



Harrisburg Global Academy

# Gifted & Advanced Learning Program

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*Parent Information Presentation • 2026-2027*

*"Empowering children to lead and to learn"*

# What Does It Mean to Be Gifted?

## South Carolina Law — Regulation 43-220

*Gifted and talented students are those who demonstrate high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and who require an educational program beyond that normally provided by the general school program in order to achieve their potential.*



### Advanced Thinking

Learns quickly, asks complex questions, thinks deeply about ideas beyond their grade level



### High Potential

May not always show it in grades — but demonstrates exceptional ability in reasoning, creativity, or leadership



### Needs More

Requires instruction that goes further, faster, and deeper than the standard curriculum to thrive

# How Students Are Identified

## Second Grade Students

1

### Universal Screening

During the state fall testing window beginning in October, all 2nd grade students will take the CoGAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) and Iowa Assessments in Reading Comprehension and mathematics.

Scores on these tests will be used to make placement decisions and decide whether additional testing may be needed.

2

### Score Review

Scores on these assessments will be reviewed by our gifted coordinator and used to make placement decisions and decide whether additional testing may be needed. Students who satisfy one of the qualifying criteria at this time will be given the verbal or non-verbal Performance Task Assessment.

3

### Placement Decisions

Once the end of the year tests are completed and all testing results sent away to be scored have been returned, a final placement decision will be made.

For more information about criteria needed for placement click [HERE](#).

4

### Family Notification

Families will be notified of placement decisions after all testing has been completed and all test results returned and evaluated.

Services will begin the following school year.

# How Students Are Identified

## Students Grades 3 and Up

1

### Students Identified at a Prior School

Coming from a South Carolina public school? Your child's identification transfers automatically — with supporting paperwork, they're placed in the gifted program with no further testing.

Coming from another state? Our Evaluation/Placement Team reviews the records. If your child met their previous state's statewide gifted criteria, that documentation may be enough for placement; otherwise, we'll schedule only the additional testing needed to complete the picture.

2

### Students Not Previously Identified

Students in grades 3+ not previously identified are screened using fall reading and math scores and prior-school test records. Those meeting a state criterion are scheduled for the additional testing needed.

3

### Family Notification

Families are notified as soon as a placement decision is made.

- Qualifies? Gifted services begin right away — no waiting for the next school year.
- Not yet? Your child is automatically re-evaluated at the end of the year for possible placement next school year. No action needed on your part.
- Full placement [criteria](#).

4

### End of Year Evaluation

Every student not yet identified gets a second look. We review SC READY and spring iReady scores — qualifying scores meet one of the two required dimensions (Achievement). Students who reach that mark are scheduled for the additional testing needed for possible placement the following school year

# Beyond the Standard Curriculum: What Enrichment Will My Child Experience?

*HGA uses nationally recognized, research-based curriculum designed specifically for gifted learners.*



## William & Mary Language Arts

*Center for Gifted Education*

Award-winning literature units that build critical analysis, persuasive writing, and literary criticism. Grades 1–8. Culturally responsive — includes diverse authors and global perspectives.



## Jacob's Ladder Reading Program

*William & Mary*

Blends advanced reading comprehension with Social-Emotional Learning — using poetry, stories, fables, and visual media to build critical thinking AND whole-child support for gifted learners.



## Vanderbilt Talented Youth & Singapore Math

*Program for Talented Youth*

Accelerated math and language arts curriculum for students ready for content 1–2 years above grade level. Fast-paced, rigorous, and research-validated.



## Engineering is Elementary HGA STEM + Spanish Language

*HGA Signature Program*

Every K–6 student participates in two separate specials: STEM and Spanish. In STEM, students take on engineering challenges, coding, data science, and environmental projects. In Spanish, they develop language skills rooted in our multilingual community.

