

PSD Highly Capable Program Identification Model

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. Outstanding abilities are seen within students' general intellectual aptitudes, specific academic abilities, and/or creative productivities within a specific domain. These students are present not only in the general populace but are present 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 their chronological 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.

Referral

Referrals are accepted based on data or evidence from teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community. Referrers will use the district's referral form to refer a student to be considered for admission in the program. Referrals for students who are highly capable may include screening procedures to eliminate students who, based on clear, current evidence, do not qualify for eligibility.

Application

Applications must be received by the district's scheduled deadlines for each testing window for students to be considered for testing.

- Applicants in grades K-8 who are new to the district should apply online as soon as possible once registered.
- Applicants in grades K-1 will be scheduled for testing during the normal testing window.
- Students in grades K-8 should apply by the application deadline listed on the testing calendar, except for second graders.
- Second grade students should not apply. All second-grade students are screened in January using the STAR Reading and STAR Math assessment scores.
- Students who meet the screening criteria will be invited to test for possible placement in the Highly Capable Program (HCP).
- Applicants in grades 3-8 will also be screened using STAR assessments to determine eligibility for further testing. Students who meet the screening criteria will be scheduled to test for possible placement in the HCP.
- Students in grade 9-12 self-select advanced courses as appropriate with guidance from their school counselors.
- To be eligible for CogAT testing, students must score 80 percentile or above on most STAR Reading and Math assessments.

Assessment

The district will obtain written parental permission prior to conducting assessments to determine eligibility for participation in its Highly Capable Program.

Students identified for further testing through the screening or application process will be assessed using multiple objective criteria. The assessment process shall be based upon a review of each student's capability as shown by multiple criteria, from a wide variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each student's unique needs and capabilities. All assessments must be administered by the Puyallup School District or administered and certified by another school district. The assessment criterion consists of both qualitative and quantitative (the district may select one or both) instruments and may include the Cognitive Abilities Test, STAR Reading and STAR Math assessments, the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, standardized state assessments, and district based common assessments/data. Students being reviewed for the secondary highly capable programs may have additional assessments which may include the Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test and a writing assessment.

Selection

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee is composed of: A highly capable program teacher (provided that if a highly capable program 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 certificated coordinator or administrator with responsibility for the supervision of the district's highly capable program; and additional professionals, if any, that the district deems desirable.

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will evaluate individual student assessment profile data using a blind (no name) process. The selection decision is 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.

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

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 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 of cognitive ability and/or academic achievement.

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will make one of four determinations:

1. (Qualified Placement) Evidence from ability and achievement data qualifies the student under the criteria of most highly capable. The student will be offered placement in the Highly Capable Program.
2. (Provisional Placement) The committee is unable to make a determination based on a preponderance of the evidence. The student may be offered, at the discretion of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee, a provisional placement in the Highly Capable Program. Provisional placements will be reviewed yearly by the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee. Additional testing or data may be requested by the committee each year. Provisional students are not considered selected or identified for continuing placement within the program.
3. (High Performance Placement) Students who have demonstrated high performance and consistently achieve above grade level, have strong task completion, and embrace challenges but for whom the cognitive assessment data does not support qualification as most highly capable. These students may benefit from and contribute to the unique learning environment of the Highly Capable Program. Such placements will be reviewed yearly by the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee and placed as space is available. High performance students are not considered selected or identified for continuing placement within the program.
4. (No Placement) The student's data does not qualify them for placement in the HCP.

The district will:

1. Notify parents of students who have been selected. Parents will receive a full explanation of the procedures for identification, an explanation of the appeal process, an explanation of the procedures 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 Multidisciplinary Selection Committee's decision. Individuals appealing the selection committee's decision must submit a completed appeal 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.

Appeals must be based upon one of the following conditions:

- A condition or circumstance believed to have caused a misinterpretation of the testing results. i.e., incorrect birthdate or grade level used in calculating the student's score.
- An inequitable application of the identification procedures. i.e., the applicant's proficiency with the English language.
- An extraordinary and temporary circumstance that negatively affected the validity of the test results. i.e., a traumatic event or physical distress immediately preceding the test.

