

LEVEL IV ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ORIENTATION PACKET

WHAT WE BELIEVE

What educators and psychologists recognize as giftedness in children is really potential giftedness, which denotes promise rather than fulfillment and probabilities rather than certainties about future accomplishments. How high these probabilities are in any given case depends on the match between a child's budding talents and the kinds of nurturance provided.

Dr. Harry Passow, 1985

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Dr. Sloan Presidio, Assistant Superintendent
Instructional Services

Noel Klimenko, Director
PreK-12 Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Carol V. Horn, K-12 Coordinator
Advanced Academic Programs

Kirsten Maloney and Lori Bedsole
Elementary Advanced Academic Programs Specialists

Jeff Lonnett
Advanced Academic Programs Specialist

DonnaLynn Cooper
Elementary School Advanced Academic Resource Teacher

Beth Baldwin
Middle School Advanced Academic Programs Specialist

Carlota Shewchuk
Secondary IB Programs Specialist

Chris Powell
High School Advanced Academic Programs Specialist

DIVISION STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED

Every child has the basic right to an education that promotes the development of his or her potential. Each child has a unique profile of strengths and abilities. FCPS is committed to providing challenging learning experiences for all learners that build on their individual strengths and optimize their abilities.

Children who have been identified as gifted and talented have the potential to achieve high levels of accomplishment that need to be recognized and addressed. These students exhibit unusual performance capability in intellectual,

creative, and/or artistic endeavors. They may also demonstrate exceptional leadership capacity and excel in specific academic areas. In order to meet their needs and develop their abilities, these highly able learners require a differentiated curriculum that provides advanced learning opportunities.

FCPS LOCAL PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED 2011–2016

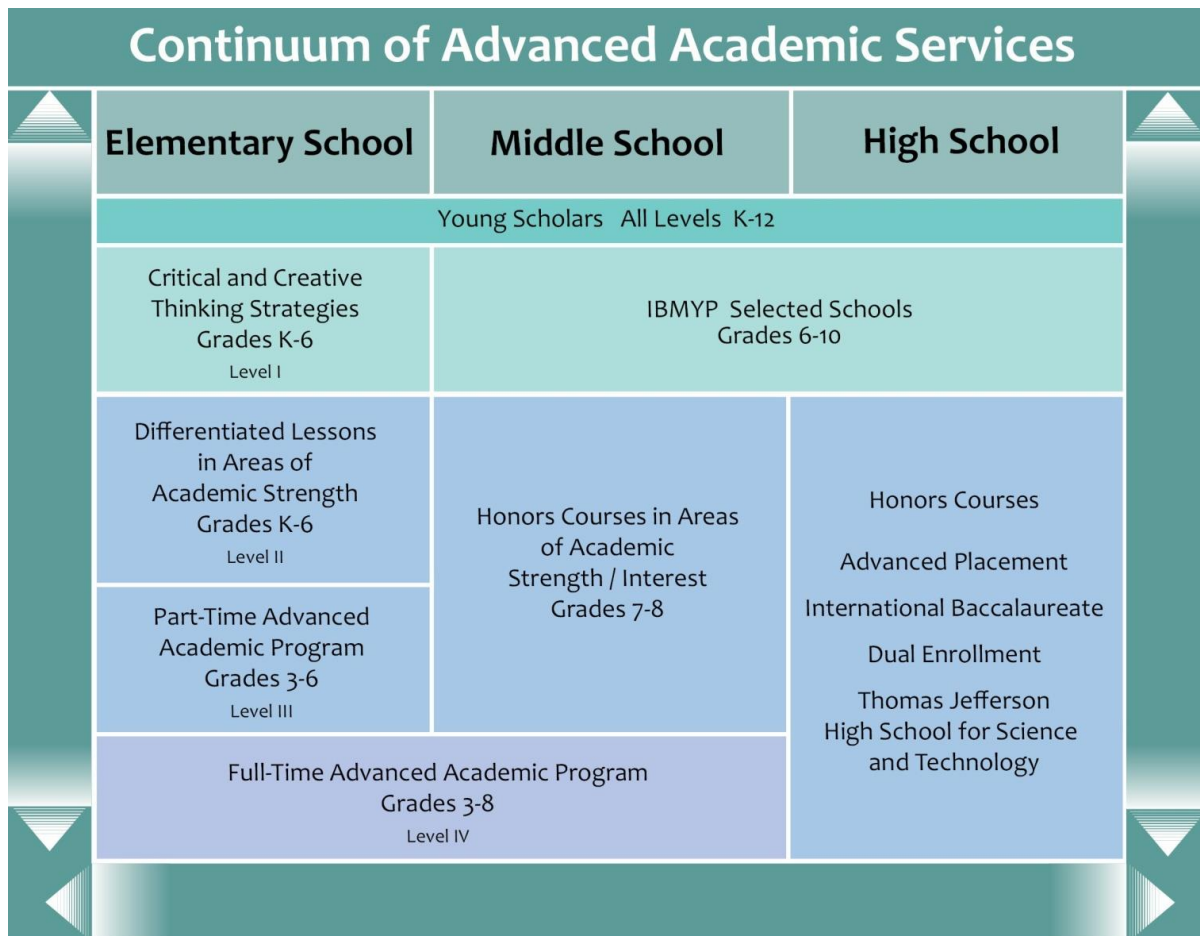
Submitted to the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education

