



RIDGEFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

unlimited possibilities

K-12 Highly Capable Program Overview

Program Description

The Ridgefield School District (the “District”) Highly Capable Program (“HCP”) addresses the social, intellectual and emotional needs of our gifted students. The HCP is implemented across all grade levels in an effort to develop each student's unique potential through accelerated learning and enhanced instruction. Students experience a differentiated curriculum that challenges them to think analytically, logically, and creatively as they solve problems, make decisions and explore their own interests. It is a program in which administrators, teachers, students, and parents share responsibilities for the highly capable child’s education.

The HCP is a state grant funded program that requires the District to meet all guidelines provided in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 392-170. It supports the District philosophy by recognizing that highly capable students in the District have unique values, needs, and talents.

Highly Capable Student Definition (WAC 392-170-035)

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 according to chapters 28A.640 and 28A.642 RCW.

Ridgefield Highly Capable Program Goals

- To identify students who have high intellectual, academic and/or creative thinking abilities.
- To provide accelerated learning and enhanced instruction designed to meet the needs of highly capable students.
- To provide teacher professional learning to maximize teacher effectiveness.
- To provide an intellectual peer group.
- To provide a quality program for eligible students at each school.

Referral Process and Consent (WAC 392-170-042)

Identification procedures include referrals from parents, teachers, other staff, and community members. Anyone referring a student will use the District’s HCP Referral Form. Referral forms are available at each building and linked on the HCP website page. Written parent permission is required prior to conducting assessments.

All students must currently live in the Ridgefield School District boundaries in order to be referred and assessed. Referral forms are in multiple languages. All referral forms must be submitted by the stated deadline. No late nomination forms will be accepted.

Assessment Process (RCW 28A.185.030; WAC 392-170-055)

Every nominated student will have a Student Portfolio to document all relevant assessment data, program services, and any additional information used during the selection process.

Multiple objective criteria for identification of students who are among the most highly capable may include:

Kindergarten through 8th Grades:

Academic Achievement/Performance

WAKids (Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills)

iReady Reading and Math Diagnostic

Smarter Balanced Assessment (3rd-6th grades)

Report Card

Those students that perform at or above the 97th percentile rank¹ on the iReady Diagnostic, in math and/or reading, move forward with the identification process. These students will be candidates for further testing. The parent or legal guardian will receive a letter of invitation for further testing.

Additional assessments for highly capable identification

Any additional assessments for the highly capable process will take place with signed parent permission.

Standardized Test of Mental Abilities

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

Fall Testing Window: Testing is limited to students new to the District since completion of the identification process of the preceding year. Placement is for the current school year.

Spring Testing Window: Testing is for Kindergarten through 8th grade. Placement is for the upcoming school year.

Rating Scale

Rating Scale for Gifted Services - Winebrenner

¹ Percentile Rank is a range from a low of 1 to a high of 99. The score is used to compare the student's performance to that of a national sample of students of the same age and/or grade level. For example, if a child has a percentile rank of 75, this means the student scored as well as or higher than 75 percent of students in the same age and/or grade level who were tested. Percentile rank and percent correct are two different performance measurements and have different interpretations.

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (WAC 392-170-070)

The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MDSC) is comprised of a District administrator, the HCP Coordinator/Director, a school psychologist (or other individual who can interpret cognitive and achievement test results) and a teacher.

Identification and Placement for Highly Capable Services

The MDSC reviews the performance data for referrals and identifies students who require highly capable services within the general classroom to be successful. Students' academic achievement data, District assessment records, nomination and referral information, report cards, plus any other pertinent information available will be reviewed in the process. No single criteria may be used for placement or non-placement into the program. This documentation will be kept in the student's file in the HCP office.

The MDSC may use professional judgment in placing students. No decision about selection or placement in programming is made unilaterally, but by a team of professionals who strive to ensure to the greatest extent possible fair and equitable consideration of all students applying to, eligible for, and participating in the HCP.

The MDSC meets twice per year, after fall and winter testing windows. All students placed in HCP must go through one of these two regularly scheduled meetings. The only exception is for students who enter the school District mid-year with scores from the sending school district that qualify them for eligibility in the program. These students may be placed by the MDSC via email review of sending school documentation.

Notification of Eligibility Process

Decision letters will be mailed by **May** as to whether the student qualifies for HCP services. Signed parent permission is required for highly capable placement. Parental permission notice includes:

- A. A full explanation of the procedures for identification of a student for entrance into the HCP;
- B. An explanation of the appeals process;
- 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.

Appeal Process

Parents wishing to appeal a placement decision must submit a written request for an appeal to the HCP Coordinator/Director within 10 days of receiving notice that the student has been determined not eligible. A Multidisciplinary Review Team ("MRT") will review the completed parent HCP Appeal Form, as well as other district records. The MRT includes two principals, the HCP Coordinator/Director, a school psychologist and at least one classroom teacher trained to work with highly capable students. Students may also be interviewed as part of the appeal process. The MRT will determine eligibility for placement and provide a final decision to the parent(s) within 30 days of receiving the HCP Appeal Form. The MRT's appeal decision is final.

Parents can access an HCP Appeal Form on the district's website or by calling the district office at 360-619-1301.

Appeal Process

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Parents can access an HCP Appeal Form on the District’s website or by calling the District office at 360-619-1317 to request a form.

