional learner.
- *These programs shall be adequately staffed to meet the IEP needs of students with disabilities enrolled in the program, including meeting the staff-to-student ratio of the program through which they would be served if they were at their neighborhood school (e.g. Access, Resource, etc.)*
- These services shall prioritize partnership with families, including Person Centered Planning, to understand and meet student needs.
- *These services shall be equitably sited throughout the District, such that they are available to students in any geographical area without undue burden, and such that they are not visibly distinct from the general school population by race.*⁸
- *Wrap-around services, including family support worker, nurse, counselor, language support, community partners, shall be available at these programs to meet student needs*⁹.
- These programs shall have a careful and purposeful system to ensure continuity of care for students rising from elementary to middle, middle to high, and high to transition (where appropriate).
- The District shall be held accountable achieving equity in participation and learning outcomes in these programs, as referenced in IDENTIFICATION Recommendations #2 & #7, and ACCOUNTABILITY Recommendations #3 & #4. These programs shall not become warehouses for students with complex needs, nor boutique programs for the privileged.
- Best practices for academic instruction, social-emotional development, and family partnership shall be shared from the Alternative Placement sites to neighborhood schools, to further strengthen the capacity of neighborhood schools to understand and meet highly individual learning needs.
- Staff from the Alternative Placement sites shall work with school-based Multi-disciplinary Selection Committees (MSCs) to iteratively improve procedures for equitably identifying students with highly individualized learning needs.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #9 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 12 Nay 1 Abstain 2

#10: Middle/High School Offerings: Seattle's comprehensive high schools currently have extremely inequitable advanced learning offerings. We recommend that:

- The District should guarantee students at all comprehensive high schools have access to a baseline set of AP or IB classes, including ELA, math, science, social studies, and at least one world language. These courses will be offered regardless of the number of students at that school taking each course. The District should work toward a future state in which no comprehensive high school offers more core-curriculum AP or IB course offerings than

⁷ This statement, drafted by the ALTF, is currently in practice by Seattle Public Schools and inherent in the delivery of FAPE for students eligible for special education services and thereby protected under IDEA.

⁸ The district recommends substitute language here to read: *These services shall be equitably sited throughout the District, such that they are available to students in any geographical area without undue burden, and such that they reflect the proportional makeup of the District's demographic average of all student populations.*

⁹ The District recommends substitute language here to read: *Comprehensive services addressing the needs of the 'Whole Child' shall be available at these service locations (i.e.: family support workers, nursing services, social-emotional and language support services as well as the engagement of community partners, et. al.)*



any other comprehensive high school, and the District will annually review progress toward that goal.

- Each comprehensive middle school should likewise guarantee all students access to vertically aligned coursework pathways that will enable them to complete the highest level of advanced class within four years of high school in ELA, math, and science. Additionally, each comprehensive middle school should offer at least one world language. For example, if the new baseline requires high schools to offer AP Calculus BC, then all comprehensive middle schools should offer a progression of math classes that lead to AP Calculus BC in students' senior year. Middle schools and elementary schools are also encouraged to consider adopting an advanced learning framework such as IB, which offers a robust curriculum for students of all ages.
- The District should also eliminate all racial disproportionality in eligibility, participation, student and family satisfaction, and academic outcomes in AP and IB classes. The District should set specific incremental goals toward this larger goal, and review progress annually. Achieving this goal would likely require steps such as
 - minimizing prerequisites
 - making the classes more culturally relevant
 - hiring more teachers of color to teach the classes,
 - requiring all students at the school to take an AP or IB class
 - offering tutoring or other individual support
- In order to support this advanced learning baseline at all comprehensive middle and high schools, the District should adjust the school funding model to divert funding from wealthier schools to less affluent ones, perhaps by increasing the weight of the equity factor in the Weighted Staffing Standard. This funding should be used to staff the newly added classes so that principals will never divert funding from students working below grade level. Additionally, the funding should be used to fund the support needed to eliminate all racial disproportionality in these classes.
- Each school shall have at least one staff member familiar with the unique social-emotional needs of children and adolescents receiving HC services, including cultural responsiveness and neurodivergence, such that the schools can adequately meet the needs of these students with an eye toward ensuring their academic and social success in these programs.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #10 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 14 Nay 0 Abstain 1.

