



ACPS Advanced Academic Services

**Overview of AAS Screening for
General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) in K-3 and
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) Services in 3-8**
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Updated Fall 2025

Advanced Academic Services Central Office Staff



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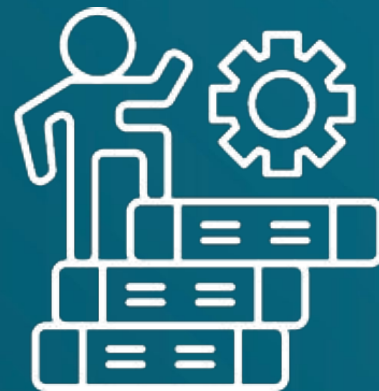
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Essential Questions

What are Advanced Academic Services in ACPS?

How does ACPS screen and identify students for GIA in Grades K-3?

How does ACPS screen and identify students for SAA in Grades 3-8?



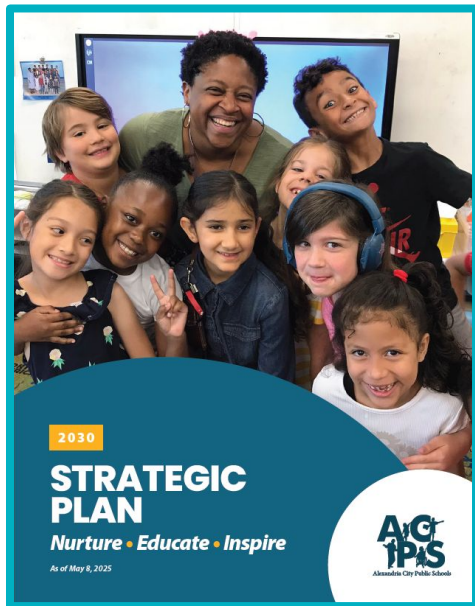


What are Advanced Academic Services in ACPS?





ACPS Equity for All- 2030 Strategic Plan



Our Goal:

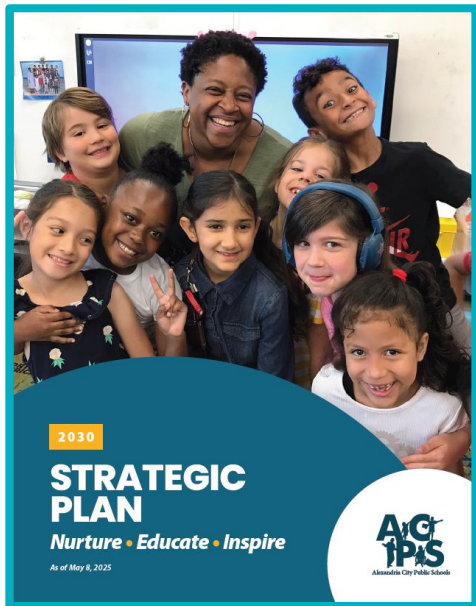
Engage and challenge each student, every day to achieve academic excellence.



ACPS Equity for All- 2030 Strategic Plan

The What:

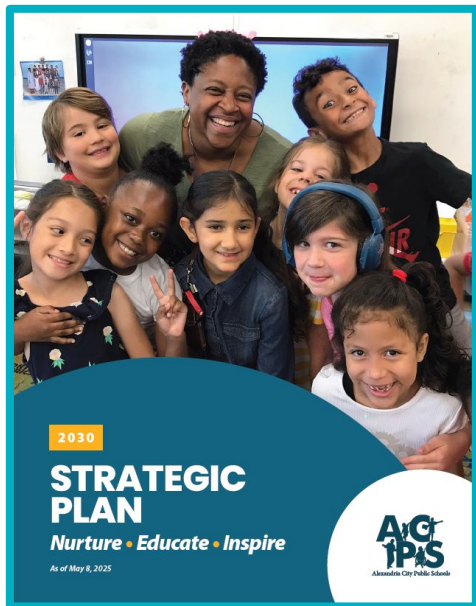
We will ensure that each student experiences **rigorous**, **engaging** and **differentiated** instruction that prepares them to think critically and reach their full academic **potential**. This includes developing their **critical thinking** and ability to manage feelings, build confidence and get along with others in alignment with the ACPS Profile of a Learner.





