GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Q: Who is responsible for nominating students for the Gifted and Talented Program or the Gifted Fine Arts Program?
A: Students (grades 2 - 12) may be referred to the Gifted and Talented Program for screening by a teacher, administrator, parent/guardian, or community member familiar with the student. In grades 7-12, students and peers may also nominate. Students (grades 2 - 7) may be referred to the Gifted Fine Arts Program for screening by a teacher, administrator, parent/guardian, or community member familiar with the student.

Q: When are nominations for the gifted programs accepted?
A: Nominations may be submitted any time during the year. Nomination forms must be completed and returned to the building W.I.N.G.S. instructor, gifted specialist or district gifted coordinator by the district-wide deadlines of **November 15** (for high school consideration for second semester only) and **December 15** (for consideration at any grade level during the current school year). Nomination forms for the Fine Arts Gifted Program must be completed and returned to the gifted specialist or gifted coordinator by the district-wide deadline of **December 15** of each year. The deadlines will be honored in order to allow adequate time for the screening and evaluation process to take place.

Q: What is the difference between the Gifted and Talented Program and the Gifted Fine Arts Program?
A: The Gifted and Talented Program serves academically gifted students. The Gifted Fine Arts Program serves students gifted in the arts.

Q: Can a student participate in both the Gifted and Talented Program and the Gifted Fine Arts Program?
A: Because of state guidelines, any student accepted into both the Gifted and Talented Program and the Gifted Fine Arts Program must choose only one in which to participate.

Q: When will we know if our child qualified for gifted services?
A: Families will receive notification by mail when the screening and/or evaluation is complete. In the Gifted and Talented & Gifted Fine Arts Program, evaluations are completed by the end of the school year in which the nominations was submitted.

Q: Should I be concerned with “cut off” scores for each program?
A: Because our evaluation process is designed to identify students' strengths vs. need for improvement, we use a matrix system for evaluation. This system allows us to evaluate various areas of ability instead of reducing the evaluation to an IQ score. Placement is also determined by district performance percentages, which fluctuate over time. For these reasons, we do not have set cut off scores.
Q: If a child is identified once, is he/she always in the program? Does my child have to reapply when going to (Steger, Hixson, High School)?
A: Once a child qualifies for gifted services, the child always remains eligible for gifted services.

Q: If a child is tested, but not identified, can he/she later be identified?
A: Yes. Students who do not meet entrance criteria after a screening or a full evaluation administered by the Webster Groves Gifted and Talented Program are eligible for retesting by program personnel. Retesting can be requested by a parent/guardian or staff member by using a standard nomination form. (See Gifted/Talented Program Nomination Form.)

If requested, the Webster Groves School District will accept up to two nominations per student* for the duration of the student's enrollment in the district (unless otherwise specified by the student's home school or the district). Students who meet the minimum screening score W.IN.G.S. can be considered for retesting by the gifted program after two years have elapsed since the initial intelligence testing took place. For students who did not meet the minimum screening score on the Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI), one year must elapse before that test can be re-administered. (*Nominations will be accepted at any time at the request of the school problem solving team.)

Q: If my child does not qualify for the Gifted and Talented Program, what resources are available to my child?
A: The gifted specialist can provide your child’s regular classroom teacher with strategies for working with your child's strengths. Students in grades 1 – 6 may qualify for the W.IN.G.S. (Webster INdependent Guided Study) program, another level of service for gifted and talented students in the Webster Groves School District. See the gifted website, gifted handbook, or contact your gifted specialist for information about the W.IN.G.S. program. In grades 7 – 12, enrichment opportunities are available through extensive after school programs and clubs.

Q: Can I take my child to a private psychologist for an IQ test? Can I have my child screened by someone other than school district staff?
A: Families may seek outside testing, through the appeals process, at their own expense, if their child receives a Full Scale IQ score of 120 or higher on the intelligence test administered by the Webster Groves Gifted and Talented Program. Outside testers must be certified psychological examiners, school psychologists, or licensed psychologists. A list of qualified testers is available from the gifted coordinator’s office. If you would like more information about any of the nationally normed assessments that we have available, please contact the gifted education office.

Q: How many students will qualify for the Gifted and Talented Program and the Gifted Fine Arts Program?
A: The Webster Groves School District serves up to 7% of the total district population in the Gifted and Talented Program. Up to 2% of the total district population can be served in the Fine Arts Gifted Program.
Q. What is the average class size in the Gifted and Talented Program and the Gifted Fine Arts Program?
A. Class or group sizes within the gifted program range from 5 to 15 students, with an average of 10 students per class.

Q: Are students participating in the Gifted and Talented Program and the Gifted Fine Arts Program required to make up missed classroom work?
A: Students are required to master the concept/skill presented in their absence, and to make up work that is taken for a grade or a test.

Q: How will my child be assessed in Gifted and Talented classes?
A: In the Webster Groves Gifted Curriculum, units are assessed using performance assessments, developed to correlate with the National Association of Gifted Children Standards (NAGC). Each performance assessment defines the unit expectations. Performance assessments are based on the students reaching a set of stated standards including a clear statement of expectations, purpose and desired outcomes.

