



GIFTED ADVOCATE

Enriched Placement Program

November, 2015
Suzanne Palmer, Coordinator

Volume III Number 1
(614)450-6055
spalmer@wscloud.org



Welcome to the 2015-16 School Year

Dear Worthington Families and Staff,

It is hard to believe that a quarter of the school year is now behind us. Fall is one of my favorite times of the year as the weather starts to get a little cooler, nature's colors are so vibrant, and school is back in session.

Each fall I also look forward to the annual Ohio Association for Gifted Children state conference here in Columbus which was held last month. I have the opportunity to attend this conference with over 700 other colleagues, teachers, administrators, field experts, and parents who share the same passion for the education and support of our gifted learners as I do. Once again the conference line-up did not disappoint from keynotes, Stephanie Tolan and Dr. Nicholas Coleangelo, to break out sessions focused on a variety of topics of interest including advocacy updates, effective service models, and differentiating instruction. Keynote Stephanie Tolan, the author of several young adult novels, is most recognized in the gifted field as the author of "[Is it a Cheetah?](#)" This metaphor has been published for quite some time but it was nice to have the opportunity to step back and be reminded of how unique our gifted learners and their needs are. Dr. Coleangelo, Dean of College of Education, University of Iowa, and Director Emeritus of Belin Blank Acceleration Institute reminded us that every child has a right to learn something new every day.

This begins our work for this year strengthening our support for all students, including our high achieving and gifted students, here in Worthington. The Gifted Services Department is working to ensure that these students are being given the opportunity to run like a cheetah and learn something new every day whether they are served in formal gifted services or not. It is going to be another great year in Worthington Schools.

*Suzanne Palmer
Coordinator, Gifted Services & Enrichment*

Gifted Services EPP Program Welcomes Two New Faculty Members

We are so excited to welcome two new teachers to the Worthington gifted program this year. Though new to the gifted program this year, they are not new to Worthington. Please join me in welcoming Stephanie Brennan, Kilbourne MS, and Molly Smith, Worthingway MS.

Stephanie Brennan is entering her 29th year teaching, twenty one of which have been in Worthington. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Education with an Exceptional Children Endorsement from Wittenberg University. She received her Master of Arts in Reading from Ashland University and is currently completing her Gifted and Talented Endorsement from Drake University. She has worked in a variety of roles in the middle school, teaching science, advanced science, reading, language arts and the gifted cluster group language arts. When she is not teaching she enjoys cooking, traveling, reading and spending time with her husband and five children.

Molly Smith grew up in Athens, Ohio and attended Ohio University for her undergraduate degree in Middle Childhood Education with certification in English Language Arts and Science. Molly also attended Ohio University for her Master's Degree in Critical Cultural Studies in Education, while she worked as a 5th Grade Teaching Fellow for Athens City Schools. This year will be Molly's second year teaching in Worthington City Schools. She is currently working on obtaining an Enriched Endorsement Certificate through The University of Cincinnati. In her spare time, Molly enjoys reading, traveling, cooking, and spending time outdoors.

Criteria for Serving Students in the Elementary EPP Gifted Math Program



The Worthington Schools places students in gifted services who score at or above the 95th national percentile on a mathematics achievement test **and** score at least two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on the cognitive abilities assessment. Minimum scores for the cognitive score vary depending upon the test administered and the age and/or grade level of the student. **Both criteria must be met for placement into gifted services.**

Second and fourth grade students will be screened once per year during district-wide screening, using the Terra Nova and In View. Additional testing is conducted by the Gifted Services Department. Third, fifth and sixth grade students are not scheduled for district-wide testing that could lead to service but may be referred by teachers, parents and administrators to our department for individual or small group testing. This complies with the minimum guidelines of the Ohio Department of Education law for the identification of gifted students for the state's data base. Please note the criteria to be served in the Gifted Program are **different** from the criteria for state identification reporting purposes.

It should be noted that assessments that are excellent for informing classroom instruction such as the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA), Ohio Achievement Assessments (OAA), and other diagnostic tests in the core subjects are **not** on the Ohio Department of Education's approved screening or identification test list. Therefore, our department is **not** able to consider these assessments when looking at identification criteria for service.

Criteria for Serving Students in the Middle School Gifted Language Arts Program



The Worthington Schools places 7th and 8th grade students in gifted services who score at or above the 95th national percentile on a reading achievement test **and** score two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on the cognitive abilities assessment. Minimum scores for the IQ vary depending upon the test administered and the age and/or grade level of the student. **Both criteria must be met for placement into gifted services.**

Other Opportunities Available to Challenge the Gifted Student

LANGUAGE ARTS ENRICHMENT (grades 3-6) -provided through General Education Identified Gifted Cluster Groups

- The Gifted Intervention Specialist will serve as a “resource” to general classroom Language Arts teachers in grades 3-6.
- Cluster groups consisting of 4-5 identified gifted students where possible, will be in the general education language arts classroom to help build flexible guided reading groups
- In smaller buildings where there are not enough to make small cluster groups of 4-5 students, identified gifted students would be clustered in one classroom.
- Gifted Services enriched level books from the previous EPP units will be available for use in the general classroom setting.