The Virginia Board of Education adopted the current Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students, which outline the requirements of the local plan for the education of the gifted that school divisions must submit to the Department of Education for approval. Currently, local plans for the gifted are renewed every five years.

Fairfax County Public Schools’ Local Plan for the Gifted outlines a continuum of gifted services that are offered in grades K-12. The plan was updated and revised through the efforts of a committee that consisted of community members, central office staff, and elementary, middle, and high school administrators and teachers.

To read the plan, please visit the Advanced Academic Programs website:

<http://www.fcps.edu/is/aap/pdfs/localplan/FinalLocalPlan.pdf>



Adapted from the *Integrated Continuum of Special Services* by Sally Reis and *Levels of Service* by Donald Treffinger.

LEVEL IV PROGRAM: A THOUGHT PROVOKING ENVIRONMENT...

The Level IV program for grades 3 through 8 is a full time academic program that offers highly challenging curriculum and instruction based on the Fairfax County Program of Studies to identified students. Level IV teachers create an environment in which students are encouraged to explore, investigate, and share their ideas and interests with other

highly able peers. The depth, breadth, and pace of instruction are adjusted according to student needs, with a strong emphasis on critical and creative thinking. Center students are provided higher level reading materials and resources in the core content areas and in the mathematics program, they are accelerated by one grade level. Students in the center are part of the total school community. They participate with the entire student body in activities such as student government, physical education, band, strings, and various other electives.

CURRICULUM GOALS IN THE LEVEL IV PROGRAM

- I. To provide for the mastery, enrichment, and extension of the core standards of learning in all curriculum areas, with appropriate resources at a pace, depth, and complexity for high ability learners.
- II. To develop an understanding of systems of knowledge, themes, issues, and problems in the external world.
- III. To develop cognitive and metacognitive skills that foster independent, self-directed learning.
- IV. To develop self-understanding.
- V. To develop social skills which enable students to build their leadership skills, interpersonal skills, and ability to effectively relate to others in a variety of situations.

How Level IV Teachers Differentiate Curriculum and Instruction

Content (what students learn)

- Facilitate the use of advanced reading, resources, and research materials.
- Present content with greater levels of depth, breadth, complexity, or abstractness through levels of questioning, problem-based learning, and concept-based instruction that focuses on "big ideas."

Process (how students learn)

- Accelerate the pace of teaching and learning.
- Compact basic knowledge and skills in core content areas.
- Provide opportunities to apply ideas and skills to contexts explored in class and those that may be unfamiliar.

Product (how students demonstrate their learning)

- Offer assignments that are more open-ended or ambiguous in nature.
- Assign products that require greater levels of independence.
- Assess work with indicators of quality that model the work of experts in the field.

