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**TIER SYSTEM LEADS TO WIDE SCORE GAPS AT WHITNEY YOUNG
ACADEMIC CENTER**

Chicago, IL – Spots at Whitney Young’s Academic Center, the top ranked middle school in the State of Illinois, have always been difficult to get. This year the average admissions score of an admitted Whitney Young Tier 4 student was 846, while the average score of an admitted Tier 1 student was 796 – a difference of 50 points.

Suppose a Tier 4 student came into the 6th grade testing process with a perfect 600 points from 5th grade (e.g., all A’s in 5th grade core subjects and a 99% percentile on both the 5th grade Reading and Math ISATs) – then he or she would *still* need to reach the 98th percentile (raw score of 132 or 246 points) on the Academic Center Admissions Test to reach the average Tier 4 score. Similarly, Tier 3 students entering the 6th grade testing process in a perfect position would need to reach the 97th percentile (raw score of 128 or 235 points) on the Academic Center Admissions Test. However, a Tier 1 student who similarly entered the 6th grade testing process with a perfect 600 points would only need to reach the 84th percentile (raw score of 105 or 196 points) on the Academic Center Admissions Test.

This year’s Academic Center admissions scores are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Academic Center Admissions Scores (2011-2012)

	Total average admissions score	Tier 1 average admissions score	Tier 2 average admissions score	Tier 3 average admissions score	Tier 4 average admissions score	Rank
Harlan	591	541	555	555	561	662
Kenwood	727	687	681	679	693	780
Lindblom	727	663	678	666	666	767
Morgan Park	699	654	647	637	654	767
Taft	766	719	722	742	775	820
Young	841	796	830	835	846	876

In addition to wide differences between Tier scores at Whitney Young, there were also wide differences in admissions scores among the various Academic Centers. There was a 250 point gap between the average score of an admitted Young student (841) and

an admitted Harlan student (591). This is a much larger gap in admissions scores than is seen among Selective Enrollment High Schools. There the gap between the average admissions scores of the most competitive school, Northside (881 points), and the least competitive school, King (712 points), was a mere 169 points.

Also noteworthy is the much lower average admissions scores of students admitted to Academic Centers vs. Selective Enrollment High Schools overall. At first glance it would seem that getting into any Academic Center is much easier than getting into a Selective Enrollment High School. After all, average admissions scores at the most competitive Academic Center, Young (841 points), are 40 points lower than the most competitive Selective Enrollment High School, Northside (881 points). In reality, it is as hard or even harder to get a spot at Whitney Young's Academic Center.

The major reason why Academic Center admissions scores are lower is that points are awarded differently for the Academic Center Admissions Test than for the Selective Enrollment Entrance Exam. Any student who gets a 99% on the Selective Enrollment Exam gets a full 300 points – and a sizable number of 8th graders did exactly that. However, a 6th grader who gets a 99.0% (raw score of 135) on the Academic Center Admissions Test only receives 255 points – 45 points less than a perfect 300. The highest admission score such a student could receive would be 855. To get the full 300 points on the Academic Center Admissions Test, a student must get 99.957% (raw score of 150) – and only .043% or fewer than 1 in 2,000 students are able to score this high.

According to Matthew Greenberg, partner of educational services firm SelectivePrep, “Because of the way the Academic Center Admissions Test is calibrated, 6th grade performance on this test is vitally important – and can even overshadow 5th grade scores. Any student targeting one of the top Academic Centers must do extremely well on the Academic Center Admissions Test.” He added, “On an entirely different topic, the approval of a new Academic Center at Lane Tech will increase the visibility of Academic Centers overall – and has the potential to elevate Lane Tech's academic profile. It's a very exciting development.”

About SelectivePrep

SelectivePrep was founded by test prep veterans with over 25 years of test preparation experience – and extensive backgrounds in both classroom teaching and curriculum development. SelectivePrep offers the *only* classroom program that prepares

students for both of the standardized tests needed to gain admission to a Selective Enrollment High School and the Academic Center Admissions Test. SelectivePrep knows what it takes to train and motivate students who are intent upon gaining admission to one of the nine Chicago Selective Enrollment High Schools or one of seven Academic Centers. SelectivePrep's programs provide a thorough and rigorous review of test content, so students can approach these competitive admissions processes with confidence.

For additional information and registration go to www.selectiveprep.com or call (312) 409-8411.