



## Joint Admissions Testing Program

### **Q & A** Updated 8/22/09

Here are answers to common questions parents have about negotiating the JATP process.

**Question:** Must I wait until the 2010-11 school application is available on-line or the packet is mailed in order to receive the JATP testing application and list of psychologists?

**Answer:** No. The 2010-11 testing application will be available to you in *early September*. You may contact the admission office(s) of the JATP school(s) of interest to request the testing application, and it will be immediately sent by fax, e-mail, or regular mail. The on-line and print applications are not usually available until mid-October or later. Beat the crowd on scheduling.

**Question:** When should I call the psychologist to schedule the JATP testing appointment?

**Answer:** You don't need to. The psychologist will contact you promptly once your JATP testing application and fee have been received. Regular local mail usually takes one day. Psychologists in session often are unavailable to sign for special mailings which can be delayed. You should call the psychologist if you have not been contacted within a week of mailing your testing application.

**Question:** Can I send in my testing application before I am certain of the schools to which we will be applying?

**Answer:** Yes, as long as you are a bona fide applicant to at least one JATP school, you can indicate the school(s) you will *probably* apply to. You can add or delete JATP schools at the time of your child's testing appointment. You can add JATP schools later.

**Question:** When my child is tested before intended application to a specific JATP school(s) is made, how should that be handled?

**Answer:** Indicate the date of the JATP evaluation on the school application to facilitate the association of the results with your child's file.

**Question:** Can I wait to see how well my child does on the testing before deciding about applying to one or more JATP schools?

**Answer:** The JATP testing sessions and fees are only offered to bona fide applicants to one or more JATP schools. JATP owns the test results. Your child's results must be sent to at least one school. You could wait to decide about additional schools.

Question: What if I am unsure about applying to a JATP school but would like information on my child similar to the JATP evaluation?

*Answer:* If you would like to know more about your child's cognitive strengths and weaknesses, you can schedule a private educational planning evaluation, in which case the parent "owns" the test results rather than the JATP schools. These are billed at private rates but can later be sent to a JATP school if scheduled with a JATP psychologist.

Question: If my child's results don't seem right to me, can I schedule re-testing with a different psychologist?

*Answer:* No. Children can only be tested once in a JATP season to avoid test-retest invalidation. If the results do not seem to reflect your child, meet with the psychologist to find out how your child functioned during testing.

Question: What should I do if my child seems sick or out of sorts due to unexpected events within the family? Should I just go ahead to the JATP appointment because there probably won't be another time to go?

*Answer:* Call and discuss the matter with the psychologist. Regardless of a full JATP schedule, the psychologist will accommodate sickness and unforeseen family emergencies (the more notice the better, especially if you are unsure what to do).

Question: What should I do if my child becomes sick within 24 hours after testing?

*Answer:* Immediately report any symptoms, doctor visits, or missed school to the psychologist so that the file can be documented.

Question: What's the advantage of going back to the psychologist for a review of the results?

*Answer:* The JATP results that are sent to the schools include much more than the score ranges on the parent reporting form. The psychologist's report to the school includes the behavior of the child during the evaluation as well as specific test scores and analysis of score patterns. Some children score well but behave poorly. Others demonstrate strong work habits that enhance average scores. You really don't know the contents of your child's report to the school based on the parent reporting form alone. Review of evaluation results with the psychologist provides parents with timely insights about their child that may be helpful in the admissions process.

Question: Can parents receive feedback from the schools about their child's observation at the school and about the teacher recommendation?

*Answer:* Parents can receive feedback from the schools about their child's observation after the school decision date in April, 2010, upon request. Schools cannot report information on the teacher forms to parents.

Question: What if I want my child's JATP results sent to a non-JATP school, or other third party, such as a pediatrician, speech therapist, or other psychologist?

*Answer:* Return to the psychologist for a parent feedback consultation at the specified additional fee. You will be provided with a report that you can send to any third party. Otherwise, the results remain the property of JATP.

Question: What if I forget the testing appointment or cancel at the last minute?

