

ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (AAP) ELEMENTARY CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is committed to challenging all students through talent development and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of advanced learners.

FCPS offers a continuum of advanced academic services for all students in Grades K-12. The continuum of services approach allows for a focus on matching services rather than labeling students. Students have:

- Multiple entry points for deeper learning opportunities in specific areas of need as they develop.
- A cluster group of students with similar academic needs to continue growing in their learning.

Teachers, administrators, and Advanced Academic Resource Teachers (AARTs) work together to provide the following levels of service at the elementary level:

Tier 1 Access to AAP Curriculum and Strategies, Grades K-6 (Level I)

All students have opportunities to think critically, reason, and problem-solve.

- All teachers use critical and creative thinking strategies in their lessons
- Classroom teachers provide opportunities using materials from the AAP Curriculum Framework a minimum of once per quarter.

Because Level I services are for all FCPS students, there is not a screening process.

Differentiated Lessons in Areas of Academic Strength, Grades K-6 (Level II)

Some students are strong in one or more subject areas. Classroom teachers may adjust instruction for students in these areas by:

- Providing different assignments and resources in those subjects
- Grouping students by their strengths, interests, and readiness
- Classroom teachers provide additional challenges using materials from the AAP Curriculum Framework.

Level II Services are re-evaluated each year.

Part-Time Advanced Academic Programs, Grades 3-6 (Level III)

Some students have advanced academic abilities in multiple subject areas. They need part-time AAP services.

- Students work with students that have similar academic needs through weekly pull-out classes or weekly co-taught lessons with the AART and classroom teacher.
- Teachers provide frequent opportunities to use materials from the AAP Curriculum Framework in Language Arts, science, social studies, and/or mathematics.

Level III services continue through Grade 6. Students do not need to be evaluated each year.

Full-Time Advanced Academic Programs, Grades 3-8 (Level IV)

Some advanced learners need a full-time advanced academic program with differentiated instruction in all four core content areas (Language Arts, mathematics, social studies, and science).

Students eligible for full-time AAP services are cluster grouped on a full-time basis and receive:

- Full-time use of materials from the AAP Curriculum Framework in Language Arts, science, and social studies curriculum, and
- Mathematics curriculum with depth and complexity that is at least one year above grade level.

Level IV services continue through Grade 8. Students do not need to be evaluated each year.

Screening for Levels II-IV

Multiple criteria are reviewed holistically to determine eligibility for all FCPS advanced academic services. Committees consider student work from opportunities with AAP lessons, examples of student reasoning or gifted behaviors from class discussions and activities, progress reports, achievement and ability scores, and

parent input. Committees consider whether students have access to a group of students with similar academic needs to support academic conversations and growth in the classroom.

Eligibility decisions for Level II and Level III services are made by a committee at the local school. Screening for Level II and Level III services is ongoing throughout the school year. To refer for Level II or III services, submit the AAP School-Based Referral Form to the AART and the local school.

Eligibility decisions for full-time Level IV services are made by the countywide central selection committee.

Screening for Level IV services occurs during specific screening cycles:

- Fall screening is available for students who are new to FCPS since January.
 - Fall referrals are due **October 7**.
- Spring screening is available for any Grade 2-7 FCPS-enrolled student
 - The referral window is from the first day of school - **December 15**.

Referral forms for Levels II-IV are found at <https://www.fcps.edu/node/38893>.

For more information, please visit the AAP website at: <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/advanced-academics-identification-and-placement/current-fcps-students>.

Ability Testing

FCPS uses ability testing as one part of the holistic screening process for Levels II-IV services. Test scores are not weighted or prioritized in the holistic screening process.

- All students in Grade 1 take the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT).
- All students in Grade 2 take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT).
- NNAT and/or CogAT may be administered to students in Grades 3-6 who do not have an ability test score during the regularly scheduled testing windows.

Parents or guardians may request a one-time retest in grades 3-6 during the fall testing windows. Please contact the school testing coordinator Laura Tapper, no later than **September 23** to request the CogAT or October 15 for the NNAT.

Please do not wait for test scores before submitting a referral for your student in Grades 2-7 as there will be no referrals for Level IV screening accepted past the deadline.

Elementary Parent Information Meeting

A virtual parent information meeting will be held at on September 29 at 5:00 PM. The AART will provide information about levels of service and examples at Lees Corner ES, explain the screening processes, and answer questions about part-time school-based and full-time Level IV services.

Young Scholars

FCPS developed the Young Scholars Model to help identify students from historically underrepresented populations for AAP services. The model provides additional opportunity to nurture talent and build confidence so that students can meet their potential.

Twice-Exceptional (2e)

Some gifted students also have learning disabilities. These twice-exceptional, or “2e” students need strengths-based instruction. Their learning challenges also must be supported. FCPS has created a 2e handbook to help schools and families understand how to identify and serve 2e students. You can find these resources by going to www.fcps.edu and searching “2e.”

Middle and High School AAP

Additional information about middle and high school services may be found on the Advanced Academic Programs web page. <https://www.fcps.edu/academics/academic-overview/advanced-academic-programs>