



## SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

**DATE:** April 6, 2021  
**FROM:** Ms. Denise Juneau, Superintendent  
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**For Introduction:** April 21, 2021  
**For Action:** May 5, 2021

### 1. TITLE

Rename and Amend School Board Policy No. 2190, Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs

### 2. PURPOSE

The revisions in this policy promote and authorize necessary changes to ensure that Seattle Public Schools stops upholding systemic and institutional racism, most specifically within the Advanced Learning (AL) Department by:

- a) Renaming School Board Policy No. 2190 to read, Highly Capable Services;
- b) Redesigning identification, assessment and selection practices that ensure equitable access for students who are demonstrating potential to perform or currently performing above standard and who will benefit from services designed for accelerated and/or enhanced high-quality learning experiences as basic education;
- c) Identifying and selecting practices for delivery of services that prioritize the learning needs of our historically underserved children of color and students furthest from educational justice;
- d) Designing and delivering an array of highly capable (HC) services, within a tiered service model, aligned to student strengths, interests, and needs within neighborhood schools to replace the current segregated cohort program; and
- e) The sunseting of the AL eligibility to align with state identification practices.

### 3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the Seattle School Board rename and amend School Board Policy No. 2190 as attached to the School Board Action Report.

## 4. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### a. **Background**

Dr. Kristina Collins, a national leader in gifted education tells us that we must “recognize that the solution does NOT lie in fixing a system that is broken” and that we must “understand first and foremost, that the system is operating in the exact way that it was designed, embedded with racist ideology, implicit biases, exclusionary intent, and inequitable desired outcomes.”

The recommendations from the Advanced Learning Task Force (ALTF), completed in December 2019, paved the way for re-envisioning how the district identifies students in need of HC services and how an array of services should be provided with racial equity at the center of the re-design and transformation of delivery of HC services.

The AL Department has undertaken the following steps, to respond to the recommendations from the ALTF, as well as subsequent requests from members of the School Board for additional family engagement and the development of a system to replace the current model of segregated cohort schools for highly capable programs in Seattle Public Schools.

- Created the [Highly Capable Racial Equity Services Advisory \(HC/RESA\) committee](#), which began in February 2020. The role of this diverse stakeholder advisory committee is to use a consistent racial equity lens as they advise the AL department on the developing systems and structures of the redesigned system, as well as becoming a conduit of information with their communities.
- Implemented a [Practitioners Work Group \(PWG\) \(January 2020\)](#) to join the AL Department in development of a Service Delivery Framework, based on the ALTF Recommendations.
- Organized subcommittees of the PWG to design the identification, elementary services, secondary services, family engagement, structure and accountability including Professional Development, Guidance, and Support (initial work to be completed by summer 2021) for implementation in the elementary priority schools and to continue as all components of the Service Delivery Framework are designed and implemented across K-12 schools). The PWG subcommittees are supported by Talent Development and Gifted Researcher, Professor Kristina Collins, Ph.D.
- Facilitated a Field Study to explore the training and implementation of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) in one school, grades 3-5, for the purpose of developing training modules, guidance and support, 2020-2021 school year. The Field Study was undertaken in this year of Covid constraints. Training modules were developed and implemented for teaching staff and one round of SEM enrichment clusters will be launched in April 2020.
- Recruited elementary schools to become the first Implementation Schools of the Service Delivery Framework for the 2021-2022 school year with a focus on K-1 implementation.
- Created a transition plan that includes collaboration, professional development, support, family engagement, budget, enrollment planning, structure and systems development, and accountability.
- Developed presentations for engagement with all Stakeholders in the winter/spring 2021.
- Updated the AL Department Communications Plan with comprehensive family and community engagement that includes on-going feedback and continuous improvement, especially with our families of Black, Native and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) students.

## Identification of Students and Services

The reframed language in the update of Policy No. 2190, targets the needs of historically underserved populations and authorizes the onset of procedural language to use multiple data sources. This policy revision opens the door to best practice regarding use of multiple data points to ensure the district is equitably and responsively identifying students in need of HC services. This shift in policy and subsequent procedures will better align Seattle Public Schools practices with RCW 28A.185.020. .

As procedures initiate, it is recommended that the district:

- Synthesize the research on equitable identification practices that align with state law and expand our practice to include additional whole child data from personnel closest to knowing the story, strength, and need of each child;
- Design and deliver 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;
- Design appropriate accountability and oversight of the equitable identification process and outcomes through:
  - AL Procedural Guide
  - Oversight and Support Central Office Processes
  - Reporting and Accountability
  - Professional Learning for Leaders and Staff

## Advanced Learning Identification

State Law requires students to be identified for HC services. The Advanced Learning eligibility category in Seattle Public Schools is rarely seen in school districts across the country. Removing this category of services aligns practice with other districts in the state.

Planning for this transition is underway within the Practitioners Work Group Identification Sub-Committee and will be specified in the Superintendent Procedures as they are developed by fall 2021. *Example: Students currently identified as Advanced Learners will be transitioned to Highly Capable (Building Based Services) with differentiated services provided in the neighborhood school.*

## Rationale for Renaming Policy 2190

The Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs title is well aligned to the current model of HC programs that is focused primarily on providing services to students in a segregated cohort program. Families of students in Seattle Public Schools and community members have known the cohort model as the “program” offered to students eligible for HC services. As the district aligns with the strategic plan and embraces the mission, vision, and commitments of the ALTF in the development of a new model of service delivery, changing the policy title to Highly Capable Services will provide a clear alignment of the content to the policy revisions. This revision will support the

communication of the implementation of a service model vs. a cohort program and will provide clarity to our stakeholders.

## District-wide Implementation

### Draft Elementary Implementation Timeline | Advanced Learning | 2190 Policy Revision

*This is one draft example of a timeline for elementary. Work is continuing with Enrollment/Planning and will align with Middle School alignment.*

<b><i>Phase I</i></b>	2020-2021	2021-2022
	Cohort - continues with grades 1-5	Cohort - continues with grades 1-5
	Planning & Design	K-1 Tiered Services - Pilot Schools
<b><i>Phase II</i></b>	2022-2023	2023-2024
	Cohort - continues with grades 1-5	Cohort - continues with grades 2-5
	K-1 Tiered Services in all schools	K-2 Tiered Services in all Schools
<b><i>Phase III</i></b>	2024-2025	2025-2026
	Cohort - continues with grades 3-5	Cohort - continues with grades 4-5
	Add Neighborhood classes in cohort buildings	Expand Neighborhood classes in cohort buildings
	K-3 Tiered Services in all schools	K-4 Tiered Services in all schools
<b><i>Phase IV</i></b>	2026-2027	2027-2028
	Cohort - continues with grade 5	K-5 Tiered Services in all schools

Seattle Public Schools has a successful history of implementing change as exemplified in a shift from district-wide school choice to neighborhood schools in the 2000s; English Language (EL) services transition from program to services in neighborhood schools except for newcomers; provision of transitional services and tiered support for students served with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), ages 19-21 (Bridges Program); the redesign of school start times, and most recently the design, professional development and launch of the Remote Learning Playbook as we prepared to continue teaching and learning in a remote setting. In each case, the District communicated with multiple stakeholders, reviewed the unintentional consequences through a racial equity lens, and took time to study and research potential practices for optimal impact. Implementation of change reflected in the ALTF Recommendations touch every process and practice of AL services. Sweeping change is necessary to uproot systems born from institutional racism and move the district forward toward genuine and authentic, culturally responsive services that prioritize the needs of every student.

ALTF recommends that:

- The newly developed Service Delivery Framework is centered on racial equity in Learner Identification, Family Engagement, Elementary and Secondary Services, Tiered Support (including Talent Development for all students), and Supports and Accountability.
- The District-wide implementation of equitably accessible services will occur over a six-year period.
- Once procedural changes are established in alignment with the changes in policy, current elementary students would maintain their current placement through completion of fifth grade in the cohort program.
- Stakeholder engagement continue regarding structures and services that reflect the new vision, mission, commitments and policy if approved by the School Board.
- The AL Department develop a procedural guide to set expectations and accountability for the delivery of high quality and accessible HC services for students (near completion). This document will be updated as the PWG completes their work.
- The District continue the new HC/RESA (initiated and charged in January 2020) to provide advice and feedback for the development of the procedure recommendations, implementation of a revised model of service delivery, and monitoring of progress. This work is centered on racial equity.

An enhancement of services for HC students will require a shift in funding and participation in professional development for staff.

**b. Alternatives**

Not amend Policy No. 2190 and maintain status quo. This is not recommended because it:

- Continues a program that is inequitable, inaccessible to students furthest from educational justice, and central to systemic racism in Seattle Public Schools;
- Maintains a system where schools are not provided adequate support, guidance and oversight due to the significant time central office staff spends on the current testing and eligibility practices.
- Continues to provide services that are narrowly focused on acceleration as the main strategy for service delivery. Washington State Law calls for districts to provide an array of services to meet student needs.

**c. Research**

The research findings below enabled the ALTF to identify the barriers for equitable access to HC services that were, and continue to be, in place in Seattle Public Schools. These barriers perpetuate systemically racist program and services that are inaccessible to many BIPOC students and families. In addition, the findings illustrated the inequalities for students who have complex needs (twice exceptional, or 2E), none of which are adequately addressed in the current system.

See the following articles and research conducted by the ALTF in the AL Resources section of the ALTF Work Session Binder 9.25.19 (SPS [website](#)).

- State and Nation Practice Study

- Identification Research: Interviews with State and National Districts regarding Identification Practices
- Review of current Seattle Public Schools' services for HC in local neighborhood and cohort Schools: Growth Results for students
- 2E Articles (Twice Exceptional) – Information regarding needs and recommended practices for outliers and profoundly gifted
- OSPI Identifying historically underserved (HUS) students

The following articles and research are examples of ongoing work conducted by the AL Department and the PWG. This is a body of research and best practice strategies that have informed the development of the Service Delivery Framework and the design of each component, to include Ensuring Racial Equity, Equitable Learner Identification, Support & Accountability, Family Engagement, and Tiered Support & Services (including Talent Development):

- [Seattle Public Schools HC Data 2020-21](#)
- [Addressing Underrepresented Students](#)
- [Schoolwide Enrichment Model](#)
- [National Center for Research of Gifted Education](#)
- [Schoolwide Enrichment Model Research Studies](#)
- [Beyond deficit thinking: Providing access for gifted African American students](#)
- [Universal screening increases the representation of low-income and minority students in gifted education](#)
- [SENG: Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted; Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Articles Library](#)
- [Missing in Action Gifted Black Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics](#)
- [Confronting Color-Blind STEM Talent Development: Toward a Contextual Model for Black Student STEM Identity](#)
- [Advanced Learner, MTSS Guide, Iowa Dept. of Education](#)
- [Avoiding Racial Equity Detours](#)
- [ALTF Final Report](#)

## 5. **FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE**

The fiscal impact and revenue source for the implementation years is outlined in [Attachment #9](#). The plan outlined in the BAR can be implemented using the current apportionment amount of \$1,731,385 annually. Working with our experts in budget and capital planning, the AL department will continue to develop the following areas of funding needs and revenue sources:

- Professional Development in collaboration with central departments (Enrichment model, Differentiation of Instruction, Identification of service needs, MTSS, Multi-disciplinary Selection Committee, content training, Racial Equity and Bias Training).
- Collaboration with Enrollment & Planning to include planning for needed boundary changes.
- Collaboration with department leads to align pathways across the district.
- Collaboration with our Special Education and English Learners (EL) partners as we provide services for students with Tier 3 HC needs.

