

# Highly Capable Program Basic Education in Washington State

## Define Highly Capable

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Your district's definition of *highly capable* must:

1. Align to state law, WAC 392-170-035
2. Clarify who meets the criteria for *most highly capable district-wide*.

If your district's definition of most highly capable differs from [WAC 392-170-035](#) or [WAC 392-170-036](#) make sure to **incorporate all components from both WACs**.

### [WAC 392-170-035](#)

"...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."

### [WAC 392-170-036](#)

"...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."

## Questions Families Ask About Highly Capable Children

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### **How does one know if a child is exhibiting highly capable or gifted behaviors?**

[National Association for Gifted Children](#) provides information on informal assessments and checklists to help address this question.

### **Must a child excel in all areas to be referred to the highly capable program?**

Children do not have to be gifted in multiple areas to be considered for the highly capable program.

### **Can a child have learning or physical disabilities and exhibit highly capable traits?**

Children can experience learning and physical disabilities and at the same time exhibit highly capable characteristics. This phenomenon is widely referred to as twice exceptional, dual exceptionality, gifted and learning disabled, and gifted learning disabled.