

Superintendent Procedure 2190SP Highly Capable Services

Approved by: s/Dr. Brent C. Jones Date: 1/17/24

Dr. Brent C. Jones, Superintendent



Board Policy No. 2190, Highly Capable Services, outlines a framework for Seattle Public Schools' services to meet the instructional needs of students identified as "Highly Capable" (HC). The policy requires that district processes for identification for Highly Capable services be equitable, culturally competent, and not result in the under-identification of HC-eligible students of color, students who receive special education services, or students who receive language supports.

To eliminate disparities in Highly Capable identification, the district will work toward a goal of identifying eligible Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice, including students who are Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Southeast Asian, Black/African American, Middle Eastern and North African, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and multiracial students who identify as one or more of the aforementioned races. The district will also work toward a goal of identifying HC-eligible students who receive and/or are eligible for the following services: Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, McKinney-Vento Act supportive services for students experiencing homelessness, Special Education, Multilingual Learners, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

STUDENTS REQUIRING HIGHLY CAPABLE SERVICES

Students requiring HC 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 specific academic abilities and/or creative productivities within a specific domain. These students are present in the general populace and all protected classes.

Students in need of HC services may possess learning characteristics that include, but are not limited to, the following:

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 beyond their grade level curriculum and standards;
3. Creative ability to make unusual connections among ideas and concepts;
4. Ability to learn quickly in their area(s) of strength; and
5. Capacity for intense concentration and/or focus in their area of strength.

AL AND HC IDENTIFICATION

The following process will be used to screen, identify, and assign students to Advanced Learner (AL) (available through the 2023-24 academic year and described below) and Highly Capable services. Additional information related to services, processes, and implementation is available on the Advanced Learning department webpage.

Multidisciplinary Selection Committee

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC) is responsible for identification of students for services.

The MSC includes trained educators and other professional staff including:

- A special teacher (as defined in WAC 392-170-038) who has training, experience, advanced skills, and knowledge in the education of Highly Capable students, or, if unavailable, a classroom teacher;
- A psychologist or other qualified practitioner with the training to interpret achievement test results;
- A certificated coordinator/administrator with responsibility for the supervision of the district's program for Highly Capable students; and
- Such additional professionals, if any, that the Advanced Learning department deems desirable.

Grades 1-8 Universal Screening and Identification

Each year, the MSC screens all students in grades 1-8, except students previously identified for HC, to identify eligibility for AL or need for HC services. This annual screening process is called Universal Screening and it acknowledges and supports the variable and potentially rapid brain development that is possible and expected in every student.

Parents/guardians may opt their student out of Universal Screening until the start of the process by completing the Advanced Learning Opt-Out form for identification and services, which is provided to every parent/guardian and available on the Advanced Learning webpage. The parents/guardians of students screened and identified as being eligible for HC services through Universal Screening will be informed and asked to provide consent prior to starting services.

Universal Screening is a comprehensive review of current student educational record data matched to specific criteria, which are only changed, when necessary, as described in the “Data Sources For Screening And Identification” section below.

Universal Screening uses multiple data sources to identify students for AL or HC services. The data sources may include, but are not limited to:

- Current academic year data:
 - Fall assessments from the current academic year;

- Demonstrated performance in the classroom as assessed by educators;
- Grade reports;
- Strengths, talents, and interests reported by educators and parents/guardians;
- Data from the previous academic year;
- Additional data:
 - Language acquisition data for students receiving Multilingual Services; and
 - Additional assessments in a student's educational records that were used as a part of a Seattle Public Schools' Special Education evaluation, which resulted in a student receiving an individualized education program.

A pattern of high academic achievement is required, illustrated by a series of consistently high academic data. The Universal Screening provides for a holistic evaluation of each student's strengths.

The Universal Screening consists of multiple identification pathways, which may vary to meet the characteristics of students in need of Advanced Learner and Highly Capable services who also: qualify for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch; receive McKinney-Vento Act services; qualify for Special Education services; are Multilingual Learners; and qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Each pathway uses multiple objective criteria to identify students. No single criterion may disqualify a student from identification nor will subjective criteria, such as teacher recommendations or report card grades, be used to disqualify a student from identification. Subjective data points may be used alongside other criteria during selection to support identification.