Exit Process

When considering exiting a student from the HCP, the emphasis is on meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of the student. Exit decisions are based on:

- A. Request by parent/legal guardian, OR
- B. Student is no longer enrolled in District, OR
- C. District’s identification process – student no longer qualifies for gifted program services based upon multiple objective assessment results. The following steps will be implemented prior to exiting any student.
 - a. Step 1:
 - i. Meeting between teacher and parents (student may be involved if appropriate).
 - ii. Discuss concerns and multiple objective assessment results.
 - iii. Set measurable goals with a timeline.
 - iv.
 - b. Step 2 (if goals from Step 1 were not met):
 - i. Meeting between building administration, district curriculum director, teacher, parent and student (if appropriate).
 - ii. Discuss concerns and multiple objective assessment results.
 - iii. Set measurable goals with timeline, or make decision to exit student from the HCP.
 - iv.
 - c. Step 3 (if goals from Step 2 were not met):
 - i. Student is exited from program.
 - ii. Student may finish the year out (if they wish) with current placement.
 - iii. May request re-entry in future years.

Educational Program (RCW 28A.185.030; WAC 392-170-078)

Student Learning Plans

All students receiving HCP services have a Student Learning Plan that describes the educational program being provided. Student Learning Plans document collaboration among the staff, parents, and students in developing the educational program.

Curriculum and Instruction Differentiation

To meet the District's goal of "achieving high outcomes through quality instruction, personalized learning, and continuous improvement resulting in success for every student" the HCP provides support to "align resources for classroom support, professional development, and implementation of best practices that are proven to increase success for all students." All staff members are exposed to differentiation strategies through various presentations at staff meetings and trainings.

Teachers with highly capable clusters in their classroom are provided additional professional development focused on teaching highly capable students in the cluster grouping model. These opportunities include an August teacher collaboration meeting to develop curriculum, 4 additional collaboration meetings during the school year facilitated by a HCP consultant, book studies, and individual sessions with TOSAs.

Grades K-4

Cluster Grouping: A group of three to eight identified English Language Arts and/or Math highly capable students are placed together in a mixed-ability classroom with a teacher who has had training in how to teach highly capable students. Our K-4 teachers that are assigned highly capable clusters will have access to a District highly capable coordinator/Teacher on Special Assignment ("TOSA") to assist them with meeting the needs of our highly capable learners by accelerating learning and enhancing instruction through differentiation of content, process, and products.

Grades 5-6

Cluster Grouping: A group of three to eight identified English Language Arts and/or Math highly capable students are placed together in a mixed-ability classroom with a teacher who has had training in how to teach highly capable students. Our K-4 teachers that are assigned highly capable clusters will have access to a District highly capable coordinator/TOSA to assist them with meeting the needs of our highly capable learners by accelerating learning and enhancing instruction through differentiation of content, process, and products. Students are eligible for advanced placement in mathematics beginning at 6th grade. Advanced placement allows students to be placed in a math class one or two years above their peer grade placement. Teachers design and/or implement a continuum of instructional options that meet the specific learning needs of our identified highly capable students.

Grades 7-8

Cluster Grouping: A group of three to eight identified English Language Arts and/or Math highly capable students are placed together in a mixed-ability classroom with a teacher who has had training in how to teach highly capable students. Our 7-8 teachers that are assigned highly capable clusters will have access to a District highly capable coordinator/TOSA to assist them with meeting the needs of our highly capable learners by accelerating learning and enhancing instruction through differentiation of content, process, and products. Students are eligible for advanced placement in mathematics at both 7th and 8th grade. Advanced placement allows students to be placed in a math class one or two years above their peer grade placement. Teachers design and/or implement a continuum of instructional options that meet the specific learning needs of our identified highly capable students.

Grades 9-12

At Ridgefield High School, highly capable students are provided multiple avenues in which to pursue their academic growth. Regular classroom-based services may include enrichment, flexible grouping, independent

projects, and differentiation. Teachers that are assigned highly capable students will have access to a District highly capable coordinator/TOSA to assist them. Accelerated learning is provided through Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and Running Start. Additionally, there are many leadership opportunities, through clubs and activity involvement. With all of these avenues, we encourage all highly capable students to choose and embrace opportunities to meet their academic needs and interests.

Content-Based Acceleration Process Guidelines

Recommendations to accelerate beyond current grade level advanced offerings are initiated by the current content-area teacher(s). The recommendation will be made in writing to the current and next year’s principal(s) and must include data from the iReady Spring Diagnostic, Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment, and Report Card that substantially support the recommendation.

Program Evaluation

Annual Program Evaluation

Surveys are sent to parents, staff, and students. Results are tallied, and comparisons made in terms of trends, areas needing focus, etc. This information is shared with staff and with the HCP Advisory Committee, which is made up of parents and staff. It is kept on file at the HCP office.

Nomination, Testing and Identification Timeline

September – October	Fall Testing Window – limited to students new to the district since January of preceding year. Placement is for current school year.
December – February	Nominations/Referrals Window
February – March	Spring Testing Window - Testing is for Kindergarten through 8 th grade. Placement is for the upcoming school year.
March – April	MDSC Identification and Placement Process
April – May	Notification of Eligible/Not Eligible letters mailed home
April – May	Appeals Received – no later than 10 days from receipt of non-eligible letter
April – May	Appeals Results – letters mailed within 30 days from receipt of HCP Appeal Form
May – June	Permission to Place received from parents/guardians