

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I nominate a child for Advanced Learning testing? Parents, teachers/staff, and community members may nominate a student to be tested, but a signed *Parent Permission* form is **required** to test. Teachers and community members should give a *Parent Permission* form to parents of students they wish to nominate. A *Teacher/Educator Input* form is also required. Both forms are due October 8, 2007*. (*Kindergarten students only: The *Teacher/Educator Input Form* is due Nov 14, 2007; parent form is due Oct 8, 2007.)

Where can I get nomination forms? Nomination materials are available at elementary and middle school offices, Enrollment Centers, the Bilingual Family Center (252-7750) and at the John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence. Materials are also available at www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/forms.htm.

Where do I turn in my nomination materials? Give the completed Parent Permission Forms either to your *school secretary* at Seattle Public elementary or middle schools, or mail directly to Advanced Learning at the address above. Do not give Parent Permission forms to teachers. Teachers may return Teacher/Educator Input forms to school secretaries or mail via campus or US mail. *Private school families should mail materials to Advanced Learning along with the \$90 processing fee.* We DO NOT accept faxed or e-mailed applications.

My child is in a private school: what should I use for the student identification number?

If you have ever applied to enroll your child with Seattle Public Schools or have previously applied for testing, your child has a Seattle Public Schools ID number. Private school families who do not know, or do not have, an SPS ID number, should leave it blank. Please do not use social security numbers.

Will I be notified of my child's test date? Dates for testing are provided in test appointment letters, and parents will receive their first appointment letter anytime between October and early December. A child's first test date will vary by grade level. Testing will begin in late October and continue through January, 2008. Letters inform parents of the test date and the type of test to be administered.

What kinds of tests are administered? All students will take a test that measures their cognitive ability (the Cognitive Abilities Test). A reading and math achievement test may be administered depending on grade level and eligibility requirements. Achievement tests are not administered to students in grades 4-7, with the exception of students who were not in Seattle Public Schools the previous spring. For 4th-7th grade students, we use the most recent achievement test scores in the Seattle Public School student records. Students in grades 4-7 with no achievement scores on record may be administered the ITBS.

Can parents observe while their child is being tested? No. It can be disruptive for children taking our tests. Children tend to perform better when they are not being observed.

If I live outside the Seattle School District boundaries, can I nominate my child for testing? No. Students must live within the school district boundaries in order to test.

When do I receive my child's test results? Final eligibility results and test scores will be mailed on or around January 31, 2008. **Test results and eligibility are reported by mail only and are NOT reported early by phone, e-mail, or fax.**

Is there a process to appeal a decision that a student is not found eligible? Yes. Specific information concerning the appeal process will be included in eligibility letters. Also, private assessments will only be considered during the appeal process.

How is eligibility for Spectrum Young Scholars different from the Spectrum Program? As of the 2005–2006 school year, eligibility for Spectrum Young Scholars (the Spectrum Program for grades 1-2) is based on cognitive ability and teacher/educator input. Achievement scores are not required. Students participating in the Spectrum Young Scholars program will be reevaluated during the second grade to determine eligibility status for grade three.

Do students retest each year to retain eligibility? As long as a student is enrolled in the Accelerated Progress Program (APP), in a Spectrum Program, or at an Advanced Learning Opportunity (ALO) school and receiving an Advanced Learning progress report, the student does not need to retest to retain eligibility. This includes students rising from 5th to 6th grade. **Students found eligible for a program during this testing cycle (2007-2008) who do not enroll in a program will need to retest during the next testing cycle. Students who apply for a program but are placed on a waitlist are given an extension but must enroll by the end of Open Enrollment for the next year or retest.**

What is the Reevaluation Process? All 5th grade students participating in the Accelerated Progress Program (APP), Spectrum Program, and district-identified students participating in an ALO program who receive an Advanced Learning progress report will be reevaluated during the spring of their fifth grade year. Nomination forms from parents or teachers are NOT required. The purpose of the reevaluation is to determine, based on WASL scores, progress reports and teacher/educator input, whether the child continues to be in need of special services as a student who is academically gifted or academically highly gifted.