#11: All Advanced Learning classes will be offered within district schools. Though some students may choose to take Running Start classes, Running Start will never be considered part of the Advanced Learning offering because students' Special Education Individual Education Plans do not transfer to community colleges, where Running Start classes are offered.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Services #11 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 7 Nay 3 Abstain 5.

#12: AL Teams: Each school will have an Advanced Learning Team, that will create a plan for their school to move forward Advanced Learning with a racial equity lens, including analyzing relevant data, making changes in school practice, spearheading events and campaigns, and providing PD to their schools. The team members receive a stipend and are required to go to PD about 4 times a year; teams in their first year have monthly PD.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Services #12 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 14 Nay 0 Abstain 1.](#)

#13: If possible, consider, economies of scale train all AL teachers at the same time or range with multiple cohorts. Then require new hires to have or acquire the training as part of the hiring process)

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Services #13 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 8 Nay 3 Abstain 4.](#)

#14: When introducing new programs and considering locations Partner with City of Seattle city planning commission/department. Consider their project and plan for ways to implement without causing inequities or redlining principles and without furthering gentrification. Memorial always included in the process celebrating a noteworthy historical figure.

TIED: [Services #14 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 4 Nay 4 Abstain 7.](#)



Services Appendix 1 - Example of Tiered Services

The table below is intended to provide an example of what tiered services in an MTSS framework could look like. It can and should be refined as the process is further developed.

Tier 1: For all students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally responsive teaching • Problem solving • Critical thinking • Strength-based focus for accessing and delivering services • Assessment practices conducive to ALs to include: pre and post assessments, ongoing, responsive and timely multi-modal assessment • Differentiation of core curriculum for all and targeting advanced learners • Enrichment • Enhanced pacing • In-class flexible grouping regrouping • Project Based Learning • Mentorship 	
Tier 2 & Tier 3: Services available to some students with General Education	Tier 3: Services available to a few students: Unique, accelerated services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive learning experiences to asynchronous development • Curriculum compacting • Enrichment • Flexible and cluster grouping • Independent projects • Content acceleration • Supplemental instruction in area of interest • Curricular compacting • Individual Learning Plan (Tier 3 only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Setting available only to these students (i.e., Self-contained, Exclusive Pull-out) • Individual learning plans required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ including addressing asynchronistic ◦ Responsive learning experiences to asynchronous development • Unique or Non-traditional services including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ services provided through cooperative arrangement with ESD or other districts

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Services Appendix 1 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 8 Nay 4 Abstain 3.](#)

Structural Recommendations

#1: We recommend that the District allocate additional financial resources to ensure equitable and consistent and ongoing delivery of Advanced Learning services at all schools.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP Unanimously: [Structural #1 Formal Vote 9/17/19: Yea 14 Nay 0 Abstain 0.](#)

#2: We recommend prioritizing provision of resources, human and financial, including AL Teams as described in Services recommendations #12, with an equity lens to schools with a disproportionately high percentage, compared to total district enrollment, of students who are Students of Color, (SOC), English Language Learners (ELL), Free and/or Reduced Lunch (FRL), and other groups furthest from educational justice.

Unanimously APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Structural #2 Formal Vote- Yea: 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0 on 12/10/19](#)

#3: Prioritize Southeast (SE) Seattle in geographic decisions, to increase access, resources, and services in that region.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Structural #3 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 11 Nay 1 Abstain 3.](#)

#5: Change the terms used to describe services from “Highly Capable” to “Accelerated Learning” or another term that does not include HC or gifted. Also, if needed, change the name of the Advanced Learning department.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Structural #5 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 7 Nay 5 Abstain 3.](#)

#6: The Advanced Learning department should hold schools and Advanced Learning Teams accountable for retention rates and growth for all students identified for services, including no disproportionality in retention and growth along FED7 categories.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: [Structural #6 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 0 Abstain 2.](#)



#7: Professional Development Related To Advanced Learning: We recommend that the Advanced Learning department seek out, support, and deliver required ongoing, actionable, and culturally transformative professional development, in partnership with other central departments, so that all school and central office staff receive ongoing development in the evaluation, identification, selection and service of students who have potential to benefit from advanced learning services.

