

SECTION II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ACADEMICALLY TALENTED PROGRAM

The Academically Talented Program (AT) is a differentiated humanities curriculum for students in grades 3 – 8 who demonstrate exceptional academic talent. The program offers opportunities for these students to challenge and learn from one another, and develops the desire for excellence and sense of individual responsibility to the school community and a changing society.

Identification Measures

All grade 2 students are screened and considered for the program. Four areas are reviewed: (1) student test scores on the Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP), (2) Structure of the Intellect Test (SOI), (3) teacher assessment, and (4) the child's academic record.

In the spring of second grade, all students are given both the DRP and SOI tests. The DRP measures reading comprehension and is used as a regular part of the state's standardized testing program in grades 3 – 8. The SOI measures student aptitude in comprehension, memory, critical thinking and creativity. The SOI is specifically designed to identify students who are gifted in all of these areas. The teacher assessment form asks teachers to rate all students who may be considered for the program in the areas of learning, creativity, motivation, leadership, reading, writing, math, and overall. Progress Reports may be reviewed to assess students' academic progress in their regular classrooms. Students who may be borderline cases will be given an individual I.Q. test with their parents' permission. These students may also be asked to do a writing sample or other performance assessment.

Process

A committee of Academically Talented teachers and Central Office administrators review all second grade student results. Parents of students who are deemed eligible for the program will be notified in early September and asked to sign a contract and permission form for their children to participate.

Classroom teachers may nominate grade three through five students for inclusion in the program by the end of March for the following year. Parents may submit nominations for their children between September and January using forms available in each building. Parents may nominate their children once during elementary school. The same measures will be used as well as any additional standardized testing (Connecticut Mastery Tests) and Progress Reports that are available. Students nominated at the end of 5th Grade will be given another DRP and SOI test. If admission to the program is declined, parents may appeal the decision once in elementary school after the end of 3rd Grade.

Participation in the Program

Students will be admitted to the program only at the beginning of each year, with the exception of students new to the Norwalk Public Schools who may be considered for mid-year entry. Students who have been successful in the elementary AT Program will continue in the program in middle school. Students who have not been successful in the program will be exited from the program no later than the end of grade 5 following a conference with the parent.