- Creation of a Talent Development stipend at each building that includes support of identification and tiered support for students in need of HC services.
- Comprehensive Communications Plan, associated costs, including implementation of engagement and feedback plans. (Attachment #10)

The Board will be regularly informed of progress and monitoring data as the plan is created and implemented.

Expenditure: ☐ One-time ☒ Annual ☐ Multi-Year ☐ N/A

Revenue: ☐ One-time ☒ Annual ☐ Multi-Year ☐ N/A

## 6. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Throughout the work of the ALTF, the work of the HC/RESA, and the work of the AL Department with guidance from the District's Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement during the 2018-2021 timeframe:

☐ Not applicable

☐ Tier 1: Inform

☐ Tier 2: Consult/Involve

☒ Tier 3: Collaborate

Engagement opportunities with stakeholders from 2018 – present is found at this [link](#).

Although significant engagement with our community through the ALTF, Special Education, and the AAMA (African American Male Achievement) has had a profound impact on the development of this plan, our families have experienced a time of unknown; a time where they know changes are ahead and a potential new model was not yet articulated. Now a new Service Delivery Framework has been created as well as a plan for implementation and on-going engagement with stakeholders.

A board vote for this amended policy would provide clarity to families about the commitment to the plan moving forward and the importance of transforming our schools to meet the needs of our students in a systematic shift to bring racial equity and accessibility to the forefront.

The initial Community Engagement work is for the purpose of sharing information about the new Service Delivery Framework. Working hand in hand with Family Partnerships and Community Engagement departments, and the Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction department, the AL department is learning about how to create on-going, trust building opportunities with systematic feedback loops. Community Engagement will increase in intensity in the weeks and months ahead as the Comprehensive Communications Plan is implemented. Community engagement events that prioritize historically underserved children of color will be conducted to ensure all voices are heard to inform the on-going work.

The ALTF work on Community Engagement is an anchor for the HC/RESA. The HC/RESA convened on February 4, 2020 and will meet multiple times each year for the purpose of using a consistent racial equity lens to analyze proposed service revisions and advising in the development of procedures in alignment with Policy No. 2190 and Policy No. 0030, the Seattle Public Schools' Strategic Plan, and the Vision, Mission, Commitments created by the ALTF. The HC/RESA committee is facilitated by Fran Partridge and Marlon Brown, Racial Equity Consultants.

## **7. EQUITY ANALYSIS**

The current model of Highly Capable Cohort (HCC) programming was created for the purpose of white flight and segregation that has resulted in barriers to accessible services for our students furthest from educational justice.

Racial Equity, through the lens of Seattle Public School Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity was central to the work of the ALTF and continues to be the central lens around which the AL department is proceeding with transforming identification and services for students.

The charter for the HC/RESA, illuminates the alignment of the work with the Board adopted Seattle Public Schools' Strategic Plan, *Seattle Excellence* with an intentional focus on African American male students and students furthest away from educational justice. The Chief of Student Support Services has structured the advisory committee with a consideration of diverse stakeholders and perspectives including a balance of educators and family members from pathway and non-pathway sites. This committee began with foundational anti-racist professional learning and continues to engage the racial equity analysis throughout its process and in alignment with the charter.

The result of the on-going equity analysis work, this policy change and the subsequent procedural changes are appropriate and necessary.

## **8. STUDENT BENEFIT**

With the approval of new School Board Policy No. 2190, Seattle Public Schools has an unprecedented opportunity to benefit all students capable of and currently performing above standard; especially our historically underserved students, furthest from educational justice.

In August 2019, one of Seattle School District's students, who is now a graduate of Garfield High School, Azure Savage, published 'You Failed Us: Students of Color Talk Seattle Schools'. In this book, they outline the ongoing challenges facing students of color attending Seattle Public Schools' cohort schools. This voice, among many other BIPOC voices, align with the data that illuminates the disproportionality black and brown students experience in the current system of HC Services.

Because of this policy change, students will benefit in the following ways:

- Students needing services will be assessed in an ongoing, systematic manner, overseen by the central office AL staff for the purpose of the immediate delivery of services driven and informed by student need.
- The whole child needs of students will be addressed through data-informed, tiered services supported across central office through a district-wide commitment to MTSS.



- The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) will be implemented in all schools to help identify and develop the talent and potential of all students. This SEM model informs the need for additional services within the Service Delivery Framework at each school.
- Students currently in a self-contained service cohort will continue in and be able to complete their current program through Grade 5.

Because of this timeline/engagement process students will benefit in the following ways:

- Teachers and school teams will be trained systematically to deliver a high-quality, engaging, and differentiated learning experience with appropriate instructional rigor aligned to student growth needs.
- Data will be the driver for Tiered services such as differentiated and flexible groups that challenge and motivate learners in a variety of ways with the provision of alternative placement and services for those students whose needs exceed the capacity of the local school.
- The AL Communication Plan will include an annual feedback system for families and students receiving services and for staff implementing services in their buildings.

## 9. **WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY**

- ☐ Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (School Board Policy No. 6220)
- ☐ Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (School Board Policy No. 6114)
- ☒ Adopting, amending, or repealing a School Board policy
- ☐ Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- ☐ Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- ☐ School Board Policy No. \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, provides the Board shall approve this item
- ☐ Other:

## 10. **POLICY IMPLICATION**

The amended policy would enable the AL department to move forward in planning for and communication about the future HC services in Seattle Public Schools and would result in the following:

- Ending the formal identification of Advanced Learner (AL) as an eligibility;
- Transition to a services-based neighborhood school approach providing a continuum of services based in student data and student need, utilizing the systems and structures of MTSS.
- Transition from a cohort model of service delivery to a neighborhood model of service delivery to all students who need HC services; and

- Authorize the Superintendent to develop procedures to outline the processes and procedures for delivery of HC services.

Changes will be needed to the Student Assignment Transition Plan and enrollment and boundaries in future years. The Advanced Learning Department has been collaborating with the Enrollment & Planning Department. Together these departments will begin Family Engagement as plan options are developed.

The Advanced Learning Department will continue collaboration with the Continuous School Improvement Department and the Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction Department to maintain alignment of policy as needed.

## **11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

This motion was discussed at the Student Supports Curriculum & Instruction (SSC&I) Committee meeting on April 6, 2021. The SSC&I Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward with a recommendation for consideration by the full Board.

## **12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The AL Department team will implement the following:

- A Comprehensive Communications Plan that was initially implemented in the fall of 2020 and will continue throughout the implementation phases.
- Implement Elementary pilot sites (regionally placed) in 2021-22 school year. Leaders and staff at these schools will receive professional development in Racial Equity, Content Differentiation, School Based Identification Practices, and Tiered Support that includes the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. They will be supported by Advanced Learning Program Specialists as they implement the Service Delivery Framework for Grades K-1.
- Selection process for Elementary Pilot sites includes an application process and recruitment strategies to assure a balance of demographics.
- Continuing the work of subcommittees of the PWG through Spring, 2021 to redesign a HC service model based on the recommendations of the ALTF;
- Continuation of collaboration with middle and high school leaders as they develop a secondary schools plan, aligned with the amended School Board Policy No. 2190, facilitated within the PWG subcommittee.
  - This plan includes articulation of course alignment and development of professional development in differentiation across content areas.
- Support of the AL 2E team as they create a system of support, K-12 for students with twice exceptional service needs.
- Review of the AL work by the HC/RESA committee monthly as plans are developed, implemented, and monitored.
- Creation of guidance documents and oversight systems by the AL Department during the first implementation year, monitored and improved in the 2021-22 school year and the final plan implementation to begin in the 2022-2023 school year with primary classrooms.
- Development of a comprehensive budget plan for the duration of the plan implementation to begin with the 2021-2022 school year to include:
  - Identification of funding sources to support implementation plan;
  - Articulation of staffing needs and associated costs;

- Development of a blended model of support of services using a stipend model for a teacher leader or teacher team in each building;
- Development of a collaborative Professional Development plan, centered on racial equity that teams with central office specialists in the areas of Identification, Differentiation of Instruction, Academic and Social/Emotional needs of all students;
- Development of technical support and communications plan to facilitate the implementation of the neighborhood school model.

### 13. **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Amended Board Policy No. 2190 (clean - for approval)
2. Amended Board Policy No. 2190 (track changes - for reference)
3. Current Board Policy No. 2190 (for reference)
4. Draft Amended Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (for reference)
5. Current Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (for reference)
6. Service Delivery Framework Presentation (for reference) (pending)
7. AL DRAFT Elementary Implementation Timeline 2020-2027 (for reference)
8. Advanced Learning Task Force (ALTF) Vision, Mission, Commitments and ALTF Recommendations (for reference)
9. Draft Advanced Learning Fiscal Plan (for reference)
10. Comprehensive Communications Plan Draft (for reference) (pending)



# Rename and Amend School Board Policy No. 2190, Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs

## Attachments to the Board Action Report


Seattle Public Schools is committed to making its online information accessible and usable to all people, regardless of ability or technology. Meeting web accessibility guidelines and standards is an ongoing process that we are consistently working to improve.

While Seattle Public Schools endeavors to only post documents optimized for accessibility, due to the nature and complexity of some documents, an accessible version of the document may not be available. In these limited circumstances, the District will provide equally effective alternate access.

For questions and more information about this document, please contact the following:

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Attachments: 1. Amended Board Policy No. 2190 (clean -for approval); 2. Amended Board Policy No. 2190 (track changes -for reference); 3. Current Board Policy No. 2190 (for reference); 4. Draft Amended Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (for reference); 5. Current Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (for reference); 6. Service Delivery Framework Presentation (for reference) (pending); 7. AL DRAFT Elementary Implementation Timeline 2020-2027 (for reference); 8. Advanced Learning Task Force (ALTF) Vision, Mission, Commitments and ALTF Recommendations (for reference); 9. Draft Advanced Learning Fiscal Plan (for reference); 10. Comprehensive Communications Plan Draft (for reference) (pending)

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It is the policy of the Seattle School Board that all students will be afforded the opportunity to reach their potential and graduate from high school ready for college, career, and life. As such, students in need of Highly Capable services will have equitable access to academically challenging and appropriate services. The School Board also recognizes, consistent with the definition of basic education under state law, that students capable of performing at significantly advanced academic levels require specialized services in order to meet their basic educational needs.

The framework for such services will encompass, but is not limited to, the following objectives:

- A. Expansion of students' academic and intellectual skills in every year of education;
- B. Stimulation of students' intellectual curiosity, independence and responsibility;
- C. Development of students' social and emotional well-being; and
- D. Development of students' originality and creativity.

