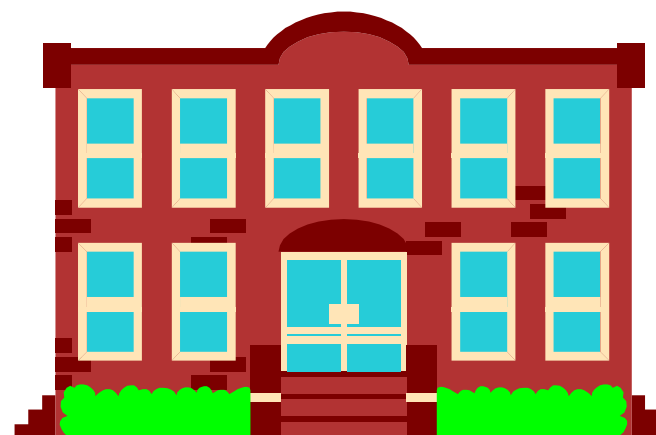


If you have questions, please contact your  
building principal or the  
Department of Pupil Services  
Westlake Board of Education  
Susan Forbes  
Coordinator of Gifted Services  
440-250-1264  
[forbes@wlake.org](mailto:forbes@wlake.org)  
[www.wlake.org/pupilservices](http://www.wlake.org/pupilservices)



DISTRICT POLICY  
FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF  
AND SERVICES FOR  
STUDENTS WHO ARE GIFTED

Information for Parents



This pamphlet should be used with:  
*Assessment Instruments Used for Gifted Identification*  
and  
*Identification of Children Who Are Gifted: Excerpts from HB 282*

## **DEFINITION**

“Gifted” according to State criteria means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 3324.03 of the Revised Code.

## **SCREENING AND ASSESSING**

The Westlake City School District uses a three-part approach in the identification of students who perform or show potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment in the areas of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creativity, and visual and/or performing arts.

The district ensures there are appropriate procedures in place for the assessment of students who are culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, have a disability or have limited English proficiency. Tests from the State approved testing list are used in all testing situations. When necessary, accommodations as allowed by the test publisher’s manual are used.

### **Stage I:**

#### **PRE-ASSESSMENT**

The pre-assessment aspect of the process involves gathering student data from a variety of sources including teacher, parent, and peer nominations, grades, portfolios, observations, review of student records, Ohio Achievement Test data, and outstanding products or performances, etc. All students are involved in the pre-assessment pool.

By using the pre-assessment process, the district ensures equal access to screening and further assessment of all district children, including culturally or linguistically diverse children, children from low socioeconomic backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children for whom English is a second language.

## **High School**

Westlake High School has a distinguished history of providing a number of honors and advanced placement (AP) courses for its intellectually gifted and talented students. The district is pleased, however, to be able to enhance its services by designating guidance counselors to work with the WINGS students in the following ways:

- provide a needs assessment to gifted and talented students.
- track student’s performance and help with appropriate course selection.
- act as independent study advisor.
- disseminate information about summer opportunities.
- oversee participation in county-wide high school seminars.

## **WRITTEN EDUCATION PLANS**

Written Education Plans are provided for each WINGS student in grades 1-7. The plan is specific to the services the student is receiving at each grade level. Parents are provided with a copy of the plan in the fall of each school year. The goals stated on the plan are developed by the teacher or teachers responsible for delivering the gifted service in that grade level. Progress towards the goals is monitored through parent conferences and quarterly progress reports. In the case of the resource room students, the Written Education Plan is shared with the classroom teacher and contains a policy for work missed while the student is in the WINGS resource room.

## **PROCEDURE FOR WITHDRAWAL**

The child or parents should put the request for withdrawal in writing. Upon receipt of the request for withdrawal the superintendent or designee will contact the parents to discuss the concern. If necessary, a group may be convened to discuss educational alternatives for the child. The parent has the final decision about the withdrawal.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

In Westlake, gifted and talented students are identified by professionally qualified persons as having potential ability and/or demonstrated achievement superior to most students.

Students are selected for the WINGS Program based on achievement tests in reading and math for a 96% core total and an individual IQ test of 130 or higher.

## **THE WINGS PROGRAM**

### **Elementary—Grades 1-4**

#### **Resource Room**

Students eligible for the gifted program participate in a resource room setting in their home schools. The resource room is available to the students for a minimum of 225 minutes per week and focuses mainly on an enriched math and language arts curriculum. Curriculum used includes Project M3, a math program, from the University of Connecticut and the language arts program developed through the College of William and Mary. Both programs are specifically designed for gifted students. Also included are activities that promote research methods, creativity, communication, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills.