ACPS Equity for All- 2030 Strategic Plan

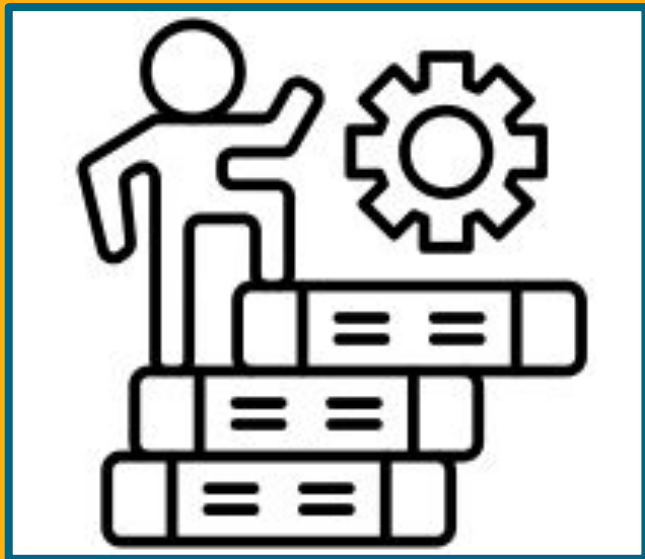
The Why:



We believe that holding **high expectations** for all students and supporting them to meet those is essential to their success. Our data show that we are not serving all of our students well, particularly our students from **traditionally underserved populations** like students of color, economically-disadvantaged students, English learners and students with disabilities. Research shows that **engaging, rigorous** instruction is essential to **closing these gaps** and helping all students succeed.

Virginia Regulation: 8VAC20-40

School divisions are required to **identify** gifted K-12 students and **provide** instructional services to meet their needs.



VIRGINIA
IS FOR
LEARNERS



ACPS' Operational Definition of Giftedness

ACPS identifies students in need of **Advanced Academic Services (AAS)** who have the potential to achieve at high academic levels. ACPS addresses the various levels of **advanced academic interventions** the schools and staff will provide for students through an advanced academic services model incorporating **the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)** across grades K-12 using a three-tiered system.



Three Tiers of Services

Response to Intervention

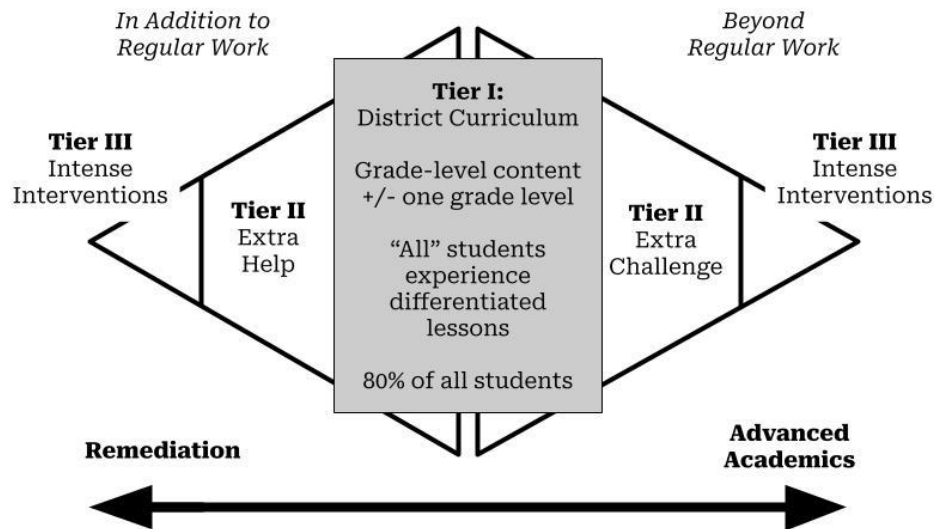


Figure 3.5. Response to Intervention continuum. Created by James Kueht and Ruth Robinson and used with their permission.

Tier I: Access to Advanced Academic Services curriculum & strategies for all students.

Critical & Creative Thinking for all.

Tier II: Differentiated lessons using advanced curriculum & strategies in the general education classroom.

