

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q: How do I interpret percentile ranks?

A: Percentile ranks compare your child to a national (Cogat or ITBS) or statewide (WASL) group. A percentile rank of 50 means your student scored higher than 50% of students nationally or statewide.

### Q: For academically gifted (eligible to enroll in Spectrum), what are the eligibility criteria?

- Performance on at least two of scores on the CogAT meets or exceeds established thresholds. For students tested as kindergarten and first graders, the threshold is the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile; for all other grades, where additional tests are required, the threshold is the 87<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- Performance in academic achievement as follows:
  - For students tested as kindergarten and first graders: achievement is not considered as part of the eligibility determination.
  - For students tested as second through seventh graders: achievement in both reading *and* mathematics meets or exceeds the 87<sup>th</sup> percentile rank threshold.
- The majority of the teacher input ratings are in the categories of “advanced compared to same-aged peer.”
- Student has the capability for thriving in an environment that provides a rigorous and accelerated curriculum.

### Q: For academically highly gifted (eligible to enroll in the Accelerated Progress Program or Spectrum), what are the eligibility criteria?

- Performance on at least two scores on the CogAT meets or exceeds the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile rank threshold.
- Performance in both reading and mathematics achievement meets or exceeds the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile rank threshold.
- The majority of the teacher input ratings are in the category of “significantly advanced compared to same-aged peers.”
- Student has the capability for thriving in an environment that provides a rigorous and significantly accelerated curriculum.

### Q: What does it mean when my student earned a “0” in a test area?

A: A “0” score is given when the student did not complete enough items for the test section to be scored. Some students find the test to be too difficult while other students become fatigued.

### Q: Can I challenge the eligibility decision through an appeal?

A: Yes. Our office only considers written appeals. All appeal decisions are final.

### Q: Should I appeal?

A: Most families with lower-than-expected results do not appeal. If your child is doing well in school and is enjoying and thriving in his/her current experience, you probably shouldn't bother. If however, you believe your child's performance is in the superior to very superior range in comparison to peers, you may want to consider making an appeal. To appeal, parents/teachers must provide compelling evidence that supports the student's eligibility as a student who is academically gifted or academically highly gifted. This means that the additional information you provide must strongly support that your child is gifted/highly gifted and will thrive in an environment that presents a rigorous reading and mathematics curriculum at an accelerated learning pace that is one to two grade levels above their current grade assignment.

### Q: What do I need to do to appeal?

A: You will need to provide compelling information that makes the case that your child actually has capabilities equal to those of students found eligible (see criteria above). We must receive your appeal, in writing, by the date indicated in your letter. Compelling information might include (a) additional achievement and/or cognitive testing results, (b) support letters describing the student's achievement in the classroom, and/or (c) curriculum-based assessments completed in the classroom. The documentation you provide MUST support that your child's intellectual/cognitive skills AND academic achievement are at the levels described above for the program for which you are appealing. *No more than 10 pages, no larger than 8 ½ by 11, no notebooks, plastic covers, plastic sleeves, metal brads or fasteners. Submitted materials are not returned.* We do not accept faxed or e-mailed appeals. See [www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/appeal.htm](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/appeal.htm) for more details.

### Q: If I'm considering outside testing, what do I need to do?

A: Our website provides specific information related to finding qualified testers, the types of tests that would be considered, and how to submit your appeal document: [www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/appeal.htm](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/appeal.htm). If you are not able to access our website, please call 206-252-0130.

### Q: If my student qualifies for free/reduced lunch, will the district assist me with in-house, district testing?

A: Yes. You should provide our office with a signed statement that you want to appeal and are requesting our help to re-test your child. For our staff to support your appeal with additional testing, we need to receive your signed statement by the due date provided in this letter.

### Q: If I am submitting an appeal, when should I submit Enrollment Forms?

A: In order to be considered on-time, you must enroll during the Open Enrollment period. We recommend that you enroll as if your appeal will be successful, ranking your choices in the desired order. If your appeal is not successful, those choices for which your child is not eligible will be dropped automatically by the Enrollment Services Office. See the Enrollment Services [www.seattleschools.org/area/eso/story.dxml](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/eso/story.dxml) website for Enrollment Forms.

### Q: How long does a student retain his/her eligibility?

A: One year if NOT enrolled in an Advanced Learning program (Spectrum, the Accelerated Progress Program or an Advanced Learning Opportunity School). Please see the Advanced Learning website <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/enrollment.htm> for more details.