

February 22, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardian of Third Grade Students,

SLCSD is committed to meeting the needs of our learners throughout the district. One of the ways in which we address unique learning needs is through the elementary Magnet and Neighborhood Extended Learning Programs.

The **Magnet** program is an all-day program for students who meet a district-established criteria of performance indicated on the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Elementary magnet programs are at Emerson (DLI), Hawthorne, and Whittier Elementary Schools. **Neighborhood ELP (NELP)** is conducted at every elementary school in the district. This program provides advanced learning support for identified students in grades 4-8 who demonstrate high academic ability or potential.

We are making some key changes in our testing procedure this year to meet the needs of students, families, and schools in more equitable ways. One of these changes is **administering the complete CogAT assessment to all students in grade 3 between February 28 – March 25** instead of administering just the screener in the fall of grade 4.

Why would we do this?

1. Giving the CogAT in the spring will allow us to build schedules and start services for students from the first day of school in the 2022-23 school year. Students may qualify for Magnet or NELP services and be informed before the end of the school year.
2. The CogAT screener consists of three subtests: one verbal, one quantitative, and one nonverbal. It's shorter, but only gives us one combined score. This is of limited use, and often doesn't help us to identify gifted students who might have specific areas of ability, who might be acquiring English, or who might have had interrupted schooling and be stronger in more areas than others. When we give the complete CogAT, we have three subtests in each area. This enables us to have a highest score in each area (V, Q, N) and a combined score (VQN, QN, NV). We are able to more equitably identify students who should be receiving Magnet or NELP services in this way.

The CogAT will be administered during the school day with the neighborhood ELP teacher as the proctor and the classroom teacher as the monitor. Following the testing, a district selection committee will review the data and make a recommendation as to which students are eligible for the MELP and NELP programs. You will be contacted by mail with your student's results.

Please feel free to contact your school's neighborhood ELP teacher if you have further questions or concerns.

With regards,



Dr. Tiffany Hall, Executive Director