

## Highly-Capable Program Philosophy

The Rochester School District recognizes that all students have individual abilities and must be provided with learning experiences that will assist each individual student in attaining the highest level of intellectual, creative, social, and emotional growth. The Hi-Cap program in Rochester is to serve students who exhibit high capability in intellectual and/or creative areas, possess and unusual leadership capacity, **and/or** excel in specific academic fields, thereby requiring services beyond the basic programs provided by schools.

The purpose of the program is to provide appropriate experiences, activities, and resources to meet the special needs of these **highly intelligent** students, whether they be intellectual, academic, creative, or leadership needs. It should provide an opportunity for students to work with one another, to challenge and inspire one another by participating in activities appropriate to their abilities. The program will also offer students in identified grades a range of special activities to develop higher level thinking skills. Activities will attempt to develop students' creative thinking, group processes, leadership abilities, and the pursuit of independent study. The use of staff in-servicing to increase the awareness of these students and the use of school/community resources are necessary to ensure that the program accommodates the widest range of students.

The HiCap program will place the identified students into a pullout grouping where they will miss one day each week of regular classroom work. This Renzulli Pull Out Service Model places students in a learning environment where during the school year they experience curriculum that focuses on Literature, Science, Math, and a selection of Social Sciences, Social Studies, or Health issues. Students are engaged with material and experiences where Bloom's Higher Level Thinking Skills are used to develop students in more than just their identified gifted area.

A second part of this program is Renzulli's Schoolwide Enrichment Model where activities are provided for all interested students in grades Kindergarten through Five. These activities allow for students with interest and/or talent, to extend their learning beyond what the regular classroom usually provides. One event will be held each quarter with all students who are interested having an opportunity to participate.

With both of these service models, the curriculum and experiences selected need to address a variety of curriculum issues. The activities must include the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies taught on a 3 year rotational scheduled.

This program is not intended to be an extension of the regular classroom, and the classroom curriculum. It is to provide and develop multiple experiences for identified students to take their learning to new heights, in new directions, and in curriculum that is not covered in the regular classroom.

### **Program Goals**

1. To identify those students who have outstanding intellectual, academic, creative, and/or leadership abilities and to assess the needs of those individuals.
2. To provide a curriculum whose central focus is to stimulate gifted students with appropriate resources and activities.
3. To guide gifted students to develop their personal, as well as, their academic skills.
4. To enhance the individual cognitive skills.
5. To provide experiences by which the process of divergent thinking will be encouraged in a setting where students are challenged by other students of similar abilities.
6. To provide enrichment activities for students in identified grades.

## Definition of gifted students

Gifted children shall be defined as those children who meet the criteria laid out in the WAC 392-170-035 referring to “highly capable students”. They are students who have been assessed to have superior intellectual ability as demonstrated in one or more of the criteria defined by the Washington law covering such programs.

*These students exhibit high capability in intellectual and/or creative areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields, thereby requiring services beyond the basic programs provided by schools. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.*

*The multiple criteria for the determination of students with superior intellectual ability shall include the following:*

*(1) "Cognitive ability" which for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined as the complete range of intellectual functions referred to as intellect, intelligence, or mental abilities and includes such psychological concepts as thinking, abstract reasoning, problem solving, verbal comprehension, and numerical facility.*

*(2) "Specific academic achievement in one or more major content areas" which for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined as obtained results on an achievement test appropriate to discriminate academic performance at high levels of achievement in one or more of the following content areas:*

*(a) Reading;*

*(b) Mathematics;*

*(c) Social studies;*

*(d) Language arts; and*

*(e) Science.*

*(3) "Exceptional creativity" which for the purpose of this chapter shall mean the demonstration of unique or outstanding creative products and/or the demonstration of unusual problem solving ability or other learning characteristics which indicate to teachers, parents, or classmates that the student has the intellectual potential to perform academically at a level significantly higher than the norm for the chronological grade level.*

## **Rochester Hi-Cap Program Policies**

The following policies are intended to make it possible for the Hi-Cap program to best fulfill its stated purpose. The policies are intended to provide a program focus and the process by which the program operates for students, teachers, administrators and parents.