- Young Scholars (YS)
- General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)- Grades K-12
- Open Honors

Tier III: Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) Services in reading, math, social studies, and/or science. Grades 4-12

Three Tiers of Services

Response to Intervention

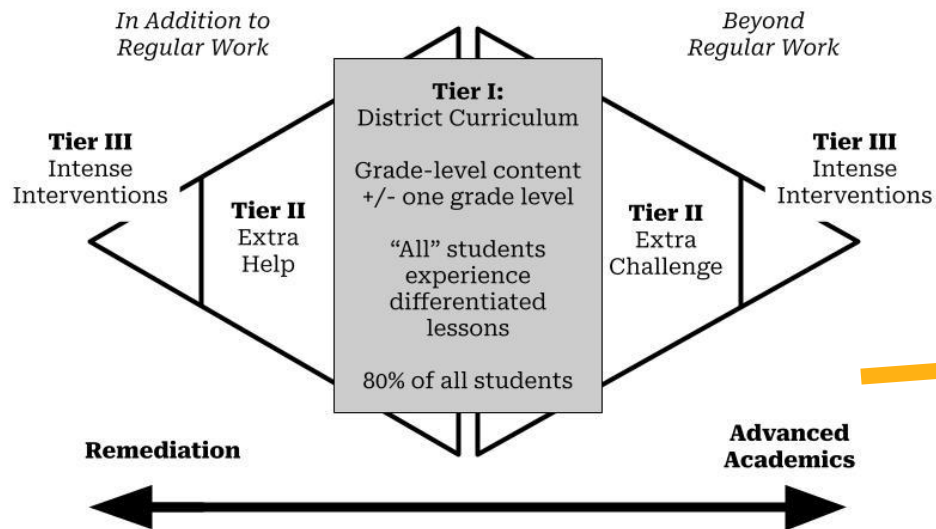


Figure 3.5. Response to Intervention continuum. Created by James Kueht and Ruth Robinson and used with their permission.

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Tiers I-II: Grades K-3 Early Childhood Talent Development Model

Provides all students access to rigor

Identifies and nurtures strengths and potential

Cultivates growth attitudes and mindsets

Aligns with gifted practices and uses gifted resources

Supports the Young Scholars and General Intellectual Aptitude programs and models

Occurs in the homeroom classroom

“The concept of giftedness is not static, but developmental... Ability evolves and shifts across the lifespan, where generalized ability turns into specialized abilities.”¹

The early childhood years should focus on the developmental and not the static.



Tier II: General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA Services)



Grades K-3

Occur within the
**General
Education
Classroom**

Designed to
Enrich & Extend
the Curriculum

Experiences
Involve Making
Connections
Across the
Subjects

GIA Services
Continue if
Student is Not
Eligible for SAA
Services

Quarterly
Differentiated
Education Plans
Developed in
Grades K-8

Tier III: Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) Services



Grades 4-5: Math & Language Arts

Direct instruction from a teacher trained in gifted instruction

Curriculum resources and strategies are aligned with gifted research and VDOE standards



Grades 4-5: Social Studies & Science

Services occur in the general education classroom by GenEd teacher

DEPs are provided to guardians outline the extension activities for students



Grades 6-12

Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

Dual Enrollment (DE) in college courses

Access to summer Governor's School

Independent Studies

Online courses



How does ACPS Screen and Identify Students for GIA in Grades K-3 and SAA Services in Grades 3-8?

Two Methods of Screening



- General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) for Grades K-3
- Eligibility is determined at the school level

Matrix Form

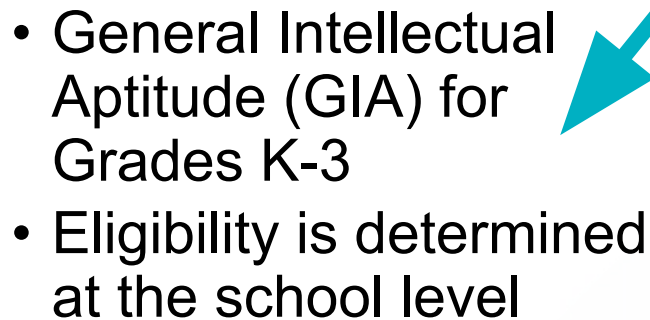
A circular inset showing a portion of a 'Matrix Form' used for screening. It includes fields for student information, a table for screening results across various subjects, and a section for committee members.

