

# Middle School Advanced Academic Programs Center Expansion Plan

April 7, 2026 School Board Work Session

Fairfax County PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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# Work Session Objective

**Work Session Objective**: Review Staff proposal for establishing Advanced Academic Program (AAP) Centers in every FCPS Middle School in response to the 9/25/25 School Board Motion:

> "I move to direct the Superintendent to develop and present to the Board, by March 2026, a comprehensive plan for establishing Advanced Academic Program (AAP) Centers in every middle school in the division."

# Rationale for Middle School AAP Center Expansion

Offering Full-Time AAP Center services at all middle schools leverages the available cohort sizes of students eligible for Full-Time AAP to:

1. Increase equitable access to Full-Time AAP without leaving neighborhood schools
2. Prioritize peer group continuity for middle and high school pyramids
3. Reduce transportation costs and the complexity of facilities planning

# Current State of Middle School Full-Time AAP

| | |
|---|---|
| **14 middle schools are AAP Centers** | • Carson, Frost, Glasgow, Hughes, Jackson, Kilmer, Lake Braddock, Rocky Run, Sandburg, and Twain serve students from the neighborhood and other feeder middle schools<br>• Cooper, Johnson, South County, and Longfellow serve only students within the neighborhood school boundary |
| **1 middle school is beginning as an AAP Center in SY 2026-27** | • Poe Middle was approved by the Board to become an AAP center in Dec 2025 and will serve students within the Poe and Holmes MS boundaries<br>• The program starts with grade 6 in SY 2026-27 and will be fully implemented by SY 2028-29 |
| **6 middle schools offer Local Full-Time AAP** | • Families have the option to attend their base middle school in **cohorted classes** for services or attend the assigned AAP Center<br>• The number of students who elect to stay for local services at each school is noted for SY 2025-26: Franklin (48), Herndon (84), Irving (156), Key (17), Thoreau (264), Whitman (40) |
| **5 middle schools do not currently cohort students** | • Hayfield, Holmes, Liberty, Robinson, Stone<br>• Students may elect to take Honors courses in 1, 2, 3, or 4 content areas through open enrollment |

# Advanced Academic Programs Advisory Committee Feedback

AAPAC recommended that the expansion include explicit program standards to ensure equitable programming for students identified for Full-Time AAP, including:

- **Accountability Systems to Ensure Academic Rigor:** Members cited a need for system level oversight, noting that advanced learners' needs can be be sidelined with many competing priorities in a school
- **Teacher Readiness:** Members noted a need to provide time or financial incentive for teachers to earn VA gifted endorsement/ FCPS AAP certification
- **Critical Mass:** Members noted the importance of having a sufficient "critical mass" of students per grade level to ensure program rigor

# Program Standards for High Quality Implementation

| AAPAC Feedback | FCPS Program Standard & Description |
|---|---|
| **Critical mass** | **Critical mass:** At least 2 full class cohorts per grade level |
| **Accountability Systems to Ensure Academic Rigor** | **Rigorous instructional expectations and opportunities:**<br>● Students are instructed using methods in the FCPS Honors Framework for differentiating up and are assessed using extended standards<br>● A variety of academically-focused afterschool enrichment opportunities in different content areas are available<br><br>**School leader readiness:**<br>● Administrators (principals, APs, DSS, department chairs) understand the needs of advanced learners and use tools from the AAP office to provide feedback on instruction and set goals about programming<br><br>**Structures for program monitoring and goal setting:**<br>● Schools annually assess the strengths and needs of programming in order to set goals and submit fidelity of implementation data to the AAP office |
| **Teacher readiness** | **Teacher readiness:**<br>● AARTs and teachers who teach AA/Honors full-time have in-depth understanding of research-based practices for meeting the needs of advanced learners and earn the *VA Gifted Endorsement* or the *FCPS AAP Certification*<br>● All teachers who teach AA/Honors courses part-time (less than 5 sections) have clear understanding of the expectations to teach and assess using extended standards using the Honors Framework, participate in coaching cycles with the AART, and complete requirements for *AAP Foundations for Middle School Teachers* |