#### Students Eligible for Highly Capable Services

Consistent with state law, the district identifies and provides services for students who perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environments. Outstanding abilities are demonstrated through students' general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities or achievements, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain.

#### Highly Capable Services

An array of equitable and accessible Highly Capable services will include provisions for peer learning and social/emotional opportunities, culturally responsive curriculum, appropriately differentiated instruction, deeper learning opportunities, and/or accelerated pacing. Teachers will participate in professional development on identification practices and the academic and social/emotional needs of students eligible for Highly Capable services. Consistent with state law, once services are started, a continuum of services shall be provided to the student, from grades K-12.

Annually, the Superintendent shall provide the Board the Highly Capable plan application required by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This plan will include: the number of students the district expects to serve by grade level, the district's plan for identifying students, a description of the highly capable service goals, a description of the services offered, a description of ongoing professional development for staff delivering Highly Capable Services, a service evaluation and fiscal report, and assurances that the district is legally compliant.

The Superintendent is authorized to:

1. Develop procedures consistent with state guidelines and Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, and prioritization of equitable access to highly capable services, including but not limited to:
  - Using multiple sources of data to identify student needs for advanced learning services in a manner that aligns with Board 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 in alignment with Board Policy No. 2163, Supports & Interventions; and
  - Use of equitable assessment practices that are accessible to and evaluate the needs of all students in a manner aligning to School Board Policy No. 2080, Assessment, and School Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity.
2. Prioritize equitable identification of low-income students and students historically underserved (Fed 7, 2E (twice exceptional), single domain, and outliers) and eliminating racial disproportionality in all facets of highly capable services.
3. Develop procedures and practices designed to support and hold every school accountable for providing a consistent array of equitable highly capable services.

Adopted: December 2014; [date]

Cross Reference: Policy Nos. A 01.00, 2090, 2200, 2080, 0030, 2163

Related Superintendent Procedure: 2190SP

Previous Policies: D12.00

Legal References: RCW 28A.185.030 Programs — Authority of local school districts — Selection of students; WAC 392-170 Special service program — Highly Capable students

Management Resources: *Policy & Legal News*, September 2013

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The framework for such services will encompass, but is not limited to, the following objectives:

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- Expansion of students' academic and intellectual skills in every year of education;
- Stimulation of students' intellectual curiosity, independence and responsibility;
- Development of students' social and emotional well-being; and
- Development of students' originality and creativity.

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#### Students Eligible for Highly Capable Services

Consistent with state law, the district identifies and provides services for students who perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environments. Outstanding abilities are demonstrated through students' general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities or achievements, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain.

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#### Highly Capable Services

The continuum of services for students identified as Highly Capable will include provisions for peer learning and social/emotional opportunities, culturally responsive curriculum, appropriately differentiated instruction, deeper learning opportunities, and /or accelerated pacing. Teachers will participate in professional development on identification practices and the academic and social/emotional needs of students eligible for Highly Capable services. Consistent with state law, once services are started, a continuum of services shall be provided to the student, from grades K-12.

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Deleted: A self-contained cohort option is available in grades 1-8. Highly Capable students who choose not to participate at a designated Highly Capable site will be served through Advanced Learning programs.

Annually, the Superintendent shall provide the Board the Highly Capable plan application required by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This plan will include: the number of students the district expects to serve by grade level, the district's plan for identifying students, a description of the highly capable service goals, a description of the services offered, a description of ongoing professional development for staff delivering Highly Capable Services, a service evaluation and fiscal report, and assurances that the district is legally compliant.

The Superintendent is authorized to:

1. Develop procedures consistent with state guidelines and Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, and prioritization of equitable access to highly capable services, including but not limited to:
  - Using multiple sources of data to identify student needs for advanced learning services in a manner that aligns with Board 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 in alignment with Board Policy No. 2163, Supports & Interventions; and
  - Use of equitable assessment practices that are accessible to and evaluate the needs of all students in a manner aligning to School Board Policy No. 2080, Assessment, and School Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity.
2. Prioritize equitable identification of low-income students and students historically underserved (Fed 7, 2E (twice exceptional), single domain, and outliers) and eliminating racial disproportionality in all facets of highly capable services.
3. Develop procedures and practices designed to support and hold every school accountable for providing a consistent array of equitable highly capable services.

Adopted: December 2014; [date]

Cross Reference: Policy Nos. A 01.00, 2090, 2200, 2080, 0030, 2163

Related Superintendent Procedure: 2190SP

Previous Policies: D12.00

Legal References: RCW 28A.185.030 Programs — Authority of local school districts — Selection of students; WAC 392-170 Special service program — Highly Capable students

Management Resources: *Policy & Legal News*, September 2013

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The District identifies and provides appropriate instructional programs and services for students who demonstrate high academic achievement, but who do not meet the definition of Highly Capable. Such students are identified as Advanced Learners. ¶

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**Programs for Advanced Learners**¶

Advanced Learning instructional programs will include differentiation, content acceleration, and deeper learning opportunities. Delivery mechanisms may include: differentiated instruction, groupings of Advanced Learning students to work together in subjects or on projects, self-contained classrooms, or accelerated pacing.¶

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	<p>HIGHLY CAPABLE SERVICES &amp; ADVANCED LEARNING PROGRAMS</p>	<p>Policy No. 2190 December 3, 2014 Page 1 of 2</p>
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It is the policy of the Seattle School Board that all students will be afforded the opportunity to reach their potential and graduate from high school ready for college, career, and life. As such, all Highly Capable students and Advanced Learners will have equitable access to academically challenging and appropriate programs and services. The Board also recognizes, consistent with the definition of basic education under state law, that students capable of performing at significantly advanced academic levels require specialized services in order to meet their basic educational needs.

The framework for such programs or services will encompass, but is not limited to, the following objectives:

- A. Expansion of students' academic and intellectual skills in every year of education;
- B. Stimulation of students' intellectual curiosity, independence and responsibility;
- C. Development of students' social and emotional wellbeing; and
- D. Development of students' originality and creativity.

#### Highly Capable Students

Consistent with state law, the District identifies and provides instructional programs and services for students identified as Highly Capable 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 demonstrated through students' general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities or achievements, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain.

#### Services for Highly Capable

The variety of instructional programs and/or services for students identified as Highly Capable will include pathways to sites with adequate cohorts of Highly Capable students in order to provide peer learning and social/emotional opportunities for these students, teachers with experience and/or professional development on the academic and social/emotional needs of these students, appropriate curriculum, appropriately differentiated instruction, deeper learning opportunities, and accelerated pacing. Consistent with state law, once services

are started, a continuum of services shall be provided to the student, from grades K-12. A self-contained cohort option is available in grades 1-8. Highly Capable students who choose not to participate at a designated Highly Capable site will be served through Advanced Learning programs.

Annually, the Superintendent shall provide the Board the Highly Capable plan application required by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This plan will include the following: the number of students the District expects to serve by grade level, the District's plan for identifying students, a description of the Highly Capable services goals, a description of the services offered, a description of ongoing professional development for Highly Capable Services and general education staff, a service evaluation and fiscal report, and assurances that the district is legally compliant.

#### Advanced Learners

The District identifies and provides appropriate instructional programs and services for students who demonstrate high academic achievement, but who do not meet the definition of Highly Capable. Such students are identified as Advanced Learners.

#### Programs for Advanced Learners

Advanced Learning instructional programs will include differentiation, content acceleration, and deeper learning opportunities. Delivery mechanisms may include: differentiated instruction, groupings of Advanced Learning students to work together in subjects or on projects, self-contained classrooms, or accelerated pacing.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures consistent with state guidelines regarding referral, evaluation, and identification of Highly Capable students in order to implement this policy. The procedures will describe the programs and services available to students identified as Highly Capable as well as to those identified as Advanced Learners.

Adopted: December 2014

Cross Reference: Policy Nos. A 01.00, 2090, 2200

Related Superintendent Procedure: 2190SP

Previous Policies: D12.00

Legal References: RCW 28A.185.030 Programs — Authority of local school districts — Selection of students; WAC 392-170 Special service program — Highly Capable students

Management Resources: *Policy & Legal News*, September 2013



## Superintendent Procedure 2190SP

### Highly Capable Services

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Denise Juneau, Superintendent

#### Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs

School Board Policy No. 2190, Highly Capable Services, outlines a framework of objectives for Seattle Public Schools' (SPS) Highly Capable Services that meet the instructional needs of students identified by the district as "Highly Capable". The following procedures shall be employed to refer, evaluate, and select students who are in need of Highly Capable services.

#### Definition

Students requiring Highly Capable Services perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels, when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environments. Students exhibit outstanding abilities within their general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain. These students are present both in the general populace and within all protected classes.

Students who are highly capable may possess, but are not limited to, these learning characteristics:

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

The district will employ the following procedures to identify, assess, and select students to participate in services designed to meet the needs of learners:

The details of these procedures will be articulated in the Advanced Learning Guidance and Procedural Guide. Schools will be accountable for implementation aligned with the Advanced Learning Transition Plan.

#### Identification

The district will work toward a goal of identifying Black and Brown students, as well as others furthest from educational justice, in order to reduce racial disparities in Highly Capable (HC) identification and to have the disparities eliminated with sustainable equity by 2025.

Rather than labeling students where possible and allowable by law, the district will instead identify student needs and match those needs with services; acknowledging that students' records would and should reflect when they have been both identified as needing and receiving HC services. The intention of identification is to ensure appropriate services and provide a safeguard for children who are often overlooked.

Students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 will not be formally identified for HC services. Instead, they will be identified in a "talent pool" for Tier 1 supports. Students will be identified for specific services beginning in Grade 2. All students will have access to differentiated instruction and opportunities for engagement and enrichment in order to develop talent. Teachers and staff will participate in training to garner their skill set for identifying characteristics of Highly Capable uniqueness in all populations of students.

The Seattle Public School's multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) is a school-wide, multi-level instructional system for ensuring student success including screening, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making for instruction and movement within the multi-level system. This system is used for addressing the needs of students who demonstrate learning characteristics of students in need of HC services or demonstrate the potential to require HC services.

Identification and selection are a jointly held process that includes schools and the district's central office. School-based Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committees (MSCs), will be responsible for screening, identifying and matching services to students' needs. School-based MSCs, a sub-committee of the MTSS tiered support team, take the lead on equitable identification of students who may have potential to benefit from HC services and also those students whose HC needs may be unique and thereby qualifying them for more intensive services. Schools should also collaborate with families who initiate the request for Tier 3 HC services.

- Central Office Advanced Learning Staff will support buildings with identification of students with the potential for needing HC services.
- Buildings will utilize their MTSS system to identify classroom-based services at Tier 1 and Tier 2 for any student needing such services.
- Students whose needs are not being met in Tier 1 and Tier 2 will be considered for Tier 3 services. Central Office staff will support building MTSS teams in making service decisions for students at the Tier 3 intensity, incorporating racial equity analysis to mitigate for bias.

