



**Current 7th graders:**

Excel on the Selective Enrollment Entrance Exam. Registration is NOW open for September 2015 classes to prepare for the Fall/Winter Entrance Exam.



**Getting into a Great High School**

A Newsletter Focused on the Selective Enrollment High School Admissions Process

Get Ready, Get Prepped, Get In!

Spring 2015, Volume 9

**Tough MAP Test Triggers Selective Enrollment Score Plunge**

The latest Selective Enrollment scores fell across the board as CPS used the more rigorous MAP as the 7th grade test. This is the first time CPS has used a Common Core aligned test in the Selective Enrollment

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**Figure 1. Average Admissions Scores (2015-2016)**

	2015-2016 average admissions scores	2014-2015 average admissions scores	change in points	2015-2016 "gap" between Tier 4 & Tier 1 cut-off
Payton	879	888	-9	<b>107 points</b>
Northside	869	881	-11	<b>133 points</b>
Jones	857	871	-15	<b>115 points</b>
Young	854	872	-17	<b>92 points</b>
Lane	809	833	-24	<b>124 points</b>
Hancock	733	NA	NA	-13 points
Brooks	722	779	-57	53 points
Lindblom	716	765	-50	23 points
Westinghouse	710	759	-49	-20 points
King	655	702	-45	-1 point
South Shore	649	696	-47	-3 points

**Upcoming Events**

**SelectiveMath Summer Classes (August 2015)**

Registration is NOW OPEN for our 5th Grade Math Enrichment Program (current 4th graders), 6th & 7th Grade Math Enrichment Program (current 5th and 6th graders), and Algebra Program (current 7th & 8th graders). Enjoy a weeklong workshop designed for creative students who are ready to tackle challenging math problems and puzzles – and have fun!

**SelectivePrep High School Admissions Seminar (Saturday, September 12th & Saturday, October 3rd)**

Parents of current 5th, 6th and 7th graders – master the complexities of the Selective Enrollment and Academic Center admissions process by attending one of these interactive sessions.

**Selective Enrollment Exam Preparation (Sept 2015)**

Attention current 7th grade parents – Registration is NOW open for fall classes to prepare for the Selective Enrollment Entrance Exam.

**Academic Center Admissions Exam Preparation (October 2015)**

Attention current 5th grade parents – Registration is NOW open for fall classes to prepare for the Academic Center Admissions Test.

Walter Payton College Preparatory High School  
 Northside College Prep  
 Whitney M. Young Magnet High School  
 Lane Tech College Preparatory High School  
 Jones College Preparatory School  
 Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy  
 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. College Preparatory High School  
 Robert Lindblom Math and Science Academy  
 Westinghouse College Prep

**Where will YOUR child go to high school?**



admissions process. Average scores at more competitive schools fell modestly – about 10-20 points, while less competitive schools saw dramatic drops of about 50 points.

### Huge Gaps Between Tiers

Scores of Tier 1 students were hit hard – opening up wide gaps in the points required for admissions. Tier 4 cut-offs for Young and Payton were about 100 points higher than Tier

#### Are you smarter than a 5th Grader?

Q: Base 2 is the numbering system used by computers. The number 10101 in base 2 equals what number in base 10 (our usual number system)?

A: 21

Just as base 10 uses powers of 10 (e.g., 10,000, 1,000, 100, 10, 1) base 2 uses powers of 2 (16, 8, 4, 2, 1). So 10101 means  $(1 \times 16) + (0 \times 8) + (1 \times 4) + (0 \times 2) + (1 \times 1)$ , or 21.

#### Can you keep up with a 6th or 7th grader?

Q: What is the probability of rolling a sum of 6 when two dice are thrown?

A: 5/36

Each die has 6 faces, and since 2 dice are thrown, the total number of combinations is  $6 \times 6 = 36$ . There are 5 ways to get a 6:

First Die	Second Die
1	5
5	1
2	4
4	2
3	3

For more information about Summer Math Enrichment Classes, go to [www.selectivemath.com](http://www.selectivemath.com)

Figure 2. Tier 3 & 4 Scores at Competitive Schools (2015-2016)

	Payton	Northside	Jones	Young	Lane Tech
change in Tier 4 mean scores (15-16)	-4 points	-6 points	-9 points	-13 points	-22 points
change in Tier 3 mean scores (15-16)	-5 points	-13 points	-13 points	-20 points	-24 points
change in Tier 1 mean scores (15-16)	-31 points	-22 points	-37 points	-31 points	-38 points

1 cut-offs, for Lane Tech and Jones about 120 points more and about 130 points more for Northside as shown in Figure 1.

