



Highly Capable Services Program Summary

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Chapter 28A. 185.020 RCW

Kelso School District's Highly Capable Program is guided by Washington State laws. The legislature finds that, for highly capable students, access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction is access to a basic education.

Purpose

Kelso School District is committed to identifying and providing for students who have unique intellectual, social, emotional, and college/career readiness needs. Our purpose is to provide appropriate educational programs and services through instructional, curricular, and administrative modifications to create educational opportunities for Highly Capable students that will maximize their individual potential.

The Highly Capable Program for the Kelso School District is available to qualifying students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The purpose of the program is to provide accelerated and enhanced learning opportunities within specific academic subjects for students with measured achievement, aptitude or creativity that is significantly above grade-level and representative of the top 5% of the school population.

These students are "outliers"; that is, their learning needs fall far outside the typical achievement-range found in most classrooms. To ensure that these advanced learners continue to be academically and intellectually challenged, the school district identifies these students and provides a continuum of programming services to meet their unique learning needs. Services are based on individual learning strengths that indicate an outstanding need for specialized support through differentiated learning experiences including enhanced instruction, acceleration, critical and creative thinking, opportunities to work with intellectual peers, development of individual interests and talents, and real-world experiences.

Rationale

In a total educational program, the needs of all children are provided for according to their specific abilities, aptitudes, and their levels of performance. Children who have outstanding abilities are capable of exceptional performance and warrant opportunities that meet their needs. The most highly capable students require an intensified and varied curriculum as well as an opportunity to share interests and experiences with other children with like abilities. The Highly Capable program is designed to place greater emphasis on more advanced levels of learning, abstract concepts, and diversification for individual students.

IDENTIFICATION

Definition of Highly Capable

Highly capable students are students who perform or show potential for performing at significantly advanced academic levels when compared with others of their age, experience 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 education populace, but are present within all protected classes... WAC 392-170-035

As a key component of the Highly Capable Program Identification and Selection process, Kelso School District will make it a priority to qualify students from various ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic groups, and to also recognize that exceptional potential can exist with English language learners and students with other learning needs.