Subject	Referral (Y)	Advanced Criteria Met					Initial Eligibility Status	Eligibility Status After Appeal
		Advanced	Highly Advanced	Gifted	Enrichment	Other		
GIA (Grades K-3)							E	NE
SAA (Grades 4-8)							E	NE
Language Arts (Grades 4-8)							E	NE
Math (Grades 4-8)							E	NE
Science (Grades 4-8)							E	NE
Social Studies (Grades 4-8)							E	NE

- Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) for Grades 3-8
- 3-Phase Approach
- Eligibility is determined at the central office level

Portfolio Approach





Matrix Form

[illegible]

- Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) for Grades 3-8
- 3-Phase Approach
- Eligibility is determined at the central office level

Portfolio Approach



Two Methods of Screening



- General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) for Grades K-3
- Eligibility is determined at the school level

- Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) for Grades 3-8
- 3-Phase Approach
- Eligibility is determined at the central office level

Matrix Form

A screenshot of a 'Matrix Form' used for screening. It includes fields for student information (DOB, Ethnicity, EL Lvl, IEP Specialist, SAA Lvl, SAA Date, SAA ID, Student Name, Parent Name, Parent Phone Number, Parent Email) and a table for recording screening results. The table has columns for 'Subject', 'Referral (Y/N)', 'Initial Eligibility Status', and 'Initial Eligibility Date'. The 'Referral (Y/N)' column is further divided into 'Advanced Criteria Met' and 'Advanced Criteria Not Met'. The 'Initial Eligibility Status' column has options for 'E', 'NE', and 'I'. The 'Initial Eligibility Date' column is for recording the date. Below the table, there are sections for 'Committee Members for Initial Screening' and 'Meeting Date'.

Subject	Referral (Y/N)	Advanced Criteria Met		Initial Eligibility Status	Initial Eligibility Date
		Advanced Criteria Met	Advanced Criteria Not Met		
GIA (Grades K-3)					
SAA (Grades 3-8)					
ELA (Grades K-3)					
Math (Grades K-3)					
Science (Grades K-3)					
Social Studies (Grades K-3)					
Art (Grades K-3)					
Music (Grades K-3)					
Physical Education (Grades K-3)					
Health (Grades K-3)					
Foreign Language (Grades K-3)					
Other (Grades K-3)					

Portfolio Approach



Screening Timeline

Referral deadlines align with ACPS testing windows, including NNAT/CogAT, MAP, and quarterly progress reports.



Current Grade	Referral Window Opens	Referral Deadline	Eligibility Notification Received by
Tier II: GIA Services (K-3)	September 1, 2025	November 21, 2025	March 13, 2026
Tier III: SAA Services (3-8)	September 1, 2025	November 21, 2025	March 13, 2026
New Students to ACPS in Grades 4-8	First Day of Entry	Within 30 Days of Enrollment	Within 90 Days of Receiving Permission to Screen

Note: You do not need to submit a referral for an area your child is already eligible for services.

What is the timeline for Screening?

**September 1
- November
21, 2025**

**November
21, 2025**

**By
December 5,
2025**

**Due
December
19, 2025**

Referral window
is open in
PowerSchool

**Newly
combined
form!**

- Submit Referrals & Permission to Screen form in PowerSchool or hard copy by deadline
- No late referrals accepted

- Confirmation email sent to parents/guardians
- Reminder to submit permission to screen and optional questionnaire

- Permission to Screen & Optional Questionnaire is DUE in PowerSchool (if not previously submitted with referral)
- Screening continues only after permission to screen is completed

What is the timeline for Screening?

January -
March

By March 13,
2026

Due by April
10, 2026

Due by June
8, 2026

Data collection:
observation
scale, progress
reports, multiple
work samples,
achievement
tests, ability tests

- Eligibility + matrix forms sent to parents/guardians in writing
- Permission to Place sent if eligible
- Appeals info sent

- Appeals window closes in PowerSchool
- Send Optional info to AAS
General Email: aas@acps.k12.va.us

Final appeals
written decision
sent to parents/
guardians

Update your
email and
mailing
address!

How does the process begin?



PowerSchool Submitted Referral: Grades K-8

- Parents/Guardians
- Instructional Staff

Hard Copy Submitted Referral: Grades K-8

- Students
- Community Members

Grade 3: Universal Screener & Automatic Referral-SAA Language Arts & Math

- Ability Scores- 85th percentile or higher*
- Achievement Scores- 85th percentile or higher on the most recent MAP test*
- Observation Scale- Top 15% of the grade level at the school*
- All Young Scholars
- All students eligible for GIA services before November

Automatic Referral (Grades 4-5)

- All Young Scholars

Referral Forms in PowerSchool



 **Step 1:**
Log into your PowerSchool Parent Access account.

 **Step 2:**
Choose the student/child you would like to refer.

 **Step 3:**
Click on "Forms."

 **Step 4:**
Choose "2025-2026 Referral Form and Permission to Screen for Advanced Academic Services (AAS)."

 **Step 5:**
Select your preferred language.

 **Step 6:**
Complete the form.

 **Step 7:**
Click the blue "SUBMIT" button.

NOTE: Most AAS screening forms are in PowerSchool. Contact your tech specialist or Advanced Academic Screening Lead (AASL) for access help.

