

**SEARCH Program FAQs – 2011/12**  
By SEARCH Chairperson Maryann Daly

**Q: What exactly is the SEARCH Program?**

**A:** The SEARCH Program (Scholastic Enrichment and Resource for the Children in Huntington) was established more than 30 years ago following parent requests for additional and rigorous curriculum for their academically talented students on the intermediate level. It has grown to include enrichment opportunities for all elementary school children.

**Q: What curriculum is covered in the program?**

**A:** Fifth grade studies include half year units in genetics, biology and jurisprudence. Sixth grade studies include half year units in Shakespeare, the Elizabethan Age and forensic science. Hands-on activities and science lab sessions are also included. SEARCH students regularly participate in an active learning environment. Workshops on Shakespeare, mock trial competitions and field trips to the DNA Learning Center in Cold Spring Harbor complement weekly double period classes for both grades.

**Q: What are some of the enrichment programs?**

**A:** New York Hall of Science instructors conduct two one-hour lab sessions (“Float, Sink, Flink” and “All Charged Up”) in May for fourth grade students immediately preceding the state science test. Second and third grade students participate in one-hour Mad Science lab sessions in March, following the one-hour Science Spectacular Show, “The Marvels of Motion.” First graders (four workshops per class) and sixth graders (five workshops per class) actively participate in public speaking and writing sessions conducted by teaching artist, Mrs. Heather Thorgersen.

**Q: What is the OLSAT?**

**A:** The Otis Lennon School Abilities Test measures the cognitive abilities that relate to a student’s ability to learn in school. The OLSAT is a 40 minute group test, comprised of 72 questions, administered in the classroom in fourth grade. This test includes problems involving, inferencing, comparing and contrasting, analogies, logic and spatial relationships. The OLSAT is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 21, 2012.**

**Q: What if my child is absent for this test?**

**A:** A make-up test will be offered to all students who were absent.

**Q: Will I be able to submit outside testing (individual IQ test) instead of the OLSAT score?**

**A:** No. Only the OLSAT score will be used. The OLSAT is a group ability index, which indicates how a child performs compared to another child his/her age.

**Q: Why can’t the report card be used as part of the criterion?**

**A:** Using a standard and scaled score provides an objective and consistent measurement

of acceptance into the program.

**Q: My child has 4's on all his NYS tests, yet he isn't in the SEARCH Program. Why?**

**A:** Levels 1 - 4 cover a **wide** range of percentiles. For a more definitive result, a scaled score is used. The **top eight** scale scores in both the NYS ELA and the NYS Math Assessments were used.

**Q: When will I know if my child has qualified for the SEARCH Program in Grade 5?**

**A:** In late September 2011, letters will be mailed to the parents of the students who have qualified for the SEARCH program for the next two years.

**Q: What is the criterion used for entrance into the SEARCH Program in Grade 5?**

**A:** Grade 4 results on the New York State ELA and Mathematics Assessments (total scaled score) are reviewed. The Grade 4 OLSAT score (administered during the student's fourth grade year) will also be used. Additionally, the student's fourth grade teacher completes a rating scale (only if the child's achievement scores total 4 points or higher on the Renzulli scale) based on learning characteristics, motivation and creativity. A composite score is attained. Those students scoring in the top ten percent of the fourth grade population will qualify for the program.

**Q: What is the criterion used for entrance into the SEARCH Program in Grade 6?**

**A:** Only students new to the district will be assessed for the program for possible inclusion.

**Q: Do you drop children from the SEARCH Program each year?**

**A:** Under normal circumstances, unless a child moves out of district, **SEARCH** students are not dropped from the program.

**Q: Are children from Saint Patrick's School taking the place of the Huntington school children, when you arrive at the top ten percent?**

**A:** No. St. Patrick's students who qualify for the program are added onto the ten percent we take from the Huntington fifth grade school population.

**Q: What is the criterion used for entrance into the Math Olympiad program in Grade 5 ?**

**A:** Scale scores change each year. Therefore, it is necessary to post new cutoff scores at the beginning of the new school year. For the 2011/12 school year, a student had to earn a scale score of 722 or higher on the fourth grade New York State Math Assessment. The expectation is for these children to complete classroom math assignments and exhibit proper behavior in Math Olympiad classes in order to participate.

**Q: What is the criterion used for entrance into the Math Olympiad Program in Grade 6?**

**A:** A student must earn a scaled score of 739 or higher on the fifth grade New York State Math Assessment. The expectation is for these children to complete classroom math assignments and exhibit proper behavior in Math Olympiad classes in order to participate.

**Q: Will my child receive home work from the SEARCH Program?**

**A:** Only when necessary.

**Q: Should my child study Math Olympiad problems before each of the five competitions?**

**A:** No. Different types of problems are reviewed on a weekly basis and posted under the Math Olympiad section on the SEARCH e-board. All children are encouraged to try to solve these problems and post their answers and questions to me using the INote. They will receive an answer from SEARCH Chairperson Maryann Daly.

**Q. Where can I obtain updated information about the SEARCH Program?**

**A.** The SEARCH program e-board is updated daily. To access this e-board go to: [www.hufsd.edu](http://www.hufsd.edu) and then go to the Quick Click Bar on the homepage and select e-boards, then click on SEARCH.