*Answer:* There is no refund or obligation on the part of the psychologist to reschedule no-shows or cancellations with less than 48 hours notice. If it is possible to reschedule your child, a second fee will be due.

Question: What if we arrive more than a few minutes late?

*Answer:* The psychologist will try to work with you, but testing sessions are often tightly booked. Other clients will not be made to wait due to another's tardiness, even if unavoidable.

Question: What happens if I cancel a JATP appointment?

*Answer:* You will receive a refund less \$25 if cancelled at least 7 days in advance or less \$50 if cancelled less than 7 days in advance. With less than 48 hours notice, there is no refund.

Question: Will my child's test scores be higher if I wait until s/he is a few months older?

*Answer:* No. The child's responses are compared to children close in age, not to older children in the applicant pool.

Question: Should I schedule my child's testing after winter holidays so we can work a little longer on letters and numbers or other academics?

*Answer:* No. Testing in JATP is cognitive, *not* academic. You will have plenty of time to work on academics before the school observations during January and February.

Question: Should I work with my child on questions I have heard are on the JATP test?

*Answer:* No. Evidence of coaching must be reported by the psychologist to the schools and is not in your child's best interest. Plus, much hearsay is not accurate.

Question: Should I wait until my child is a little more mature to take the test?

*Answer:* Maturity matters at any age. While your child is maturing, so are the others.

Question: Should my child attend school or a school observation before a mid to late morning testing appointment?

*Answer:* Testing is often enjoyable, but it can be demanding and fatiguing for the child. Do not schedule other appointments before the testing.

Question: Should we just wait until after the testing to have lunch?

*Answer:* No. Most children eat mid-morning snacks at preschool or lunch during late morning in grade school. Make sure they eat before testing.

Question: Can I bring my younger child along if it is hard to find childcare?

*Answer:* Siblings can provide an undesired distraction, so use judgment.

Question: Should I schedule two children on the same day?

*Answer:* Some children don't do well waiting and benefit from their own special day.

Question: Will my child do better in testing if I offer a treat, like a new toy purchase, for doing well?

*Answer:* Your child will know that you don't really know what occurred during the session. The "reward" may be more on the child's mind than the tasks at hand.

Question: Should I wait to tell my child about the appointment until that day?

*Answer:* Some children respond poorly to an unannounced change in routine and get upset about missing school.

Question: Should I tell my child that s/he is going to play some games and have some fun at the appointment?

*Answer:* No. Particularly for 4-5 year olds, tell your child that the visit is with someone like a teacher and the activities are similar to doing activities at school with the teacher, just one child at a time rather than a classroom. Listen and do what you are asked, just as at school.

Question: Should I tell my child the testing is for a specific school and to see how well they do?

*Answer:* For 4-5 year olds, do not relate the visit to school appraisals of the child. For older and more mature children, tell your child the session provides information to parents about how they learn. You may tell older and more mature children the test is required by some schools the parents are considering, but there may not be openings even if the child performs very well.

Question: Is the deadline for the JATP results the same as the school's application deadline?

*Answer:* No. The common testing deadline for all JATP schools is February 22, 2010. Each school has its own *application* deadline, which is typically earlier. There is also a desired time period for receipt of the Teacher Recommendation, usually early February.

Question: Are there any problems in scheduling school observations if I decide to wait until close to a school's application deadline to apply?

*Answer:* Yes. Your child's school observation cannot be set until the application is received. Early school application will facilitate resolution of observation date conflicts when applying to more than one school. For example, the first observation date at most schools falls in early January. If you don't apply until February, you have probably missed the first two observation dates offered. You should submit the school applications as soon as possible.

Question: What should I do if I am unhappy with my child's experience in the psychologist's office?

*Answer:* First, address any concerns with the psychologist. A feedback consultation might be helpful. If not satisfied, you can contact the JATP chairperson. The JATP results are just one part of what schools consider in admissions. A JATP re-test is not permitted.

Question: Should I save a copy of the JATP testing application and explanatory letters from the psychologist?

*Answer:* Yes. You will be able to answer many of your own questions later.