- Professional development shall educate central office and school staff about bias and how bias has been ingrained and sustained systemically, and how to undo that bias and its effects.
- There should be a focus on students from historically underrepresented populations and help them fulfill the commitments and recommendations stated above.
- Professional development should be required and tiered to focus on schools with lower proportions of underrepresented students who have been identified for advanced learning services and implement systems of monitoring effectiveness based in data.
 - There should be a process and annual report to identify which schools will receive more PD, based on student needs and outcomes.
 - Assess and evaluate trends and gaps in services and identification, and design PD plan accordingly.
 - Center the needs of students of color farthest from educational justice and 2e students seek out professional expertise to provide professional development to meet their needs. ¹⁰

Unanimously APPROVED by the ALTF Voting Membership: Structural #7 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

#8: Professional Development Related to Anti-Racism and Culture Shift: We recommend that professional development, training, and coaching work toward a culture shift to create fully inclusive, anti-racist school communities, including professional development in culturally responsive teaching for all school personnel.

Unanimously: Structural #8 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

#9: Students should have access to both appropriate Special Education AND Advanced Learning services. Currently students must choose between the two, and often, they are treated with a deficit-based approach only for their behaviors, but their academic needs are not met.

Unanimously APPROVED by the ALTF Voting Membership: Formal Structural #10 Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

¹⁰ ALTF Notes to possibly be add: Specific language around MSC, practice examples from paper document, language around advanced learning specialists, and proposed PD topics to prioritize

#10: Students receiving wrap-around services at Title I schools who are identified as needing HC services at a location outside of their neighborhood school should not lose access to wrap around services as part of an alternative placement. Location of program placement should consider this and/or supplemental services should be provided.

Unanimously APPROVED by the ALTF Voting Membership: Structural #11 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

#11: For any alternative settings or programs, avoid situations where programs are visibly distinct by race from the school in which they are located, as in Thurgood Marshall, Washington, and Garfield.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Structural #12 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 10 Nay 1 Abstain 4.

#12: We recommend instituting a district-wide initiative for culture change, celebrating diversity, such as the students' racial and cultural identities and neurodiversity, including choosing a district-wide certification such as District of Character and of Distinction. The initiative should be inclusive, with emphasis on students, staff, parents, and community.

APPROVED: Structural #13 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 10 Nay 1 Abstain 4.

Accountability Recommendations

#1: Process: We recommend a formal adoption, implementation, and operationalization process to enact the overhaul outlined in these recommendations, including the goal of eliminating racial disproportionality in Advanced Learning services by 2025.

- The process would include change management and communication plans. In addition, the process would result in a continuous improvement process that take the recommended measures and report out regularly and be reviewed annually to include what actions for improvement were taken.
- The process should map to Services Recommendations 5, 6 and 7.
- The process documents would be reviewed by at least 3-4 racially, socioeconomically, geographically, etc. diverse stakeholder groups.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Accountability #1 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 11 Nay 2 Abstain 2.

#2: Communication Plan:

We recommend a two-way communication plan to present changes to diminish the community anxiety and ensure an inclusive approach to reach as many parents, staff, teachers, administrators, and community partners/members as possible, and to receive and address input from the community. Information should also be shared with the schools, specifically school AL Teams, MSCs and people at schools who have the most contact with families (office staff,



instructional assistants, classroom teachers) that help to communicate relevant information (e.g., decisions, needs, changes, issues).

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Accountability #2 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 14 Nay 1 Abstain 0.

#3: Re-Branding:

Implement a rebranding of Advanced Learning Services that incorporates the ideas of these recommendations that moves forward the vision of racial equity.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Accountability #3 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 8 Nay 2 Abstain 5.

