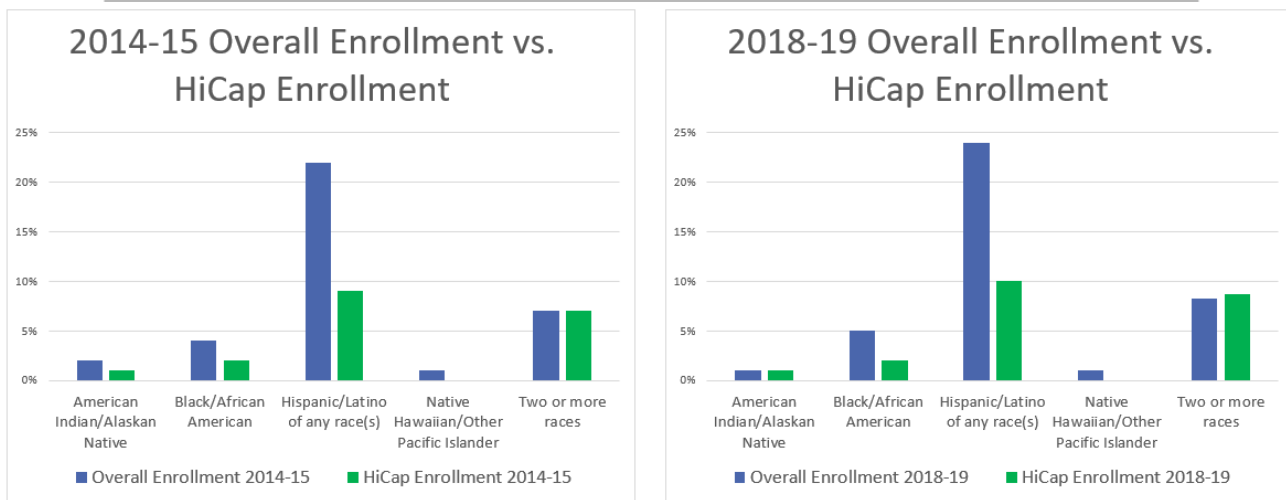


“Gifted children in poverty and from minority groups are 2.5 times less likely to be identified for, and in, gifted and talented programs in schools.”¹ Despite bills passed in 2017² & 2018³ that “prioritize equitable identification of low-income students,” Washington hasn’t made ANY progress on equity yet. Low-income students enrolled in Highly Capable programs actually went DOWN since 2014-15.

WA State Over The Past 5 Years: Little Change



Source: OSPI Report to the Legislature, 2018⁴ (2015 data⁵ for comparison, 2015 ELL data unavailable)

Background

- A parent or teacher must refer a student in order to be considered for highly capable (HiCap) services. **Most students are never considered.**
- Testing is often scheduled on Saturdays or afterschool, at an unfamiliar or distant location. **Discriminates against families without transportation.**
- Identifying low-income students with high potential **early on closes the opportunity gap.**^{6,7,8,9}
- HiCap students disengage, underachieve, or have behavior problems when under-challenged.¹⁰ **Students of color are more likely to be referred for special education than highly capable.**¹¹
- When school is too easy, students don’t develop study skills, persistence, or a solid work ethic.¹²

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For More Information

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For more information on the WSPTA advocacy program, please visit our website (www.wastatepta.org).

Proposed Solutions

- The #1 research-based practice is to **universally screen every student in a grade level**.^{13,14,15,16}
- Can use **existing assessments** (like Smarter Balanced) or administer a screener.
- Non-verbal, cross-culturally equitable screening tools take **as little as 30 minutes**, assess reasoning skills (not math or reading), and serve as a valuable critical thinking exercise for all students.

Innovative Solutions at work:

Along with using local norms (already in law, as of 2018), universal screening allowed Northshore School District to make tremendous gains in equitable identification. **In 2020, 16.2% of Northshore’s 1st graders identified as HiCap were English Language Learners**, which fully aligns with the district’s 16.21% ELL enrollment in that grade level.

	504 Plan	IEP	2e (504+IEP)	Low Income	ELL	Total
Newly Identified in 2016 (referrals only)	20	5	25	3	1	29
Newly Identified in 2017 (district data review)	39	19	58	6	19	83
Newly Identified in 2018 (univ screen K-8)	24	21	45	4	6	55
Newly Identified in 2019 (univ screen K-5, local norms)	129	99	228	99	73	400
Newly Identified in 2020 (univ screen K/1/5, local norms)	50 [58]	60 [73]	110 [131]	52 [80]	173 [181]	335 [392]*

Students identified for HiCap (math, reading, or dual) who accepted HiCap placement.
*[Students identified, but family did not accept HiCap placement]

11x increase
over 4 years

7x increase
in 1 year
using local
norms

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