Definition of Learning Characteristics

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. WAC 392-170-036

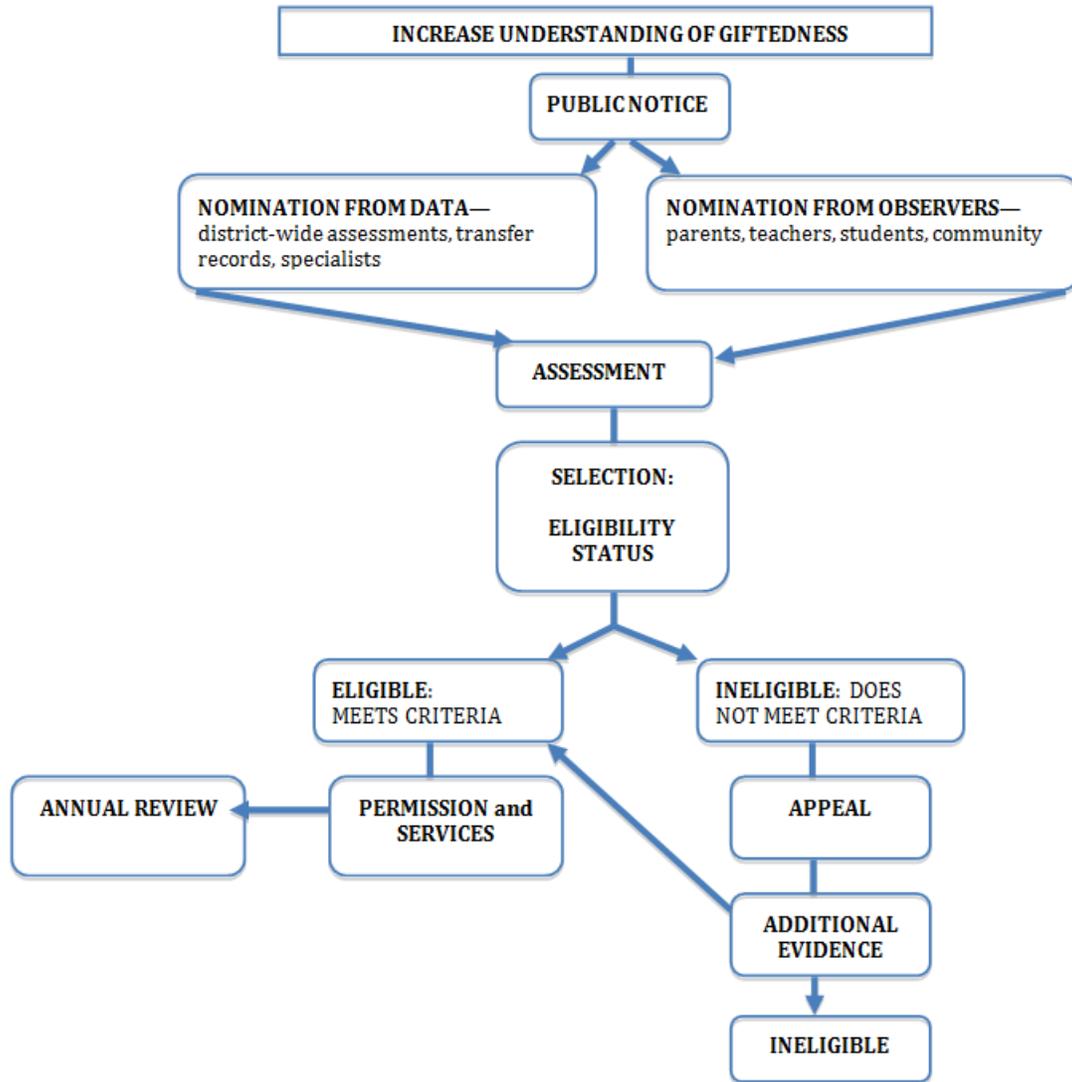
Identification Measures

Students who are highly capable are identified via multiple, current objective measures using a case study approach. Assessments measuring aptitude, achievement, creativity and behavior are the cornerstones of the assessment process. The Highly Capable Review Committee (HCRC), the school-based selection committee that makes decisions about student eligibility, will gather and examine a body of evidence such as tests and assessment, interviews, observations, portfolios, work samples, academic records, and/or performances. The purpose of the case study process will be to assess the body of evidence to determine if the student demonstrates exceptional performance or potential as defined by state laws. WAC 392-170-055

Identification Process

There are basically three stages in the identification process: (1) nomination, (2) assessment, and (3) selection. Nominations may be made at any time and are reviewed quarterly by the building-based HCRC.

Figure 1: Flow Chart of the Identification Process



Stage 1: Nomination

1. **Nomination by Data** – State or nationally-normed testing results (as well as the results of the CogAt 7 Screening test administered to all students at the end of grade 2) are used to identify advanced students and to nominate these students for further consideration. The district also reviews the test records of transferring students and automatically refers students whose prior test records indicate exceptional aptitude or achievement. Screening of test data or transfer records never excludes a student from consideration. Students not referred through screening may be referred through nomination.

Students whose records from schools outside of Kelso School District indicate prior eligibility for highly capable services are also nominated for further assessment. To provide continuity in services, students who were identified as highly capable in outside districts have top priority for re-evaluation for Kelso’s Highly Capable Program. To be found eligible for services, these students must be re-assessed according to Kelso SD procedures. WAC 392-170-045

2. **Nomination by Observers** – School staff members, parents/guardians, and members of the community may nominate students. Students may also nominate themselves. Nominations result in automatic referral for further evaluation.

