



GIFTED ADVOCATE

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Dear Worthington Families and Staff,

Welcome back to the school year after a very challenging spring and summer. During these last several months, we have learned to navigate a time of many changes with what has become our new normal since the onset of this pandemic. In these last seven months, we have faced and overcome many challenges while at the same time being ready for whatever may come our way next.

We have seen a change in our academic structure in response to the pandemic and while we know many of our students are resilient and can adjust, that does not mean that students, especially some of our gifted learners are not going to struggle in this “new normal.” It is important for us to not only be in tune with the gifted learner’s academic needs, but we must also be in touch with their social and emotional well-being.

Throughout this publication you will find a number of resources that will be a great support for not only your gifted child, but for you as the parent of a gifted learner as well. I encourage you to learn more about these different resources to help you navigate this incredibly challenging time. At the end of this publication, there are links to several organizations that have always supported and advocated for this population of students and are continuing to be that resource for teachers, students and parents during this challenging time.

This publication is distributed to families of ALL students identified as gifted in one or more areas, whether or not the student is served in a formal gifted service, like EPP Math, MS Enriched Language Arts, or AP courses. You and your child are a part of the gifted community here in Worthington and there are many topics that may be of interest to your child or to you as the parent of a gifted learner. With that in mind, in an effort to make this publication easier to navigate, we have identified the targeted populations to make it easier for you as a parent to determine what is applicable to you and your child.

The Gifted Advocate is published a few times throughout the year, so please let me know if there are topics of interest you would like to see included in this publication.

Have a wonderful school year,
Suzanne Palmer
Coordinator, Gifted Services & Enrichment

For Elementary, Middle School, High School

Gifted Frequently Asked Questions

In what areas can students be identified as gifted?

Students can be identified as gifted in the area(s) of:

- **Superior Cognitive Ability** (Scoring at least two standard deviations above the mean (mean = 100) +/- the standard error of measure on a state-approved, nationally-normed abilities test - i.e. CogAT, Inview, OLSAT, NNAT, etc).
- **Specific Academic Achievement** - Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies (Scoring at or above the 95th percentile on a state-approved, nationally-normed achievement test – i.e. MAP, Iowa, Stanford).
- **Visual and Performing Arts** – Visual Arts, Music, Drama, Theatre, Dance Demonstrated superior ability through a display of work, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, in a visual or performing arts area and exhibited sufficient performance on a state-approved checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area.
- **Creative Thinking Ability** Scoring at least one standard deviation above the mean on a state-approved test of creative ability – i.e. CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT and exhibited sufficient performance on a state- approved checklist by a trained individual of creative behaviors.



When will students be tested for Gifted Identification?

Worthington offers whole group screenings for superior cognitive ability in 2nd and 4th grade. MAP testing, which is administered on an on-going basis in grades K-8, is used for gifted identification in the achievement areas of math and reading. A referral for testing can be made no more than two times per academic year (whole group screenings count as one of those referrals each year).

How will I know my child has been identified as gifted?

Once a student has met the criteria established by the state for gifted identification in any area, you will be notified with a Letter of Gifted Identification. This letter will notify you of the area(s) of gifted identification and the qualifying score and test. Letters should be kept for your records.

I have received a Letter of Gifted Identification for my child(ren). What does that mean?

While there is a state mandate for gifted identification, there is no mandate for gifted services. Districts receive a limited amount of funding for services, and therefore, districts determine services that are in compliance with Ohio Gifted Operating Standards (OAC 3301-51-15) to best meet the needs of its population. (See Worthington's Gifted Services Plan below which was effective August 2018).

At the elementary level, students in grades 3-6 who are identified as gifted in the areas of superior cognitive ability AND math qualify for placement into a self-contained, single-subject course (most commonly known as EPP Math). This service is provided by a licensed gifted intervention specialist who serves as the math teacher of record for students in the program. The EPP Math program is

designed to take the math content standards into more depth, breadth, complexity, and in some instances, at an accelerated pace. In addition, the program incorporates other enrichment and extension activities designed specifically to meet not only the academic needs, but the unique social and emotional needs of the gifted learner as well.

Students in grades 3-6 identified as gifted in the areas of superior cognitive ability AND reading are placed into a language arts cluster group with five to eight like ability peers. The teacher of a gifted language arts cluster is receiving on-going high quality professional development on meeting not only the academic needs of the gifted learner but also the social and emotional needs as well. Classroom teachers are required to participate in 60 hours of professional learning over a four year period specifically focused on the gifted learner.

