Highly Capable Students Report

2013

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28A.185.050

Title I/LAP and Consolidated Program Review
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Executive Summary

Highly Capable programs serve over 55,000 students in Washington annually. The state Highly Capable Program (HCP) allocates grant funds to school districts to help fund their HCPs. Programs for highly capable students are needed to challenge all students to meet their academic potential.

The HCP is sometimes known as *gifted and talented*. Districts use research based methods to identify potential HCP students. Once selected for the HCP, students are offered services or programs specially designed for the gifted learner. Services vary by grade level or grade span.

For example, [Seattle Public Schools](#) serves grades 1-8 through self-contained classrooms composed entirely of HCP students. [Evergreen Public Schools](#) serves some of its HCP students in grades 2-5 through weekly enrichment at a separate site. In addition to Advanced Placement, [Wenatchee School District](#) offers independent study options for high school HCP students.

Before the 2013–14 school year, districts could decide if they would provide HCP services. In 2013–14 districts must develop a plan for serving HCP students in grades K-12 as a part of basic education. Districts will need help identifying students and building a continuous program for grades K-12.
Introduction
The state HCP funds districts to create programs that meet the unique academic needs of highly capable learners.

School year 2011–12 HCP data is the most current, complete data available. This report is based on the 2011–12 school year data as reported by participating districts.¹

Districts Served
In 2011–12, 181 school districts received HCP grant funds. This was 61 percent of school districts in Washington.

In 2013, WAC 392-170-020 was amended to reflect RCW 28A.185.020. The HCP is now part of basic education. All 295 school districts are expected to serve HCP students by school year 2014–15.

Students Served
Highly capable learners have high levels of academic, cognitive and/or creative performance compared to their peers.

In 2011–12, 55,093 students received HCP services. This was 5.3 percent of the total public school student population. Most HCP students were served in grades 6–8. The fewest HCP students were served in grades K–2.

Hispanic students were significantly underrepresented in the HCP. Other underrepresented race/ethnicities were Alaskan Native or American Indian, Black, and Multiracial. Both White and Asian/Pacific Islander² students were slightly overrepresented in the HCP (Table 1).³

¹ All HCP data is from iGrants Highly Capable End-of-Year Report Fiscal Year 2012–13 (School Year 2011–12).
² In 2011–12, HCP enrollment data for Asian and Pacific Islander students was not disaggregated. It was combined into a single category. In order to compare HCP enrollment data to statewide enrollment data, the statewide enrollment totals for the Asian and Pacific Islander categories were combined.
³ Statewide enrollment data by race/ethnicity is from OSPI’s School Report Card, School Year 2011–12, October 2011.
Table 1: Students Served by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Group</th>
<th>% of Statewide Enrollment</th>
<th>% of HCP Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaskan Native or American Indian</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who received special education services and students who qualified for free or reduced price meals were significantly underrepresented in the HCP. Section 504 students were slightly overrepresented in the HCP (Table 2).\(^4\) Twice exceptional students who are both highly capable and being served by special education, were less than one percent of the statewide special education population.

Table 2: Students Served by Special Programs\(^5\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Group</th>
<th>% of Statewide Enrollment</th>
<th>% of HCP Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free or Reduced Price Meals</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 504</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Programs

\(^4\) Section 504 students are eligible for disability related physical accommodations such as larger text materials. This is different from the specially designed instruction that special education students receive.

\(^5\) Statewide enrollment data by special programs is from OSPI’s School Report Card, School Year 2011–12, May 2012.
Services provided to HCP students are described as learning opportunities. These opportunities are proven by research and best practice data to effectively serve HCP students. Program models describe the setting or circumstances in which HCP services are delivered (see Appendix A). Districts reported on the 12 categories of program models (Chart 1). For 2011–12, the majority of participating districts provided HCP services through content specific part-time grouping (see Appendix A) and advanced subject placement.

**Chart 1: Instructional Programs Used by Districts**

Use of instructional programs varied based on grade level (Table 3). For example, the Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) and Pre-AP/IB programs were only used at the middle and high school grade levels. Regular Classroom with Differentiated Instruction was the most popular program for Grades K–1. Districts did not use many other programs for that grade span.
Table 3: Instructional Programs by Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Advanced Grade Placement</th>
<th>Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB)</th>
<th>Advanced Subject Placement</th>
<th>Cluster Grouping</th>
<th>Honors</th>
<th>Independent Study</th>
<th>Mentorships</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Part-Time Grouping (content specific)</th>
<th>Pre-AP/IB</th>
<th>Regular Classroom with Differentiated Instruction</th>
<th>Self-Contained Gifted Classroom</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>6</td>
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Funding
Allocations for the HCP are based on providing an additional 2.159 hours per week of instruction for a class size of 15 FTE students. The enrollment basis for this calculation is 2.314 percent of current year total enrollment. The resulting funded enrollment figure is used to calculate the number of teachers needed to provide the additional instructional time. Funding is received as salary and benefits for the number of teachers generated by the formula. In 2011–12, the calculated per pupil funding amount provided by the state was $405.45.

The state grant is not the only source of revenue for district HCPs. Districts can choose to supplement their state program allocation with district, federal, and other funds. In 2011–12, participating districts were allocated $9,000,801. However, they reported spending $56,817,841 on their HCP, which is $47,817,040 more than the state allocation.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

Hispanic students, students from poverty and special education students were underrepresented in the HCP. Districts need help identifying these students for their HCPs. Districts also need help recognizing twice exceptional students who should receive both HCP and special education services.