If a student has insufficient data in their educational record at the time of Universal Screening, the MSC is unable to make an accurate identification for services. In those situations, the student is ineligible to be identified for services in that academic year's screening process, but will be screened for identification via the 1-8 Universal Screening process the following academic year once there is sufficient data in their educational record.

Grades 9-12 Referral, Screening, Final Assessment, & Identification

9-12 Referral & Screening

Students in grades 9-12 may be referred by teachers, other staff, parents/guardians, students, and community members. Referral forms and information are available on the Advanced Learning department webpage. Upon receipt of a timely referral, the Advanced Learning department will conduct a screening of referred students. The screening process is a high-level review of current data from each student's educational record matched to specific criteria. This process will identify students who may benefit from HC services and will eliminate students who, based on clear, current evidence, do not qualify for eligibility under WAC 392-170-055. The data and criteria used in the screening are available on the Advanced Learning department webpage. If a student has insufficient data in their educational record at the time of screening, the MSC is unable

to make an accurate identification for services. In those situations, the student is ineligible to be identified for services in that academic year.

9-12 Final Assessment

When referred students are found in the screening to be potentially eligible for services, they will then be eligible for review in the Final Assessment process, which is the final step for identification. The Final Assessment is a review of each student's capability shown by multiple criteria using different pathways that are dependent on a student's educational identifiers to reveal, from a wide variety of sources and data, each student's unique needs and capabilities. The Final Assessment uses existing data in a student's educational record. The Advanced Learning department will not use or require an additional assessment be taken for the purpose of identification.

During the Final Assessment, the MSC will evaluate multiple data sources for each student. No single criterion will disqualify a student from identification, nor will subjective measures, such as teacher recommendations or report card grades, be used to disqualify a student from identification. Subjective data points may be used alongside other criteria during selection to support identification.

DATA SOURCES FOR SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

Data and criteria used for Universal Screening for Grades 1-8 and Referral and Screening for Grades 9-12 are described on the Advanced Learning department webpage and are updated as adjustments to the relevant data and criteria occur. The data and criteria used for screening and identification processes are reviewed at least annually by the Advanced Learning department and the Advanced Learning Practitioners Work Group on Identification/Eligibility and will be updated as new assessment tools are identified. If additional assessments used for the identification of students for AL and HC services are added to the process, they will be provided to students at every district school in the applicable grade level(s).

Changes to the data and criteria used during an ongoing screening process will occur only when deemed necessary by the department. If adjustments occur during the screening process, students previously screened through the applicable Grades 1-8 Universal Screening or Grades 9-12 referral-based screening process, as applicable, who were not identified for services will be screened again with the revised data/criteria.

No outside testing or data will be accepted for screening or identification apart from assessments from previous schools/districts, language acquisition assessments for students receiving Multilingual Services, and additional assessments in a student's educational records that were used as a part of a Seattle Public Schools' Special Education evaluation, which resulted in a student receiving an individualized education program (IEP).

ELIGIBILITY / INELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

Every notice of a student's eligibility for HC services will be provided in a language the parent/guardian understands and include:

- a. A full explanation of the procedures for identification of a student;
- b. An explanation of the process for appeal;
- c. An explanation of the procedures to exit a student from the program; and
- d. Information on the district's program and the options that will be available to identified students.

Notifications of a student's eligibility or ineligibility for services will vary by grade level as following:

- **Grades 1-8:**
 - Parents/guardians of students in grades 1-8 will be sent a notice that their student's Universal Screening results are available on their Source account. This notice will include the timeline for appeals.
 - Parents/guardians of students in grades 1-8 identified for HC or AL services will receive a notice of that eligibility decision.
 - Parents/guardians of students in grades 1-8 identified for HC services will be sent a Consent for Services form with instructions to complete and return by a specified due date. Failure to return the consent by the due date will be considered a denial of consent.
- **Grades 9-12:**
 - Parents/guardians of students in grades 9-11 identified for HC services will be sent a Consent for Services form with instructions to complete and return by a specified due date. Failure to return the consent by the due date will be considered a denial of consent.
 - Parents/guardians of students in grades 9-11 found ineligible for HC services will be sent a notice of ineligibility.

APPEAL PROCESS

A parent/guardian may file an appeal if their student is found to be ineligible for AL and/or HC services. Appeals will be reviewed by the MSC Appeal Committee. A formal appeal should be submitted in writing within 10 school days of receiving the electronic results communication notification (grades 1-8) or the notice of ineligibility (grades 9-11) from the Advanced Learning department using the appeal form available on the Advanced Learning webpage.