This service is also available at the middle school level for 7th and 8th graders who have been identified as gifted in the specific academic area of reading but do not have the gifted identification in the area of superior cognitive ability.

For 7th and 8th graders who have been identified as gifted in the areas of both superior cognitive ability AND reading, they are served in a self-contained, single-subject course (most commonly known as Enriched Language Arts). With this service, a licensed gifted intervention specialist with a language arts background, serves as the students teacher of record for English Language Arts. Very similarly to the elementary math program, the Enriched English Language Arts is designed to take the curriculum standards into much more depth, breadth, and complexity with opportunities for the gifted intervention specialist to address the social and emotional needs of the gifted learner.

At the high school, all academic opportunities are self-selected and do not require a gifted identification for the various programs and coursework. Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and STEM are all good options for students to provide a rigorous and challenging education. Both AP and IB teachers are receiving on-going high quality professional development on meeting not only the academic needs of the gifted learner but also the social and emotional needs as well.

Students enrolled in AP and/or IB courses and whom have been identified as gifted in the area corresponding to the course will be considered as served in his/her area of gifted identification. For example, a student who is identified as gifted in reading and taking AP English Language & Composition is considered served as defined by Ohio's Gifted Operating Standards.

My child has been identified as gifted but does not meet the criteria for placement into formal gifted services (i.e. EPP Math Program or Enriched ELA). How can I be sure my child is being challenged?

Teachers throughout the district use formative assessments to guide instruction for all learners, including gifted identified students. Teachers are able to differentiate instruction as needed to make sure that students are receiving the most appropriate level of instruction and challenge. As a parent, you are encouraged to open that line of communication with your child's teacher to get a better understanding of how your child's needs are being met.

How do I know if my child is being served in a gifted service?

Any student who meets the criteria for placement into any of the services described above will receive a Written Education Plan (WEP). The WEP provides you as a parent with information such as a description of the service to be provided, goals for the student in the service setting, methods and schedule for reporting progress, staff members responsible for ensuring delivery of specified services, and date for which WEP will be reviewed for possible revision.

My child consistently scores high on nationally-normed assessments (i.e. MAP, CogAT) and has a teacher who has provided extensive enrichment and extensions to the grade level curriculum, but my child still complains that she is bored.

It is important to understand that being “bored” can have a number of meanings. It does not always have to mean that the curriculum is not challenging enough. In some instances, it can actually mean that something may be a little too challenging for the student, so the student is avoiding engaging in the task altogether. This can often be the case when a child is used to having things come easy to him/her and is faced with a challenge that requires effort and a healthy struggle. It can also mean that your child has no interest in the topic of study. We as adults can sometimes relate to this. These are the tasks that we tend to put off or avoid. Through dialogue with your child’s teacher, it is important to get some insight on what exactly being “bored” means. Is it too easy? Too hard? Not an area of interest? Something else?

Sometimes, however, despite numerous enrichment and extension opportunities provided, it is possible that your child needs the additional challenge of a subject or whole grade acceleration when grade level curriculum has been mastered. This intervention is for a very small percentage of the population, and a student need not be identified as gifted in order to be referred for acceleration.

A subject acceleration would require that a student go to the next grade level for instruction in one or more content areas. With a subject acceleration a student then is assessed at that grade level for any state testing. A whole grade acceleration will address the needs of a student who demonstrates readiness academically, socially, and emotionally in all areas to support a move to the next grade level.

A number of factors, including quantitative and qualitative, are used by an acceleration team to make an informed decision on best placement for a student. This becomes a permanent placement after the nine week transition period. A student who just qualifies is probably not the ideal candidate for acceleration. One must examine the potential for long-term achievement. Accelerated students should be expected to achieve, relative to their new grade peers, at a high level that is generally comparable to their performance in their previous grade. These students are typically in the top 10% in a class and one would expect them to remain in the top 10% throughout their academic career. Thus, test scores should be strong in order for acceleration to be successful.

For more information on acceleration, visit <http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/Resources/QA/>. For families considering whether or not acceleration is the right intervention for their child, contact the child’s teacher to get an idea of the student’s progress within the classroom and what extension and enrichment opportunities have been implemented in the classroom to stretch and engage the learner. You may also contact the gifted services department with any questions about acceleration.

