

**Chapter 28A.185 RCW  
HIGHLY CAPABLE STUDENTS**

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**RCW 28A.185.010 Program—Duties of superintendent of public instruction.** Pursuant to rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction for the administration of this chapter, the superintendent of public instruction shall carry out a program for highly capable students. Such program may include conducting, coordinating and aiding in research (including pilot programs), disseminating information to local school districts, providing statewide staff development, and allocating to school districts supplementary funds for additional costs of district programs, as provided by RCW 28A.150.260. [2009 c 548 s 707; 1984 c 278 s 12. Formerly RCW 28A.16.040.]

**Effective date—2009 c 548 ss 101-110 and 701-710:** See note following RCW 28A.150.200.

**Intent—2009 c 548:** See RCW 28A.150.1981.

**Finding—2009 c 548:** See note following RCW 28A.410.270.

**Intent—Finding—2009 c 548:** See note following RCW 28A.305.130.

**Severability—1984 c 278:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1984 c 278 s 24.]

**RCW 28A.185.020 Equitable identification of low-income students—Not classified as individual entitlement.** District practices for identifying highly capable students must prioritize equitable identification of low-income students. Access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction through the program for highly capable students does not constitute an individual entitlement for any particular student. [2023 c 265 s 2; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 13 s 412; 2009 c 548 s 708; 1990 c 33 s 168; 1984 c 278 s 14. Formerly RCW 28A.16.050.]

**Finding—Intent—2023 c 265:** "(1) The legislature finds that, for highly capable students, access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction is access to a basic education. The legislature has directed school districts to prioritize equitable identification of low-income students for participation in highly capable programs and services. The research literature strongly supports using universal screening and multiple criteria to equitably identify students for highly capable programs. There are multiple approaches to implementing universal screening and the use of multiple criteria. The legislature intends all school districts to use best practices and does not intend to prescribe a single method.

(2) The legislature further intends to allocate state funding for the highly capable program based on five percent of each school district's student population. The legislature does not intend to limit highly capable services to five percent of the student population. School districts may identify and serve more than five percent of their students for highly capable programs and services." [2023 c 265 s 1.]

**Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 13 ss 401-413:** See note following RCW 28A.150.200.

**Intent—2017 3rd sp.s. c 13:** See note following RCW 28A.150.410.

**Collective bargaining agreements not impaired—2017 3rd sp.s. c 13:** See note following RCW 41.56.139.

**Effective date—2009 c 548 ss 101-110 and 701-710:** See note following RCW 28A.150.200.

**Intent—2009 c 548:** See RCW 28A.150.1981.

**Finding—2009 c 548:** See note following RCW 28A.410.270.

**Intent—Finding—2009 c 548:** See note following RCW 28A.305.130.

**Severability—1984 c 278:** See note following RCW 28A.185.010.

**RCW 28A.185.030 Programs—Authority of school districts—Selection of students—Equitable enrollment practices.** (1) School districts may establish and operate, either separately or jointly, programs for highly capable students. Such authority shall include the right to employ and pay special instructors and to operate such programs jointly with a public institution of higher education.

(2) School districts that establish and operate programs for highly capable students shall adopt identification procedures and provide educational opportunities as follows:

(a) In accordance with rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction, school districts shall implement procedures for referral, screening, assessment, identification, and placement of highly capable students.

(i) Referrals must be available for all grade levels not being universally screened, and may be submitted by teachers, other staff, parents, students, and members of the community.

(ii) Each school district must select a grade level to implement universal screening procedures for each student. Universal screening must occur once in or before second grade, and again in or before sixth grade. The purpose of universal screening is to include students who traditionally are not referred for highly capable programs and services. Students discovered during universal screening may need further assessment to determine whether the student is eligible for placement in a program for highly capable students. Districts must consider at least two student data points during universal screening, which may include previously administered standardized, classroom-based, performance, cognitive, or achievement assessments, or research-based behavior ratings scales. There is no requirement to administer a new assessment for the purpose of universal screening, however districts may do so if they desire.

(iii) Assessments for highly capable program services must be based upon a review of each student's capability as shown by multiple criteria intended to reveal, from a wide variety of sources and data, each student's unique needs and capabilities. Any screenings or additional assessments must be conducted within the school day and at the school the student attends, except that school districts, on a case-by-case basis and with the consent of the parent or guardian, may offer a student screenings or additional assessment opportunities during the summer, outside of school hours, or at an alternative site.

(iv) Identification and placement decisions shall be made by a multidisciplinary selection committee after consideration of the results of the universal screening, any further assessment, and any available district data. Students identified pursuant to procedures outlined in this section must be provided, to the extent feasible, an educational opportunity that takes into account each student's unique needs and capabilities, and the limits of the resources and program options available to the district, including those options that can be developed or provided using funds allocated by the superintendent of public instruction for this specific purpose.