Optional Parent Questionnaire

The AAS office will send a confirmation receipt of the referral.

Only needed if not previously completed in referral form by parents.

Located in PowerSchool

Permission is needed to move forward with the screening process.

Newly combined form!

ACPS
Alexandria City Public Schools

Written Permission for Advanced Academic Services Evaluation & Additional Information

Your child has been referred for Advanced Academic Services (AAS). For your child to be screened for AAS, ACPS requires permission from the parent/guardian to obtain additional information, which may include cognitive testing. This form contains permission-to-screen information and a space to provide optional additional information you would like to share about your child. Please return this form to the AAS Screening lead within 10 instructional days of receiving the confirmation letter.

Permission to Screen

I give permission for my child to be evaluated on appropriately selected measures of ability and/or achievement as requested by the Identification/Placement Committee. This evaluation aims to help determine the student's eligibility for Advanced Academic Services. I understand that the evaluation results are restricted to professional use within Alexandria City Public Schools and are available to me for interpretation and discussion. I understand the results are kept in a confidential file in the school's office.

Student First and Last Name:			ID #:
School:	Grade:	Homeroom Teacher:	
Signature of Parent/Guardian:		Date:	
Print Name of Parent/Guardian:			

Optional Information:

As a parent/guardian, you have unique opportunities to see your child in play, work, and family settings. Please share your observations with us so we can better understand your child. This may include information about out-of-school activities and interests, how they are as learners, what motivates them, their leadership or creativity skills, or what brings them joy.

Due by Dec.
19, 2025

Data Collection: January-March 2026



**Ability
Assessment**

**Standardized
Achievement
Scores**

**Observation
Scales**

**Progress
Reports**

Work Samples

Observations

**Optional
Parent
Information**

(submitted via the Referral
and Permission to Screen
form or during the appeals
process)

GIA & SAA Standardized Testing Information



Ability Testing

- Any ability test (CogAT, NNAT, or WISC) already on file will be used.
- CogAT testing will be given in Grade 2
- NNAT3 (Naglieri) will be given in Grade 3
- Any student who does not have an ability score will be given to students who need one for screening.
 - Grades 4-8: Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT)
 - Grades K-1: Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test

Achievement Testing

- MAP scores (Grade 2 or higher)
- SOL scores (Grade 3 or higher)

Screening Committees



**AAS Screening
Leading***

**Classroom
Teacher***

AAS Teacher*

**Counselor/Social
Emotional
Professional***

**Administrator/
Designee***

**Assessment
Specialist/Coach**

**Young Scholars
Lead**

**English Language
Teacher**

**Specialized
Instruction
Teacher**

Similar Matrix to previous years for GIA (Grades K-3)

Alexandria City Public Schools Advanced Academic Services

Advanced Academic Services (AAS) Eligibility Profile

General Intellectual Ability (GIA)- Grades K-3
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA)- Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies- Grades 4-8

Student Name:	ID #:	Grade:	Screening Window: 2023-2024
School:			
Gender:	Age:	DOB:	Ethnicity:
SQA Plan:		IEP/ Specialized Services*:	
Current AAS Eligible Status	Y.S.	GIA:	SAA LA: SAA Math: SAA SS: SAA Sci:
Parent Name 1:	Parent Name 2:		
Parent 1 Phone Number:	Parent 2 Phone Number:		
Parent 1 Email:	Parent 2 Email:		
Primary Street Address:	Alexandria, VA		Zip Code:

*If the student has an IEP, please check with the student's case manager to see if any assessment information is relevant to AASS screening (may include WISC, Kaufman, etc.).

Summary Chart:

- To qualify for **General Intellectual Ability (GIA)** services, a student must have "Advanced" ratings in three categories, one of which must be a standardized ability test.
- To qualify for **Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA)** services, a student must have "Advanced" ratings in three categories, one of which must be a standardized ability and/or achievement test in the area being screened.

Place an "X" if the category falls within the "Advanced" range. For each subject screened, if the student is eligible, please place an "X" under the "E" column; if a student is ineligible, please place an "X" under the NE column.

