

TIPS/TOOLS FOR FAMILIES -- Highly Capable Programs

Each school district must make available options for accelerated learning and enhanced instruction for highly capable students in grades k-12.

Districts have some **flexibility** in determining how to use limited funds to meet the learning needs of their highly capable students. Districts may develop a variety of appropriate options, including separate programs, access to differentiated instruction, and honors or advanced placement courses. Each district can develop its own identification policies and procedures, consistent with rules established by the state. Districts are encouraged to use multiple, objective criteria to identify those students who are most highly capable.

Action Steps for Understanding/Accessing a District's Highly Capable Programs

- Start by looking on the web or asking for a copy of your district's **policy and timelines** for referral and assessment for highly capable programs. Many districts will set a particular time-frame each year for accepting referrals and completing assessments;
- Understand that separate highly capable programs are typically large enough to serve only a small percent of a district's overall population. **Multidisciplinary selection committees** - which must include a teacher, a psychologist or other person familiar with assessments, and an administrator - are charged with selecting the most highly capable students who would benefit from the available programs.

If your child is assessed but is determined not to be eligible for a highly capable program:

- Review the district's procedure on appeals (there may be only one level of appeal); and/or
- Talk with your child's teacher, school counselor and principal, and/or reach out to the district's highly capable program administrator, to ask about possible options for adding to the instruction in the general curriculum or accessing other options outside of class.

Relevant Rules for Highly Capable Programs are at: [WAC 392-170](#).

The rules provide definitions and outline various state-wide requirements, including:

- Each district must have a **written procedure** for identification of students eligible for highly capable programs. This includes written procedures for nomination or referral; assessment; selection and appeal;
- Districts must obtain **parent permission** before a child is assessed to determine eligibility for participation in highly capable programs; and before a child is placed in a highly capable program;
- When a student, who is a **child of a military family in transition**, has been assessed or enrolled as highly capable by a sending school, the receiving school shall **initially honor placement** of the student into a like program; and
- Districts must **annually review and report** on the implementation of their highly capable programs.

Find links to these rules and much more information at **OSPI's Highly Capable Programs page:** www.k12.wa.us/HighlyCapable/.