

Frequently Asked Questions Online Gifted Application

Is there anything I need to do before I begin an online application?

If you are going to submit an online gifted application, you should speak with the Gifted Resource Teacher (GRT) at your school prior to submitting the application. The GRT will be able to guide you through the application process and answer any questions you may have about the process and/or the gifted program itself.

How do I login to the application site?

Parents will need to login to the Gifted Application Management Site using their child's VBSchools credentials (use your child's Username and Password that they use at school). Passwords are changed quarterly. If you are having problems with the Username and Password, you should contact the child's homeroom teacher to see if it has been changed.

Why have I been "kicked out" of the application?

You will be timed out and comments may not be saved if you are on the site for an extended period of time. We recommend that you type your comments into a Word Doc and copy and paste it into the application.

Where can I go to learn more about the gifted program in Virginia Beach City Public Schools?

To learn more about the VBCPS gifted program, please visit the website:

<http://www.vbschools.com/curriculum/gifted/index.asp>

Who will administer the testing?

Assessment specialists from the Gifted Education Testing Office will administer testing.

What should I do to prepare my child for testing?

A good night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast are the only preparation necessary.

What materials will my child need to complete the tests?

Two sharpened #2 pencils is all that will be needed.

What if my child is absent on his/her school's scheduled testing date?

Absences will be made up prior to the Identification and Placement Committee Meeting.

How do I interpret my student's test scores?

Scores on the tests are reported as a percentile. Scores are posted on Parent Portal at the end of each testing period.

My child is applying to Old Donation School, but is already identified for gifted services. Will he/she still be tested again?

Yes, testing will be updated to the current school year for all previously identified students and these test scores will become part of the application to Old Donation School. Once a student is identified for gifted services in Virginia Beach City Public Schools they hold that identification until graduation.

If my child is Identified Gifted, will he/she be considered for placement at Old Donation School?

All students who wish to be considered for Old Donation School must complete an application and meet the criteria for identification for gifted services in VBCPS. All applicants to Old Donation School who are first identified for gifted services are then reviewed by the Old Donation School Selection Committee. *It is important to note that Old Donation School selection is a separate process from gifted identification.*

Who determines if my child is gifted?

All information is reviewed by the Virginia Beach City Public Schools Gifted Identification and Placement Committee to determine *identification* for gifted services.

What information is used to determine if my child is gifted?

Information considered by the committee includes:

- Online Application form from parent/guardian
- Teacher checklist of behavioral characteristics of the gifted indicating a need for gifted services (online)
- Achievement indicated by grades and classroom performance
- Current information from ability tests
- Information from achievement tests

What if my child has an IEP/504 Plan?

Testing accommodations as noted in the IEP or 504 Plan will be followed for all testing completed by the Gifted Education Testing Office. Please contact the Gifted Education Testing Office at 757-263-6870 if you have questions regarding testing.

How can I access my child's scores?

You can access your child's Parent Portal account and navigate to the Standardized Test Results to view your child's gifted test scores. Your child's gifted test score will be available on Parent Portal when you receive your decision email and you may access it at that time. Please note that separate accounts are required for each child/student within the family in order to view the test scores.

What services are available if my child is found eligible?

Gifted students in Virginia Beach City Public Schools are provided with instruction through a differentiated curriculum responsive to the educational needs of the child. Gifted students may choose to apply to a centrally located full-time gifted school, Old Donation School, or students may remain in the neighborhood school and receive services through the resource-cluster program. Both models provide opportunities for gifted students to benefit from learning challenges offered through the differentiation of curricula, the incorporation of strategies designed to raise the level of learning, and the availability of specialized programs.

What is the Resource – Cluster Model?

Gifted services are available to *identified* VBCPS students in their neighborhood schools through the resource-cluster model. The resource cluster model available in each school provides the potential for gifted resource teachers and core area cluster teachers to develop exciting, differentiated curriculum through a collaborative team effort. This model promotes optimum understanding of the needs of gifted children for all school staff, without creating an isolated learning environment. Gifted students interact with their teachers and classmates in a heterogeneous grouping, while attaining benefits through the modification of content, process, product, and learning environment.

If my child is found eligible for gifted services, can he/she apply to Old Donation School?

Yes, if the student is found eligible for gifted services, he/she may be considered for placement at Old Donation School if you have chosen the "*Old Donation School*" program on the **Application Selection** portion of the online application at the time of submission. If the student is not identified gifted, he/she will not be considered for Old Donation School.

How does the Old Donation School Selection Process work?

To be considered for placement at Old Donation School, students must meet the criteria for gifted identification.

Identified gifted students interested in attending Old Donation School are referred to the selection committee for review. A team of approximately 25 people representing a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and ethnicities serve on the Student Selection Committee. The team will review eligible applicants to determine placement at Old Donation School. The following components will be used in the decision making process:

- Parent Information
- Teacher Information (only 1 form will be accepted)
- Standardized Test Scores
- Student Achievement (as indicated on the current report card)

The selection process begins with training to attend to inter-rater reliability. The committee will use a numerical rating scale to complete a blind and holistic evaluation of the applicants. Multiple readers will rate each application independently. The committee will stop periodically to check the reliability of the ratings; if readers are more than one number apart in their rankings, the application will receive further review and group discussion as needed. This process is modeled after those used to select students for the Governor's School Summer Programs and many college admissions offices.

A rating scale of 5 - 1, with 5 being the highest recommendation, will be used. Listed below are the criteria for each numerical rating:

- 5 = consistently strong in all of the application components; a definite yes
- 4 = strong in most of the application components; a likely yes
- 3 = shows strength in some application components, but not consistently excellent; possible, but not a likely yes
- 2 = few consistent areas of strength; a likely no
- 1 = not recommended

After the applications have been rated, those receiving the highest ratings will be recommended for placement at Old Donation School contingent on the number of seats available at each grade level. An applicant pool will be identified in the event that a student who is offered a position chooses not to accept. The applicant pool will be dissolved prior to the first day of school.

Parents/guardians are notified within fourteen instructional days of the Selection Committee's decision through email. Parents/guardians may appeal the decision of the Selection Committee. The appeal is administered by the director in the Office of Gifted Programs.

How is Old Donation School different from the neighborhood school?

Old Donation School is a full-time school for *identified* academically gifted students in grades two through eight. *Students must apply to Old Donation School and be accepted in order to attend.*

Who should I call if I have questions regarding the process?

If you have questions about the gifted program, please email Martha.Palmer@vbschools.com or call the Gifted Education Testing Office at 757.263.6870.