Q: Do students get grades in gifted classes?
A: Formal assessments (progress reports/report cards) begin at second grade and are shared with parents and students throughout the year. Four levels of assessment are used in the Webster Groves Gifted Curriculum. Students move across the continuum during their years in the Webster Groves School District. Below is a chart showing which levels are used for each grade: The shaded areas represent the level most students achieve by the end of the year.

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<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Approaching</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Excelling</th>
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<td>6 – 8</td>
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Q: What are the specific criteria that must be met to get into the Gifted Fine Arts program?
A: Selection criteria include:
- Student Interviews/Group Performance Evaluation Day
- Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students – Revised
- Creativity Assessment

Q: How much time do students spend in the gifted pull-out programs?
A: In the Gifted and Talented Program, students receive the following approximate minutes of service weekly:
Grade 1 – 90 minutes
Grade 2 - 150 minutes
Grades 3 – 5 / 250 minutes
Grades 6 – 8 / 150 minutes
Grades 9 – 12 / 200 – 300 minutes
In the Gifted Fine Arts Program, students receive the following minutes of service weekly:
Grades 3 – 8 / 150 minutes
Grades 9 – 12 / GT English / GT Social Studies Class Periods

Q: Why is the Gifted Fine Arts screening only once a year?
A: The Gifted Fine Arts screening process includes a full day of group interviews with professional artists. Due to the expense and extensive nature of this process, the screening occurs once a year.

Q: Are the regular education teachers trained to meet the needs of the gifted and talented students?
A: All school staff is made aware of the nomination procedures and the nature and needs of gifted students at annual staff meetings. Study groups and professional development opportunities related to differentiated instruction are also offered to all district staff.

Q: Does my child need to be identified for the Gifted and Talented Program in order to qualify for high school Advanced Placement (AP) or honors classes?
A: No. Students enrolled in high school AP and honors classes have met the Webster Groves School District criteria for placement in those classes. For specific criteria for AP and honors classes, please contact your child's guidance counsellor or Sarah McGrath, high school gifted coordinator.

Q: What educational training is available to the gifted specialists in the Webster Groves School District?
A: All gifted specialists are certified in the area of gifted education by the state of Missouri. Throughout the school year and during the summer, professional development opportunities are offered to all K-12 teachers. Expert teachers in the district, as well as outside educational consultants and speakers, offer classes and forums for teachers to learn about and reflect on instructional practices. Teachers are encouraged to attend local, state, and national conferences on gifted education and other current educational topics related to gifted education.

Q: Should my child practice for the IQ test that he/she will take for evaluation?
A: Our expectation is that children do not practice (study) for this test. The practice effect occurs when past-experience of taking a test or similar problems has an impact on taking that same test again. It usually results in a higher than normal score, and is most pronounced when the interval between the two tests is short. If a student tells the tester that they have practiced the test, we have a re-test protocol that we follow. We can wait one year and give the same test again or give a different test. Achievement tests are a measure of what you have learned (skill). An IQ test measures an individual's ability to understand (problem solving). Test drill is not best practice for preparation for an IQ test. The practice effect makes it difficult to assess a child’s true ability.
Q: My child was in a gifted program in their former district, are the qualifications for the Webster Groves School District the same in all districts and is he/she automatically placed in the gifted program?
A: No. Each district has set qualifications that are guided by the state and determined by the district. All students that need to be evaluated for the gifted program must submit a nomination form to begin the process.

Q: Why does W.IN.G.S. end at 6th grade?
A: W.IN.G.S. services support student need through independent study that is based on student interest. Program options, elective classes and clubs based on student interest are offered at the middle school level.

Q: Will I be notified of my child’s actual testing date?
A: The testing schedule must remain flexible due to unexpected occurrences (absence, tests, illness, etc.) in the school setting. The actual testing date is subject to change. Most often students are tested within two weeks of the submission of the Permission to Test Form.

Q: If my child is not identified for the gifted program after the district wide screening, when can he/she be tested again?
A: Placement for the current school year is only guaranteed for students that meet the screening/evaluation criteria. Students who are not identified through the district screening process may be nominated for the program immediately. He/she may be tested at any time after the nomination is submitted. Based on the child’s placement on the testing log, testing could occur the current school year or the early part of the following school year.

Q: Will all first grade parents be notified of NNAT2 results?
A: NNAT test results are available upon request.

Q. Why has my child’s test scores changed since they were last tested?
A. In the past, IQ or intelligence was thought to be static and unchanging. In fact, an IQ score derived when a child is young, is likely not as accurate. From age 3 to age 10, two-thirds of children’s IQ scores will improve, or drop, more than 15 points. This is especially true among bright children – their intelligence is more variable.

Q: If I have further questions regarding the Webster Groves gifted programs, whom should I contact?
A: The district gifted coordinator, Kristy Daniels-Jackson, can be contacted at 918-4366 or via email - danielsjackson.kristy@wgmail.org or Sarah McGrath, gifted coordinator at the Webster Groves High School, can be contacted at 918-4607 or by email mcgrath.sarah@wgmail.org

Each school site has a gifted specialist who can provide program information and serve as support to parents and teachers. School principals are available to provide program information. The district gifted website also contains detailed information and resources.