### Top Scores Still Needed by Tier 3 & Tier 4 Students

Despite the overall drop in scores, students from Tier 4 neighborhoods still need scores in the top percentiles on the 7th grade test to get into the most competitive schools. Scores for Tier 4 students fell only 4 and 6 points and 5 and 13 points for Tier 3 students at Payton and Northside as shown in Figure 2.

### Chasm Emerges At Academic Centers

This past year, average Academic Center admissions scores were flat at the most competitive schools and fell noticeably at less competitive ones as CPS replaced the ISAT with the MAP as the 5th grade test.

### Conclusion: 7th Grade Test Matters More

The 7th grade test is still just one third of the total score – but the use of a tougher test has dramatically increased its importance in the admissions process. In the past, the primary differentiator was the Selective Enrollment Exam since so many students had straight A's and near perfect ISAT scores. Students who do well on the 7th grade test will have a greater chance for success in the admissions process.

Scores of Tier 1 students were hit hard – opening up huge gaps in the points required for admissions for students from different Tiers. Tier 4 cut-offs were nearly 100 points more than Tier 1 cut-offs at Young,

Figure 1. Academic Center Admissions Scores (2015-2016)

	2015-2016 average admission scores	change in points	2015-2016 "gap" between Tier 4 & Tier 1 cut-off scores
Young	862	+1	83 points
Lane Tech	833	-4	151 points
Taft	766	-13	294 points
Kenwood	731	-17	69 points
Lindblom	721	-17	197 points
Morgan Park	649	-30	69 points
Harlan	580	-56	NA

## Mastering Common Core – MAP & PARCC

Rigorous Common Core aligned tests have caused a plunge in Selective Enrollment admissions scores. But this can be a good thing. A tougher test provides an advantage to students who are well prepared – now they can rise to the top.

How? To get a top score, 7th graders must be proficient in statistics, data interpretation, algebra and geometry. Topics that were considered "accelerated" are now standard fare. Does your 7th grader know how to convert sentences to equations? Calculate the volume of a 3D figure? Factor square roots?

Deeper knowledge in basic areas is needed as well. How do you tell if you are dealing with independent or dependent probabilities? Can you interpret a Venn Diagram? Solid computational skills and mastery of math facts are a given – unlike before --no crutches will be provided.

Gone are reading comprehension passages with child-like simplicity – replaced by dense passages that draw on interpretative skills, knowledge of literary structure, and vocabulary. Does your child know the difference between a metaphor and a simile? What's an onomatopoeia? How can you determine an author's point of view? What's the best way to find a main idea?

SelectivePrep has incorporated changes into its curriculum and materials so students will enter the testing process well prepared for the new Common Core compliant tests. We believe that "practice makes perfect" – and have added hundreds of new practice problems – including a special section of "advanced math topics". Our material has detailed step-by-step explanations of how to get to the right answer plus a concept review for each topic. We've included more quizzes and practice tests to provide students with feedback on their progress. We've added more reading comprehension passages – including poems, excerpts from plays and non-fiction passages in obscure topics like philosophy or medieval medicine. With SelectivePrep, your child can approach the Selective Enrollment admissions process from a position of confidence and strength.



about 150 points higher at Lane Tech, nearly 200 points higher at Lindblom, and nearly 300 points more at Taft as shown in Figure 1.

Tier 4 mean and cut-off scores – already stratospheric, rose at Young and Lane Tech to means of 875 and 861 respectively. Tier 3 mean and cut-off scores rose at these schools as well. The fact that Tier 3 and Tier 4 scores rose, not fell, despite the use of a tougher test underscores

the high level of demand for seats at top Academic Centers among middle class students.

Students who are successful in getting admitted to Young or Lane Tech must achieve top scores. On average any student accepted to these schools is in the top 1-3% academically. To reach Lane Tech's 833 or Young's 862 composite score, a student would need to get all A's in 5th grade, 5th grade

test scores in the top 1% in both Reading and Math and Academic Center Admissions Test scores in the top 2-3% for Lane Tech and in the top 1% for Young. In fact, the high level of these scores puts these Academic Center students at the same level academically as admitted students at Walter Payton or Northside College Prep, the two most competitive Selective Enrollment High Schools.