

## FALL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

### ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (AAP) CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) offers a continuum of advanced academic services for all students in grades K-8. Learning experiences are designed to develop higher-level thinking through enrichment, acceleration, and extension of the Program of Studies (POS). Teachers, administrators, and Advanced Academic Resource Teachers (AARTs) work together to provide the following levels of services:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking Lessons, Grades K-6 (Level I)**

The first level is provided to all students in kindergarten through grade six and consists of model lessons that are designed to teach critical and creative thinking skills. The lessons are modeled in all classrooms by AARTs and the thinking strategies are then used throughout the year by classroom and other teachers who work with students. Student responses to these lessons are used as part of the identification process for Levels II-IV. Parents may also practice these strategies during family conversations and activities. A description of the nine critical and creative thinking strategies can be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/academics/elementary-school-academics-k-6/advanced-academics/critical-and-creative-thinking>.

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

The AART collaborates with classroom teachers to provide additional challenges through lessons and resources that extend and enrich the POS. Screening for this level of service is ongoing throughout the school year. The Young Scholars Model begins at this level and is designed to find and nurture advanced academic potential in students from historically underrepresented populations.

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

Students identified by a local school screening committee for Level III part-time advanced academic services are challenged through models and strategies designed to extend and enrich the POS in the four core subject areas. Screening for this level of service is ongoing throughout the school year.

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

Students found eligible for placement in full-time Level IV Advanced Academic Programs through a central selection process receive a highly challenging instructional program in the four core subject areas. Screening for this level of service occurs in the fall for students who are new to FCPS and in the spring for all other students. The referral deadline is October 5, 2017, for students who are new to FCPS and January 12, 2018 for spring screening. Additional information is available in the Parent Information Packet published on the AAP website: <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/advanced-academics-identification-and-placement/elementary-school>.

- **International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP): Selected Schools, Grades 6-10**

The IBMYP is designed for students ages 11-16. The program helps students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world. The curriculum is supported by the fundamental concepts of intercultural awareness, holistic learning, and communication.

- **Honors, Grades 7-8**

Advanced and/or accelerated classes are available for students in grades 7-8 through an open

enrollment process. Students receive instruction that is differentiated for advanced learners in the four core subjects in one or more areas of academic strength or interest.

## SCREENING

Multiple criteria are reviewed to determine eligibility for all FCPS advanced academic services. The local school committee determines student eligibility for part-time school-based services. The countywide central selection committee determines eligibility for full-time AAP Level IV placement.

## TESTING

In the spring, the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) is administered to all FCPS first grade students. In the fall, the CogAT-Custom Form is administered to all FCPS second grade students. During the fall testing cycle, the NNAT and/or Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) may be administered to students in grades 3-6 who do not have an ability test score. A second grade screening pool is established using the test results from first and second grade testing. Students in the second grade pool are automatically screened for full-time AAP Level IV placement. Parents or guardians may exercise a one-time retest option during the fall testing cycle.

## REFERRALS FOR FULL-TIME AAP LEVEL IV (Grades 2–7)

Parents or guardians of students not in the second grade screening pool may initiate the full-time AAP Level IV screening process by completing and submitting an **Advanced Academic Programs Level IV Referral Form to the local school principal no later than January 12, 2018.** No late referrals will be accepted. Second grade students **not** in the pool and **all** students in grades 3-7 are screened only by referral. Forms are available on the AAP website (<https://www.fcps.edu/registration/advanced-academics-identification-and-placement/elementary-school>) and in the *Parent Information Packet* available at the local school. Parents or guardians of students who are in the second grade pool will be notified by the school. Students who are not in the second grade pool will not receive notification. The benchmark score used to create the second grade pool will be published on the AAP website mid-January.

**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 of January 12, 2018.** If you are waiting for test scores and would like your student screened for Level IV please submit the referral by the published deadline (even if you have not received the test scores for your student).

## PARENT INFORMATION MEETING

A parent information meeting will be held at the London Towne library on **October 11, 2017 at 6:00 pm.** The AART will provide information about levels of service and examples at London Towne as well as explain and answer questions about the screening processes for part-time school-based and full-time Level IV services. The meeting is open to all K-6 parents. Please contact Lucy Zamora, Advanced Academics Resource Teacher, at [lkzamora@fcps.edu](mailto:lkzamora@fcps.edu) if you have any questions about the program.