Stage 2: Assessment

Once parent permission is obtained, multiple pieces of recent objective data, validated for the specific purpose for which they are used, are collected and reviewed by the school-based HCRC. The HCRC reviews quantitative and qualitative data for each referral and makes decisions from a case study of the Student Body of Evidence regarding eligibility or ineligibility for services of the Highly Capable Program based upon need. WAC 392-170-055/075

Quantitative Data Instruments such as:

- Ability: *Cognitive Ability Test, Cogat 7 Screener* and others
- Achievement: MAP, MSP, SBA, BAS and others
- Observations by Teachers: *Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS, otherwise known as “Renzulli Scales”)* with evidence
- Observation by Parents: *Things My Child Likes to Do (grades K-8)* with evidence

Qualitative Data Instruments such as:

Portfolio	Academic Records
Interview	Work samples and other evidence
Observational Evidence	Awards, Accomplishments

Stage 3: Selection and Services

Notification of Determination

Once a determination has been made, parents/guardians receive written confirmation of the committee’s decision together with a description of the evidence used during the evaluation process. If found eligible, services will begin once parent permission has been received. If found ineligible, the student may be nominated again during another school year. WAC 392-170-047

Appeals

Advocacy for individual students is encouraged in the eligibility process. If parents/guardians disagree with placement decisions, they are welcome to offer additional data for the Appeals Committee to review. Appeal forms and directions are available online or by contacting the Highly Capable Program Coordinator at 360/501-1926. WAC 392-170-076

Exit Procedures

Once identified, students receive continuous services matched to their current readiness and achievement levels in areas of specific academic strength. Parents have a right to withdraw their child from the program at any time or to ask for “time off.” The intensity of services for individual students may be adjusted over time, and interventions may be requested to help under-achieving children become more successful. Parents/guardians will be involved in establishing intervention goals and timelines. If interventions fail, it may be necessary to exit the child from the program.

When considering exiting a student from the Highly Capable Program Services, the emphasis is on meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of the student. A recommendation for discontinuation of services should be based on proper documentation such as unsatisfactory class work, demonstration of a lack of motivation and/or task commitment, or evidence that the student is not working to his/her potential. Often in the Highly Capable Program, students need time to get accustomed to the rigor and pace of the accelerated program. Research and experience supports a commitment of a minimum of one year to maximize student success.

Process for parents to request exit of child:

1. Parents meet with the Highly Capable Coordinator to discuss concerns and set measurable goals for the student.
2. A follow-up meeting/communication will take place to discuss student progress on goals.
3. If at the end of the second communication, the parent decides that the Highly Capable Program is not the best placement for the student, the student exits the program (preferably at end of school year) and parent and teacher complete a *Discontinuation of Services for the Highly Capable Program* form.
4. Should the student wish to re-enter the Highly Capable Program in the future, the request will be considered by the district placement committee to determine what identification procedures are necessary.

Process for teachers to recommend exit of child:

1. Teacher(s) meet with the parent and Highly Capable Coordinator to discuss concerns and set measurable goals for the student. If the concerns remain after the designated time, a follow-up meeting should be held to revise the goals or go on to step two.
2. A follow-up meeting/communication will take place to discuss student progress on goals.
3. After reviewing goals and timeline, if the team recommends the Highly Capable Program is not the best placement the student exits the program (preferably at end of school year) and parent and teacher complete a *Discontinuation of Services for the Highly Capable Program* form.
4. Should the student wish to re-enter the Highly Capable Program in the future, the request will be considered by the district placement committee to determine what identification procedures are necessary.

SERVICES

Once identified, the student’s unique talents and needs will be matched with appropriate district services. WAC 392-170-078. Highly Capable students usually require faster pacing, greater depth and complexity, plus opportunities to interact with their intellectual peers. This may be accomplished through various grouping arrangements, acceleration, enrichment, extensions, and differentiation. Curriculum should provide opportunities to learn and apply higher order thinking skills, extended time to pursue areas of interest in-depth, opportunities to make connections across disciplines, or to make real-world applications. WAC 392-170-080

Figure 2: K-12 Programming Options Menu

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS	Kindergarten	Elementary	Middle	High
Resource In-Class Support	X	X	X	X
Regular Class with Cluster Grouping & Differentiation	X	X	X	X
Walk to Read, Walk to Math Enrichment	X	X		
Interest-Based Enrichment Pullout	X	X	X	X
Single-Subject Acceleration	X	X	X	X

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS	Kindergarten	Elementary	Middle	High
Whole Grade Acceleration	X	X	X	X
Advanced Placement Courses				X
Advanced Section of a Course			X	X
Early Access to College; Running Start				X
Career and Counseling Support		X	X	X
Individualized Services	X	X	X	X
Additional Opportunities	X	X	X	X

Resource In-Class Support—District personnel provide in-class support to kindergarten teachers to assist with the identification and servicing of highly able Kindergarten students.

