

Advanced Academic Programs

Screening and Identification for
Full-Time AAP Services, Grades 3-8

STUDENTS IN GRADES 2-7 MAY APPLY

Kent Gardens Elementary School
September 19, 2024



Fairfax County Schools (FCPS) Beliefs

- Each student is entitled to an excellent education that meets their individual needs.
- Students learn best when educators, families, and students work together.
- High expectations lead to high performance.
- All students need opportunities to use strengths and pursue interests.

Two **Goals** of the Advanced Academic Programs

FCPS AAP strives to develop the talents of all students and provide challenge through:

- **Talent development** opportunities for **all students**
- **Differentiation** to meet the needs of **advanced learners**

Talent Development

What does Talent Development look like in Fairfax County Public Schools?

- Instructional opportunities to use AAP curriculum and strategies, regardless of identification. (Tier 1 instruction)
- Students identifying and exploring their areas of interest.
- Attention to historically underrepresented groups through the Young Scholars Model.

Differentiation to Meet the Needs of Advanced Learners

Students are not labeled gifted as FCPS AAP offers a continuum of services to provide multiple entry points to meet student's cognitive and affective needs

What does Differentiating for Advanced Learners mean in Fairfax County Public Schools?

- Meeting students by name and need (norming)
- Access to differentiated curriculum and learning environment including: different pacing, increased depth and complexity, and removing scaffolds.
- Time to work with similar academic peer group to ensure peer-to-peer feedback to promote growth.
- Academic advising and complementary supports for success through implementation of the Young Scholars model.

Local Norming Approach in Matching Students to Services

Local Building Norms:

- Started in FCPS in 2021.
- Research-based practice in the field of gifted education that shifts the focus from labeling students as gifted to matching students to services they need to grow.
- Tied to FCPS' belief that all students should have access to rigorous instruction *and* access to a cluster of academic peers.
- Use data from the local setting (individual schools) to determine which students may have outlier needs in that specific setting.



Advanced Academic Programs Overview

Young Scholars Model - K-12

Elementary School: K-6	Middle School	High School
Access to Rigor - K-6	IB Middle Years Program – Grades 6 -10 (selected schools)	
Subject-Specific AAP - K-6	Honors Courses in areas of Academic Strength/Interest Grades 7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors Courses • Advanced Placement (AP) • International Baccalaureate (IB) • Dual Enrollment Courses • Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Part-Time AAP - Grades 3-6		
Full-Time AAP - Grades 3-8		

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

Full-Time AAP Services

Some advanced learners need a full-time advanced academic program, including differentiated instruction in all 4 content areas and a different placement in order to have a peer group with similar academic needs.

Students eligible for Full-Time AAP services receive:

- Advanced Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies curriculum, and
- A high degree of frequency and intensity of differentiation through acceleration, depth, and complexity of content and skills.

Screening Pathways

There are three pathways to screening:

1. Family Referral
2. Staff Referral
3. Universal Screener Referral

All referrals result in the student being considered for Full-Time AAP services.

There is no advantage based upon the type of referral source.

Full-Time Services Referral

Families or teachers may submit the **Full-Time AAP Referral Form**.

Go to www.fcps.edu and search “AAP forms.”

Referral forms and optional materials are due by **December 15** to the local school.

There are no exceptions to this deadline. If a family misses it, the student will be screened for Subject-Specific AAP or Part-Time AAP services at the end of the year. The family can submit a referral the following year.

Grade 2 Universal Screener Referral

*Fall - Due Oct. 15
(new families as of 1/1/24)*

Spring - Due Dec 15

Some students will automatically be screened for Full-Time AAP services based on ability test information. This is called the [Grade 2 Universal Screener Referral](#). The purpose of a Universal Screener Referral is to ensure students whose families may not be able to refer are considered for Full-Time AAP services based on one aspect of available data.

There is no advantage in being referred through the Grade 2 Universal Screener Referral pathway as it does not mean a student will be eligible - it only means they will be automatically screened.

Local School Committee

The **local school committee** creates the screening portfolio.

The school does not screen the portfolio or make eligibility decisions.

