

Highly Capable Program Basic Education in Washington State

Serve Your Highly Capable Students

Build a continuum of services — K through 12 — that address individual learning needs — grades K-12

Lawmakers emphasize the need for a **continuum of services** with regular review that takes a critical look at — *how effective are the services and programs you provide?*

[WAC 392-170-078](#) *Program services* — defines the “continuum” as kindergarten through grade 12.

Districts shall make a variety of appropriate program services available to students who participate in the district's program for highly capable students. Once services are started, a continuum of services shall be provided to the student from K-12. Districts shall periodically review services for each student to ensure that the services are appropriate.

State administrative law takes into account the funding constraints and local resources. However, this WAC places each student's need and capabilities at the center of the program service you put into place.

[WAC 392-170-080](#) *Educational program for highly capable students* — directs districts to take student needs and capabilities into consideration when providing services and to keep a description of individual student educational programs on file.

Each student identified as a highly capable student shall be **provided educational opportunities which take into account such student's unique needs and capabilities**. Such program shall **recognize the limits of the resources** provided by the state and the program options available to the district, including programs in adjoining districts and public institutions of higher education. Districts shall **keep on file a description of the educational programs provided for students selected**.

Professional Development

Professional development is a component of a district's annual plan — [WAC 392-170-030](#) (6) — which targets the need to provide ongoing training to educators: HCP staff and general education staff.

[WAC 392-170-030](#) *Substance of annual school district plan* — the HCP component of your plan defines the strategic focus and operation of your work with highly capable students.

The school district's annual plan shall contain the following:

- (1) A report of the number of K-12 students who are highly capable that the district expects to serve by grade level;
- (2) A description of the district's plan to identify students;
- (3) A description of the highly capable program goals;
- (4) A description of the services the highly capable program will offer;
- (5) A description of the instructional program the highly capable program will provide;
- (6) A description of ongoing professional development for educators of students who are highly capable and general education staff;**
- (7) A description of how the highly capable program will be evaluated that includes information on how the district's highly capable program goals and student achievement outcomes will be measured;
- (8) A fiscal report; and
- (9) Assurances signed by the school district's authorized representative that the district will comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

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[WAC 392-170-090](#) End of year report - districts report on HCP activities including professional development.

Districts shall submit to the superintendent of public instruction at the close of each fiscal year an end of the year report on forms provided by the superintendent of public instruction which includes:

- (1) Number of students served by grade level (K-12);
- (2) Student demographic information;
- (3) Data to determine if students who are highly capable met the goals set and if the programs provided met the academic needs of these students;
- (4) Number and content of professional development activities provided for special teachers and general education staff;**
- (5) Program evaluation data and, if needed, program changes that will be made based upon this information; and
- (6) Final fiscal report that reports on activities and staff funded by this program.

Special Teacher (optional)

Aware of the special skills necessary to instruct highly capable students, lawmakers defined the essential skill set and knowledge base that makes a teacher effective in a setting with highly capable students. Districts are not required to employ special teachers or teachers with the Gifted Specialty endorsement. Teachers must meet highly qualified requirements for the content areas in which they are working.

[WAC 392-170-038](#) *Special teacher* — frames the competencies of HCP teachers.

As used in this chapter, a special teacher is a teacher who has training, experience, advanced skills, and knowledge in the education of highly capable students. Areas of competence should include knowledge of the following: identification procedures, academic, social and emotional characteristics, program design and delivery, instructional practices, student assessment, and program evaluation.

Add a Specialty Endorsement for Gifted Education

Teachers, certified to teach in Washington State, are able to add the gifted specialty endorsement to their endorsed certificate. The competencies detailed in this specialty endorsement align with the definition of a *special teacher*.

[Gifted Specialty Area Endorsement](#) (PDF) explains the endorsement process.

- On the OSPI site, visit [Certification](#) — Teachers — [Adding an Endorsement](#). There are 3 pathways outlined on this page.
- On the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) site, teachers of highly capable student will find value in [Gifted Education — Grades 5-12](#). Here, the PESB details the *Foundations of Gifted and Talented Education*.