### **Rochester Primary School**

The Rochester Primary School Enrichment Program contains two parts. First the Enrichment teacher will provide all students (K-2) with four enrichment activities, one per quarter. Second, the Enrichment teacher will provide an after school program using the program Destination Imagination (DI).

### **Grand Mound Elementary**

The Hi-Cap program meets the needs of highly capable students in grades three through five. This Renzuli Pull-Out Service Model is for **identified** students in grades three through five. Each grade level will meet with the Hi-Cap teacher two half days a week. Students will work on themed units of study. Themed units are at the discretion of the teacher, but **must** include the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies taught on a 3 year rotational schedule. (An after school Enrichment program, using DI, for students in grades 3-5 could also be implemented with the Hi-Cap teacher's assistance.)

### **Entrance and Selection**

Elementary students will be selected and prioritized based on the GMES Hi-Cap Matrix in accordance with WAC 392-170-045. The process for selection is as follows:

1. All students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will be tested for identification.
2. Teacher will fill out the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students
3. Parent will fill out the GMES Parent survey
4. Student will take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Reading and Math
5. Student will take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

All of these scores will be entered into the GMES Hi-Cap Matrix to establish the pool of students who will be eligible for the program. Some students may be put on a waiting list. WAC-392-170-042 requires public notification of parents and students prior to the identification activity. The selection process shall be appropriate as described in WAC-392-170-042 regarding screening and selection of applicants.

### **Program Appeal Process**

Parents/Guardians will have 10 days to appeal, in writing to the building administrator and/or designee, the outcome of their child's testing results. The administrator and/or designee will set up an appointment with the parent/guardian to discuss the decision. The final decision will come from the administrator and/or designee.

### **Exit**

A student may be released from the Hi-Cap program under one of the following conditions after a conference has occurred with the program teacher, parent, and classroom teacher:

1. Written parental request stating reasons for release.
2. Repeated poor attitude and performance as documented by the Hi-Cap program teacher or the regular classroom teacher where the program is housed.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum for Hi-Cap will be determined by the program teacher with the approval of the **building administrator**. It must be a flexible program whose activities incorporate the following characteristics:

1. Emphasis on higher level thought processes;
2. Life skill application;
3. The use of creative problem solving as a vehicle;
4. Integration of concept development
5. Development of self-evaluation skills;
6. Development of skills in locating and using resource;
7. Emphasis on student responsibility for his/her own learning;
8. Providing exposure to a broad range of activities and disciplines.
9. Positive written and oral communication skills

The content of the curriculum must include opportunities for creativity, independence, self-evaluation and relations with gifted peers.

The learning environment must be supportive and it must shift responsibility from the teacher to the student. Students must have opportunities to develop organizational skills and appropriate self-evaluative techniques.

The process of the gifted curriculum is more important than the content. There must be emphasis on flexibility, inquiry, discovery, investigation, and creativity. The emphasis is intended to develop skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation and creative, productive, and divergent thinking.

### **Student/Teacher Accountability in the Regular Classroom**

The students in the Hi-Cap program will be accountable for facts, concepts, and information given in the regular classroom while they are in the program and related activities. Regular class work and related homework should generally be waived. However, students will be accountable for meeting goals and objectives and demonstrating competency on assessments.

The student is expected to maintain the general quality of work seen in that subject area previously. Quality of work will be judged by test scores previously maintained by the student. If a student fails to maintain the individual quality of work seen previously, he/she may be required to complete homework or class work assignments missed until potential in that area is reestablished.

It is the responsibility of the regular classroom teacher to inform the Hi-Cap program teacher if a student's performance level is declining in the regular classroom.