How Parents Can Contribute to their Child's Success

Create a safe, positive, nurturing atmosphere.

- Be a good listener.
- Encourage effort and perseverance.
- Encourage tolerance, empathy, understanding, and recognition of different points of view.
- Maintain a balance between active, organized interests, television and computer activities, and time to reflect.

Encourage your child to use his/her intellectual abilities effectively.

- The perfectionist needs help with letting go of an assignment which is not "perfect."
- The disorganized child needs help clarifying requirements, finding materials, and finishing work on time according to expectations.
- The quick or impulsive child leaps directly from defining a task to an immediate solution, but needs support in identifying the steps to follow so a more sequential approach can be applied when the tasks become more complex.

Model perseverance and risk-taking.

- Encourage short and long-range planning. Commitment to an endeavor is usually needed before mastery or success is attained.
 - Encourage appropriate social behavior and the acceptance of personal responsibility for one's actions.
 - Model behavior that demonstrates respect for others.
 - Discuss optional steps needed to accomplish a goal.
- Learn when action on your part is required.**
- Encourage independence and self-discipline.
 - Understand that some situations or problems do not need adult intervention to be solved.
 - Decide when to answer questions and when to send a child seeking his/her own answers.

ANSWERS TO THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For *additional* information please visit the [ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS WEB SITE](#)

HOW IS THE LEVEL IV CURRICULUM DIFFERENT FROM GENERAL EDUCATION?

A differentiated curriculum framework and Level IV curriculum guide are used to extend and enrich the FCPS Program of Studies for advanced learners. The framework and guide were developed for the Level IV program by FCPS in collaboration with national experts in the field of gifted education. The framework and guide outline the goals and objectives of the Level IV program and provide recommended teacher resources. In addition, the Parallel Curriculum Model, a nationally recognized model for designing curriculum for gifted learners, is used to create lessons and units that are varied in depth, breadth, and pace of instruction. Information about the curriculum framework can be found on the Advanced Academic Programs website: <http://www.fcps.edu/is/aap/gradelevel.shtml>. The Fairfax County Public Schools' website has information on the extensions to the Program of Studies as they relate to the elementary progress report. <http://www.fcps.edu/is/elemprogreport/gradelevelinfo.shtml#iv>.

HOW IS THE LEVEL IV PROGRAM DIFFERENT FROM THE SCHOOL-BASED LEVEL II AND LEVEL III PROGRAMS?

The Level IV program for students in grades 3 through 8 offers identified students a full-time, highly challenging instructional program in all subject areas. The Level II and Level III school-based program provides varying levels of challenge to students with specific academic strengths through extensions and enrichment of the Program of Studies.

HOW MUCH HOMEWORK CAN STUDENTS EXPECT TO RECEIVE?

The Level IV program follows the same regulation guidelines as the general education program. FCPS regulation number [3205.1](#) states, "On average, homework across disciplines should not exceed 0.5 hours at the primary level, 1 hour at the upper elementary level, 1.5 hours at the middle school level, and 2 hours at the high school level. The amount of time spent at home may vary. Long-range projects may require additional time beyond the school day."

The Level IV program is designed to encourage maximum development of potential rather than repetition of the familiar. Homework assignments should be relevant to content being studied with an emphasis on quality rather than

quantity. Homework for advanced learners should focus on understanding content in greater depth and complexity and not on increased time commitments.

HOW ARE TEACHERS SELECTED TO TEACH IN THE LEVEL IV PROGRAM?

Level IV teachers are selected by the school principal. All FCPS teachers must hold a valid Virginia teaching license. Level IV teachers are required to receive either a state endorsement in gifted and talented education or a FCPS Advanced Academic endorsement within five years of accepting a Level IV teaching assignment.

WHAT ARE THE STUDENT-TEACHER RATIOS FOR LEVEL IV CLASSES?

Student-teacher ratios are determined by the Fairfax County School Board and are the same ratios used with general education.

