

March 30, 2012

**ADDITIONAL SEATS AND DECLINING SCORES FROM LOWER TIER
STUDENTS FLATTEN COMPETITIVE ACADEMIC CENTER ADMISSIONS
RESULTS**

Chicago, IL – Average Academic Center admissions scores flattened as seats were added at the more competitive schools and scores required from lower Tier students plummeted. The total number of offers at Lane Tech jumped by a whopping 46% to 136 and also increased by 13% and 16% at Whitney Young and Taft respectively – after remaining steady in the preceding years. Additionally, the mean scores of lower Tier students continued to put pressure on composite scores. The average score of admitted Tier 1 and Tier 2 students declined by 14% and 29% respectively at Lane Tech, and by 47% and 33% respectively at Taft.

Getting into Whitney Young’s Academic Center is as tough as getting into Northside– or even tougher. Whitney Young, widely seen as the crown jewel among its Academic Center peers, saw its average admissions score climb an additional 6 points this year. This means a student coming into the testing process with a perfect 600 points from 5th grade would still need to get a 98% on the Academic Center Admissions Test – with even more spectacular scores required from higher Tier students. Lane Tech, in only its second year, continues to be the next most competitive Academic Center and the only other one with an average admissions score of over 800 points.

Huge gaps between admitted Tier 4 and Tier 1 students persist at the more competitive schools -- and in some cases widened further. The gap between Tier 4 and Tier 1 students’ scores at Whitney Young was 48 points, at Lane Tech 54 points – and at Taft -- a gaping 114 points. These gaps show that dramatically different academic credentials are being required for admissions at the top schools.

For example, suppose a Tier 4 student applying to Lane Tech 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 95th percentile on the Academic Center Admissions Test to reach the average Tier 4 score. However, a Tier 1 student who

similarly entered the 6th grade testing process with a perfect 600 points would only need to reach the 66th percentile on the Academic Center Admissions Test.

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

Figure 1. Academic Center Admissions Scores (2012-2013)

	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	616	574	549	540	NM	656
Kenwood	709	673	676	670	673	774
Lane Tech	807	767	766	809	821	844
Lindblom	721	700	693	686	700	784
Morgan Park	703	688	670	658	690	772
Taft	761	672	689	743	786	809
Young	847	808	816	840	856	886

In addition to wide differences between Tier scores at the top schools, there continue to be enormous differences in admissions scores among the various Academic Centers. There was a 231 point gap between the average score of an admitted Young student (847) and an admitted Harlan student (616). This is an even 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 (717 points), was only 164 points.

While Whitney Young, Lane and Taft continue to thrive, a number of Academic Centers on the south side of Chicago did not fare as well. Only Lindblom and Morgan Park met their “quota” of Tier 4 applicants. It’s also becoming apparent that Lindblom’s growing academic reputation and its ties to a Selective Enrollment High School are overcoming its location disadvantage.

According to Matthew Greenberg, partner of educational services firm SelectivePrep, “Academic Centers are still a relatively unknown treasure within the CPS system. Often elementary school administrators are reluctant to discuss them with parents since they do not want to lose their best students. Even so, it’s likely that more parents will consider applying to an Academic Center as a way to bypass the tough Selective Enrollment High School admissions process. Specifically, the high average admissions scores at Lane, given that the number of offers has increased dramatically, is evidence

that motivated parents and students believe they have been given another avenue to a top-quality education. On the other hand, schools housing Academic Centers without attractive high school options are going to continue to struggle to attract the top applicants – and need to revamp their approach to remain viable.”

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.