

INSTRUCTION

Special Programs

Advanced Academic Programs, Grades K-12

This regulation supersedes Regulation 3335.4.

I. PURPOSE

To describe the program organization and teacher certification for advanced academic programs and services.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

In section IV., wording has been added for clarification regarding teacher certification.

III. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

A. School-Based Services, Grades K-6

The FCPS Program of Studies (POS) and ongoing assessment guide the school-based services. These services are specifically planned for identified students through consultation between classroom teachers and the advanced academics resource teacher assigned to the school. Accommodations are made to the child's instructional program in order to provide an appropriate level of challenge. These accommodations may include advanced applications of content, alternative resources, and/or flexible groupings in areas of strength.

1. Advanced Academics, Levels I and II

Level I services for grades K-6 provide a series of model thinking lessons, connected to the POS, in critical and creative thinking for all students. Students who exhibit advanced academic potential are identified for differentiated services, or Level II, within the general education classroom.

2. Advanced Academics, Level III

School-based services for grades 3-6 are delivered through a collaborative model that supports a continuum of challenge. The model is designed to strengthen direct services for advanced learners and to enhance the quality of instruction offered to all students. Differentiated instruction may be provided to identified students through cluster grouping, flexible grouping, and/or independent projects that build on academic strengths.

3. Overview of K-6 Screening and Identification Procedures

- a. Parents or staff members refer students.
- b. Advanced academics resource teachers coordinate the screening process.
- c. A local school committee determines eligibility for Level II and Level III services. The committee reviews data on candidates, which includes achievement and ability test scores, the Gifted Behaviors Rating Scale (GBRS), progress reports, and other optional information, e.g., student work samples and parent-guardian questionnaire.
- d. Notice 2401 outlines identification procedures and time lines.

B. Middle School Honors, Grades 7-8

Identified students in grades 7-8 receive instruction that is differentiated for advanced learners in core subjects in areas of academic strength.

1. The director of student services coordinates the screening process in each middle school.
2. Middle school screening committees review ability test scores, achievement test scores, progress reports, the Gifted Behaviors Rating Scale, and teacher recommendations to determine which students will benefit from placement in one or more Honors classes.

C. Advanced Academics, Level IV

Eligible students in grades 3-8 are offered placement in a full-time academic program. Level IV provides a challenging, complex curriculum differentiated in the depth, breadth, and pace of instruction to challenge highly advanced learners. It promotes an understanding of broad-based interdisciplinary concepts, fosters the development of high-level thinking skills, and nurtures self-understanding, self-direction, and interpersonal skills.

1. Notice 2401 outlines identification procedures and time lines.
2. Student eligibility is determined using multiple criteria.
3. Transportation is provided to a school that offers Level IV services.

D. High School Programs

The Advanced Placement program, the International Baccalaureate program, and the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology provide curricular options for high school students to accelerate and pursue in-depth studies in areas of academic strength.

IV. TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Teachers who teach in an advanced academic program full-time must either hold a Virginia state endorsement in gifted education or have completed the FCPS endorsement in advanced academics. A teacher must meet this requirement within five years of accepting an assignment in advanced academics. Teachers of one or more advanced academic courses in grades 7-12 must complete a minimum of one course as outlined in the FCPS advanced academic endorsement. All teachers of advanced academic courses are encouraged to pursue the state endorsement in gifted education or the FCPS endorsement in advanced academics.