ARE THERE SPACE LIMITATIONS IN THE LEVEL IV CENTER PROGRAMS?

No, all students found eligible by the central selection committee for Level IV services are guaranteed placement.

HOW IS TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED TO A FULL-TIME AAP (LEVEL IV) CENTER?

FCPS provides transportation for students who have accepted placement to a level IV center. Bus routes will be noted on the permission for placement forms that are sent home with eligibility decision letters.

CAN A SIBLING OF A STUDENT IN A LEVEL IV CENTER BE TRANSFERRED TO THE SAME SCHOOL?

A parent or guardian may request a student transfer for his or her school-aged child (K-12) for the next school year during transfer season. Student transfers are made on a space available basis and must meet one of the requirements in [regulation 2230.11](#):

1. Family relocation
2. Child care hardship (elementary only)
3. Medical, emotional, or social adjustment
4. FCPS parent employee working 20 or more hours per week
5. High school curricular program

Parents/guardians are advised to review the student transfer regulation and frequently asked questions before making a request. For further details visit:

[http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/94VJ8U4BFF03/\\$file/R2230.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/94VJ8U4BFF03/$file/R2230.pdf)

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS FOUND ELIGIBLE FOR THE LEVEL IV CENTER PROGRAM BUT CHOOSES NOT TO ATTEND THE CENTER?

Students found eligible for the Level IV center program may defer eligibility by noting so on the parent/guardian permission form. Students may activate their eligibility status at a later date by submitting the *Reactivation Form* to the Advanced Academic Programs Office and including a copy of the eligibility letter. The *Reactivation Form* is available at <http://www.fcps.edu/is/aap/forms.shtml>. Students may also be considered for Level III school-based services at the

local school. Please speak with the Advanced Academic Resource Teacher at your local school to discuss the Level III program.

WHAT ADVANCED ACADEMIC SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

All 26 middle schools offer Honors classes in the four core subjects. In addition, twelve middle schools offer the Level IV center program.

MY CHILD HAS BEEN IN AN ELEMENTARY LEVEL IV CENTER PROGRAM. WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

Rising seventh grade students, who are center-eligible, may attend the assigned middle school Level IV center, or they may take Honors classes at their local middle school. During the course selection process, parents/guardians help children make the decision whether to attend a middle school Level IV center or enroll in Honors classes at their local middle school.

HOW IS THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL IV CENTER PROGRAM DIFFERENT FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL HONORS CLASSES?

The Level IV center program for students in grades 7 and 8 offers identified students a full-time, highly challenging instructional program in all core subjects: social studies, English, science, and/or mathematics. Honors classes provide opportunities for students to develop academic strengths through a more rigorous and challenging program in one or more identified subject areas.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Parenting for High Potential

The National Association for Gifted Children

<http://www.nagc.org/parenting-high-potential>

This quarterly magazine shares advice for parents about developing a child's gifts and talents. Each issue includes special features, expert advice columns, software and book reviews, ideas from parents of high potential youngsters, and a pullout children's section.

Parenting Gifted Children

The National Association for Gifted Children

<https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents>

This comprehensive guide covers topics such as working with high achievers and young gifted children, acceleration, advocating for talented students, serving as role models and mentors for gifted kids, homeschooling, underachievement, twice-exceptional students, and postsecondary.

The Journal for the Education of the Gifted

The Association for the Gifted

<http://jeg.sagepub.com/>

Issued quarterly and directed to professionals and parents, the journal covers major topics in gifted research and innovative programming. In addition, the journal provides reviews of literature and historical perspectives on gifted

education.

Gifted Education Press Quarterly

<http://www.giftedpress.com/gepqnw.htm>

This publication includes interesting essays on differentiated curriculum and great writers and thinkers of world literature, history, politics and philosophy.

2e: Twice Exceptional Newsletter

<http://www.2enewsletter.com/>

This online newsletter, published bimonthly, focuses on understanding twice exceptional children (children who are gifted and have learning or attention difficulties). The newsletter includes the following: articles on giftedness and learning differences; profiles of experts, organizations and resources; columns that offer insight into living and working with twice exceptional children; research findings, trends, and events; and book reviews and recommendations.