- The AL Department will clearly define what the identification criteria would be for a student to receive HC services (or Tier 2 vs. Tier 3 services). They will also determine the criteria and process by which students become eligible for an alternative (Tier 3) 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.
- Local Norms as Used by School-Based MSCs: Where applicable, and effective immediately, school-based MSC teams should use local norms when appropriate for determining need for HC services. Specifically, standardized assessment scores should be looked at using local norms, including cognitive and/or achievement tests.

## **Referral**

Referrals are accepted from schools for Tier 3 services. A process will be developed and communicated to schools and families along with necessary forms for referral.

## **Screening**

Universal Screening, at a minimum of one grade level, will be facilitated annually by the AL department.

## **Assessment**

The district acknowledges the cultural, racial and economic bias of standardized assessments. The use of standardized assessments is not intended to legitimize what have been used as tools of oppression for decades; but, rather to use the assessment tools in combination with other qualitative and quantitative data in ways that will create the most equitable access to HC services.

A student portfolio will be collected. The portfolio includes assessments from the following list, as appropriate for the grade level of the student, to be used in the building collaborative problem-solving process for MTSS:

- State Academic assessments
- District level assessments
- Classroom work samples demonstrating the areas of giftedness
- Classroom based assessments/Performance Tasks
- Cognitive Assessment (screeners and/or full assessments)
- Teacher, community member, and parent recommendations

The district will obtain written or electronic parental permission for any assessments not currently collected as part of the student's basic education and are needed to understand the service needs of the child.

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.

Other than assessments from other schools/districts and assessments accepted as part of a Special Education Evaluation, no outside testing will be accepted.

## **MTSS**

Practices for identifying students requiring HC services must prioritize equitable identification of low-income students.

The district must have identification procedures for their highly capable programs that are clearly stated and implemented by the district using the following criteria:

- The district will 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;
- The district will base highly capable selection decisions on consideration of criteria benchmarked on local norms, but the district will not use local norms as a more restrictive criterion than national norms at the same percentile.
- The district will not use subjective measures, such as teacher recommendations or report card grades to screen out a student from assessment or to disqualify a student from identification. However, the district may use these data points alongside other criteria during selection to support identification; and
- To the extent practicable, the district must give screening and assessments in the native language of the student. If native language screening and assessments are not available, the district must use nonverbal screening and assessment.

The district will record test results in the student's cumulative file.

## **Selection**

Students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 will not be formally selected for HC services. Instead, they will be identified in a “talent pool” for possible selection for services beginning in Grade 2. All students have access to differentiated instruction and opportunities for engagement and enrichment for the purpose of talent development.

Within the MTSS structure in each school building, a multi-disciplinary selection team (MSC) composed of a building administrator, psychologist (or, other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results), and a teacher will review data for all students in grades K-1 for identification into a “talent pool”. Students in Grades 2-8 will be reviewed for identification of service needs.

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

- Multiple criteria from the profile data demonstrating that a student is among the most highly capable;
- Evidence of clear need for highly capable services; and
- Determination of which students would benefit the most from HC services.

A single assessment score or indicator will not prevent a student's selection for HC services, however, individual pieces of evidence (if strong enough) can indicate that the student would benefit from these services. If properly validated tests are not available, the professional judgment of the qualified district personnel shall determine eligibility of the student based upon evidence from multiple criteria including:

- State Academic assessments
- District level assessments
- Classroom work samples demonstrating the areas of giftedness
- Classroom based assessments/Performance Tasks
- Cognitive Assessment (screeners and/or full assessments)
- Teacher, community member, and parent recommendations

Students further from educational justice will be considered through the lens of special considerations with flexible “on ramps” or “entry points” into identification.

The district will assure that:

- Services at Tier 1 and Tier 2 will be identified at each building from a list of strategies developed by the Practitioners Work Groups, supported by professional development offered by the Advanced Learning Department (in Partnership with CAI), and monitored at the building level. Students receiving services will be monitored through the use of an intervention tracking tool, which will be monitored for growth by the Central Office Advanced Learning Team.
- Students referred by the school for Tier 3 services will be considered for placement in a program within their district region for services. These students will be identified as HC for this purpose.
- Notify parents of the students 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.



- Obtain parental permission to place identified students in Tier 2 & 3 services before any special services are provided to the student.

## **Process for Appeal**

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

To the extent allowable by law, private testing is allowed only for students receiving Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), 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 occur after students have been matched with services and the services provided are not meeting a student's needs.

## **Program Design**

The district will make a variety of appropriate services available to students who need them. In addition to Tiered services, students will participate in a school-wide enrichment program that is designed to develop talent in all students, increase engagement, create social and academic peer groups, and allow for choice for students. Once services are started, identified students will be provided a continuum of services through grades K-12. The district will keep on file a description of the services provided for identified students. The district will review services (district time frame – to be developed) for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

During a neighborhood elementary school pilot phase, the AL Department will develop more detailed plans for how it will phase out the current cohort model. These plans will include:

- A phase out option for the elementary cohort program, aligned with the phased implementation of the neighborhood school HC services plan;
- 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;
- Development of a comprehensive PD plan for staff;
- Development of a comprehensive communications plan;
- Clarity on the financial resources needed to do this well.



## **Strengthening Services at Neighborhood Schools:**

Decision making practices and delivery of services will 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.

**Tier 1 services:** The district will commit to providing equitable, and culturally relevant 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.

Schools shall follow a standard procedure for routine and systematic review of outcome data with an anti-bias lens, aligned with the 2019-2024 SPS Strategic Plan. This review should also evaluate whether all racial disproportionality is being eliminated in all facets of HC services, from identification to participation to outcomes.

Tier 1 services is core content centered around racial equity and culturally responsive teaching. Adopted curriculum is delivered with a focus on differentiated instructional strategies and talent development for all student.

Within the MTSS process, once students' needs for or potential to benefit from advanced learning Tier 2 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.
- Schools will report participation in services and partner with Central Office to review student participation in tiers 2 and 3 to ensure that there is proportionate participation across tiers, using the Fed 7 categories and focusing on historically underserved students of color and especially African American students.

**Tier 2 services:** HC service delivery is monitored through an intervention tracker. Tier 2 services are reported to families in a written description, discussed at fall conferences each year and articulated in the individual school's Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP). Students remain in Tier 1 instruction with Tier 2 supports.

- Students furthest from educational justice receiving Tier 2 services receive a Classroom Learning Plan that acknowledges their strengths, needs and preferences.

**Tier 3 services:** Alternative Placements for Students with Highly Individualized Advanced Learning Needs: The Advanced Learning Department, in partnership with the Special Education Department, will develop Alternative Placements at elementary, middle, high school, and transition (18-21 year old) levels, designed to meet students' highly individualized advanced learning needs.

- Students receiving Tier 3 services receive an Individual Student Learning Plan that acknowledges their strengths, needs and preferences.

**Students previously identified as Advanced Learners:** When the AL eligibility has been discontinued, students will be transitioned to an eligibility of HC Neighborhood School for the transition years.

### **Exit Process**

Upon the request of a parent, teacher, school leader or a highly capable program lead, the district may initiate the exit process for students who no longer demonstrate a need for highly capable services. The MSC will convene a meeting to review the student's profile to determine if the student qualifies for 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 services. If the committee determines that the student no longer qualifies for highly capable services, it may recommend that the student be. The district will notify the parent in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal's process.

The multi-disciplinary selection committee will determine if identification procedures are necessary for students wishing to participate in HC services in the future.

### **Accountability**

#### **Communication Plan:**

Racial equity and alignment with the 2019-2024 SPS Strategic Plan is central to the communication from the AL department.

A two-way communication plan will be developed to present changes in order 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.

The Highly Capable/Racial Equity Services Advisory (HC/RESA) will be utilized as a sounding board for the AL department throughout the process of program/services revisions and re-design. This committee will also support the development of a two-way communication plan with the community and families.

Guidance and training will be provided to school leaders, 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).

#### **Progress Check and Adjustment:**

The Advanced Learning Department, in collaboration with other Central Office departments, will create tools to check progress throughout the phases of implementation of new policy and procedures. Adjustments will be made to the service model and implementation timeline as indicated by data from progress checks.

A Guidance and Procedural Guide, developed by the AL department, will be utilized to frame services and guide all schools in the delivery of enhanced and accelerated, tiered supports to all students, including educating schools to the contents of the guide. This guide will be available on the internal staff website.

Consistent reporting for families will be developed that tracks growth through provided services.

Periodic updates will be made to the Board through Board Updates and the annual OSPI State Report.

## **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) that includes:

- Number of students served by grade level K-12;
- Student demographic information;
- Data to determine if students receiving highly capable services met the goals set and if the services and programs provided met the academic needs of these students;
- Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers and general education staff; and
- Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information.

**Adoption Date:**

**Classification:**

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

# Superintendent Procedure 2190SP **Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs**

Approved by: s/Larry Nyland Date: 8/24/16

Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent



## **Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs**

School Board Policy No. 2190, Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs, outlines a framework of objectives for Seattle Public Schools' (SPS) Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs that meet the instructional needs of students identified by the district as "Highly Capable" and "Advanced Learners." The following procedures shall be employed to refer, evaluate, and select students to participate in the program.

### **Definitions**

Per state mandate, Highly Capable Services are designed for students identified as Highly Capable to provide one or more of the following: enhanced curricula, appropriately differentiated instruction, deeper learning opportunities, and/or accelerated pacing. To further the development of their potential, it is equally as important to recognize the unique needs of these students and to support their social and emotional needs as long as they stay in SPS, from identification through graduation.

The District also supports Advanced Learning Programs (Spectrum/ Advanced Learning Opportunities) in grades 1-8 for students identified as Advanced Learners to provide advanced curriculum in reading/ELA and mathematics. Spectrum/ Advanced Learning Opportunities are open to students who have been identified as Advanced Learners, as well as to students identified as Highly Capable.

### **Referral**

Anyone may refer a child for the eligibility evaluation process for Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs, including teachers, other staff, parents, students, and community members. However, a student's parent or guardian must submit signed permission for the student to participate in the eligibility evaluation process. All candidates must go through the eligibility evaluation process and follow the established timelines and eligibility criteria in order to provide equal access for the thousands of candidates who are referred annually.

A Fall/Regular Assessment Cycle is SPS's standard process to determine Advanced Learning eligibility. For students to be considered, their referral forms must be submitted by the deadline. These forms are published annually by SPS in multiple languages, places and media (e.g., website, calendar, and local print media).

Summer testing is available only for students who move to or return to Seattle after the Fall/Regular Assessment Cycle referral deadline. It is NOT available for students who wish to retest, private school students who lived in the city at the time of the deadline, or students in the system who missed the Fall deadline. These students must follow the Fall/Regular Assessment Cycle dates for placement consideration the next school year.

The referral form consists of a Parent/Guardian Permission Form and Rating Scale, which is published and described on the SPS website (hard copies are available at the John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence and upon request at all SPS elementary, middle, and K-8 school sites). Teachers and community members wishing to refer a student for evaluation must have the student's parent or guardian complete the Parent/Guardian Permission Form and Rating Scale and submit by the established deadline.

