



Advanced Learning

Addendum to: The Unofficial Guide to Enrollment in Seattle's Public Schools

2009-2010 *

Advanced Learning Options

"SPS Advanced Learning provides for the learning needs of students who are academically gifted, academically highly gifted, and high achievers/motivated learners through programs that provide rigorous and accelerated curricula." <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/index.htm>

Advanced Learning Opportunities (ALO) (Grades 1–8)

The ALO program is intended to offer a range of challenge to meet students where they are in each subject. ALOs are offered within general education school programs, offering a higher level of academic expectation and opportunity to those who wish it.

Where the program can be found:

ALO programs are available at: **Adams, BF Day, Coe, Dearborn Park, Green Lake, Hay, Laurelhurst, Lowell, Loyal Heights, Olympic Hills, Sacajawea, Thurgood Marshall, and West Woodland** Elementary Schools, **Blaine K-8** and **Madison Middle School**.

Spectrum (Grades 1–8)

The Spectrum program is academically 1 year ahead of grade level in reading and math. Spectrum is available at several schools throughout the district, and varies in form and popularity from school to school. Some schools have waiting lists for Spectrum. Others have too few district-identified Spectrum-qualified kids to fill classes, and complete the rosters with teacher-identified kids. This often is a great opportunity for those who have not been tested, or who did not make the necessary test scores but who can handle more challenging work. However, if the number of Spectrum-identified kids is too small, the rigor of the program can be seriously compromised.

Where the program can be found:

Spectrum programs are available at: **Broadview-Thomson, Lafayette, Lawton, Leschi, Muir, North Beach, View Ridge, Wedgwood, West Seattle, Whittier, and Wing Luke** Elementary Schools and at **Aki Kurose, Denny, Eckstein, Hamilton, Mercer, Washington, and Whitman** Middle Schools.

Accelerated Progress Program (APP) (Grades 1–12)

The APP (not to be confused with AP, which is a high school program—see below) is academically approximately 2 years ahead of grade level in math and reading. It is a self-contained program, which means the classes have only APP-eligible students. Because children join the program as they qualify (not always in the 1st grade), there have historically been more APP students in the higher grades than the lower. As there are a large number of newcomers to the program each year, APP teachers are experienced at welcoming new students into the program and bringing them up to class level within their first few months. The curriculum is rigorous, and as the students grasp basic concepts quickly, there is great opportunity for enrichment. Many of the children who qualify for APP have delayed or variant social development. Special attention is given to an

anti-bullying program and social skills. At Lowell there has been a long-standing buddy program between APP and Special Ed students, which fosters compassion and understanding.

Where the program can be found:

Elementary APP has for many years been housed at Lowell, sharing space with a Special Ed program. Beginning in 2009–2010, half of the elementary APP program will move to **Thurgood Marshall**, where it will share the building with an ALO program and a Special Ed autism program. Another ALO program, largely made up of students from the closing T.T. Minor Elementary, will move into the resulting space at **Lowell**. Half of the APP Middle School program will remain in its longtime home at **Washington** and half will move to **Hamilton**. Students from north of the ship canal plus Queen Anne and Magnolia will be assigned to Lowell and Hamilton, while all other students will be assigned to Thurgood Marshall and Washington. Currently, students with APP designation who register on time are automatically accepted into **Garfield** High School. This ensures that Garfield has enough accelerated students to drive a full complement of honors and AP classes, as well as its nationally-recognized music program.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (Grades 9–12)

Testing by the Advanced Learning office is not required to register for high school AP and IB courses.

AP (Advanced Placement) is a national program for high school students to take college-level classes. SPS high schools offer varying numbers of AP courses, which are designed to prepare students to take the College Board's Advanced Placement Exams. These exams have a fee, and students who perform well enough on them can receive college credit for high school work.

Two high schools, **Ingraham** and **Sealth**, offer the IB Diploma Program. See <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/advancedplacement.htm>

Qualifying for Advanced Learning Programs

Testing for eligibility as Academically Highly Gifted (APP) or Academically Gifted (Spectrum) is necessary for enrollment in the App or Spectrum programs. The deadline to apply for the 2008–2009 fall/winter testing cycle was October 8, 2008. Test scores with eligibility results are mailed January 30 or early in the week of February 2, 2009. The Open Enrollment period is the same as that for other SPS programs, in the month of March.

Summer testing is available only for students who relocate to the city of Seattle mid-year or later and are unable to participate in the fall/winter testing cycle. Applications will be available in late May 2009, are due in June 2009. All students must establish residency and enroll with Seattle Public Schools by mid-August 2009. (Exact dates will be posted in May 2009.)

<http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/eligtestprocess.htm>

Eligibility criteria are detailed on the SPS website:

<http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/eligtestcriteria.htm>

Because the testing is done in a group setting, the accuracy of results varies. There is an appeals process if a child appears to be suited for advanced learning but does not achieve the necessary test results. Families with free/reduced lunch designation can request retesting by the district. Others must seek out an approved educational psychologist for private retesting. Many families find that in the individual test setting their children score higher, sometimes quite a bit higher. There is a higher threshold to qualify through private testing, however. <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/advlearning/appeal.htm>

Questions?

Parents of APP students are available to answer your questions about the programs and the school communities. If you wish to speak with a family similar to your own, call Chris Rhinehart (206-723-5415) who has a list of parents who are willing to speak with you. Her list includes families of diverse races, backgrounds, socioeconomic levels and family structures.

CPPS

Community & Parents for Public Schools (CPPS) of Seattle is a non-profit started by Seattle parents, working together to ensure excellent public schools for all Seattle children. There are few things more important to the health of our city than the education of all our children. Active parent participation in the district and in the schools makes a big difference. Join us!

If you liked this guide, please consider a donation to help us continue our work. More information on CPPS, including membership and donation information, can be found at www.cppsofseattle.org, or contact us at enrollment@cppsofseattle.org.

Good luck with enrollment!

* **DISCLAIMER:** Many parents have contributed to the current draft of this guide and it represents our best understanding of how the enrollment process works. However, we cannot guarantee that is 100% accurate. When in doubt, be sure to consult with the SPS enrollment office. If you do find any mistakes, please let us know at enrollment@cppsofseattle.org so we can fix them. (Last updated: Feb 6, 2009)