

# Enrichment News

## Wenatchee School District Enrichment Program

**Mission:** To find and nurture talent in students by providing and supporting opportunities for them to pursue their interests at an appropriate pace and level of complexity and regular opportunities to work with students of similar abilities

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### Did you know?

Gifted ed programs have long been optional in our state. School districts have been able to individually decide if they wish to accept modest funding from OSPI (Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction), in which case they had to then follow some general guidelines for identifying and serving gifted students. Wenatchee School District has long been one of the districts who not only takes advantage of this system, but also supplements our Enrichment budget through levy funds. But some school districts have not had programs for gifted students. Beginning in September of 2011 that will no longer be an option. Gifted ed will, by law, be defined as a “basic education” for those students who are academically advanced enough to need it.

### WAETAG Conference invites teachers and parents

Interested in learning more about how to help young people meet their full potential? The Washington Association of Educators for the Talented and Gifted is hosting its yearly conference soon, and its focus is that “Proficiency is Not Enough.” The conference will be held the evening of Friday, October 15 and all day Saturday, October 16 in Bellevue, WA. The keynote speaker is Michael Clay Thompson, an experienced educator who has written many books designed to encourage language arts skills in students. The conference will cater to different strands of attendees, including elementary teachers, secondary teachers, and even parents of gifted children. You can register or just find out more information by going to [www.waetag.org](http://www.waetag.org).

### Teacher opportunity

Famed golfer Phil Mickelson believes so strongly in math and science that he is willing to put his money where his mouth is. He is hosting an all expenses paid trip to an academy for third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers so they can improve their skills and enthusiasm for math and science. Teachers can go to [www.sendmyteacher.com](http://www.sendmyteacher.com) and apply for this week-long class. The deadline for application is Oct. 31.

### Parent opportunity

The Northwest Gifted Child Association (NWGCA) is hosting a connections conference for parents of academically advanced children. It is called “Raising Your Gifted Child” and will be held January 29, 2011, at Redmond High School. The conference seeks to provide expert information to parents, but also to provide time for these parents “to talk with other adults candidly about the joys and challenges of raising a high-ability child.” Check out [www.nwgca.org](http://www.nwgca.org) for more information.

**“To throw a non-swimmer in the deep end of the pool is inhumane. To demand an Olympic swimmer remain in the shallow end until the rest of the class learns to swim is a ludicrous restraint.” ~Author unknown**

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## **AP advantages**

In the August 2010 issue of *O, The Oprah Magazine*, financial guru Suze Orman throws in her recommendation for taking Advanced Placement classes in high school. She says that most college students these days end up not graduating in four years. Not so, however, for students who have already earned credit through Advanced Placement classes/tests. These students tend to graduate on time as a result of already earning credit, thereby saving themselves (and their parents) 25% of the total costs for tuition. Orman says, “Bear in mind that the average tuition at a four-year public college for the 2009-10 school year was \$7020, compared with \$26,273 for a private college.” Following this logic, taking a typical amount of three AP tests, at \$86 each, could cost a family \$258, but save them \$1755 at a public college or \$6568 at a private college. The savings is even greater if your family qualifies for free or reduced lunch, as AP exams then only cost \$5 each. Recent research (Adelman, 1999) found that high school seniors who took only one AP class nearly doubled the likelihood of graduation from college (59% compared to 33% of those who did not take an AP class). Students who took two or more AP courses raised the likelihood to 76%. Additionally, although Running Start may appear to be free, the cost of textbooks may add up to \$200-300, while they are free for AP. AP advantages truly stack up.

## **According to The Great Books Foundation...**

“Gifted children need and deserve challenging, appropriate curriculum. When they don’t get it, they disengage from school, with tragic results. Studies show that 18 to 25 percent of gifted students drop out of school—an astonishing rate. The lower the social and economic status of the gifted student, the more likely the student is to drop out. Gifted students are bright, but they are still children. They will not ‘teach themselves’ or ‘do just fine’; they need educators’ expert help as much as any other student with special needs. There *is* something you can do to help your gifted students. Research shows that intervention for gifted students truly works, whether it takes the form of pullout programs, cluster grouping, enriched curriculum, gifted classrooms, or acceleration. All these practices increase gifted students’ test scores and, even more important, help gifted students stay engaged and on track for success in school and in life. Well-planned intervention can increase gifted students’ achievement scores up to one full grade level.”

## **Acceleration**

In 2004 A Templeton National Report on Acceleration was published. *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America’s Brightest Students*, tells us that acceleration is a much better option than most of us believe. It says acceleration (early entrance, grade skipping, subject-acceleration) is the most effective curriculum intervention for gifted children. Contrary to fears, it has long-term benefits, both academically and socially, and the cost is nearly nothing. Acceleration keeps students from being bored, unhappy, and turned off from learning. Using The Iowa Acceleration Scale and the input of educators and family makes it a low-risk, high-success intervention for qualified learners. “AP is the best large-scale option for bright students who want to take college-level courses in high school,” according to the authors, Colangelo, Assouline, and Gross. “Many educators have been largely negative about the practice of acceleration, despite abundant research evidence for its success and viability. Educational equity does not mean educational sameness. Equity respects individual differences in readiness to learn and recognizes the value of each student.” Here, here!

Click on [www.accelerationinstitute.org/nation\\_deceived/ND\\_v1.pdf](http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/nation_deceived/ND_v1.pdf) for more information.

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