I have received a No Services Letter from the Gifted Services Department the last couple of years. Why are you sending this letter to me AGAIN?

Under Ohio’s Gifted Operating Standards (OAC 3301-51-15), we are required to send an annual notification of no gifted services to the family of any student identified as gifted in any area who is **not** receiving formal service, such as elementary EPP Math, elementary language arts cluster grouping, or MS Enriched ELA. As mentioned above the state of Ohio mandates gifted identification but not gifted services. Districts receive a limited amount of funding for services, and therefore, districts determine services that are in compliance with Ohio Gifted Operating Standards (OAC 3301-51-15) to best meet the needs of its population. As also mentioned, even if a student identified as gifted but is not served in formal programming, the student is still having his/her needs met within the regular classroom setting.



Visual and Performing Arts Gifted Identification

Under Ohio Revised Code 3324 we are mandated to identify students as gifted in the area of the visual and performing arts. We are currently accepting referrals for students in this area which includes the visual arts, music, dance, and theatre. While there is a mandate for gifted identification in the area of the arts, there is no mandate for gifted services in this area.

Students participating in this process will be evaluated through various assessment instruments. The first phase of the evaluation is the completion of a gifted trait checklist by an educator in the arts. A teacher familiar with your child and the area in which he/she is being assessed will complete the checklist based on observations from the beginning of the school year.

Students meeting the state screening score, but not the state qualifying score, will be assessed with a second checklist. All families will be notified of the outcome of this checklist assessment. Students who earn a qualifying score on the second checklist assessment will be invited to participate in the next phase of assessment. That is a display of talent using a portfolio of visual art or an original music, dance, or drama performance coupled with a display of requested technical skills as appropriate to the area being assessed. The referral form and more information about the assessment process can be found on the Gifted Services Website.



For Elementary, Middle, and High School



Invention Convention

Looking for a little extra enrichment or project for your child(ren) while we are spending more time at home these days? During our days at home over these past few months, has your child come up with an invention to help pass the time or figured out a way to improve an existing product? Trying to find a creative project to encourage teamwork between siblings? Then Invention Convention is the perfect program for your child(ren).

Worthington has been a long-time participant of Invention Convention and is looking forward to participating again this year in a virtual format. This strong enrichment program encourages students to use their creative thinking to invent new products or improve existing products to help simplify our daily lives. Students can work independently or with a partner on their invention. Invention Convention is available to **all students, grades K-12** For more information, please visit the Invention Convention website at www.inventionleague.org.

Since the inception of the Worthington Science Day, Invention Convention has been a part of that fun experience with the top winners of Worthington's Invention Convention moving on to compete at the state level. Those students who have the opportunity to represent Worthington at the state level compete for scholarships and other exciting prizes, as well as the chance to advance to the National Invention Convention & Entrepreneurship Expo.

As with so many things this year, the structure of Science Day is being reviewed and possibly reimaged to address our current state with COVID. Stay tuned for more information on the Worthington Science Day and how to compete in Invention Convention this year. But in the meantime, students can certainly start working on those inventions to not only compete for great prizes and scholarships, but perhaps make a difference in the lives of others with their invention.

2020-21 Destination Imagination Program

We are excited that once again Worthington students will have the opportunity to participate in Destination Imagination (DI). As is the case with so many other things detailed for you in this communication, it will look a little different. Details are still being released from Destination Imagination and we are closely monitoring those details. The season will be getting underway much later than usual with materials not being released until November and December. Watch for more information to come out from the Gifted Services Department about forming a team for the 2020-21 season.

For those new to Destination Imagination, 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 present their solutions and have a chance to advance all the way up to Globals to be held later this coming spring.

All Destination Imagination teams must have a **team manager**. 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 supplemental contract is provided to team managers. New team managers must attend a mandatory training session. We can't thank our parents enough for taking on this role for our students.

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 tournament. It's a great way to become familiar with the program before possibly serving as a team manager in the future.

Worthington has been well represented at all levels of DI, including Globals for the past few years, and we doubt this year will be any different even as the program evolves to be more virtual.



