

## **AIG Parent Handbook**

Welcome to the Shining Rock Classical Academy parent handbook! Our handbook has been designed to help parents of current AIG students and prospective families as well, understand how our AIG program functions. Please feel free to contact our AIG specialist Nancy Bertrand ([nbertrand@shiningrock.org](mailto:nbertrand@shiningrock.org)) or our AIG coordinator Keith Buff ([kbuff@shiningrock.org](mailto:kbuff@shiningrock.org)) if you have questions or desire additional information.

### **Mission Statement**

The gifted education program at Shining Rock Classical Academy will cultivate the academic, intellectual, creative, and social-emotional growth of gifted learners by fostering a challenging and engaging environment that ignites curiosity, nurtures individual passions and empowers students to become innovative and responsible global citizens.

### **Referral Process**

Students may refer themselves or be referred by a parent, teacher, or another student/friend. Students will be made aware verbally at the beginning of each school year as to how the referral process works at SRCA. This information will be posted continually on the SRCA website.

Once a referral is received, the AIG coordinator will create a file that includes evaluation of the following: classroom grades, teacher evaluations, and existing data points (BOG3, mClass, MAP, EOG/EOC, NC Check Ins, etc.)

If the student appears to meet multiple LEA standards for AIG placement, he/she will be scheduled for testing. Based on the student's academic strengths, he or she will be tested with the Naglieri, CogAt, or OLSAT aptitude instruments. Each of these instruments is used worldwide to evaluate and identify academically gifted learners.

After initial screening by the AIG coordinator, all data will be shared with the AIG Placement Committee for decision making.

### **Screening Process**

During the last two weeks of April each school year, a universal screening of all second-grade students will be administered using the Naglieri Aptitude instrument for initial AIG consideration. A score of 85% or higher will lead to further evaluation.

The screening process for existing students at SRCA will be continual and ongoing throughout each school year. The AIG coordinator will evaluate data points (both aptitude and achievement) as they come in, classroom grades, teacher recommendations, and student behaviors for possible AIG placement.

The AIG coordinator will also evaluate each student who transfers to SRCA for possible AIG placement through a review of classroom grades, aptitude & achievement test results, and other pertinent data points and information.

After initial screening by the AIG coordinator, all data will be shared with the AIG Placement Committee for decision making.

### **For Consideration**

In order to merit further consideration for AIG placement and services, students must meet the following minimum standards:

1. Second Grade Universal Screening

85% or higher on the CogAt instrument then---

- mClass scores from K-2
- MAP scores
- Classroom grades

If all/most of these warrant AIG placement, teacher(s) will complete a Gifted Rating Scale.

2. Screening of Referral & Transfer students 3-12

At least half of previous EOG/EOC scores are 85% or higher then---

- Administer either the CogAt screener or the Naglieri aptitude tests
- Depending on grade level, review mClass scores & MAP scores
- Classroom grades

If all/most of these warrant AIG placement, teacher(s) will complete a Gifted Rating Scale.

### **For Placement**

In order to be placed in the AIG program at SRCA, students must meet the majority of the following standards:

For AG Reading Only, AG Math Only, or both AG Reading & Math

1. 90% or higher score (120) on CogAt or Naglieri aptitude tests **AND** (2 of the 3 below)
2. At least half of previous achievement test scores (subject specific) are 85% or higher
3. Gifted Rating Scale scores of 90% or higher on 4 of the 5 subscales
4. Consistent grades of A or B in subject specific areas

For Academically & Intellectually Gifted (AIG)

1. 95% or higher score (124) on the CogAt or Naglieri aptitude tests **AND**
2. At least half of previous achievement test scores are 90% or higher

For Intellectually Gifted (IG) Only

1. 98% or higher score (130) on the CogAt or Naglieri aptitude tests

### **AIG Services**

Once a student has been placed in our AIG program he or she is eligible for the following services:

1. Students in grades 3-8 attend pull-out enrichment classes with our AIG specialist twice each week for 50 minutes. These classes provide advanced learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math as well as English, history, current events, philosophy, and social-emotional activities.
2. Students in grades 9-12 have unlimited opportunities to pursue advanced academic curriculum through our AP and honors classes on campus and at Haywood Community College and/or online through the North Carolina School of Science and Math and the North Carolina Virtual Public School.
3. Students at all grade levels may also choose to participate in extra-curricular activities and competitions such as AMC 8, 10, & 12, Smart Tank, the WCU Regional Science Fair, and other options as student interest is met.
4. Finally, SRCA is the only school in Haywood County that offers Project Lead the Way (PLTW) programming. These classes are offered as electives in grades 6-8 and provide hands-on, problem & project-based learning using a variety of topics and models.

### **AIG Faculty**

SRCA employs Nancy Bertrand as our AIG specialist. Mrs. Bertrand has done a remarkable job of implementing both the AIG and Project Lead the Way programs at Shining Rock Classical Academy. She is a graduate of Rhode Island College with Bachelor's Degrees in Elementary Education and Special Education. Her teaching experience includes stints in Massachusetts, including the Boston Public Schools, Person County and Durham City Schools in North Carolina, and previous charter school experience as well. Mrs. Bertrand has been a member of the faculty at SRCA since January of 2024 and served as part of a team which secured a three-year, \$50,000 per year grant for our STEAM program. She can be reached at [nbertrand@shiningrock.org](mailto:nbertrand@shiningrock.org).

SRCA employs Keith Buff as our AIG coordinator. Mr. Buff is AIG-licensed, was an AIG specialist at Valley Springs Middle School for five years and Asheville Middle School for one year and twice assisted in writing the Local AIG Plan for Buncombe County Schools. Over the course of his 30+ year career as an educator, Mr. Buff has taught all grade levels from

kindergarten through high school seniors, was nominated at four different schools as Teacher of the Year, and was also an award-winning track, basketball, and cross-country coach at the middle and high school levels. He holds a Master's Degree in School Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Education with concentrations in English and Economics. He can be reached at [kbuff@shiningrock.org](mailto:kbuff@shiningrock.org).