ACCELERATION (grades K-12)

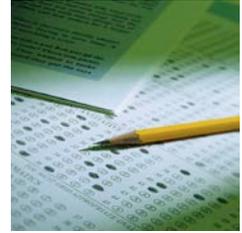
- Accelerations are available for whole grade (including early entrance), subject, and early graduation
- In general, if a student is identified as gifted, their accelerated pathway would be to advance to the next grade level of gifted math at the elementary level.
- If a student is **not** identified as gifted, their accelerated pathway would be to advance to the next general education math class at the elementary level.
- If an accelerated placement is made mid-year and beyond, we will assess the situation on an individual case by case basis for the next year’s placement or continuation.

Note: A student does not have to be identified as gifted to be referred for an accelerated placement.



Mark Your Calendars for these 2015-16 Test Dates

Below are the test dates sponsored by our department. If for some reason our district SAT and ACT test dates conflict with your student's schedule, he/she is welcome to take these tests at any of our neighboring districts on alternate dates. For more information on how to register for either of these tests, visit www.act.org or www.collegeboard.org.



SAT Middle School Test – December 5, 2015 at Worthingway Middle School
ACT High School Test – February 6, 2016 at Thomas Worthington High
Advanced Placement High School Testing – May 2 – May 13, 2016 at the WEC
SAT High School Test (Newly redesigned) – June 4, 2016 at Worthington Kilbourne High School



Invention Convention

Worthington has been a long-time participant of Invention Convention and is looking forward to participating again this year. For more information, please visit the Invention Convention website at www.inventionconvention.org. This enrichment program is open to all students in grades K-8 and encourages students to use their

creative thinking to invent new products or improve existing products to help simplify our daily lives. Invention Convention is one of the programs available to **all students, grades K-8** wishing to participate in 3rd Annual Worthington Science Day on Saturday, February 27th. Winners of Invention Convention at the Worthington Science Day will go on to compete in the regional competition where they will be competing for scholarships and other exciting prizes.

Invention Convention is a 501©3 non-profit so they run entirely on donations from individual and business partners. Here is how you can help.....Invention Convention has launched an **ONLINE FUNDRAISING CONTRIBUTION CENTER** and is making an appeal to parents, colleagues, business leaders, and PTOs for contributions.

Invention Convention has also partnered with **Kroger Cares**, so every person who identifies Invention Convention as their 'preferred non-profit' will have a donation made on their behalf every time they use their Kroger rewards card when they shop. (instructions are online at www.inventionconvention.org). Invention Convention's mailing address is: Invention Convention and Just Think Inc., c/o The Columbus Dispatch, 1st Floor, 5300 Crosswind Drive, Columbus, OH 43228.

We hope to see this program continue in future years.

2015-2016 Destination Imagination Program

The Destination Imagination process is ready to begin. For those new to Destination Imagination (DI), this program encourages teams of learners to have fun, take risks, focus, and frame challenges while incorporating STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), the arts, and service learning. Participants learn patience, flexibility, persistence, ethics, respect for others and their ideas, and the collaborative problem solving process. Teams then present their solutions at the Region 4 tournament in the spring. For anyone interested in participating in DI, please [click here](#) for more information on the program and how to get involved in the program.



We are currently looking to identify **team managers** and **team appraisers**. A **team manager** recruits students, supervises team meetings throughout the year and attends the regional tournament as well as state and global tournaments if their student team qualifies. A small stipend is provided to managers. New team managers must attend a mandatory training session

If you are not able to commit the time to be a team manager, we invite you to be a **team appraiser** for one of our DI teams, which only requires you to attend a training session and the regional tournament. It's a great way to become familiar with the program before possibly serving as a team manager in the future.

To be cost effective we will only send registration information to parents who are willing to manage a team. A team manager kit will be provided to any team that returns official Region IV registration materials. The Gifted Services Department has already paid the national registration fees for our district to participate and to access to the 2015-16 challenges. Registration fees for the regional competition will also be paid by the district. **Please contact the gifted services office at 450-6056 for registration information.**

SWEPP - Supporting Worthington's Enriched Placement Program

SWEPP would like to extend an invitation to every parent of academically talented students to join its organization. SWEPP is a parent/community organization that advocates for academically talented students and quality education while providing a support network for their parents in the Worthington School District. Activities include ongoing support of the EPP program at the elementary level, enriched coursework at the middle school level, and honors and advanced placement course work at the High School level. SWEPP strives to provide enrichment activities for all students who would benefit, and we encourage parent participation from anyone who wants to support enrichment for their high achieving student. For more information about SWEPP, please visit www.supportingworthingtonsepp.com or www.facebook.com/supportersofworthingtonEPP.

2016 Martin W. Essex School for the Gifted Registration **Now Open**



The 2016 Martin W. Essex School for the Gifted and Talented™ at Otterbein University offers **current gifted sophomores and juniors** opportunities for enrichment and career exploration through a unique program comprised of classes, seminars and workshops on the arts, sciences and humanities. Taking place in multiple venues throughout Otterbein's campus, this week long residential program encourages social interaction and peer discussion so that students can be challenged intellectually and artistically while developing a better understanding of the role of their abilities and talents in their lives and in society. For more information visit www.otterbein.edu/essex or [click here](#) to view video highlights from the 2014 camp.

DATES for this summer opportunity: June 19-25, 2016

LOCATION: Otterbein University Campus

COST: \$650 - Financial assistance may be available for those who qualify. See application for more information or contact Suzanne Palmer, Gifted Services Coordinator, 614-450-6055 or spalmer@wscloud.org.

TO REQUEST AN APPLICATION, contact Suzanne Palmer, Gifted Services Coordinator, 614-450-6055, spalmer@wscloud.org or visit: <http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/domain/63>.