Ohio Association for Gifted Children Scholarship Opportunities



The Ohio Association for Gifted Children's mission is to promote and support the development of gifted students through dissemination of information, advocacy on their behalf, encouragement of affiliate organizations, and to promote research and education for gifted children. One way the organization supports the development of gifted students is through the awarding of several scholarships each year. The following scholarships are available to identified gifted learners annually:

- **OAGC Susan Faulkner Arts Scholarship** (Deadline: November 15th) - Open to students in grades K-12 who are applying for a special program or activity to further encourage or nurture an interest or talent in an area of the visual or performing arts.
- **OAGC Student Scholarship** (Deadline: February 15th) - Each year OAGC offers scholarships to K-12 gifted Ohio students for special activities that extend their special talent/interest areas.

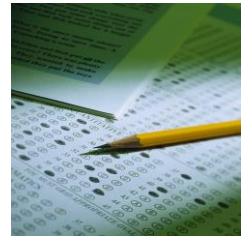
- **OAGC College Scholarship** (Deadline: April 15th) - For any gifted-identified student who is about to enroll in his/her first year of college and/or a student currently enrolled full time in an undergraduate program of an Ohio college.
- **OAGC Distinguished Student Award** (Deadline: June 1st) - This scholarship is awarded annually by OAGC for students currently in grades 3-6, and covers the areas of academics, arts, athletics, and leadership. The Ohio nominee will be recognized, along with his/her family, at the OAGC Fall Conference.

To learn more about each of the scholarships and/or access the application, please visit <http://www.oagc.com/scholarship.asp>.

For High School ONLY

Mark Your Calendars: 2020-21 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.



- **ACT High School Test: February 6, 2021 at TWHS**
- **Advanced Placement (AP) High School Testing:**
 - **May 3 – May 14, 2021 at TWHS and WKHS**
- **SAT High School Test – June 5, 2021 at WKHS**

For Elementary and Middle School

Northwestern University Midwest Academic Talent Search (NUMATS)

NUMATS, a program offered through the Center for Talent Development, is an opportunity for gifted and high ability students, grades 3 to 9, to take above level tests such as the ACT, PSAT, and/or SAT. By participating in above grade level testing, educators and parents are able to get better insight on what students are ready to learn by removing the “ceiling effect” of grade level assessments. For more information about the above grade level testing and programs offered by the Center for Talent

Development, visit: www.ctd.northwestern.edu/numats.



Center for Talent Development
Northwestern University
School of Education & Social Policy

For Parents



You are invited to attend the **2020 OAGC Virtual Parent Day**

OAGC Virtual Parent Day is scheduled for **Sunday, October 18th, from 2:00 – 5:00 PM**. The registration fee is \$5.00 and you can register by submitting the [Registration Form](#) to OAGC. This year's parent day keynote presenters include Dr. James Delisle and Dr. Colleen Boyle.

Dr. Delisle has worked in the field of gifted education for over 40 years. He retired from Kent State University after 25 years of service as a distinguished professor of special education. Throughout his career, Dr. Delisle would step away from college teaching to get back into the classroom, volunteering his time as a teacher. He has authored more than 275 articles and 23 books. His latest book, *Creating Kind and Compassionate Kids*, was written with his wife Deborah Delisle, former Ohio State superintendent of public instruction. Dr. Delisle's keynote will help you understand your gifted child from the inside-out.

Dr. Boyle is an experienced educator with 25 years in the field and most of those years in gifted education. Dr. Boyle has her Ph.D. in educational psychology. She has served in multiple roles on the OAGC Governing Board, including past president, and has also worked on several committees through the Ohio Department of Education in support and advocacy of gifted learners. She is currently the coordinator of curriculum and gifted for Bexley City Schools. Dr. Boyle will speak on the impact of giftedness in families at Sunday's event.



SWEPP - Supporting Worthington's **Enrichment Programs and Parents**

SWEPP is a parent/community organization supporting academically talented students, exceptional learners, and quality enrichment education in the Worthington School District. Activities include ongoing support of: the Worthington EPP program, enrichment programming within the district, and Honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate courses. We also advocate for gifted students at the state and local level and provide a network of support and education for parents. 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. It is not necessary to have a child identified as gifted and/or placed in EPP in order to join - membership is open to any parent in the Worthington School District who wishes to support exceptional learners. For more information about SWEPP, please visit www.facebook.com/swepp.org.

Additional Resources for Parents

Worthington Gifted Services Department: <http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/domain/63>
Ohio Association for Gifted Children: www.oagc.com
National Association for Gifted Children: www.nagc.org
Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG): <https://www.sengifted.org/>
Acceleration Institute: www.accelerationinstitute.org

