

18.36 Equitable Access to Highly Capable Services

Resolution passed 2018

Whereas, Washington State PTA is a strong advocate for the social and emotional well-being and academic needs of all children, so that they may reach their highest potential; and

Whereas, highly capable students often have unique needs and vulnerabilities, including social and emotional challenges, delayed executive function, asynchronous intellectual, social, and motor development, different developmental timelines, and a need for accelerated academics; and

Whereas, successful student outcomes (positive self-image as well as academic achievement) are more likely when student needs have been met, and suffer when they have not been met; and

Whereas, students of color, English-language learners, low-income students, students with disabilities, and twice-exceptional (“2e”) students are 250% less likely to be identified and served in highly capable programs; and

Whereas, best practices for equitable access and identification of highly capable students have been published by the Washington Highly Capable Program Technical Working Group (2010), as well as in national research; and

Whereas, pre-service teacher training programs rarely cover the characteristics and needs of highly capable students.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports removing barriers to the identification of highly capable students of all genders in every demographic group, regardless of prior academic achievement, including students of color, English-language learners, low-income students, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, migrant students, students with disabilities, and twice-exceptional (“2e”) students; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports access to highly capable services for ALL students who qualify for highly capable programming using expanded equity promoting criteria, and expressly objects to limiting access to highly capable programming based on space constraints, logistical considerations, lack of transportation, waitlists, special education needs, holding appeals to a higher standard than general identification criteria, or any form of quotas; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports using best practices to remove barriers to the identification of ALL students who would benefit from highly capable services, including the use of universal screening in early elementary grades, and again before secondary school, conducting all screenings and assessments during the regular school day, and other best practices known to improve equity of access; and be it further



Resolved, that Washington State PTA supports teachers, counselors, principals, and administrators receiving meaningful pre-service training and ongoing professional development about the unique characteristics and social, emotional, and academic needs of highly capable and twice-exceptional students.