HCP students were concentrated at the middle level with significantly fewer students served in grades K–2. Districts relied on AP and IB course offerings at the high school level to meet the needs of older HCP students.

Districts use a significant amount of district, federal, and other funds along with the HCP state grant to support their HCPs.

Starting in 2013, all districts must develop a HCP for grades K–12 to be implemented at the beginning of the 2014–15 school year. Districts are working hard to comply with all requirements of the amended WAC 392-170.

Districts need help from OSPI to:

- Develop a K-12 identification system.
- Select appropriate assessment tools for all grade levels.
- Set goals and conduct program evaluations.

Districts also need examples of program models for districts of varying sizes. OSPI is developing a HCP Annual Plan which will help districts develop their HCPs. OSPI is providing technical support through webinars, list serves, the HCP Web site and some participation in ESD HCP trainings.
Appendix A: Descriptions of Instructional Programs

**Advanced Grade Placement:** An HCP student who has demonstrated achievement at a higher level than same age peers is placed into an appropriate grade level. Example: A first grade student is reading at the fourth grade level, is performing in mathematics at the third grade level, and is socially very mature. A school team, including parents, may decide that a student would best be served by accelerating to the second grade.

**Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB):** HCP secondary students are offered the opportunity to enroll in AP/IB designated courses in specific content areas. Courses designated as AP must be approved by The College Board. Courses designated as IB must be approved by the International Baccalaureate Organization. AP/IB courses are designed to offer college level instruction, curriculum, and content. Each AP/IB course has a culminating exam which students may take to earn advanced college placement or college credit. Example: A high school HCP has adopted AP/IB courses in mathematics, literature, and world languages. Students who excel in one or more of these areas participate in the AP/IB courses, take an exam, and may receive both high school and college credits.

**Advanced Subject Placement:** An HCP student or small group of students who have demonstrated achievement at a higher level than their same age peers are placed into an appropriate grade level or into a content area at a different grade level. Example: A second grade student is reading at an eighth grade level. The school has a cluster group of fourth grade HCP students working with their reading specialist. The second grade student meets with this reading group four times a week to receive appropriate level instruction.

**Cluster Grouping:** HCP students are grouped or “clustered” together in a regular mixed-ability classroom for all or part of a school day. Cluster grouping provides students an opportunity to work with other students of similar strengths, abilities, and interests. Example: Seven HCP students were identified in third grade. There are three third grade classrooms at the school. The school has arranged schedules so that one teacher has the seven identified HCP students in his classroom. This teacher has received professional development in cluster grouping and will be able to work effectively with these students.

**Honors:** HCP students have the opportunity to enroll in content specific honors courses at the middle, junior high, and high school levels. Honors classes examine a subject in greater depth, in content and analysis. Example: A high school offers English and science honors courses. Students who excel in one or more of these areas participate in honors courses.

**Independent Study:** A student or a small group of students do an in-depth study in an area of interest. Example: A high school HCP student has a keen interest in marine biology. The student has taken the two biology classes offered in the high school and has proposed to study orca whales as an independent study project for additional credit. The student will work with the local university's
expert on marine mammals and will prepare a week-long course on orca whales. The student will then teach the unit in a ninth grade high school biology class demonstrating the student’s knowledge.

**Mentorships:** HCP students are provided the opportunity to work with an expert in an academic or job related area. They receive academic credit for their work. Example: A middle school HCP has arranged for a student who excels in mathematics to work with a local architect. The school counselor, architect, and student work together to design a plan in which the student will demonstrate his ability to apply his knowledge of mathematics while working on projects with the architect. The architect will evaluate the student’s work and meet with the middle school math teacher to determine the student’s grade.

**Other:** This category is listed for districts to check for the many other types of activities they provide for their students. In some cases districts have checked this category because their students are participating in courses or competitions provided by Centrum, Destination Imagination, or Future Problem Solving.

**Part-Time Grouping (Content Specific):** Students are provided time to meet with their intellectual peers before, during, or after the regular school day. Instruction provides special experiences which enrich the regular school program in order to accommodate the special educational needs of HCP students. Example: Middle school HCP students meet with a math coach to prepare for competitions. Students who excel in mathematics are coached by an expert to further advance interests and abilities.

**Pre-AP/IB:** HCP students are served in classes with teachers who have received training in pre-AP/IB instructional strategies. Strategies emphasize critical thinking skills, increased content knowledge, and study skills necessary for college-level work. Such courses may be designated as “advanced” or “honors.” Example: A seventh grade HCP student may be registered in Advanced English where pre-AP instructional strategies are used by the teacher.

**Regular Classroom with Differentiated Instruction:** HCP students remain in their regular classroom after identification. Assessment data is shared with the classroom teachers to drive the learning opportunities for students. Curriculum and instructional strategies are differentiated to meet academic needs. Example: There are 10 fifth grade HCP students placed in the regular fifth grade classrooms. The fifth grade teachers have received professional development in differentiation and will be able to work effectively with these students in the regular classroom setting.

**Self-Contained Classroom:** Students are in a HCP classroom that offers accelerated instruction. Identified HCP students from a specific grade level or from a range of grades make up the class enrollment. Elementary students work with the same teacher for all content area instruction. Middle and high school students may be placed into “block scheduled courses.” Example: HCP
students in seventh grade are placed into a reading/social studies and/or math/science block to receive appropriate level instruction.
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