**EiE:** Proven to boost science achievement and engineering enthusiasm

# How the Program Is Delivered

*What does gifted services look like at HGA?*



## Enrichment Sessions

Enrichment services are delivered in two ways: pull-out sessions, where students work with the gifted teacher outside the classroom, or push-in sessions, where support is provided within the classroom. These sessions may take place during core instruction or during the school's daily enrichment block.



## Scheduling

Two delivery models: Pull-out (with gifted teacher, outside classroom) or Push-in (support inside the classroom)  
Two scheduling windows: During core instruction or during the daily enrichment block



## Cluster Grouping

Gifted students are grouped together in the regular classroom for advanced work and discussion — ensuring they are challenged even during whole-class instruction.



## Content Acceleration

Students performing 1–2 years above grade level in ELA or Math may be accelerated into above-grade content — in addition to gifted services.

# Odyssey of the Mind — Participation Is Optional and Interest-Driven

Odyssey of the Mind is an international creative problem-solving competition for students in grades 3–6. Teams of 5–7 students solve long-term challenges involving STEM, the arts, and performance — then compete at regional, state, and world levels.

## Competition Levels



School → Regional → State → World Finals

## Team Size



5–7 students per team

## When



Year 2 (2027–2028) based on student & staff interest

## Skills Built



agile thinking, teamwork, public presentation

## Problem Types



STEM, vehicle design, classics, performance, structure

## Why HGA



Aligns to our mission of creating global collaborators and change-makers

# The Full HGA Gifted Experience

## Academic Enrichment

- William & Mary & Vanderbilt units
- Above-grade reading & writing seminars
- Socratic seminar & philosophical discussion
- Independent research projects

## STEM Focus

- Engineering design challenges
- Computer science & coding
- Data collection & scientific inquiry

## Leadership & Voice

- Student voice in program design
- Public speaking & debate
- Community project presentations
- Mentorship & peer tutoring

## Bilingual Language

- Spanish Instruction
- Advanced academic vocabulary
- Global literature & world perspectives
- Multicultural storytelling

## Social-Emotional Learning

- SEL curriculum
- Empathy, resilience & identity development
- Stress management strategies
- Gifted-specific emotional support

## Family Partnership

- Annual meeting with teacher
- Semester progress reports
- Family STEM night & showcase
- Bilingual communication

# Frequently Asked Questions

*What families most want to know*

## Q: What if my child wasn't identified?

Identification happens through formal assessment. Students not identified in 2nd grade may be re-screened in later grades. Talk to us if you have concerns — we use multiple data points.

## Q: Will my child miss regular class?

Most sessions happen during the enrichment block — no core instruction missed  
Pull-outs are coordinated with teachers so students never miss new material  
Enrichment extends learning — it doesn't create gaps

## Q: Is there a cost to families?

No. All state-required gifted services are provided at no cost to families. Some optional enrichment activities may have minimal fees.

## Q. How will gifted service be delivered?

The core gifted service: small-group instruction with our gifted-endorsed teacher outside the regular classroom, scheduled during the daily enrichment block whenever possible so students don't miss new core content.

## Q: Can my child be recommended by a teacher?

Yes — teachers, parents, and staff can refer students for screening  
All SC 2nd graders are also universally tested — no referral needed  
A referral starts screening; eligibility is set by state criteria  
Students qualify with a cognitive score at or above the 96th national percentile, OR by meeting two of three state dimensions (aptitude, achievement, and academic performance)

## Q: Does private testing count?

Not for eligibility — state regulation only accepts school-administered assessments. But private results can serve as a referral that starts screening.

# Next Steps & How to Get Involved

1

Complete the Parent Interest Survey — your responses directly shape what we build first. Coming in August

2

Watch for your child's 2nd grade assessment results in December/January.

3

Schedule a conversation with Principal Rivas and/or Leesa Martin Gifted Coordinator if you have questions or concerns about your child.

4

Attend our Gifted Program Parent Information Night this fall — date coming soon.

5

Consider joining our Gifted Program Parent Advisory Team — we need your voice.