The MSC Appeal Committee will consist of a subset of the individuals who make up the MSC, including educators and other professional staff trained in the MSC process.

There are two different types of appeals, conditional and identification. A parent/guardian must select one of the two for their appeal and provide the required information.

1. **Conditional Appeals:** A condition or circumstance is believed to have caused inaccurate or unavailable (i.e., excused circumstances caused a student to miss an entire assessment window) testing results. The appealing party must collect and submit in writing:
 - An explanation detailing why they believe their student's identification results are inaccurate due to a condition or circumstance, and why an exception should be made.
2. **Identification Appeals:** There was a mistake in the data used by the MSC for identification which caused the student to be found ineligible for services. To initiate an identification appeal, the appealing party must collect and submit in writing:
 - An explanation accompanied by evidence proving there was a mistake in the data used by the MSC for identification.

If an appeal does not fall into one of the two categories above, the appeal will not be considered.

The MSC Appeal Committee will meet, review each appeal form and record, deliberate, and provide a written decision to the parents/guardians within 25 school days of the MSC's receipt of the appeal form. The MSC Appeal Committee will review one appeal per student, per year. The MSC Appeal Committee's decision is final.

Pursuant to state law, any person aggrieved by a final decision of a district official may appeal to King County Superior Court within 30 days after the decision.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Highly Capable Service Delivery

Once a student has been assessed to be eligible for Highly Capable services in grades 1-8 and their parent/guardian has provided permission to provide services, the district will make a variety of appropriate services available.

HC services have previously been provided through the cohort model of service or within their assigned schools through differentiation. The cohort model is being phased out and will be replaced by the Neighborhood School Model in all schools. Regardless of service model, once services are started, identified students will be provided a continuum of services throughout their Seattle Public Schools education.

- **Highly Capable Cohort (Elementary) or Highly Capable Pathway (Middle and High Schools)**

The Highly Capable Cohort program serves elementary grade students eligible for HC services in a cohort (a group of students) that is separate from students not in the cohort. The cohort service delivery model is provided at specific schools

called cohort pathway schools. In a cohort pathway school, students in the cohort receive accelerated instruction with other HC cohort students.

During the 2023-24 academic year, students identified for Highly Capable services in elementary school will be served in the elementary cohort schools or within their assigned schools through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiation.

Beginning in the 2024-25 academic year, the elementary cohort model of service delivery will phase out, one grade level each year, beginning with first grade. Highly Capable services will be delivered through a Neighborhood School model in all schools as described below. The Advanced Learning department website will have updates on the cohort phase out process.

Students in middle and high school receive services at Highly Capable Pathway schools through blended classes until the pathway schools are phased-out and the Neighborhood School model for providing services is implemented in every middle and high school.

- **Highly Capable Services at All Schools**

- Grade 1 – Grade 8**

- The district provides services for students identified as Highly Capable (grades 1-8) through differentiation at each student’s assigned school. The delivery of HC services is being aligned to the district’s Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework, provided for under Board Policy No. 2163, Supports and Interventions. HC Services will be aligned with the framework by identifying, targeting, and delivering services informed by district and classroom data and responsive to the unique needs of students. The Neighborhood School Model will be implemented in every school serving grades 1-8 by the 2024-25 academic year.

- Schools will follow a standard process for routine and systematic review of outcome data using an anti-bias lens. This review will also evaluate whether racial disproportionality is being eliminated in all facets of HC services, from identification to participation to outcomes.

- HC services will be articulated in each school’s Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and on school websites by 2024-25. This service delivery model will serve students through a three-tier system of support by the 2024-2025 academic year as follows:

- **Tier 1** –Tier 1 is education provided for all students in the classroom in all schools. This includes universal design for learning, differentiated instruction, and talent development/enrichment.

- **Tier 2** – Tier 2 support services accelerate the depth and complexity, and provide for exploration, interest-based learning, and student voice centered activities through a variety of differentiation strategies within grade level content.
- **Tier 3** – Tier 3 support services are specifically matched to the student and determined by an individual needs assessment.

