

La Conner School District
Highly Capable/ Highly Motivated Services
Purpose, Selection Process, Appeals, and Exit Procedures

Purpose

Chapter 28A. 185.020 RCW

La Conner School District's Highly Capable/Highly Motivated 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

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

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/Highly Motivated program is designed to place greater emphasis on more advanced levels of learning, abstract concepts, and diversification for individual students.

Selection Process

Referral: Initial screening for highly capable services may begin as early as kindergarten. Parents/guardians, educators (including specialists), members of the community, and students themselves may initiate referral for Highly Capable services by contacting the School District Office. Principals and the Coordinators of the Highly Capable/Highly Motivated Program may also refer students if documents in transfer records or analyses of district-wide testing reveal students who have demonstrated exceptional achievement. Public and school notices requesting referrals are published annually.

As a key component of the Highly Capable/Highly Motivated Program Identification and Selection process, La Conner 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.

Evaluation: Typically, the district's most highly capable students fall within the top 3-5% of the general student population. In order to determine which students demonstrate or show potential to perform at these remarkably high levels when compared with others of their age, experience, and/or environment, a body of quantitative and qualitative evidence is collected for each referred child. This body of evidence is gathered to represent three areas of accomplishment: aptitude, achievement, and behavior. It is the preponderance of evidence in one or more domains or symbol systems that will determine if a student requires targeted or intensive programming beyond the regular curriculum.

Possible data that may be gathered and applied in each of the areas includes:

1. Aptitude: Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)—full battery or screener, other.
2. Achievement: Measures of Academic Performance (MAP), Measures of Student Performance (MSP), End-of-course tests (EOC), report cards and grades, other.
3. Behavior: Parent-rating scale; Teacher-rating scale; anecdotal records; cumulative files review, other.

Selection and Placement: A Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee meets at least twice a year to review the Body of Evidence portfolio for each referred student in order to determine eligibility status and to recommend service options matched to learner strengths. Parents and teachers receive assessment results with recommendations. If a parent/guardian disagrees with decisions or recommendation, he/she may initiate the appeal process.

Appeal Process WAC 392-170-076

Advocacy for individual students is encouraged in eligibility, change in placement, and exit processes. If parents/guardians disagree with decisions, they are welcome to appeal the decisions.

The appeal of decisions must be made in writing by a parent/guardian, a teacher, student, or other appropriate school personnel to the building principal who will appoint and chair the building Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will include the District Superintendent and at least one representative of the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee. In addition to the appeal form, the appellant is invited to present additional data for review. For transfer students, additional data may include recent school assessment results from previous school district. If a current student, additional data may include assessment results from qualified sources outside the school district.

The building Appeals Committee will review all data and make a decision to:

1. Uphold the original decision of the building Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee (MSC),
2. To reverse the decision of the MSC, or
3. Collect further information.

The decision of the building Appeals Committee will be communicated in writing to the appellant within 30 days of the request. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final.

Appeal forms and directions are available online or by contacting Andrea Partridge, School Psychologist, at 360.466.3171 or apartridge@lc.k12.wa.us.

Exit Process

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-performing children within the program become more successful. If an intervention is required, 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 Highly Capable/Highly Motivated 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/Highly Motivated Program, students need time to get accustomed to the rigor and pace of the accelerated program. Research and experience supports a minimum commitment of one year to maximize student success.

Process for parents to request exit of child:

1. Parents meet with the Highly Capable Coordinator and Principal 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/Highly Motivated Program is not the best placement for the student, the student exits the program (preferably at end of school year) and parent and teacher both complete a *Discontinuation of Services for the Highly Capable Program* form.
4. Should the student wish to re-enter the Highly Capable/Highly Motivated Program in the future, the request will be considered by the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee to determine what identification procedures are necessary.

Process for teachers to recommend exit of child:

1. Teacher(s) meet with the parent, Principal, 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/Highly Motivated 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/Highly Motivated Program in the future, the request will be considered by the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee to determine what identification procedures are necessary.