BOOKS

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success

Author: Carol Dweck

Publisher: Ballantine Books

ISBN: 978-0345472328

http://www.amazon.com/Mindset-The-New-Psychology-Success/dp/0345472322/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1397570647&sr=8-1&keywords=mindset

Parenting Gifted Children

Author: Jennifer L. Jolly, Ph.D., Donald J. Treffinger, Ph.D., Tracy F. Inman, Joan Franklin Smutny, Ph.D.

Publisher: Prufrock Press (2010)

ISBN: 978-1-59363-430-8

<https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents>

Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties: Overcoming Obstacles and Realizing Potential

Authors: Rich Weinfeld, Linda Barnes-Robinson, Sue Jeweler, and Betty Roffman Shevitz

Publisher: Prufrock Press

ISBN: 978-1-59363-180-2

<http://www.prufrock.com/Smart-Kids-With-Learning-Difficulties-Overcoming-Obstacles-and-Realizing-Potential-2nd-ed-P1880.aspx>

Some of My Best Friends Are Books: Guiding Gifted Readers from Pre-School to High School

Author: Judith Wynn Halsted, M.S.

Publisher: Great Potential Press

ISBN: 978-0-910707-96-1

http://www.amazon.com/Some-Best-Friends-Are-Books/dp/0910707960/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1460550635&sr=8-1&keywords=some+of+my+best+friends+are+friends+are+gifted

Solving Executive Function Challenges: Simple Ways to Get Kids with Autism Unstuck and on Target

Author: Dr. Lauren Kenworthy
Publisher: Brookes Publishing
ISBN: 978-1598576030

The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children: What Do We Know?

Author: Maureen Neihart, Sally Reis, Nancy Robinson, & Sidney Moon (Eds.)

Publisher: Prufrock Press/2002

ISBN: 1-882664-77-9

<http://www.amazon.com/Social-Emotional-Development-Gifted-Children/dp/1882664779>

WEBSITES

Fairfax County Public Schools Advanced Academic Programs Website

www.fcps.edu/is/aap

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

<http://www.nagc.org>

Practical Tools for Parents

<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents>

Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students

<http://www.aegus1.org/about.html>

Virginia Association for Gifted Children (VAG)

<http://vagifted.org>

Center for Gifted Education at William and Mary Enrichment Programs

<http://cfge.wm.edu/k-12.htm>

University of Virginia Summer Enrichment Programs

<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/centers/enrich/>

Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/>

SENG: Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted

<http://www.sengifted.org/>

International Baccalaureate Organization

<http://www.ibo.org/>

Advanced Placement

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html>

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

Summer Camps and Programs for Youth: George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

intended for ages 5-18, <http://summercamps.gmu.edu>

Northern Virginia Writing Project: George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

Intended for rising 5th-10th graders who love to write and are looking for new ways to grow as a writer.

<http://nvwp.org/youngwriters/ssi/>

Summer Safari Day Camp: National Zoo, Washington, DC

Intended for rising K-7th graders; students will explore the lives, habitats, and conservation of animals around the world. <http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Education/Camps/DayCamp/>

CREATE at the National Building Museum: National Building Museum, Washington, DC

Intended for rising 3rd-5th graders; students will experience the world we build for ourselves in new ways—through the building, visual and performing arts! <http://www.nbm.org/families-kids/summer-camp.html>

Summer Enrichment for Gifted Education: College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA

Intended for ages 4 years-grade 10 with an emphasis on the development of problem-solving skills and higher level thinking skills. <http://education.wm.edu/centers/cfge/precollegiate/sep/>

iD Tech Camps:

Summer tech camps held at the University of Virginia, William & Mary, Georgetown, American, and over 80 prestigious universities nationwide. Students create apps, video games, C++ and Java programs, movies, robots, and more. Intended for: Ages: 7-17 <http://www.iDTech.com>