#4: Progress Check and Adjustment:

If SPS doesn't identify close to racially proportional number of new students needing HC services in 2 years, then the District will make major revisions to increase racial proportionality in identification approach in 2 years.

If the service model increases racial segregation (compared to general education services) in 5 years (in neighborhood or alternative settings), 2025, we recommend that the service model will be adjusted. Number of years may need to be adjusted based on implementation timeline.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Accountability #4 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 8 Nay 2 Abstain 5.

Tabled for further discussion: We recommend that all students receiving highly capable services be reported to the state (as required by WAC 392-170-090) and that the services they receive should be reflected in their report card or communicated to parents by other means.

Identification Recommendations

#1: Implement and work toward a goal of identifying Black and Brown students, in order to reduce racial disparities in HC identification, and have the disparities eliminated entirely by 2025 and sustain racial equity.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #1 Formal Vote 9/17/19: Yea 11 Nay 3 Abstain 0.

Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC)

#2: We recommend that identification and selection become a jointly held process that includes schools and the central office. School-based MSCs will be responsible for screening, identifying, and matching services to students' needs.

- School-based MSCs should be diverse and representative of the student population as much as possible, including those required by law but not limited to the following staff: classroom teachers, academic intervention specialist, ELL specialist, Special Education specialist, school counselor, gifted education specialist, and staff all of whom have completed and continue to receive implicit bias training.
- School-based MSCs should lead on equitably identifying students who may have potential to benefit from advanced learning services AND students whose advanced learning needs may be unique, thus qualifying them for more intensive services. Schools should also collaborate with families who initiate the request for AL services.
- The central office will primarily be held accountable for establishing and maintaining fidelity of implementation. Central office should review quarterly the identified students and services in order to ensure equitable access along FED7 categories. Identification practices should be adjusted if criteria are not met.
- At the elementary level, the MSCs shall assess all students without solely relying on referrals.
- At the secondary level, the MSCs should inform the creation of the master schedule. The MSC should include experts across disciplines (beyond literacy and math) in order to identify students with advanced learning needs in other content areas.
- It is imperative that schools, in partnership with the central office intentionally seek out ELL/ FRL/ low-income/ 2E/ underrepresented students, by collaborating with staff (such as instructional assistants, family support workers, social workers, community partners, case workers, etc.) who work directly with those student populations.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #2 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 14 Nay 0 Abstain 1.

Identification: Process & Criteria Recommendations

#3: The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC) at each school will use a consistent, equity-based process that identifies students as eligible for Advanced Learning services. The selection criteria and process should:

- Not require parent referrals for students to be considered for Advanced Learning services, but shall include a clear, transparent, and accessible process for teacher, school, family and community referrals, and self-referral or self-advocacy, particularly from historically underrepresented and under identified communities.
- Include multiple objective criteria (e.g., curriculum-based and summative assessments, student work, portfolio, developmental history, cognitive assessment). Objective criteria can also include performance across classes or years, English language proficiency scores and rate of acquisition, diversity at school/class level, oral assessment, and discrepancies between achievement scores and class performance.



- Minimize the use of subjective criteria and portfolios prepared with family assistance in such a way that traditionally favors privileged students and puts unfair burdens on underrepresented students. Subjective criteria (such as teacher rating scales) can be used to identify (but not exclude) underrepresented students and students of color furthest from educational justice for Advanced Learning services.
- Allow multiple pathways for identification, however that does not mean that students must meet a burdensome number of criteria. Students can qualify for services based on at least two criteria that indicate need for Advanced Learning/highly capable services. Selection measures will be evaluated for bias and selected to ensure equitable access to services.

APPROVED Unanimously: Identification #3 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

#4: We recommend ending discriminatory referral practices, including but not limited to:

- hard to access electronic referral forms
- use of The Source as primary place to submit a referral
- burdensome parent rating scale

Unanimously Approved by the ALTF Voting Membership: Identification #4 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

#5: Students can be identified as needing Highly Capable services in a single subject area (e.g. single domain).

Unanimously Approved by the ALTF Voting Membership: Identification #5 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.