Grades 9-12

At the high school level, all students continue to have access to courses with instruction at an advanced level. These opportunities vary by school and can include AP courses; Honors courses; College in the High School; Running Start; Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM); and International Baccalaureate (IB) education. Students are also encouraged to access additional enrichment opportunities within and beyond the school setting through participation in extracurricular and interscholastic clubs and competitions.

Advanced Learner Service Delivery

In addition to HC services, the district currently provides Advanced Learner services for students who need enriched and differentiated instruction and do not meet the criteria for HC. AL is an additional eligibility category and non-cohort service model. AL services are expected to continue through the 2023-24 academic year and then phase into the district plan for Highly Capable students with a Tiered Support model as described above.

Students who qualify for AL in Universal Screening for grades 1-8 will be provided differentiated services within the student's assigned 2023-24 classroom. Differentiated services are determined by each school. The following are examples of services that may be offered within the Math and Reading grade level curriculum:

- **Flexible cluster grouping:** Students will be grouped with other classmates to develop an identified skill or skills.
- **Universal Design for Learning/Differentiation:** Teachers adjust their lesson to provide students the support they need to grow their strengths and work at more complex levels. This includes more challenge within classes, assignments, and activities to help push learning further.
- **Independent/interest-based projects:** Students work independently or in a small group on projects that excite their interests and provide in-depth learning.

Basic content specific resources and strategies are available for all educators. Specific information about the services a particular school offers can be obtained by contacting the school directly.

ELIGIBILITY FOR NEW STUDENTS

Students may participate in the New/Transfer Student Eligibility process if they are enrolled for immediate attendance in the district after October 31 or enrolled in the district during the current academic year for attendance the following academic year. Application details for the New Student Eligibility process are available on the Advanced Learning department webpage.

To participate in the New/Transfer Student Eligibility process, students will need comparable normed assessment data to district students as determined by the Advanced Learning department. Students without comparable normed assessment data will not be eligible to participate in the New/Transfer Student Eligibility process but will be eligible to participate in the standard process during their following full year of enrollment.

Students identified as HC who leave the district for longer than one academic year will need to participate in the New Student Eligibility process to determine eligibility.

Students identified for HC services in another district or their district's equivalent that enroll in Seattle Public Schools will have their data evaluated by the Advanced Learning department as follows:

- For students enrolled during the academic year, the student or their parent/guardian should notify the Advanced Learning department about prior qualification for HC services while enrolling. The Advanced Learning department will then request student records from the student's prior district and determine eligibility within a week of receiving records based on Seattle Public Schools criteria.

HIGHLY CAPABLE SERVICES EXIT PROCESS

Upon request of a parent/guardian, 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 MSC 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, the district will notify the parent/guardian in writing of the committee's decision and of the process to appeal the committee's decision. The appeal process for program exit is the same as the program eligibility appeal process detailed above.

DISTRICT PLAN FOR HIGHLY CAPABLE SERVICES

As required by Chapter 392-170 WAC, the district will develop an annual plan for the district's highly capable program on forms provided by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The Annual Plan will be submitted to the School Board for approval through a Board Action Report and then submitted to OSPI.

The annual plan will contain the following per WAC 392-170-030:

1. A report of the number of K-12 students who are highly capable that the district expects to serve by grade level;
2. A description of the district's plan to identify students; consistent with RCW 28A.185.020, district practices for identifying the most highly capable students must prioritize equitable identification of low-income students;
3. A description of the highly capable program goals;
4. A description of the services the highly capable program will offer;
5. A description of the instructional program the highly capable program will provide;
6. A description of ongoing professional development for educators of students who are highly capable and general education staff;
7. A description of how the highly capable program will be evaluated that includes information on how the district's highly capable program goals and student achievement outcomes will be measured;
8. A fiscal report; and
9. Assurances signed by the school district's authorized representative that the district will comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

END OF YEAR REPORT TO OSPI

As required by WAC 392-170-090, the district will submit an end of the year report to OSPI at the close of each fiscal year on OSPI-provided forms that include:

- (1) Number of students served by grade level (K-12);
- (2) Student demographic information;
- (3) Data to determine if students who are highly capable met the goals set and if the programs provided met the academic needs of these students;
- (4) Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers (defined in WAC 392-170-038) and general education staff;
- (5) Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information; and
- (6) Final fiscal report that reports on activities and staff funded by this program.

Approved: January 2015

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Cross Reference: School Board Policy No. 2190