# Critical Mass - Projected Enrollment Numbers
## (minimum 2 class cohorts per grade level)

| | Grade 6 | Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Total | | Grade 6 | Grade 7 | Grade 8 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carson | - | 149 | 127 | 276 | Kilmer | - | 147 | 131 | 278 |
| Cooper | - | 181 | 178 | 359 | Lake Braddock | - | 130 | 119 | 249 |
| Franklin | - | 169 | 163 | 332 | Liberty | - | 102 | 68 | 170 |
| Frost | - | 166 | 154 | 320 | Longfellow | - | 170 | 181 | 351 |
| Glasgow | 80 | 84 | 83 | 247 | Poe | 57 | 54 | 51 | 162 |
| Hayfield | - | 89 | 84 | 173 | Robinson | - | 147 | 140 | 287 |
| Herndon | - | 98 | 105 | 203 | Rocky Run | - | 91 | 82 | 173 |
| Holmes | 65 | 74 | 61 | 200 | Sandburg | - | 110 | 115 | 225 |
| Hughes | - | 95 | 95 | 190 | South County | - | 80 | 88 | 168 |
| Irving | - | 127 | 121 | 248 | Stone | - | 57 | 48 | 105 |
| Jackson | - | 100 | 112 | 212 | Thoreau | - | 214 | 206 | 420 |
| Johnson | - | 115 | 109 | 224 | Twain | - | 84 | 81 | 165 |
| Key | - | 67 | 47 | 114 | Whitman | - | 71 | 67 | 138 |

# Tiered Professional Learning

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tier 1**<br>**AAP Foundations for Middle School Teachers** | • Minimum requirement for all middle school teachers who teach advanced courses (AA/Honors) part-time (teach fewer than 5 AA/H sections)<br>• 3 days of training over the course of one school year related to instruction and assessment in advanced courses<br>• 6 hours of job-embedded work with the AART on application of learning after each day of training |
| **Tier 2**<br>**VA Gifted Endorsement** or **FCPS AAP Certification** | • Expectation/requirement for AARTs and any teacher teaching advanced coursework (AA/H) full-time (teach 5 AA/H courses)<br>• Can take courses for free through FCPS Teacher Academy or at a university and apply for tuition reimbursement<br>• Credits can be applied to salary credit |

# Budget for AAP Foundations for MS Teachers

| Year | Schools/Participants | Total Approximate Cost: $329,500 |
|---|---|---|
| SY 2026-27 | • Phase 1&2 schools (development year)<br>• 1/3 of teachers at current centers who are not gifted endorsed/AAP certified<br>• estimated 229 teachers | $111,500 |
| SY 2027-29 | • Phase 3 schools (development year)<br>• 1/3 of teachers at current centers who are not gifted endorsed/AAP certified<br>• estimated 227 teachers | $111,000 |
| SY 2029-30 | • Phase 4 schools (development year)<br>• 1/3 of teachers at current centers who are not gifted endorsed/AAP certified<br>• estimated 218 teachers | $107,000 |
| Sustaining | • newly hired teachers | Variable based on additional sections or teacher turnover |

*Note: All costs are estimates based on the projected number of teachers who will teach 3 sections of advanced courses (the predominant advanced course load in SY 2025-26 data collection of middle school teaching assignments)*

# Facility Capacity Utilization Analysis

| | Change in Full-Time AAP Eligible Student Enrollment | Total School Enrollment at Full Implementation | Current Program Capacity Utilization | Program Capacity Utilization at Full Implementation | | Change in Full-Time AAP Eligible Student Enrollment | Total School Enrollment at Full Implementation | Current Program Capacity Utilization | Program Capacity Utilization at Full Implementation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carson | -265 | 1,129 | 97% | 82% | Kilmer | -85 | 963 | 92% | 75% |
| Cooper | 10 | 1,193 | 93% | 109% | Lake Braddock | -216 | 1,120 | 90% | 69% |
| Franklin[1] | +284 | 947 | 94% | 112% | Liberty | +145 | 963 | 81% | 88% |
| Frost | -56 | 1,122 | 92% | 84% | Longfellow | -27 | 1,018 | 91% | 76% |
| Glasgow | -136 | 1,595 | 92% | 85% | Poe | +107 | 1,153 | 70% | 93% |
| Hayfield | +128 | 986 | 81% | 88% | Robinson | +52 | 1,233 | 94% | 94% |
| Herndon | +121 | 897 | 90% | 89% | Rocky Run | -266 | 673 | 81% | 59% |
| Holmes | +126 | 944 | 85% | 90% | Sandburg | -92 | 1,284 | 96% | 88% |
| Hughes | -109 | 878 | 95% | 84% | South County | +2 | 938 | 98% | 97% |
| Irving | +89 | 1,247 | 108% | 109% | Stone | +89 | 707 | 80% | 82% |
| Jackson | -69 | 889 | 96% | 85% | Thoreau | +158 | 1,442 | 93% | 105% |
| Johnson | -2 | 1,111 | 104% | 101% | Twain[1] | -159 | 915 | 102% | 89% |
| Key | +95 | 751 | 72% | 81% | Whitman | +101 | 891 | 77% | 86% |