Students currently enrolled in high school grades 9-11 can also be referred for Highly Capable services for the upcoming school year through a similar (not identical) set of procedures. The high school application packet will include the following: the Parent/Guardian Permission Form and Rating Scale; Teacher/Educator Rating Scale; current achievement; Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Test (ACT) scores (if taken); current overall GPA; current coursework; a writing sample (writing prompt is provided with application packet); and grade reports from IB and/or AP courses. The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will evaluate the application packet to determine eligibility.

## **Evaluation**

Referred students are evaluated based on tests that measure cognitive ability, academic achievement in ELA and mathematics, and the Teacher/Educator Rating Scale. Parent/guardian rating scales and permission forms are also required. Cognitive abilities testing (CogAT) for both SPS and private school students is scheduled by the Advanced Learning office. Achievement testing is provided for all SPS students in grades K-8 through District testing at their individual schools.

All referred students' test results are recorded by the Advanced Learning Office and are made available to the referred student's parent/ guardian.

NOTE: If a student demonstrates cognitive ability in verbal, quantitative, or non-verbal reasoning AND qualifies for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learner services, and/ or Special Education services, the student may warrant further consideration by the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC) if there is strong teacher/ educator input to do so. [Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Section 392-170-060 focused on evidence of cognitive ability and/or academic achievement.]

## **Identification**

The MSC reviews each candidate's test scores and supporting documentation to determine eligibility. SP S's established eligibility thresholds are not absolute disqualifiers; teacher and parent/guardian input are also important considerations. In order to provide equitable opportunities for all students and to uphold the intent of

WAC language regarding protected classes [WAC 392-170-035], the MSC will give special consideration to and assess the impact of the following factors: cultural diversity, socio•economic status, linguistic background, and identified disability.

### Highly Capable

Referred students in Grades K-8 may be tested during the Fall/Regular Assessment Cycle window for identification as Highly Capable. Identification in Grades K-8 as Highly Capable requires:

- 98th-plus percentile rankings in two or more subtests of CogAT, at least one of which must be the Verbal-Quantitative (VQ), Quantitative-Nonverbal (QN) or Verbal-Quantitative-Nonverbal (VQN) composite score
- 95th-plus percentile rankings in reading/ELA and math on district-administered achievement tests

All Advanced Learning Programs are open to Highly Capable students. The Highly Capable self-contained cohort model ends upon completion of grade 8.

### Advanced Learner

Referred students in Grades K-7 will be tested during the fall evaluation eligibility cycle for identification as Advanced Learners. Identification in Grades K-7 as an Advanced Learner requires:

- 87th-plus percentile rankings in two or more subtests of CogAT, at least one of which must be the VQ, QN or VQN composite score
- 87th-plus percentile rankings in reading/ELA and math on district-administered achievement tests

Applicants in grades 5-7 who meet the advanced learning cognitive requirements and receive 87th-plus percentile rankings in reading achievement only will also be considered eligible for Advanced Learner/Spectrum Language Arts. Advanced Learner/Spectrum eligibility does not determine mathematics placement for students in grades 6-8.

Students transferring in from another District's Highly Capable program has been, and will continue to be, handled on a case by case basis.

Eligibility decisions and test scores are reported to the parent/ guardian who initiated the referral through the Source and/or by letter.

### **Continuing Eligibility**

Based on Washington State law (WAC 392-170-078), students who are identified as Highly Capable will receive a "continuum of services" from the time that "services are started" through grade 12. Eligibility continues for students identified as Advanced Learners or as Highly Capable from the time of identification, as long as the student remains in SPS.

- When the MSC determines that a student who is not currently enrolled in SPS is eligible for Advanced Learning services, they have one year to enroll to begin services in Seattle Public Schools without the need for retesting.
- If a student is enrolled and leaves SPS for any reason, they will retain their Advanced Learning eligibility for up to one year (i.e. moving to another District, state, a private school, or a parent on sabbatical leave).
- Advanced Learners may test for Highly Capable eligibility without risk of losing their current eligibility.

## **Appeals**

Parents/Guardians of students who participate in the eligibility evaluation process may appeal the decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC). Appeals must be received in the Advanced Learning Office within three weeks from the date postmarked on the eligibility decision notification so that decisions can be made for enrollment purposes. Appeals should contain a signed letter of explanation for the appeal as well as compelling information demonstrating that the test scores in the student's eligibility decision notification are not representative of the child's abilities. Additional current cognitive and/ or achievement test results may be submitted in the appeal. This information will be reviewed as an added data point in conjunction with the scores reported on the eligibility notification. Specific information on how to appeal is included in eligibility letters and is also available on the SPS website.

For families who choose to appeal and who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program, SPS will provide in-house testing during the appeals process free of charge. Appeals decisions are final; there are no appeals of appeals.

## **Enrollment in Programs**

The Student Assignment Plan and Superintendent Procedure 3130SP, Student Assignment, governs all Highly Capable and Advanced Learner program enrollment options.

Students in grades K-7 designated as Highly Capable will not automatically be enrolled in the Highly Capable Cohort. Even if the HC Cohort is offered at the student's attendance area school, families must actively select the HC Cohort and school for which the student is eligible and submit a School Choice Form during the SPS Open Enrollment period.

Students enrolled in the HC Cohort in grade 8 will automatically be enrolled in 9th grade at their pathway high school. If a student chooses not to attend the pathway high school at any time, enrollment in the pathway high school is no longer guaranteed.

Students in grades K-4 designated as Advanced Learner will not automatically be enrolled in Spectrum. Even if Spectrum is offered at the student's attendance area school, families must actively select Spectrum and the school for which the student is eligible and submit a School Choice Form during the SPS Open Enrollment period. Assignment to Spectrum is based on space availability. For Advanced Learning Opportunities (ALO) at elementary schools, a student's identification as Highly Capable or Advanced Learner is used for placement. No School Choice Form is necessary.

Students in grades 5-7 designated as Advanced Learner WILL automatically be enrolled in Spectrum at the student's attendance area middle school. No School Choice form is necessary unless the student is requesting placement at a school outside of their attendance area.

For students who participate in the summer testing opportunity, the Advanced Learning Office will notify the parents/ guardians of their students' results at the end of August to use for enrollment purposes.

## **Program Design**

Highly Capable services are available to all students who are identified as Highly Capable in grades K-12. The curriculum is presented at an accelerated learning pace and/ or advanced level of complexity and depth, requiring students to perform significantly above grade level. Students identified as HC in kindergarten begin receiving HC services in the second semester in the school in which they are currently enrolled, and may choose to join the self-contained Highly Capable Cohort (HCC) at designated pathway schools beginning in the first grade. Students identified as HC in grades K-7 may choose to join the HC Cohort at any grade, one through eight.

The district currently offers Highly Capable students the following services and programs:

**Highly Capable Cohort (HCC)** service model is self-contained in Grades 1-5 in ELA, math, science, and social studies. A formal waiver to allow flexible grouping of Gen Ed., AL and HC students for social studies may be requested by HC Cohort elementary schools. For purposes surrounding program implementation fidelity, the waiver process must outline procedures supporting an annual review process. This review of program effectiveness will be anchored in evaluation components that incorporate the analysis of baseline, progress and summative data, progress monitoring practices and a formal review of performance results aligned to initial, specified outcomes conducted at the building level. The waiver process must include principal, staff, community, and district representative input. The HC Cohort service model is also self-contained in most core subjects in Grades 6-8. For 9th grade students who are enrolled in the 8th grade HC Cohort will be assigned to attend an accelerated AP pathway at Garfield or they may submit a School Choice form to attend an accelerated IB pathway at Ingraham. Placement at Ingraham is subject to space availability.

**Advanced Learning Opportunities (ALOs)** and **Spectrum** are for students identified as "Advanced Learners," as well as those identified as Highly Capable. ALO and Spectrum are for students who perform well above average for their grade level and require differentiated instructional practices to provide appropriate challenge. These students are typically served within General Education classrooms through flexible grouping, acceleration, and/ or interventions through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model.

Spectrum is offered at all middle schools and at several specified elementary schools.



**Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program** are available at all SPS comprehensive high schools. All comprehensive high schools offer either AP or IB courses in multiple subject areas that allow Highly Capable students to accelerate and/ or deepen their learning. The courses provide challenging academic material at the college-level for all students who have taken the prerequisite courses.

## **Other Services**

Other services for Highly Capable students are available from identification to graduation. These may include social and emotional counseling and/ or support for twice-exceptional students' other learning needs.

In the field of gifted education, students who are both gifted and disabled are considered twice-exceptional learners. Seattle Public Schools' Advanced Learning Office recognizes the importance of identifying and serving these students both with specialized educational services and through 504 accommodations. Working in close collaboration with school and Special Education personnel, district staff supports these students in a number of important ways. Advanced Learning staff provides accommodations for students during eligibility assessments, observes students in classes to determine the best accommodations and specially designed instruction (including individual classes in a student's areas of strength), and participates in Student Intervention Team and Individual Education Plan meetings as needed to ensure students' needs for gifted services are recognized. Advanced Learning staff also collaborates with experts in the Special Education Department and from the community to provide ongoing professional development for teachers in advanced learning programs.

The Advanced Learning Office provides resources to District schools to support identified Highly Capable and Advanced Learners. These services include assistance in curriculum alignment and ongoing professional development opportunities for school staff working with Highly Capable and Advanced Learners.

## **Exiting Programs**

Students may be exited from Highly Capable Services if the services are no longer appropriate. A meeting of the parent/guardian, teacher, administrator, a representative from the Advanced Learning Office, and the student (at parent/ guardian discretion) shall precede such a service delivery change.

## **Community and Family Engagement**

Individual progress for Highly Capable students is reviewed annually as part of parent/teacher conferences at elementary and middle schools. High school students create and review their four-year High School and Beyond Plan with a school counselor.

The Advanced Learning office works closely with the Highly Capable Services Advisory Committee (HCSAC) to share information and receive feedback from parents/guardians, students and teachers about the Highly Capable-program. The HCSAC holds monthly meetings and is composed of parents/guardians, teachers, principals and Advanced Learning staff members.

## **Reporting**

The Superintendent or designee shall provide an end-of-the-year report to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Approved: January 2015

Revised: August 2016

Cross Reference: Policy No. 2190; RCW 28A.185.030 Programs — Authority of local school districts — Selection of students; WAC 392-170 Special service program — Highly Capable students



# Seattle Public Schools

## Advanced Learning Department

[www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org) | 206-252-0130 | Deenie Berry, Program Manager



The Advanced Learning Department's new journey began in the Summer of 2019 with Azure Savage, author and 2020 graduate of Garfield High School.