(b) In addition to the criteria listed in (a) of this subsection, district practices for identifying highly capable students must seek to expand access to accelerated learning and enhanced instruction at elementary and secondary schools and advance equitable enrollment practices so that all students, especially students from historically underrepresented and low-income groups, who are ready to engage in more rigorous coursework can benefit from accelerated learning and enhanced instruction.

(3) When a student, who is a child of a military family in transition, has been assessed or enrolled as highly capable by a sending school, the receiving school shall initially honor placement of the student into a like program.

(a) The receiving school shall determine whether the district's program is a like program when compared to the sending school's program; and

(b) The receiving school may conduct subsequent assessments to determine appropriate placement and continued enrollment in the program.

(4) For a student who is a child of a military family in transition, the definitions in Article II of RCW 28A.705.010 apply to subsection (3) of this section. [2023 c 265 s 4; 2009 c 380 s 4; 1984 c 278 s 13. Formerly RCW 28A.16.060.]

**Finding—Intent—2023 c 265:** See note following RCW 28A.185.020.

**Severability—1984 c 278:** See note following RCW 28A.185.010.

**RCW 28A.185.035 Funding for student identification.** (1) Other basic education funding can be used alongside categorical funding to identify students and provide programs and services for highly capable students.

(2) Each school district must conduct universal screenings in accordance with RCW 28A.185.030 to find students who may qualify for potential highly capable program placement. [2023 c 265 s 3.]

**Finding—Intent—2023 c 265:** See note following RCW 28A.185.020.

**RCW 28A.185.040 Contracts with University of Washington for education of highly capable students at early entrance program or transition school—Allocation of funds—Rules.** (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall contract with the University of Washington for the education of highly capable students below eighteen years of age who are admitted or enrolled at such early entrance program or transition school as are now or hereafter established and maintained by the University of Washington.

(2) The superintendent of public instruction shall allocate directly to the University of Washington all of the state basic education allocation moneys, state categorical moneys excepting categorical moneys provided for the highly capable students program under RCW 28A.185.010 through 28A.185.030, and federal moneys generated by a student while attending an early entrance program or transition school at the University of Washington. The allocations shall be according to each student's school district of residence. The expenditure of such moneys shall be limited to selection of students, precollege instruction, special advising, and related activities necessary for the support of students while attending a transition school or early entrance program at the University of Washington. Such allocations may be supplemented with such additional payments by other parties as necessary to cover the actual and full costs of such instruction and other activities.

(3) The provisions of subsections (1) and (2) of this section shall apply during the first three years a student is attending a transition school or early entrance program at the University of Washington or through the academic school year in which the student turns eighteen, whichever occurs first. No more than thirty students shall be admitted and enrolled in the transition school at the University of Washington in any one year.

(4) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt or amend rules pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW implementing subsection (2) of this section before August 31, 1989. [1990 c 33 s 169; 1989 c 233 s 9; 1987 c 518 s 222. Formerly RCW 28A.58.217.]

**Intent—1994 c 166; 1987 c 518:** See note following RCW 43.216.525.

**Severability—1987 c 518:** See note following RCW 43.216.525.

**RCW 28A.185.050 Program review and monitoring—Reports to the legislature—Public access to demographic data—Rules.** (1) In order to ensure that school districts are meeting the requirements of an approved program for highly capable students, the superintendent of public instruction shall monitor highly capable programs at least once every five years. Monitoring shall begin during the 2002-03 school year.

(2) Any program review and monitoring under this section may be conducted concurrently with other program reviews and monitoring conducted by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. In its review, the office shall monitor program components that include but need not be limited to the process used by the district to identify and reach out to highly capable students with diverse talents and from diverse backgrounds, assessment data, other indicators to determine how well the district is meeting the academic needs of highly capable students, and district expenditures used to enrich or expand opportunities for these students.

(3) Beginning June 30, 2003, and every five years thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall submit a report to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate that provides the following:

(a) A brief description of the various instructional programs offered to highly capable students; and

(b) Relevant data to the programs for highly capable students collected under RCW 28A.300.042.

(4) Beginning November 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the superintendent of public instruction must make data publicly available that includes a comparison of the race, ethnicity, and low-income status of highly capable students compared to the same demographic groups in the general student population of each school district. Reporting must also include comparisons for students who are English language learners, have an individualized education program, have a 504 plan, are covered by provisions of the McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act, or are highly mobile.

(5) The superintendent of public instruction may adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW to implement this section. [2023 c 265 s 5; 2002 c 234 s 1.]

**Finding—Intent—2023 c 265:** See note following RCW 28A.185.020.

**RCW 28A.185.060 Condensed compliance reports—Second-class districts.** Any compliance reporting requirements as a result of laws in this chapter that apply to second-class districts may be submitted in accordance with RCW 28A.330.250. [2011 c 45 s 10.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—2011 c 45:** See note following RCW 28A.330.250.