#6: The District should clearly define what the identification criteria would be for a student to receive HC services (or Tier 2 vs Tier 3 services) and the criteria and process by which students become eligible for an alternative placement, including objective criteria to be used to determine when a student's needs are not and cannot realistically be met in their neighborhood school.

- If students identified as having high ability or potential do not demonstrate the expected growth, consider assigning them to a higher tier.
- When appropriate, District can use above-level or ceiling less testing to show highest level of student performance.
- Some students because of their disability (including 2E status, identified or otherwise), cognitive/learning profile and/or distinct socioemotional needs may find it difficult to learn in general education classrooms and may need an alternative placement.
- The District will implement a layer of governance, including an annual process to review the procedures, qualifications, and process for placement in an alternative setting. These

procedures, qualifications, and processes must both meet individual student needs and create equity for students of color furthest from educational justice.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #6 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 10 Nay 1 Abstain 4.

#7: We recommend that the Advanced Learning department no longer identify a separate category of students as “Advanced Learners”, as distinct from “Highly Capable”.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #7 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 0 Abstain 2.

#8: We recommend avoiding labeling students where possible and allowable by law, and instead identifying student needs and matching those needs with services (acknowledging that students’ records would and should reflect when they have been identified as needing and a recipient of Advanced Learning services). The intention of identification is to ensure appropriate services and provide a safeguard for children who are often overlooked.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #8 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 8 Nay 3 Abstain 4.

#9: We recommend that the District MSC invoke a process to strategize future identification approach improvements. The process should be reviewed annually and updated by a majority vote of the MSC. Publications may provide breakthroughs on identifications that classify students as gifted in ways the district has not thought of before.

TIED: Identification #9 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 5 Nay 5 Abstain 5.

#10A: Use of Local Norms

- Local Norms Influencing Central Office Referrals: We recommend immediate implementation of local norms (norms allowing within-group comparisons so underrepresented students are compared with students who share similar demographic characteristics) for automatic referral by the District's MSC team to the school-based MSC teams for FRL, ELL, underrepresented students of color, and other Fed 7 groups who score in the top 15% on achievement tests (MAP or SBA). Local norms here are not meant as building site-based norms.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #10 Formal Vote (first bullet only) 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 1 Abstain 1.



- Local Norms as Used by School-Based MSCs: Where applicable, and effective immediately, school-based MSC teams should use local norms (when appropriate) when determining need for HC services. Specifically, standardized assessment scores should be looked at using local norms, including cognitive and/or achievement tests.
 - Local norms should be used to compare students with others:
 - with FRL status
 - with ELL status
 - with similar disability status
 - *(See additional comparison group to be voted on separately below)*
 - *(See additional comparison group to be voted on separately below)*
 - The purpose of using local norms is to provide Advanced Learning services to as many students as possible who need them, especially students furthest from educational justice.
 - For each group, the MSC should look at standardized assessment scores in comparison to others in that group, to help match with the appropriate service level. This helps match identification to service and is in keeping with the WAC definition of HC students, which includes comparing students to others of their “age, experiences, or environments.” This may mean a student would be identified as HC at one school but not another.
 - Local norms should be used to help eliminate racial disproportionality in identification across the school district.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #10 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 13 Nay 1 Abstain 1.

#10B: Include “within racial groups underrepresented in Advanced Learning (as allowable by law)” in the local norm comparison groups above.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #10B Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 11 Nay 1 Abstain 1.

#10C: Include “at their local school” in the local norm comparison groups above.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #10C Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 9 Nay 2 Abstain 4.

Testing & Screening Recommendations

Preamble: We recommend that the District formally acknowledge the cultural, racial, and economic bias of standardized assessments. Our recommendations related to the use of standardized assessments are not meant to legitimize what have been used as tools of oppression for decades, but to use the flawed tools in ways that will create the most equitable access to advanced learning services.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification Testing and Screen Preamble Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 12 Nay 0 Abstain 3.

#11: Identification must include the use of universal (opt-out, not opt-in) screening (using a non-academic cognitive/ability test) in multiple grades as a measure to counteract bias in either referral, achievement testing, or parent access to program offerings. Given that SOCs do better on non-verbal reasoning and problem-solving tests, we recommend a non-verbal test that is more culturally fair.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #12 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 9 Nay 4 Abstain 3.