## **‘You Failed Us’: Teen author asks 40 students of color to share their experiences at Seattle schools**

Garfield High School student Azure Savage illuminates common struggles with identity and mental health faced by marginalized youth.

by [Liz Brazile](#) / September 5, 2019 / [Updated September 10 at 3:16 p.m.](#)

# We're upholding systemic & institutional racism.

## CRITICAL ISSUES WITH THE EXISTING SYSTEM FOR ADVANCED LEARNING

Certain student groups are not getting the services they need to succeed

"Acceleration-only" is not the best method for a robust, well rounded education

Current processes for advanced learning opportunities allow for racial bias

Identification and access to Advanced Learning services is inequitable

Existing practices are not inclusive

Students are being segregated



## **Dr. Kristina Collins a National Leader in Gifted Education tells us...**

“Recognize that the solution does NOT lie in fixing a system that is broken.”

“We must understand, first and foremost, that the system is operating in the exact way that it was designed, embedded with racist ideology, implicit biases, exclusionary intent, and inequitable desired outcomes.”

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) – Board of Directors  
Social Emotional Needs of Gifted (SENG) – President  
Ed Leadership/administration at Texas State University –  
Teaches courses related to talent development and gifted education



# Current HC Eligible and District Enrollment



## Current HC Eligible Student and District Enrollment by Race, 2020-2021

\*Data Pull October 2020

Race	HC Eligible	District Enrollment
Black/African American	92 (1.8%)	8,130 (15.0%)
American Indian	0 (0%)	227 (0.4%)
Asian	663 (13.4%)	7,100 (13.1%)
White	3118 (63.2%)	24,670 (45.6%)
Latinx	259 (5.25%)	7,085 (13.1%)
Multicultural	799 (16.2%)	6,625 (12.2%)
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1 (0.02%)	218 (0.4%)
Total	4932	54,090

# Reaching Seattle Excellence

## OPPORTUNITY

- Flexible and multidimensional identification process
- Eligibility that is transparent and clear



## ACCESS

- Identification of more gifted learners
- Reduction of racial disproportionality



## SUPPORT

- Educational, social, emotional & behavioral support for all students
- Engaging & challenging curriculum for learners with atypical needs



## INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

- Emphasis on anti-racist practices, problem-solving, and creative thinking
- School-wide program offerings



## STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

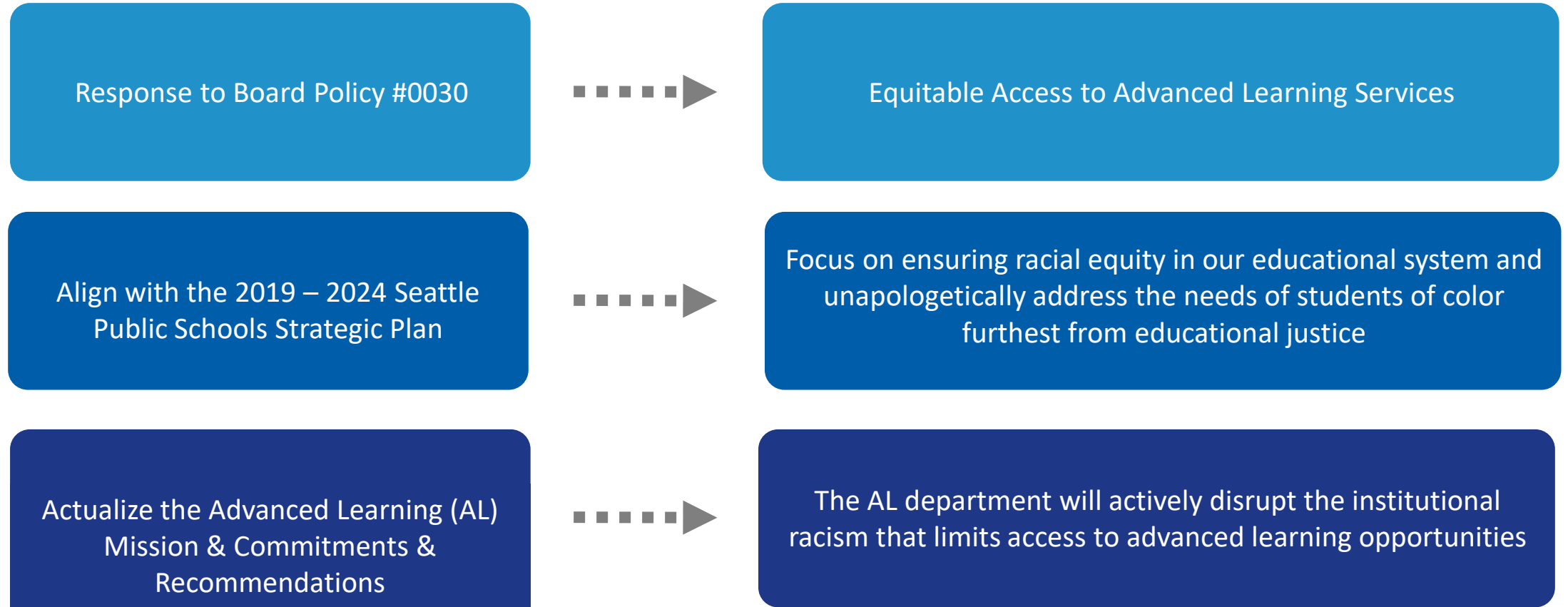
- Consideration of individual characteristics
- Improved student satisfaction & intellectual self-confidence



*Every student graduates prepared for college, a career, and community participation.*



# Why Has the AL Department created a New Service Delivery Framework?



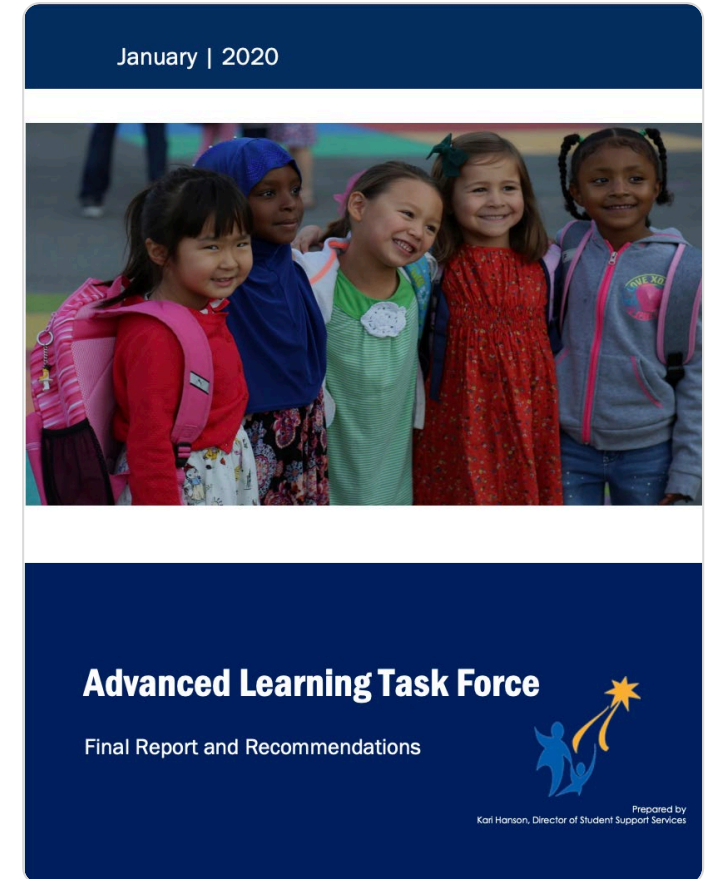
# Advanced Learning Task Force (ALTF)

## ROLE OF THE ALTF

- 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.
- Support the District's efforts toward equitable access to advanced learning as directed in School Board Resolution No. 2017/18-10.
- Provide SPS with parental and community perspectives on advanced learning programs and highly capable services

## RECOMMENDATIONS – December 2019

- Shift from a model of accelerated-only teaching and learning
- Implement a model that is accessible to all students who need services
- Add a common model to support talent development



*Established May 2018 by the Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools*

# From Accelerated-only to Tiered Service Model

## CURRENT SERVICES:

### Elementary Highly Capable Pathway Schools

- “Subject Acceleration” practices
- 2 Years Acceleration in Math
- 1 Year Acceleration in Reading and Writing

### Elementary Neighborhood schools

- Services determined by the school.



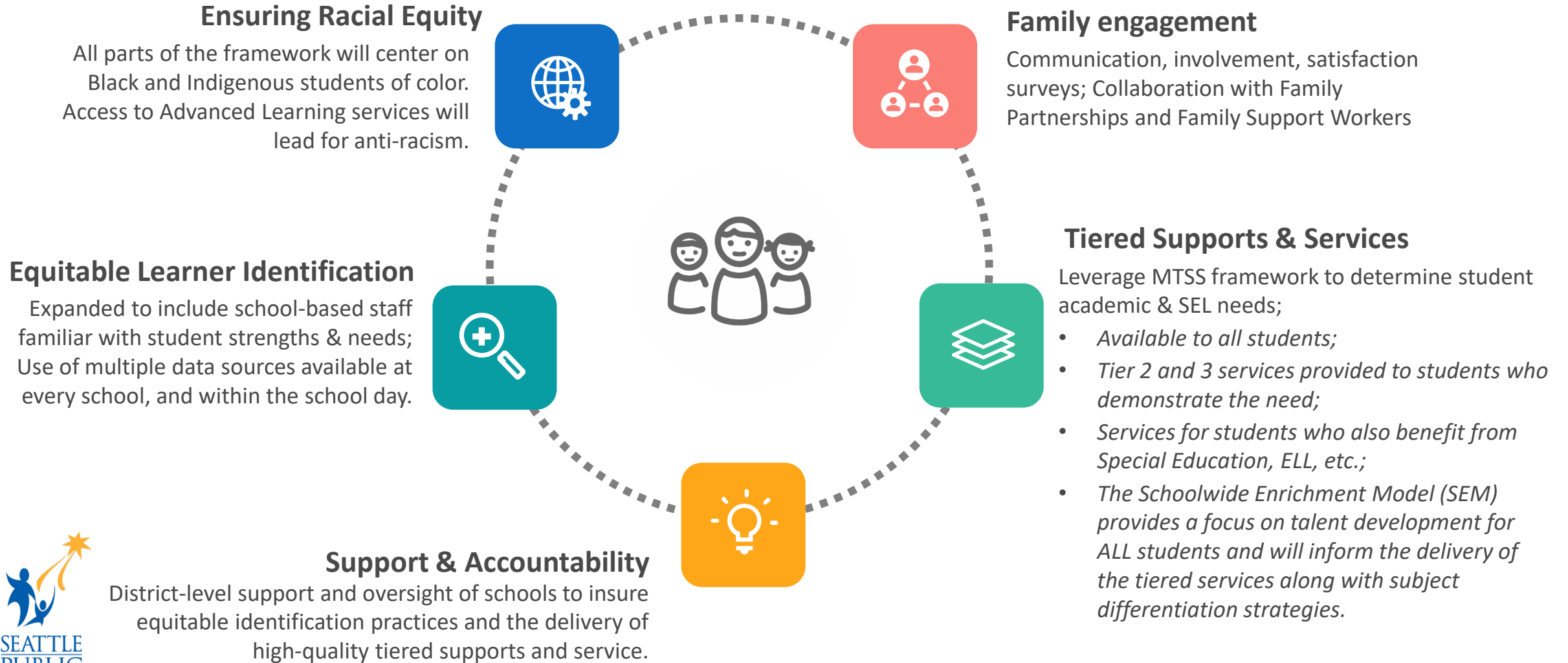
## PROPOSED SERVICES:

