Frequently Asked Questions
about Advanced Learning Program (ALP) Grade 2 Screening

The Advanced Learning Program (ALP) begins in all Greenwich Public Schools during grade 2. ALP offers advanced curriculum, alternative methods of teaching, and student challenges in the areas of math, language arts, and interdisciplinary science. Interdisciplinary science begins in grade 3. (To read more about the ALP program in general, refer to www.greenwichschools.org/page.cfm?p=22.) If you have questions not answered in this sheet or online, contact your school's ALP teacher, your principal, or Bonnie O'Regan, the District's ALP Facilitator.

1. When does ALP screening begin in elementary school?
A combination of subjective and objective data is considered during ALP screening. ALP teachers participate in each grade 2 classrooms to further identify ALP candidates through hands-on teaching.

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is administered to grade 2 students during the month of October. The CogAT evaluates the level and pattern of cognitive development of students, as well as their abilities in problem solving using verbal, quantitative, and spatial (nonverbal) reasoning. The general abilities evaluated by this assessment reflect the overall efficiency of cognitive processes and strategies which enable an individual to learn new tasks or solve problems. Because these abilities are closely related to an individual's success in school in virtually all subjects, data gathered from these assessments will be included as one aspect of the multiple measures which help teachers make decisions regarding a child's instructional needs. The CogAT is also included as one of the measures used to determine student participation in the Advanced Learning Program. Parents will be notified of CogAT results via letters that are sent home.

Parents of students whose Standard Age Scores are in the very high range (130 and above) or have been nominated by teachers for further ALP testing are notified via letters that are sent home.

2. What happens if my child is not teacher-nominated in the initial grade 2 screening?
If a child is not nominated by a teacher, parents can nominate their child for testing. Regardless of who makes the nomination, all nominated children are tested. The parent nomination period will be announced to parents through school newsletters and other communications.

3. Should I nominate my child?
Each parent should consider the individual needs of their child and attend the informational sessions conducted by Bonnie O'Regan before nominating their child. The assessments for ALP Placement are "out of level," which means achievement is evaluated approximately two grade levels above the student's current grade. For example, a grade 2 student will be tested on grade 4 material. This can be a source of stress for some young children.

4. When is the grade 2 testing of nominated students?
ALP testing will take place for all students nominated by teachers or by parents in November. Parents will be notified of testing dates by the ALP teachers in their building.

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5. What happens next in grade 2 Placement Process?
Overall, three parameters are assessed during ALP Placement:

- Ability–reasoning abilities that are developed indirectly through instruction that challenges students to think in new ways
- Achievement–knowledge and skills specifically taught in schools
- Performance–a student's ability to integrate knowledge and skills

Informational sessions for parents will be conducted by Bonnie O'Regan.

6. Will I find out the results of my child's assessments?
Parents will receive letters with the placement recommendation and assessment results via mail.

7. If my grade 2 student is selected, when does the program begin?
Pull-out programs begin the second trimester of grade 2. This is scheduled differently by school, but totals 2 hours/week each in math and language arts. It takes place during regular classroom instruction time in math and language arts, in a separate room from the main classroom. ALP science instruction begins in grade 3, and totals 90 minutes/week.

8. If my child was not selected in the fall of grade 2, when is the next screening?
In April of grade 2, ALP screening is available to those students who were not a part of the grade 2 ALP program and who are nominated by classroom teachers or by parents. Deadlines for parent nominations will be announced in school communications after winter break. Parents will be notified of testing dates (testing is typically completed before spring break). Parents are notified of the outcome via mail by Memorial Day. Students participating in grade 2 ALP continue in grade 3 ALP without additional screening requirements. Appeals are due no later than two weeks before the close of school.

ALP screening processes are subject to change from year to year.

For more information on ALP screening

Attend one of the three Informational Meetings:
Monday, November 7th Byram Shubert Library 9:30 am
Wednesday, November 9th Cos Cob Libray 9:30 am
Wednesday, November 9th Board of Education Staff Development Room 7:00 pm

or

Contact Bonnie O'Regan, bonnie_o'regan@greenwich.k12.ct.us