All portfolios are screened by the FCPS central screening committee. **The central screening committee makes eligibility decisions.**

Screening Portfolio

The **local school committee** will provide these required items:

- Screening Summary Sheet
- School Committee Gifted Rating Scale (HOPE)
- Progress Reports (1 ¼ years)
- Test Data Sheet (FCPS test scores)
- Work Samples (4-school, 2-family)

Holistic Screening

Best practices in advanced academic identification include:

- universal screening (giving all students an ability test vs. only giving students who are referred an ability test),
- holistic review of multiple data points, and
- use of tools that are inclusive of diverse cultures.

Holistic means all of the parts of a portfolio are considered together and none are weighted in decision making. Due to how files are screened FCPS is unable to provide families with individual reports as to why a student was found eligible or ineligible.

HOPE Gifted Rating Scale

The school-based committee will complete the HOPE Gifted Rating Scale.

Students are rated in social and academic areas.

School committee ratings compare each student to students of similar age, background, and experience at their current school. Doing this helps the central screeners understand your student's strengths and the availability of an academic peer group.

Ability Tests

Ability testing is one of several data points considered in student portfolios.

Ability testing is not weighted more than other items in student portfolios.

Researchers in advanced academics note that relying on quantitative data (test scores) alone for identification is not shown to be a valid indicator of giftedness.

Family Input

Contributions from the family provides information that schools may not have.

There are several ways families can support the screening process.

Family Input

Referral Form

Submit the **Full-Time Referral Form** by the deadline on the AAP website

This form is **required** unless the student has a Grade 2 Universal Screener Referral.

It is **helpful** to submit the form even if your student has a Grade 2 Universal Screener Referral.

Schools will create the screening portfolio.

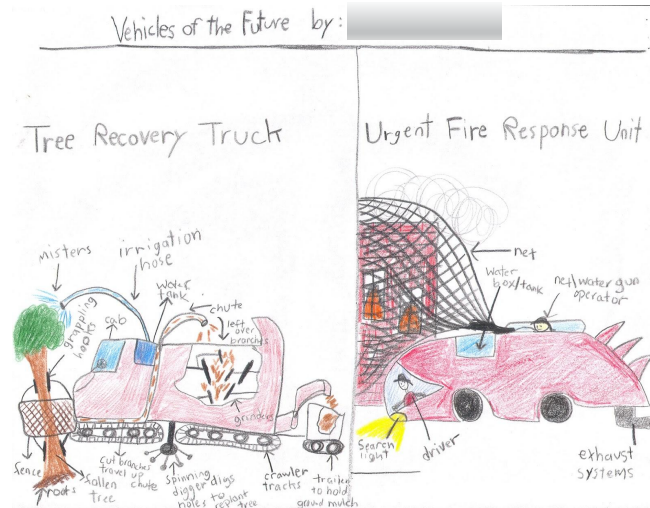
Family Input

Work Samples

Consider what work samples might provide evidence of your child's ability to think critically and creatively, reason, and problem solve.

Work samples from families are optional.

Families may submit **TWO 8.5"x11" single-sided pages** of student work samples.



Family Input

Work Samples

Work Samples Requirements:

- 2 pages maximum
- Single-sided, 8 ½ x 11 pages
- No 3-D, video, or audio samples.
- To ensure readability by committee members, it is not advisable to copy more than one page of work on a single work sample page and to include a brief description on the sample noting what you would like the committee to notice.
- Copies or originals are accepted, but please note they will not be returned

AARTs will accept electronic work samples in the following formats: PDF and image files (e.g. jpg). It is helpful to write a brief description of what you would like the committee to notice.

Family Input

Work Samples

Please note: As of 2020, letters of recommendation and awards are not permitted as a screening component as opportunities outside of the school day are not necessarily the same for all students.

Keep in mind this is an academic program. Art samples are accepted, however, **samples from multiple content areas** are most helpful for the screening committee.

The committee looks for **exceptional critical and creative thinking, reasoning, and problem solving** showcased in the student work.

Exceptional means that at that time, it stands out compared to students of similar age, background, and experience.

Family Input

Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

It is helpful to provide specific examples of what your student has said or done in each category in addition to marking the rating.

Advanced Academic Programs Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

Optional for Advanced Academic Programs Referral

Student Full Name Student ID

Current School Grade

Please circle or highlight how often you notice the following in your child and give an example. Please print clearly or type. Responses must fit on this form.

1. My child surprises me with their knowledge. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

2. My child comes up with imaginative and/or unusual ways of doing things. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

3. My child is intellectually curious and asks thoughtful questions. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

4. My child finds humor in situations or events unusual for their age. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

5. My child can focus on a particular topic for an unusually long period of time. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

Does your child have a special learning need that you want to communicate to the committee?