Subject	Referral (R)	Advanced Criteria Met						Initial Eligibility Status		Eligibility Status After Appeal*	
		Ability	Achievement	Standard-Based	Observation Scale	Work Sample	Other**				
								E	NE	E	NE
GIA (Grades K-3)											
SAA- Language Arts (Grades 4-8)											
SAA- Math (Grades 4-8)											
SAA- Social Studies* (Grades 4-8)											
SAA- Science* (Grades 4-8)											

* Social Studies and Science require a referral and are not a part of the automatic referral process.

** For appeal or oversight use only: "Other" may include additional work samples, observations, growth percentiles, special program consideration, or parent narratives.

School-Based Committee Members for Initial Screening Meeting Date: _____

AAS Screening Lead*	Counselor*
Classroom Teacher*	School Administrator/Designee*
AAS Teacher*	Curriculum Specialist/Coach
Other:	

*use initials

Last Name, First Name _____ ID # _____ AAS Screening 2023-2024- Page 1 of 4

Part 1: Standardized Ability Results

Qualification Key: Use the chart below to determine the advanced status of each subject. If the box has an "x" in it, you may use that test battery to determine "Advanced" for the screened subject.

Subject Area	NNAT Nonverbal	CogAT Verbal	CogAT Quantitative	CogAT Nonverbal	CogAT VQN
General Intellectual Aptitude	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X
Math	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

For each test score below, place a circle in the box where the score falls within the categorical range.

	Year	Percentile	Age Score	Below Average	Average	Above Average	High	Advanced
NNAT				Percentile: ≤24 NAI: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 NAI: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 NAI: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 NAI: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ NAI: 126-160
CogAT Verbal				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160
CogAT Quantitative				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160
CogAT Nonverbal				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160
CogAT VQN				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160

Additional Information: Name of Ability Test: _____

	Year	Percentile	Age Score	Below Average	Average	Above Average	High	Advanced
Other: Verbal				Percentile: ≤24 NAI: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 NAI: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 NAI: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 NAI: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ NAI: 126-160
Other: Quantitative				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160
Other: Nonverbal				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160
Other: Full				Percentile: ≤24 SAS: ≤89	Percentile: 25-75 SAS: 90-110	Percentile: 76-91 SAS: 111-120	Percentile: 92-95 SAS: 121-125	Percentile: 96+ SAS: 126-160

GIA Services: A student must have an "Advanced" rating on a standardized ability (Part 1). Please circle "Yes" or "No" if this criterion was met in Part 1. A note to screening leads-If a student is advanced in all other areas on this chart besides the ability score, please contact the AAS office for additional steps.

SAA Services: A student must have "Advanced" ratings in either the standardized ability (Part 1) or achievement (Part 2) score in the subject screened to qualify for SAA services. Please circle "Yes" or "No" if this criterion was met in Part 1.

GIA- Advanced	LA- Advanced	Math- Advanced	SS- Advanced	Science- Advanced
Yes or No	Yes or No	Yes or No	Yes or No	Yes or No

Last Name, First Name _____ ID # _____ AAS Screening 2023-2024- Page 2 of 4



Matrix Eligibility Decisions



- A student must have at least **three** advanced criteria across **three different** areas to be eligible for services.
- GIA- Must have an advanced ability score (**96 percentile** or higher)

Ability
Assessment

Standardized
Achievement
Scores

Observation
Scales

Progress
Reports

Work
Samples

How will I be notified of the eligibility decision?

- All parents will receive a copy of the screening matrix form used to determine eligibility.
- Decision letters will be sent in writing.
- If your child is eligible for services, you will also receive a “**Permission to Place**” form which is signed and returned back to the AAS screening lead at your child’s school.



NOTIFICATION



ALERT

30



What happens if my child is not found eligible for AAS services?

Parents/guardians have the right to **appeal** the decision of the Identification/Placement Committee **within 10 ACPS instructional days** after being informed of their child's eligibility for services or a decision regarding a change in placement.

You may submit an appeal form via PowerSchool: Advanced Academic Services Appeal.

Additional information sent to: aas@acps.k12.va.us

If your child is ineligible for services, you will receive additional information about the appeals process within the written notification that contains the eligibility and matrix forms.

Additional Information

Elementary and Middle Schools will offer optional Parent/Guardian Q&A sessions through Oct. 15. Watch for details from your child's school.

For questions or additional support please contact your child's AAS screening lead. Screening lead names are located on the AAS website.

Additional AAS overviews are located on the AAS website.

A FAQ section is in the process of being updated on our website.





2030 Strategic Plan —



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Advanced Academic Services

<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/programs-services/advanced-academic-services>

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Tim Beaty

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