Regular Class with Cluster-Grouping and Differentiation—A small group of highly capable students are intentionally organized within heterogeneously grouped grade-level classes where they receive differentiated learning opportunities appropriate to their area(s) of academic strength. Differentiation could include curricular modifications such as compacting, critical and creative thinking skill development, contracts for independent study, online instruction, product development using advanced resources or technologies.

Middle School students who are highly capable in the verbal domain form a cluster within Honors ELA. Students highly capable in mathematics qualify for the **Accelerated Math Sequence**.

Walk to Read, Walk to Math—Students kindergarten through 5th grade leave their classrooms at a designated time to walk to another classroom where they receive enrichment instruction in the subject area(s) of strength.

Interest-Based Enrichment Pullout—On a short-term basis, students with similar interests or talents are pulled-out for special enrichment instruction

Single-Subject Acceleration—This practice allows students to be placed in classes with older peers for part of the day (or with materials from higher grade placements) in one or more content areas. Subject-matter acceleration or partial acceleration may be accomplished by the student either physically moving to a higher-level class for instruction or using higher-level study materials in the current classroom.

Accelerated Math Sequences are single-subject acceleration offerings provided at the middle and high school levels.

Whole Grade Acceleration—Radical acceleration appropriate for students who have mastered grade level content in multiple subjects, have social-emotional maturity, and motivation to skip one or more grade levels.

Advanced Placement Courses—An array of Advanced Placement courses are offered to all interested students at the high school level. Those achieving successful exam scores may earn advanced placement at the college level. *Advanced Placement courses are also offered through Kelso’s Virtual Academy.

AP American Govt.	AP Literature and Composition	AP Calculus
AP Chemistry	AP United State History	AP World History

Advanced Section of a Course—Many advanced courses are offered at middle and high school levels. Identified students automatically qualify for advanced courses but may also be required to meet prerequisites and/or selection requirements.

Middle:	Adv. Science, Advanced Writing	
High:	Honors American Literature	Honors World Literature

*Advanced selected courses are offered in World Language and Fine/Performing Arts

Early Access to College—Students may achieve early access to college via dual enrollment (e.g. AP, Running Start), or through credit by examination or experience which may accelerate the student’s high school graduation date.

Running Start is a unique state approved program between high schools and colleges. This program allows high school juniors and seniors (determined by credits earned) to attend college classes as all or part of their high school program and earn both high school and college credits. Qualifying placement test scores are a requirement for admission.

Career and Counseling Support—Highly capable students receive counseling services as needed for issues such as feeling different, perfectionism, early career identification.

Additional Opportunities—Students are encouraged to develop their talents through opportunities provided by school, home, and the community through academic competitions, clubs, service learning, summer school programs and so forth.

Individualized Services—Mentorships and independent study are examples of individualized services available to some students. Others may need assistance in the area of study skills, organization and planning.

Kelso Virtual Academy offers an expansive menu of online courses that students can take on a full- or part-time basis. The web-based school features courses from Apex Online Learning, which offers core subjects, electives, advanced placement and honors classes. Any Kelso student ages 15-20 is eligible to participate in the program, as long as the student can access the internet regularly. The district considers this rigorous program an attractive option for students who **enjoy learning independently** and at their own pace.

Figure 3: K-12 Curriculum Continuum

**Kelso SD Curriculum Sequence
for Students with Talents in the Verbal and Quantitative/Non-Verbal (Spatial) Domains**

TALENT DOMAIN	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
VERBAL	Cluster Group-verbal Walk to Reading Enrichment PO-Verbal	Honors ELA cluster Advanced Writing Enrichment PO-Verbal	AP Literature and Composition Honors American Literature Honors World Language Arts 9 Honors World Literature AP American Government AP World History AP US History Running Start
QUANTITATIVE NON-VERBAL	Cluster Group-math Walk to Math Enrichment PO-Math	Accelerated Math Sequence Advanced Science Enrichment PO-Quant/Non-V	Accelerated Math Sequence AP Calculus AP Chemistry Computer Aided Design Running Start