If YES, please explain (such as a learning disability, IEP, or 504 Plan). Parents/guardians may submit additional information regarding special learning needs to the school to be included in the screening file.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Family Input

Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

Does your student have a special learning need you want the committee to know about?

Families may submit a page of additional information about a student's 2e needs.

Reminder: The school may not provide information about 504s and IEPs to the screening committee; this can only be provided at the parent's or guardian's request. Students found eligible for Full-Time services will continue with the services in their 504/IEP plan.

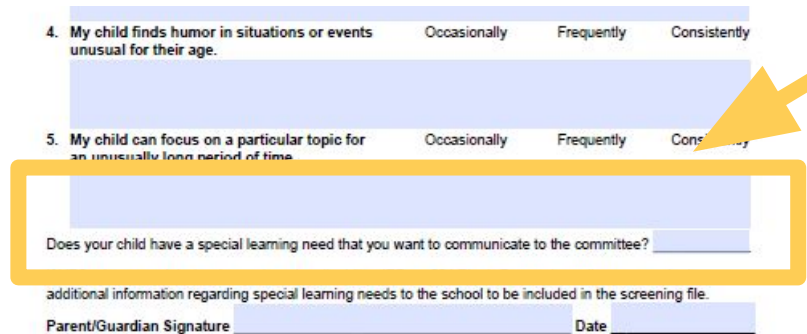
4. My child finds humor in situations or events unusual for their age. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

5. My child can focus on a particular topic for an unusually long period of time. Occasionally Frequently Consistently

Does your child have a special learning need that you want to communicate to the committee?

additional information regarding special learning needs to the school to be included in the screening file.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____



Additional Testing

Ability or Achievement Test Reports

A parent/guardian may seek private testing through a **state-licensed** clinical psychologist or through **George Mason University (GMU)**.

If testing was not done at GMU, the clinical psychologist's **license number** must be included with the full report.

Reviewing Your Student's Portfolio

We are happy to provide families a copy of the screening portfolio upon request after the portfolios have been submitted for central screening review.

It is often helpful to see the information that was sent for central committee consideration and see the strengths-based notes and work samples in your student's portfolio.

If you would like a copy, email Mrs. Bulford at drbulford@fcps.edu to let them know you would like a copy when it is ready.

Central Screening Process

Each student portfolio is read by many people who carefully consider whether they see evidence that a different placement is necessary to meet a student's needs for advanced differentiation.

A central screening committee reviews all screening portfolios. Central committee members attend training about how to view portfolios holistically and fairly.

No one person makes an eligibility decision. Each portfolio is read independently by multiple committee members.

Eligibility Notifications

An email about the eligibility decision for Full-Time AAP services will be sent to the email address in SIS of the enrolling parent or guardian.

The notification will include directions for how to accept placement or defer services.

Kent Gardens will provide information about orientation dates and times to help families make decisions both in the winter and spring.

Start Dates for Eligible Students

Spring Screening (December 15 referral deadline):
Begin Full-Time AAP services beginning the next school year.

Fall Screening (October 15 referral deadline) (only available to students who are newly enrolled in FCPS):
Begin Full-Time AAP services second semester.

Ineligibility Notifications

Parents/guardians are notified if their student is ineligible.

The notification includes information about the appeal process if a parent or guardian would like to submit additional information for consideration.

Due to the volume of portfolios and the holistic nature of the screening process, there are not individual reports about why a student is ineligible for Full-Time AAP services.

Understanding an Ineligibility Decision

In general, an ineligible decision means the committee felt the student had:

- a broad academic peer group in their current setting and
- a match to AAP curriculum access in school-based opportunities.

It does not mean that a student isn't capable of advanced coursework. Advanced academic materials are used in all classes.

FCPS expects that all students will engage in a variety of pathways to meet their advanced learning needs based on their strengths and interests. Our goal is to foster and cultivate talent!

Who to Contact

Kent Gardens Elementary School:

Debra Bulford, Advanced Academic
Resource Teacher (AART)

- drbulford@fcps.edu
- [Kent Gardens AAP Website](#)

AAP Office:

- 571-423-4740
- AAP@fcps.edu

For more information: www.fcps.edu

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https://www.fcps.edu

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