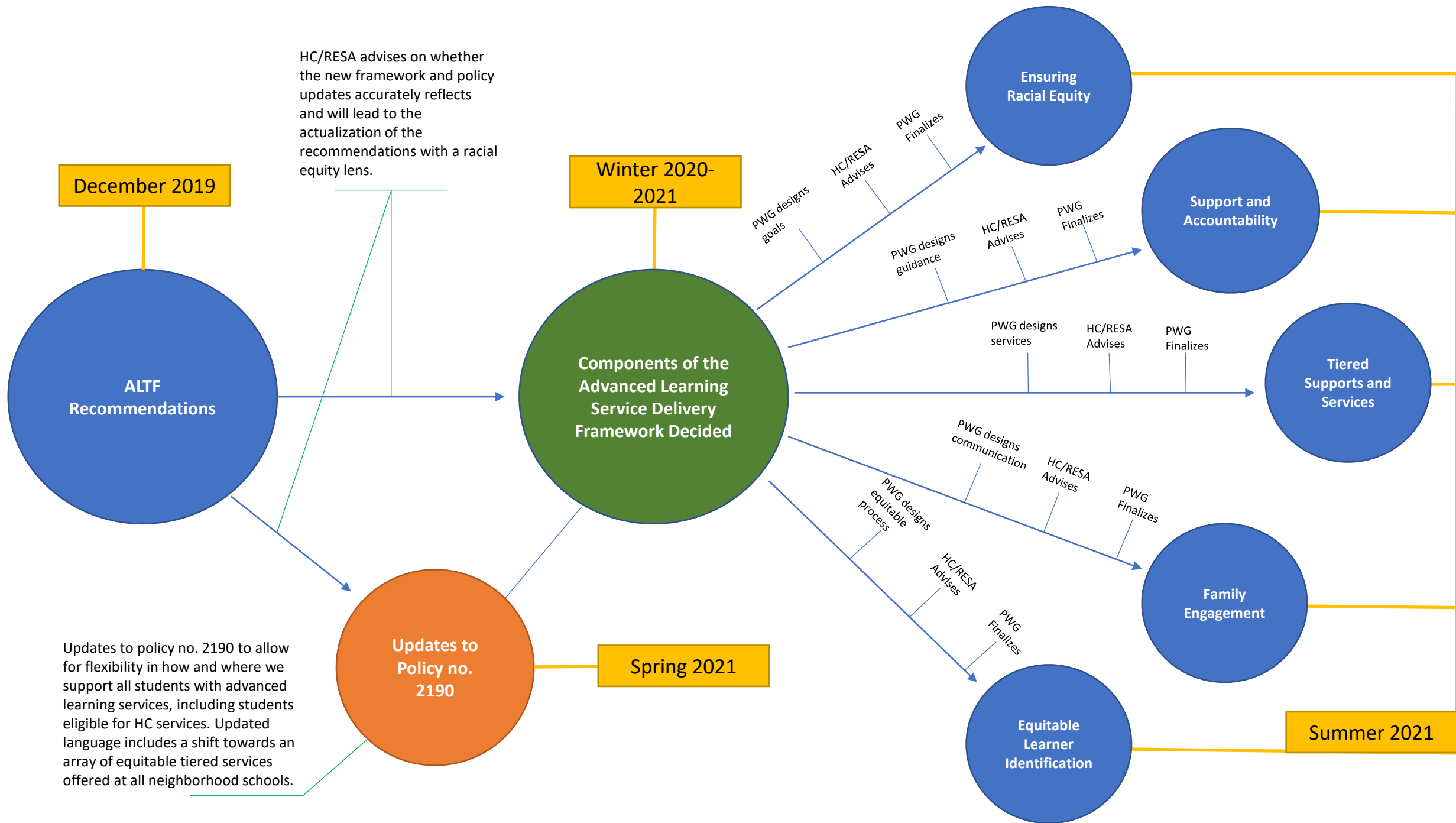
### All elementary schools

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

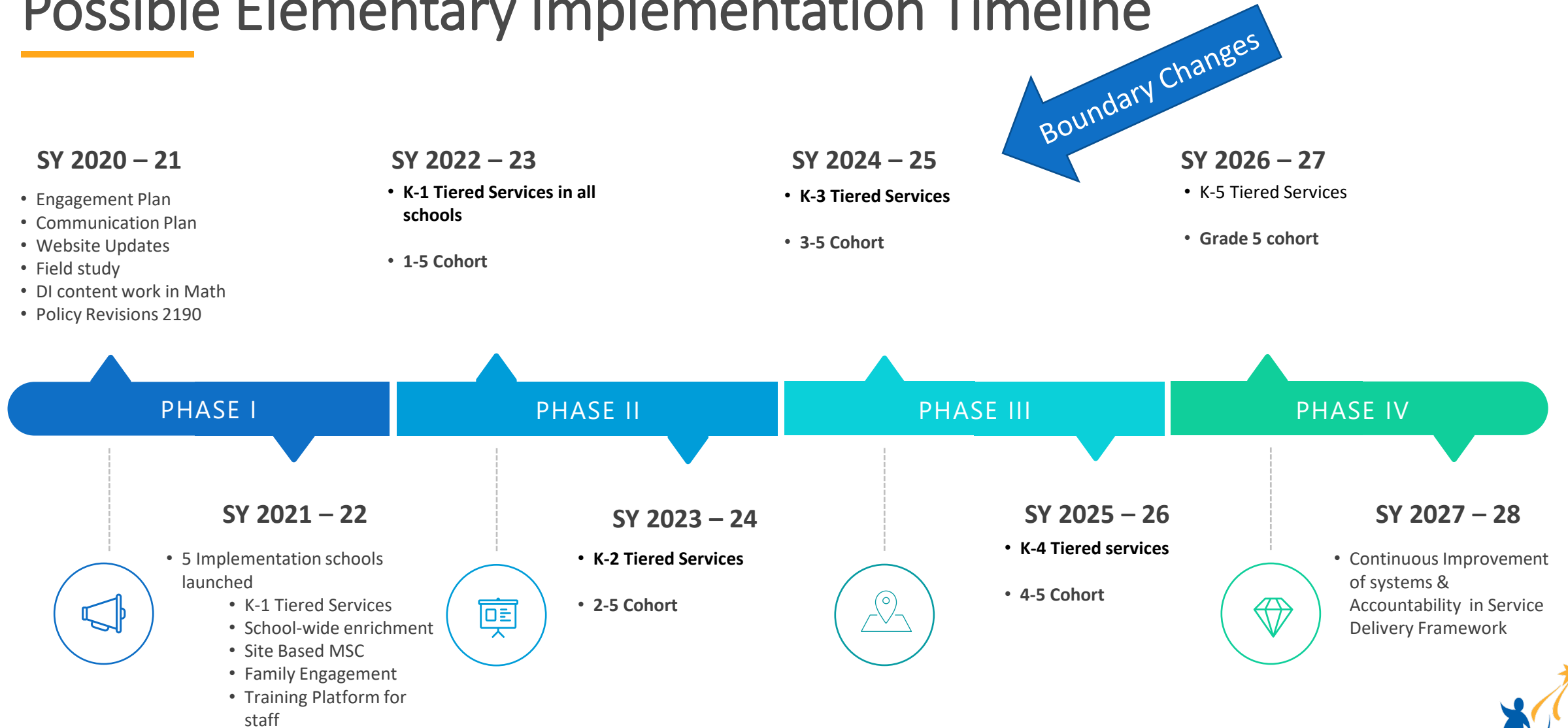
*\*Example of Tiered Services provided by the ALTF.*

# Components of Service Delivery Framework





# Possible Elementary Implementation Timeline





# Implementation Schools Tangible Services & Support:

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*The Schoolwide Enrichment Model creates access for all students to enrichment experiences that are: Rooted in student interests, intellectually rigorous and integrated in a continuum of services.*

- K-1 Tiered Services/PD & Support focusing on differentiating instruction for high performing students in math, ELA & science
- Site-based decision making for AL services/coaching & support in data collection and review
- Schoolwide Enrichment Model\* for K-1 w/a stipend funded enrichment teacher provided.

# Middle School Agreements

## Alignment & Agreements for 2020-22

In partnership with the  
Student Support Services Department  
Department of Racial Equity Advancement (DREA)  
Curriculum Assessment and Instruction Department  
Directors of Schools  
Department of Schools and Continuous Improvement



Friday, February 26, 2021

*Thank you to the Advanced Learning/Student Supports teams for their contributions to this presentation.*



# Middle School Alignment

- **Reasons for Alignment** – We want to promote:
  - **Equitable** Access for Students in service of College and Career Readiness
  - **Predictability** for Families
  - **Sustainability** for Schools and SPS



# Middle School Alignment

## In progress for 2020-21

- Student Support Services with coordinate professional development from April 20-December 20 focused solely on middle school with an emphasis of support for ELL, Special Education and gifted learners. This work is starting now with a focus on differentiation and culturally responsive practices.
- Math department will develop and communicate enrollment guidance for rising 5<sup>th</sup> graders
- Science department will provide training to support 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers in collaboration with advanced learning
- Math department will develop guidance on math course progressions that allow for acceleration to reach Algebra 1 in 8th grade





# Questions & Reflections

## Draft Elementary Implementation Timeline

*This is one draft example of a timeline for elementary. Work is continuing with Enrollment/Planning and will align with Middle School alignment.*

<b>Phase I</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>
	Engagement Plan	Implementation Elementary Schools
	Communication Plan	K-1 Tiered Services
	Website Updates	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.
	Field Study	Site Based MSC for Identification
	(Schoolwide Enrichment Model)	Family Engagement
	Partnership with CAI	Training Platform for staff
	Development of Differentiated content Strategies for K-1	Development of Superintendent Procedures
	Policy Revisions 2190	Engagement Process for Boundaries
	Develop Supports & Accountability	Implement Supports & Accountability
<b>Phase II</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
	<b>Cohort - continues with grades 1-5</b>	<b>Cohort - continues with grades 2-5</b>
	K-1 Tiered Services in all schools	K-2 Tiered Services in all Schools
	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.
	Site Based MSC for Identification	Site Based MSC for Identification
	Family Engagement	Family Engagement
	Training Platform for staff	Training Platform for staff
	Engagement Process for Boundaries	Possible Boundary Shifts
	Support & Accountability	Support & Accountability
<b>Phase III</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>	<b>2025-2026</b>
	<b>Cohort - continues with grades 3-5</b>	<b>Cohort - continues with grades 4-5</b>
	Add Neighborhood classes in cohort buildings	Expand Neighborhood classes in cohort buildings
	K-3 Tiered Services in all schools	K-4 Tiered Services in all schools
	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.
	Site Based MSC for Identification	Site Based MSC for Identification
	Family Engagement	Family Engagement
	Training Platform for staff	Training Platform for staff
	Support & Accountability	Support & Accountability
<b>Phase IV</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>2027-2028</b>
	<b>Cohort - continues with grade 5</b>	<b>K-5 Tiered Services in all schools</b>
	K-5 Tiered Services in all schools	Continuous Improvement
	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.	School-wide Enrichment-Talent Dev.
	Site Based MSC for Identification	Site Based MSC for Identification
	Family Engagement	Family Engagement
	Training Platform for staff	Training Platform for staff
	Support & Accountability	Support & Accountability



January | 2020



# Advanced Learning Task Force

Final Report and Recommendations



Prepared by  
Kari Hanson, Director of Student Support Services



# Advanced Learning Task Force Final Report



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## 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’<sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup>Furfaro, 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 representation<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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*



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## 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.

