

HiCap

Wenatchee School District's "Enrichment" Program has rebranded itself. We are now the Highly Capable Program, or HiCap, to more clearly identify our purpose.

Fall 2013

LAW: Section 708 of HB 2261, codified in RCW 28A.185.020, states in no uncertain terms: "The legislature finds that, for highly capable students, access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction IS access to a basic education."



QUOTE: "The label of 'gifted' is not an award we bestow upon students. It is an awareness of needs so instruction can be differentiated to match readiness."
~Dr. Bertie Kingore



CONTACT: Please contact Kari DeMarco, Highly Capable Programs coordinator and newsletter editor, if you have questions, comments, concerns, or wish to check out any of our books on highly capable students.

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New WACs

There have been substantial changes made to the Washington Administrative Code regarding academically advanced students. Starting next year, every school district in Washington state will have to identify, serve, and monitor growth for kindergarten through twelfth grade highly capable students. In the past, identifying or serving any students was optional, and fourth and fifth graders were the only required grades if you did.

Fortunately, Wenatchee School District has served as many gifted students as possible for many years (approximately two decades). However, to keep in strict compliance with this new law, we will start identifying as early as kindergarten for some exceptional students. We will also formalize "following" identified students clear through graduation. We will also have to monitor the academic growth of each identified student. Any students no longer served will be formally exited.

Clearly this will lead to a lot more work, but it will also draw greater awareness to these students' needs. Advanced learners deserve this, too!



All trees grow.

Some grow faster, some slower.

Some are destined to be taller, some shorter.

But all trees grow if given sun and water.

Holiday Gifts for Gifted Children

According to Carol Bainbridge, not all presents are created equal. Here are what she sees as the Top 10 Toys for Gifted Children:

1. SET: The Family Game of Visual Perception
2. Cranium Cadoo for Kids
3. Qwirkle
4. Apples to Apples
5. Mad Gab Game
6. Rush Hour Traffic Jam Logic Puzzle
7. Capsela Construction Kits
8. Rokenbok Construction Sets
9. Kapla Planks
10. Home Planetarium

For more information, check out the entire article at http://giftedkids.about.com/od/booksandtoys/tp/top_ten_toys.htm

And keep in mind that you can never go wrong with books. Click this Hoagie's link for ideas that are at the right reading level AND the right maturity level for your child: http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/reading_lists.htm. We hope your child will have fun learning!



Elementary HiCap Happenings

Each of our elementary schools has its own program fingerprint, but each school also has a lot in common. Each has a .5 specialist, and these teachers meet once a week (and even in their “free time!”) to plan their Newsroom (for gifted readers) and Studio (for high cognitive or visual/spatial learners) units.

Newsroom

In Newsroom this year they are doing an exciting new project called “Environmental Declaration.” The students will study local environmental and community issues and get to take some action of their choosing. Students will get a chance to research, apply concepts from their regular classroom to the real world, work as a team, develop leadership skills, and see that they can make a difference even at their young age!

Studio

In Studio they are doing a similarly complex, hands-on project: Inventions. They will find out themselves what it takes to identify a problem, brainstorm solutions, and create a prototype. They will also present their invention at Invent Washington. Many thanks to The Community Foundation of NCW and The United Way of Chelan and Douglas Counties for aiding us in this endeavor through their Classrooms Can! grant.

Math

Although they vary, all elementary schools have excellent math pullout classes for gifted mathematicians. And we have lots of them!

Sometimes parents or other community members step forward to volunteer to coach Math is Cool. Please thank these volunteers if you have them!

Elementary HiCap Specialists

Gail Gilbert--Sunnyslope

Rozanne Lind--Columbia, Newbery

Brooke McAllister--Lewis & Clark, Washington

Kathy Moody--Lincoln, Mission View

Middle School HiCap Happenings

Each middle school also decides how they wish to serve students identified as highly capable. Counselors and administrators can use a past “label” as academically gifted to include students, as well as more recent test results from NWEA Maps math and/or reading tests.

Although each of our middle schools determines how to best serve their own unique population, there are some non-negotiables: gifted students must be offered (at least once a week) faster pace, greater complexity, and time with their academic peers.

Some schools do this through Cluster Grouping, in which 3-10 gifted students are “clustered” (scheduled together) for literacy and/or Core. The makeup of the rest of the class might be AVID students or at-grade-level peers. The idea is that these students have a teacher specially trained to differentiate for their academic needs, and with enough of them in one class it is easier to do so while also giving kids the time together that research tells us gifted individuals need so as to not feel so alone.

Some schools do this through Honors Core or other advanced level grouping. An entire class of gifted kids is most common in math, as ability grouping is such an obvious choice for mathematics. This is the best way to provide all three non-negotiables: faster pace, greater complexity, and time with similarly talented peers.

Some schools still have the Challenge program. This is designed to encourage students to engage in the activities that will prepare them for college: gathering career info, keeping a good grade point average, staying involved in their school through leadership and clubs or sports, and doing community service. Falcon Flyers, the FMS Challenge club, has gotten rewards for their efforts through things like academic field trips to Barn Beach Reserve.

*Pioneer recently took a field trip to the Performing Arts Center, led by librarian Sandra Lancaster. There they saw a performance of *Jason and the Argonauts* and Lancaster raved about the quality of the experience. Not only that, but the PAC’s Matt Cadman raved about the excellent behavior of our students. Kudos!*

Be watching for upcoming info on Knowledge Bowl and Math is Cool competitions at the middle schools.

High School HiCap Happenings

WHS has several programs for highly capable students to choose from, as well as fabulous clubs to join like Speech & Debate and Knowledge Bowl.

Honors and Pre-AP: Students can take advanced level coursework in mathematics, science, and English. Taking the most rigorous coursework a student can successfully pass is the best way to prepare for college, possible scholarships, and future choices in where to go and what to study.

AP: Advanced Placement is the most rigorous route a student can take, viewed by selective college admissions counselors as even more rigorous than Running Start. WHS currently offers many AP courses to choose from: Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chemistry, Computer Science, English Language, English Literature, Human Geography, Physics, Statistics, and U.S. History. Most students take the AP exams, offered around the world in early May, and we usually have an excellent pass rate. Some students study on their own for exams, too, such as Spanish, Psychology, Art, World History, and any other subject College Board / AP offers.

Academic Challenge/Distinguished Scholar: Students can follow a “roadmap” to college admission and scholarship success by accessing this program. Taking challenging coursework, maintaining a high GPA, staying involved at WHS through school clubs and sports, and doing community service: these are the elements colleges look for, and this program is designed to spell out and honor their completion over the course of a student’s high school career. Check out this link for more information: <http://home.wsd.wednet.edu/?q=node/1914>

Directed Study: This is for students who have a talent or passion that goes above and beyond what we offer in a regular class at WHS. The student and his/her teacher/mentor map out a curriculum for the student based on those needs. Past and current examples have included studying Finnish, piano, AP Environmental Science, and many others. Join us for Visionscape May 22 to see their projects.