Procedure - Highly Capable Programs

Definition
Highly capable students are students who perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environments. Highly capable 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 refer, assess, and select students to participate in the program:

Referral
The district accepts referrals based on data or evidence from teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Persons referring a student for consideration for admission into the program will use the district's referral form.

Screening *(Omit if district does not conduct a screening procedure)*
The district will screen each referred student to identify students who qualify for further assessment. Screening criteria may include the following: *(list the screening tools used)*

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

District practices for identifying the most highly capable students must prioritize equitable identification of low-income students.

The district will assess students identified for further testing through the screening process *(keep language if district employs a screening process; otherwise omit)* using multiple objective criteria. The district must base the assessment process upon a review of each referred student's capability as shown by multiple criteria, from a wide variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each referred student's unique needs and capabilities. The assessment criterion consists of both qualitative and quantitative *(district may select one or both)* instruments and may include *(list assessments used)*:

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

a) Districts must use multiple objective criteria to identify students who are among the most highly capable. Multiple pathways for qualifications must be available and no single criterion may disqualify a student from identification;

(b) The district must 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.

(c) 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

(d) 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 a nonverbal screening and assessment.

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

Selection

A multi-disciplinary selection team composed of a district administrator, psychologist, or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results, and a teacher will review data that has been collected for each of the referred students. The multi-disciplinary selection committee is composed of: a special teacher (however, if a special teacher is not available, a classroom teacher shall be appointed); a psychologist or other qualified practitioner with the training to interpret cognitive and achievement test results; a certified coordinator or administrator with the responsibility for the supervision of the district's highly capable program; and additional professionals if any, that the district deems desirable.

The multi-disciplinary selection committee will evaluate individual student assessment profile data and make the selection decision based on:

1. A preponderance of evidence from the profile data demonstrating that a student is among the most highly capable;

2. Evidence of clear need for highly capable services; and

3. Determination of which students would benefit the most from inclusion in the district's program.

A single assessment score or indicator will not prevent a student's selection for the HCP; however, individual pieces of evidence, if strong enough, can indicate that the student would benefit from these services. If properly validated test are not available, the professional judgment of the qualified district personnel shall determine eligibility of the student based upon evidence of cognitive and/or academic achievement.

The district will:

1. 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.

2. Obtain parental permission to place identified students in the program before any special services and programs are provided to the student.

Process for Appeal

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision. Individuals appealing the selection committee's decision must submit a completed appeals form or letter requesting review of selection/placement decision. The written request must include reasons for the appeal and, to support reconsideration, provide additional evidence of significantly advanced cognitive or academic levels and/or outstanding intellectual, academic, or creative abilities.

Parents/ legal guardians must submit the appeal request and supporting evidence to the *Coulee Hartline School District* within *10* school days of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision notification.

The district's appeals committee *(district may indicate multidisciplinary selection committee (CHSD administration)* will review the student's file, assessment profile data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal. The Appeals Committee is composed of: *(list title of individuals that compose the committee, unless using the multidisciplinary selection committee, which is defined above, CHSD Administration)*.

The decision of the appeals/multidisciplinary selection committee *(district specifies which is used)* may include:

- Upholding the original decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee;
- Reversing the decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee;

The Appeals Committee will make a decision within *10* school days after receipt of written request for reconsideration, and will notify the parent/legal guardian of the decision in writing. (If no other appeal is available) The decision of the Appeals Committee is the final decision. (If an additional appeal is available) The parent/ legal guardian may appeal the decision of Appeals Committee to the Coulee Hartline Administration in written form within 10 days of the appeal.

Exit Process
Upon the request of a teacher or a highly capable program administrator, the district may initiate the exit process for students who no longer demonstrate a need for highly capable program services. The Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee will convene a meeting to review the student's profile to determine if the student qualifies for program services based on assessment data and selection criteria. The multi-disciplinary selection committee may request additional evidence of student capabilities and/or willingness to participate in the program. If the committee determines that the student no longer qualifies for highly capable program services, it may recommend that the student be exited from the program. The district will notify the parent in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal's process.

A parent/legal guardian may request to withdraw the student from the program or a student may voluntarily withdraw from the program. A meeting will be convened by the Highly Capable Program Coordinator/Director to discuss the request. If the parent/legal guardian desires to withdraw the student from the program, the district will exit the student from the program. The multi-disciplinary selection committee will determine if identification procedures are necessary for students wishing to reenter the program in the future.

Program Design
The district will make a variety of appropriate program services to students who participate in the program. Once services are started, the district will provide a continuum of services to identified students in grades K-12. The district will keep on file a description of the educational programs provided for identified students. The district reviews services *twice a year* for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

The district will offer highly capable students the following programs: *(Describe the district's grades K-12 programs and services. Options include but are not limited to: accelerated learning opportunities; academic grouping arrangements that provide intellectual and interest peer group interactions; cooperative agreements between K-12 and institutions of higher education and programs designed to share resources and facilities to maximize student learning and mentorships and career exploration.)*

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 who are highly capable met the goals set and if the programs provided met the academic needs of these students;
- Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers and general education staff; and

- Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information.

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