The instructional design consists of large and small group activities as well as individual student work which stresses a multidisciplinary approach.

### **Intermediate School**

Fifth and sixth grade gifted students at Parkside are clustered with high achieving students in classrooms for the major subjects of math, language arts, science, and social studies. They are mainstreamed during the remainder of the school day.

### **Middle School**

The gifted program at Lee Burneson Middle School is instructionally focused on the math curriculum.

Students are tested at the end of their sixth grade year to determine appropriate math placements. Options include Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1 and the opportunity for acceleration or continuous progress by taking math classes at Westlake High School.

## **Stage II:**

### **ASSESSMENT FOR SCREENING**

The screening stage examines the data gathered from the pre-assessment stage and determines if additional assessment is necessary. School personnel examine all available information about a student to determine if any evidence of possible giftedness exists for the student and conducts necessary additional assessments.

Whole grade level screening takes place in grades three and seven. Third graders are assessed using the Cognitive Abilities Test in the fall. Seventh graders are assessed in the fall using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Cognitive Abilities Test.

When moving students from the screening stage to the assessment stage, district-determined cut-off scores are lower than the scores necessary for identification (e.g. specific academic 93<sup>rd</sup> percentile and above, a cognitive ability standard score of 125 or above for the superior cognitive area). After the district has received the results from screening, the parents must be notified within thirty days as to their child's performance(s). During the screening, if a student's performance meets the State criteria for identification, he or she will be identified and will not go on to Stage III.

## **Stage III:**

### **ASSESSMENT FOR IDENTIFICATION**

Assessment strategies provide additional data necessary for an identification decision. Strategies for additional assessment include the individual and group testing requirements of Sections 3324.01-3324.07 of the Ohio Revised Code; and are described in the Gifted Identification pamphlet.

Once additional assessment has been completed, the data obtained throughout the stages of identification are evaluated, the identification decision is made and the student's needs are determined.

## **REFERRAL**

The district ensures there are ample and appropriate scheduling procedures for assessments and reassessments using:

- Group tests;
- Individually-administered tests;
- Audition, Performance;
- Display of work;
- Exhibition; and
- Checklists.

Children may be referred for assessment based on the following:

- Child request (self-referral);
- Teacher recommendation;
- Parent/guardian request;
- Other (e.g. psychologist, community members, principal, etc.)

Referrals for assessment are processed during the months of October and February. Referral packets can be found on-line at the district website as well as in the main office of each building. A reminder notice of the referral periods will appear in district and building newsletters for both staff and parents.

Upon completion of the referral packet, testing will be scheduled during the months of November for the fall referral period, and March for the spring referral period. In accordance with test instructions, tests are administered by qualified personnel.

Parents will be notified by mail of all testing results.

## **GENERAL**

The district accepts scores on assessment instruments approved for use by the Ohio Department of Education administered by other school districts and/or trained personnel outside the school district.

## **TRANSFER**

The district ensures that any child suspected of being gifted are assessed within 90 days of the enrollment at the request of the parent. Parents requests can be made to the building principal or the coordinator of gifted services.

## **APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Parents have an opportunity to appeal any decision about the results of any identification procedure or the services for a student. (Ohio Revised Code Section 3324.03)

An appeal by the parent is the reconsideration of the results of any part of the identification process that could include:

- Screening procedure or assessment instrument
- The scheduling of children for assessment;
- The placement of a student in any program; and
- receipt of services.

Parents should submit a letter to the coordinator of gifted services outlining the nature of the concern.

The director of pupil services, with support from the coordinator of gifted services, will convene a meeting with the parent/guardian, which may include other school personnel.

The superintendent or director of pupil services will issue a written decision within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal request.

## **SERVICES: WINGS**

### **Westlake Instructional Network for Gifted Students**

This program is in compliance with the Ohio State Board of Education Rule for School Foundation Units for Gifted Children.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Gifted children have learning characteristics warranting special educational programming. These students tend to learn more quickly and are frequently challenged by a more in-depth approach to the school curriculum than would be possible in a regular classroom setting. Being with other students of advanced ability is stimulating and motivating to gifted students as well.

The Westlake City Schools are committed to providing a program of differentiated instruction to gifted students in order that they might become self-directed learners with healthy self-concepts and motivation to excel.