[1] Schools are scheduled for a renovation to begin construction within five years in the FCPS Capital Improvement Plan.

Note: The *Change in Full-Time Eligible Student Enrollment* numbers reflect recently adopted boundary adjustments and the students who will be reassigned to their base middle school for Full-Time AAP using SY 2025-26 enrollment. The *Total School Enrollment* and *Program Capacity Utilization* are based on projected membership for SY 2030-31 as in and adjusted for full implementation of an AAP Full-Time Center.

# Plans to Address Overcrowding

| School | Conceptual Cost Estimate | Potential Solutions |
|---|---|---|
| Franklin | N/A: Renovation | Renovation of school is estimated to begin construction FY 2030 (SY 2029-30) |
| Irving | $225,000 | • Potential boundary adjustment with schools identified as having capacity surplus.<br>• Increase efficiency by re-assigning instructional spaces within a school to accommodate an increase in membership.<br>• Possible program changes.<br>• Minor interior facility modifications to create additional instructional space and to help accommodate a capacity deficit.<br>• Addition of temporary classrooms to accommodate a short-term capacity deficit. |
| Thoreau | $450,000 | |

Note: All solutions identified below are conceptual and subject to detailed analysis, design, submittal, review, approval, and permitting by Fairfax County Land Development Services (which includes building permits) before work can commence.
Any option(s) chosen for implementation will be discussed and decided through a transparent process in accordance with School Board Policies and Regulations, as applicable.

# Timeline of Phasing and Implementation

## Phase 1 & 2

| Phase 1 & 2 School & Grade Levels | SY 2026-27 | SY 2027-28 | SY 2028-29 | SY 2029-30 | SY 2030-31 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PHASE 1 SCHOOLS**<br><br>**Poe Middle** (gr 6-8) | **Implement**<br>Grade 6 | **Implement**<br>Grade 7 | **Implement**<br>Grade 8 | **Monitor** | **Monitor** |
| **PHASE 2 SCHOOLS**<br><br>**Hayfield Middle** (gr 7-8)<br><br>**Key Middle** (gr 7-8)<br><br>**Whitman Middle** (gr 7-8)<br><br>**Holmes Middle** (gr 6-8) | **Develop** | **Implement**<br>Grade 7<br>(Hayfield, Key, Whitman)<br><br>Implement<br>Grade 6 (Holmes) | **Implement**<br>Grade 8<br>(Hayfield, Key, Whitman)<br><br>Implement<br>Grade 7 (Holmes) | **Monitor**<br>(Hayfield, Key, Whitman)<br><br>**Implement**<br>Grade 8 (Holmes) | **Monitor** |

# Timeline of Phasing and Implementation

## Phase 3 & 4

| Phase 3 & 4 School & Grade Levels | SY 2026-27 | SY 2027-28 | SY 2028-29 | SY 2029-30 | SY 2030-31 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PHASE 3 SCHOOLS**<br>**Herndon Middle** (gr 7-8)<br>**Liberty Middle** (gr 7-8)<br>**Robinson Middle** (gr 7-8)<br>**Stone Middle** (gr 7-8) | | **Develop** | **Implement** Grade 7 | **Implement** Grade 8 | **Monitor** |
| **PHASE 4 SCHOOLS**<br>**Franklin Middle**[1] (gr 7-8)<br>**Irving Middle** (gr 7-8)<br>**Thoreau Middle** (gr 7-8) | | | **Develop** | **Implement** Grade 7 | **Implement** Grade 8 |

[1] School scheduled for a renovation to begin construction within five years in the FCPS CIP.