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## 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)



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# 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.

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# 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 Recommendations<sup>3</sup>

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**

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<sup>3</sup> 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 Recommendations<sup>4</sup>

## 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.<sup>5</sup>
- 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

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

<sup>5</sup> 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 well<sup>6</sup> 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

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<sup>6</sup> 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.*<sup>8</sup>
- *Wrap-around services, including family support worker, nurse, counselor, language support, community partners, shall be available at these programs to meet student needs*<sup>9</sup>.
- 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

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<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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.*

<sup>9</sup> 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.

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

**APPROVED BY THE ALTF VOTING MEMBERSHIP:** Services Appendix 1 Formal Vote 12/10/19: Yeas 8 Nays 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.<sup>10</sup>

**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.

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<sup>10</sup> 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.**

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# 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**<sup>11</sup> 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

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

## Advanced Learning Fiscal Plan 2021-2027 (Draft)

Description		5 Elementary pilot sites 2021-22 <i>Grades 1-5</i>	Elementary roll out K-2 2022-23 <i>Grades 1-5</i>	Elementary roll out 3-5 2023-24 <i>Grades 2-5</i>	2024-25 <i>Grades 3-5</i>	2025-26 <i>Grades 4-5</i>	2026-27 <i>Grade 5</i>
Elementary Cohort Schools							
<b>Professional Development</b>							
<b>Secondary Schools</b>	<i>Talent Development/Differentiated Instructional strategies in content areas. School Enrichment Model Implementation in 2022-23. Developing training for HS teachers beginning in 2023-2024</i>	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
<b>Elementary</b>	<i>Beginning with five schools in 21-22 and expanding to all elementary and K-8s. Training in Differentiated instruction and embedded enrichment. Training and support of school-based MSC.</i>	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
<b>Cost of 1 additional Program Specialists for Elementary</b>	<i>Share support with elementary specialist to meet the needs of HC PD &amp; MSC in each building.</i>	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
<b>Cost of Stipend per school @ \$2000</b>	<i>Funds used for stipend and release time for training/planning/MSC</i>	\$ 10,000	\$ 148,000	\$ 208,000	\$ 208,000	\$ 208,000	\$ 208,000
<b>Communication Plan</b>	<i>Funds to support printed materials and community meeting expenditures.</i>	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
<b>Total</b>		\$ 261,000	\$ 399,000	\$ 459,000	\$ 459,000	\$ 459,000	\$ 459,000
Funds saved on testing costs as the cohort transitions to the neighborhood schools.		(\$30,137)	(\$76,232)	(\$115,400)	(\$150,311)	(\$179,137)	(\$204,688)
		<b>\$ 230,863</b>	<b>\$ 322,768</b>	<b>\$ 343,600</b>	<b>\$ 308,690</b>	<b>\$ 279,863</b>	<b>\$ 254,312</b>



# Advanced Learning Communications Plan

## **BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW:**

Board Policy 2190 and Superintendent Procedure 2190SP are in the process of being revised. The Board Policy 2190 will be brought to committee in spring 2021. The most significant revision to 2190SP involves transition from the current 1-8 grade cohort service model (self-contained) to an “blended” model, with services for most students being provided at neighborhood schools and supported by multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS). While there will always be some students who need an alternative placement, our goal is to provide the most inclusive learning environment for our students who receive highly capable services.

If the revised policy and procedures are approved, implementation of the blended model will be put into development. Once fully implemented, the blended model will result in a dramatic reduction in racial disparities in HC identification and enrollment, eliminating disparities entirely by 2027 while sustaining equity over time, services matched to individual student needs, a smaller group of students, with more intensive needs, served in an alternative placement – as opposed to the current model where most HCC students are receiving services in a self-contained environment.

Other key recommended changes to 2190SP: students receiving Tier 2 or 3 services will receive a Classroom Learning Plan or Individual Student Learning Plan respectively that acknowledges their strengths, needs, and preferences. In addition to Tier 2 services, all students will participate in enrichment designed to develop talent, increase engagement, create interest, social and academic peer groups, and promote student choice. Universal screening will be conducted at a minimum of one grade level annually during school hours. State/district assessments and cognitive testing will be part of a building-based system for identification of students in need of above level services. Local norms and other evidence of unique talents and abilities will be included in a more holistic analysis of student academic proficiency and potential. In addition, students will not have to wait a year from referral to receiving services. The MTSS structure of identifying and providing services for students will be an on-going process throughout the year.

**GOAL:** Re-envision and transform how Highly Capable services are provided, addressing and eliminating disproportionality in enrollment demographics, developing talent in all students, and increasing all students’ access to expanded learning opportunities while serving most HC-identified students in neighborhood schools. We are committed to providing accountability and feedback loops.

## **General Comms Timeline:**

Work done throughout 2020-2021:

- Two by twos with Board members
- Visits by Advanced Learning and Student Support Staff to school PTAs, community groups by request

- Monthly HC/RESA meetings
- Practitioner workgroup + subcommittee meetings regularly

#### March:

- Routing BAR/board materials for revisions to policy
- FAQ posted to web/updated web content by last week of March
  - Timeline and FAQ, highlight HC/RESA meeting notes
- Family engagement/outreach
- Internal staff engagement/outreach

#### April:

- April 6: Introduction to CAI committee
- Support media press releases
- April 21: Intro Board consideration
- Family engagement / outreach

#### May:

- May 5: Voted on by Board
- Additional family education on what was decided and how that may or may not impact families

#### June

- Summary of expected changes for the 2021-2022 school year
- Continue to roll

#### **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES:**

- Engage partners, families, and students furthest away from educational justice to help shape the model and advocate for change.
- Distribute direct communication to all SPS families, including current HCC families, about how AL changes improve conditions for everyone.
- Build staff capacity to be ambassadors for change (school leaders, JSCEE, school staff).
- Provide evidence that this blended model is already working in many schools. Articulate how these changes are aligned with latest research and best practice nationally.

**Challenges:** People's belief in how MTSS works or what it is. Parents' experience in neighborhood schools and perceived lack of teachers' ability to differentiate. The unintended consequence of boundary changes for current neighborhood families because of HC student return.

**Opportunities:** Ninety percent of our students are not HC identified currently, but all families want enriching, academically rigorous instruction for their children. They want a system that is more inclusive and where each individual child is recognized for their strengths and have access to deeper, enhanced, or accelerated learning as appropriate. Engaging parents through neighborhood and HC Cohort PTAs etc. and letting them know how these changes will benefit their child as an educational opportunity that should be considered. SPS has numerous

influential partners such as SESEC, DEEL, SCPTSA, Seattle Housing Authority, and community preschools, and a 300+ partner list. These partners need to be brought in early so they can help dispel rumors, share information, and advocate for change. Possible New York Times interest in helping us tell our story of transformation. Engage local, ethnic media or community blogs/newspapers to help carry the story over traditional media or education reporters. Partner with faith-based networks – coffee chats, invitations to come learn more etc. Bring in SEA and PASS to share the message and co-plan.

### **PROACTIVE MESSAGING**

- Seattle Public Schools is re-envisioning and transforming our highly capable services to better serve all students, particularly students of color who are furthest away from educational justice and opportunity.
- Every student deserves to get what they need to thrive and achieve.
- A blended model would prioritize service delivery in neighborhood schools, ensuring Highly Capable students remain in communities where they are known and supported.
- Emphasis on Safe and Welcoming Environment – this is a priority goal for the district
- Teaching preparation for AL – want more teachers to have access to growing those skills.
- Testimonies from principals with HC cohort in their school.
- Testimonies from teachers, both HC and not.
- Reference mission statement: “Students will graduate prepared for college, career, and community participation.” - benefits of diversity in job fields (actual tangible innovation benefits)
  - Students need to have experiences working and learning in heterogenous groups to be truly prepared for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.
- Students will have access to a continuum of services making sure individual student strengths and needs are met, including an alternative placement option for students who require it.
- To ensure success of this shift, the district will implement the new model with up to 5 regionally selected early implementation schools for the purpose of monitoring efficiency and growth of students, in preparation for systematic and gradual roll out to all elementary and K-8 schools. The development and planning for Middle School professional development, guidance, ad support for alignment is underway. With our families, community, and staff we are ready to get this important work underway.

### **REACTIVE MESSAGING (this should build the base of the FAQ)**

- The district is not “lowering the bar” – our students receiving highly capable services are thriving:
  - We are legally bound and committed to continuing to support our students identified for highly capable services.

- We are not “dismantling” but working to create a better system for all students including those currently in HCC. We are transforming Advanced Learning to make sure we meet the needs and strengths of our students.
- Educational outcomes for AL students are strong, specifically for HC-designated students that have selected to stay in their neighborhood schools. Average performance is 95% on standardized tests.
- 30% of our students who receive highly capable services remain in their neighborhood school currently.
- In the district we serve 14% of students who identify as African American or Black, but only enroll 1.6% AA/Black into the HC or HCC service. There is something fundamentally wrong with a system that produces these outcomes and we aim to change that. We believe our identification process and service models are flawed and do not recognize the brilliance of all students, particularly students of color.
- There will always be a need for alternative placement, but that should not be our default. We know it benefits students to receive services and supports in spaces that are closer to home and in diverse environments. When we asked families in 2015-2016 how AL services could be improved the key finding was they want supports in neighborhood schools.
- We recognize that any change is difficult, and families are fearful. We are committed to going slowly and engaging deeply with families and staff, but we are also committed to seeing the work through.
- Our students are depending on us to make bold, brave change that advances educational justice and improvement for everyone.
- Our educators are highly skilled; they are some of the best. Teachers are excited to support advanced learners in a blended model across the district and they welcome the opportunity for embedded professional development to continuously improve.
- We will reduce racial disparities in HC identification, and have the disparities eliminated entirely by 2027 and sustain equity. If Seattle Public Schools cannot do it, it cannot be done anywhere in the nation. We have the brainpower and resources – we just need the will.
- Seattle Excellence is in reach. By transforming our Advanced Learning program, we help ensure every student gets a shot at a bright future and the opportunity to fulfill their dreams.