#12: Use the Naglieri screener as a low cost test (instead of using the full Cognitive Abilities (CogAt) test) to be used as an additional objective criteria, in order to identify students who may not have other data sources demonstrating their need for advanced learning services (e.g., students who have not performed well on achievement tests or who have not been referred due to implicit bias).

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #13 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 6 Nay 2 Abstain 7

#13: If students already have two qualifying data points, there is no need for the District to administer a cognitive test. If a student does not have high performance on a cognitive abilities test, that shall not disqualify them from advanced learning services.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #13 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 12 Nay 0 Abstain 3.

#14: The District should explore if racially equitable results can be achieved using existing data sources with local norms, without administering additional tests (e.g., cognitive tests). Since nonverbal cognitive tests appear to also have significant bias and given limited financial and human resources, using existing data may be just as effective and allow staff to better focus on service delivery.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #14 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 9 Nay 0 Abstain 6

#15: Any evaluations or assessment for the identification of students for services shall be made available during the school day, in the schools that students attend at the time of assessment (exceptions can be made for 2E students or students for whom testing off site is most appropriate).

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP Unanimously: Identification #15 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 15 Nay 0 Abstain 0.



Appeals Process Recommendations

#16: The intention of the appeals process is to include students in Advanced Learning services whose need for Advanced Learning services might be masked by other factors, particularly underrepresented students.

- To the extent allowable by law, private testing must be allowed only for students receiving FRL support (provided free to families by SPS), students with a disability (including those whose disability is documented as part of the appeal), and for other students furthest from educational justice.
- A process should also be created that allows for appeals or review based on a documented need for services that is not being met. This could happen once students have been matched with services and the services provided are not meeting students' needs.

APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Identification #16 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yea 9 Nay 3 Abstain 3.

2018 Advanced Learning Task Force Membership

The 2019 Advanced Learning Task Force was selected through a comprehensive application and review which resulted in the selection of a representative body of parents/guardians, Seattle Public Schools staff, community members, and supported by central office staff.

*Voting Members as of 12/10/2019

- ***Andrew Siegel** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student, identified Advanced Learner
- ***Christine Tang** Community Organization
- ***Colin Pierce** Staff, Teacher at Rainier Beach High School
- ***Devin Bruckner** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- ***Dominique Daba** Community Organization
- ***Ji-Young Um** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- ***Joanna Noonan** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student, identified Highly Capable (HC)
- Jonathan Carroll-Madden** HC Student in Seattle Public Schools
- Joy Sebe** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student, identified Highly Capable (HC)
- ***Julie van Arcken** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- ***Kari O'Driscoll** Community Organization
- Laurie Bohm** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student
- ***Mary Kunce** Parent of Seattle Public Schools Student, identified Advanced Learner
- ***Dr. Nancy Hertzog** Subject Matter Expert: Professor, University of Washington
- Richard David Bash**¹¹ Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- Rina Geoghagan** Staff, Principal Decatur Elementary
- Stacia Hawkinson** Staff, Native American Education Services, Seattle Schools
- ***Theresa Yeh** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- ***Ursula White-Oliver** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- ***Valeri Makam** Parent of a Seattle Public Schools Student identified HC
- ***Vanessa Meraki** Staff, Teacher at Emerson Elementary

Central Office Staff:

- Dr. Concepcion Pedroza**, Chief, Student Support Services, Seattle Public Schools
- Deborah Northern** Coordinator, Department of Racial Equity Advancement, Seattle Public Schools
- Faizah Bradford**, Coordinator, Department of Racial Equity Advancement, Seattle Public Schools
- Kari Hanson** Director, Student Support Services, Seattle Public Schools
- Stephen Martin** Supervisor, Department of Advanced Learning, Seattle Public Schools, Retired
- Wyeth Jessee** Chief, Schools and Continuous Improvement, Seattle Public Schools

¹¹ *Honorable mention:* Names in italics indicate ALTF member or participant who engaged through a portion of the process.