The appeal request and supporting evidence must be submitted to the Puyallup School District, Office of Equity, Student Success, Strategic Engagement, within ten (10) school days of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee's decision notification.

The district's Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will review the student's file, assessment profile data, and additional evidence provided in the request for appeal. All submitted documents are closely and carefully reviewed. The Committee is looking for evidence that the results of the testing are not a true representation of the child's abilities.

The decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee may include:

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

A decision will be made by the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee within fifteen (15) school days after receipt of written request for reconsideration. The parent/legal guardian will be notified of the decision in writing.

The appeal decision of the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee is final.

Exit Process

The exit process may be initiated for students who no longer demonstrate a need for highly capable program services. A request may be made by a teacher or program administrator for highly capable student identification and placement discontinuation. The Multidisciplinary 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 Multidisciplinary 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 be recommended that the student be exited from the program. The parent will be notified in writing of the committee's decision and of the appeal process.

A parent/legal guardian may request that the student be withdrawn, or a student of legal age may voluntarily withdraw from the program. A parent/legal guardian of a student identified as highly capable, or a highly capable student of legal age may request a furlough from the program. Furloughed students will reenter the program at the beginning of the following school year. The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will determine if identification procedures are necessary for exited students wishing to reenter the program in the future.

The parent/legal guardian will discuss the request with the teacher, building administrator, counselor, or program coordinator. If the parent/legal guardian desires to withdraw the student from the program, the parent/legal guardian must complete and return the *Withdrawal/Furlough* form. The student will then be exited or temporarily furloughed from the program. Furloughed students will reenter the program at the beginning of the following school year, or they will be moved to the withdrawn category. The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee will determine if identification procedures are necessary for exited students wishing to reenter the program in the future.

Instructional Program

K-2 Young Scholars is a pull-out enrichment program for identified highly capable students. Students work with intellectual peers in a rigorous environment of discovery and exploration. The context of the enrichment is literature and science, with an emphasis on vocabulary and the scientific process. The enrichment model allows for multi-age grouping and intellectual peer socialization. Buildings may also accelerate identified highly capable students as appropriate for reading and math.

3-6 QUEST is offered for identified highly capable students. QUEST, which stands for *Quality Experiences to Stimulate Thinking*, serves highly capable students in grades 3-6 at selected elementary sites in the Puyallup School District. QUEST classrooms feature specialized curriculum and instruction for highly capable students. The self-contained QUEST classrooms are differentiated by an increased intellectual rigor, accelerated pacing, an expectation of early content mastery, greater depth, and exploration of content with structured inquiry. Students experience curriculum designed for highly capable learners, which is at least one year above grade level.

Secondary During the registration period each year, counseling services provide guidance for secondary highly capable students related to acceleration and pathway options.

7-8 PAGE is the Puyallup School District's cohort acceleration program for grades 7-8 at selected host schools. PAGE is open only to students identified for the highly capable program by the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee. This program for highly capable students features a higher level of rigor, depth, breadth, and acceleration within a cohort setting. For grades 7-8, selected students participate in one to four PAGE courses: English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science. All PAGE courses feature curriculum compacting, curriculum acceleration, interdisciplinary curriculum, and an emphasis on higher level thinking skills. In addition to the PAGE programming, students will have the opportunity to enroll in fitness and the arts within the junior high program.

9-12 Highly capable students in grades 9-12 receive programming via acceleration. Advanced coursework such as Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), AP Capstone, and College in the High School (Cornerstone) are offered in multiple subject areas. Students may also accelerate based on demonstrated and assessed talents in the performing and visual arts. Pre-AP and AP courses provide rigor and complexity beyond that which is expected in the regular classroom, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary curriculum and higher-level thinking skills.

Running Start is an additional offering for students and families who desire options beyond the Puyallup School District's High School Course of Study. Information is available in each high school's counseling center.

K-12 Digital Learning is available for families with identified highly capable students who wish to be served in a distance learning model, students are served through Puyallup Digital Learning (PDL). Acceleration is available in Tracks 2 and 4 through *Edgenuity* curriculum.