### **Student Learning Plans**

In accordance with WAC-395-170-080, the Hi-Cap teacher will have on file a Student Learning Plan, which describes the unique needs and abilities of each participating student and how these needs and abilities are being met. This plan will be written by the Hi-Cap teacher and shared with the regular classroom teacher, parents/guardians, and student. The plan will be reviewed as necessary throughout the school year. It will be placed in the student's permanent record with the intent of providing ongoing support to ensure that the student's academic needs are met.

### **Grading**

Students in the Hi-Cap program will be given a report card at the end of each quarter. This report at the end of the school year will be placed in the students' permanent record. Conferences will be held with parents during district conference weeks.

### **Student Activities**

The Hi-Cap students will attend recess, assemblies, and all other school activities with the other students at the school where the program is being housed.

### **Field Trips**

All field trips will be at the discretion of the Hi-Cap teacher. They will be appropriate for the curriculum being offered. Requests for travel must be written and submitted for approval in accordance with district policy.

### **Materials**

The materials for this program will be provided by the school district as needed for the program outlined by the Hi-Cap teacher. These materials will be approved through the regular district curriculum process.

## **Rochester Middle School**

Currently the sixth grade Accelerated Core Subjects program meets the needs of the highly capable students in sixth grade. The seventh and eighth grades have advanced math and science classes.

### **Entrance and Selection**

- The sixth grade selection is based on STAR Reading and Math scores, 5<sup>th</sup> grade WASL scores, Success Maker Math scores, and parent recommendation.
- The seventh and eighth grade selection is based on teacher and parent recommendations and WASL scores.

Extended learning opportunities for middle school students will enrich middle school students. This would include before/after school enrichment programs. These programs would be open to all students in the middle

school, as well as create opportunities for our most creative and highly capable students.

- **The Arts:** such as visual, dramatics, music, and dance. These students would be building a strong foundation to build upon as they enter the high school programs.
- **Destination Imagination:** This program will allow students who have been involved in DI at the Primary and Elementary Schools to continue with this program. It is a community-based, school friendly program where young people take what they know and what they do well and learn to apply it to solve Challenges.
- **Core Subject Clubs:** These clubs could be, but are not limited to, Health and Fitness, Science, Math, etc.

### **Rochester High School**

Rochester High School currently offers three Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and students do have the option to independently study for and take the AP test without formally taking an AP class. Students also have the option of on-line classes. Career and Technical Education classes have tech/prep options for earning college credit through their advanced classes. New Market Skills Center offers AP classes in Computer Science and Environmental Science.

The Rochester High School is encouraged to increase student participation in AP and/or Honors classes, especially in the math and science disciplines. This would include creating more opportunities to communicate with parents of highly capable students the many options their child has for enrichment or advanced studies.

### **Rochester School District**

Our committee recommends that each building in the Rochester School District receive training in differentiation once every 3-4 years. This could be done during a half day in-service.

## **Hi-Cap Committee**

The Hi-Cap committee shall consist of one teacher representative from each building, an administrative representative, and (optional) a parent representative.

The goal of the Hi-Cap Committee is to enable the Rochester School District to enrich the students. In an effort to accomplish that goal, the committee will do the following:

1. Assist the gifted education teacher in planning, maintaining, and reviewing the gifted program.
2. Oversee the program; evaluate its progress in relation to adoption goals and policies.
3. Serve as “advocates” for local gifted students. They should meet annually; making recommendations to the program director or appropriate groups so that students’ needs will be better met throughout the district.
4. Disseminate information to enable local teachers and parents to better meet the needs of gifted students.
5. Ensure regular district participation in enrichment programs that are aimed at meeting the special needs of students. Such programs might include:

Young Authors

Knowledge Bowl

Writing contests

School Publications

Music Competitions

Science Fair

Art shows

Invention Fair

Destination Imagination

Vocational Meets

Science Olympiad

Poster contests

Speaking contests

Dramatics

Math Olympiad