

THE DAVIDSON  
ACADEMY  
OF NEVADA



# The Davidson Academy

**Every student is unique.  
We think their education should be too.**

The Davidson Academy of Nevada is a free public school for profoundly gifted middle and high school students located on the University of Nevada, Reno campus.

Unlike traditional school settings, Academy classes are organized by ability, not by age. Students attend middle and high school classes at the Academy and, when ready, may access University courses for advanced studies.

*“The Academy provides a nourishing, encouraging environment for students to reach their full potential; it is definitely a place where the sky is the limit!”*

– Davidson Academy Student





## What sets The Davidson Academy apart?

- Students are appropriately challenged while learning at a pace and depth consistent with their knowledge, skills and motivation.
- Students develop Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) to guide them through a rigorous core curriculum and choose electives.
- Students can earn college credits while accessing resources and mentorship opportunities at the University.
- Students build friendships and pursue extracurricular activities with same-age intellectual peers.
- Students regularly meet one-on-one with an academic advisor, who has experience working with profoundly gifted youth.

# Why the Academy?

The Academy opened in 2006 as a free public school, thanks to state legislation that allowed for the creation of a “university school for profoundly gifted pupils.” When students have completed the Academy’s core curriculum and are ready to proceed with more advanced studies, they may access University courses for credit under a dual enrollment agreement.



*“Every student should have the opportunity to learn in school. That may seem like a reasonable standard for public education, but when it comes to our nation’s brightest students, that standard is often ignored.”*

– Bob and Jan Davidson, Founders of The Davidson Academy

## **A New Approach to Curriculum**

The primary focus of The Davidson Academy's curriculum is for Academy graduates to leave with a solid, broad-based foundation of knowledge, and the ability to think deeply and learn independently. The Academy organizes each student's schedule based on his or her abilities, interests and needs. Assessments are used to place students into appropriate classes, and concrete academic benchmarks help the faculty guide students to more advanced classes when ready.

The Academy offers middle school and high school credits, and students can be concurrently enrolled in each depending on their abilities and strengths. All students take core classes in English, math, history and science. Curriculum is accelerated a minimum of three years and is designed with the asynchronous nature of highly gifted students in mind.

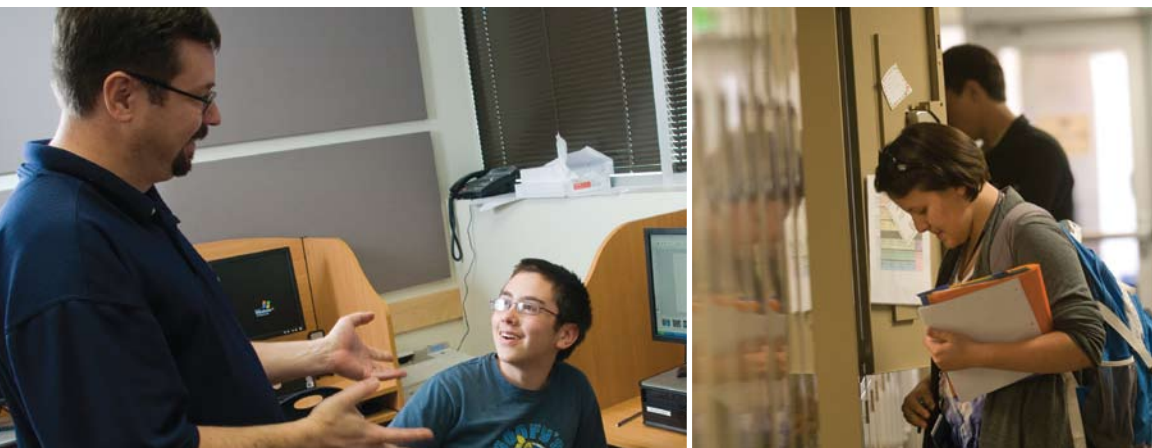
## **A Unique Social Environment**

At the Academy, students are surrounded by academic peers – many for the first time. Lunchroom conversations range from history and science projects to social activities and world affairs, providing an environment in which students can safely express themselves and their ideas without standing out or being labeled.



# Academics

The mission of The Davidson Academy is to provide profoundly gifted young people advanced educational opportunities matched to their abilities, strengths and interests.



## Core Values

Responsibility  
Integrity  
Balance  
Leadership  
Pursuit of Knowledge  
Respect

At The Davidson Academy of Nevada, the aim is not only for students to excel academically, but to become well-rounded human beings. The Core Values are the foundation of the Academy and were developed collaboratively by students, faculty and staff.



*“ Our daughter has developed strong friendships and thrives on the challenges provided, becoming a confident young lady who knows she belongs. ”*

– Davidson Academy Parent

## **Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs)**

Academy students, along with their parents, work with faculty and staff to develop Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs). These living documents lead students through the rigorous core curriculum and help them choose electives.

## **Teaching Method**

Academy courses are taught by licensed teachers and university instructors. All students at the Academy are high-ability learners, allowing instructors to teach at advanced levels, using techniques that provoke lively discussions, thoughtful reflection, and genuine understanding of complex ideas.

Focusing on the individual learner, the Academy believes gifted students need instructors who understand how to shape classroom experiences around uncommon styles of thinking. Together, these interpersonal and instructional dynamics create a vibrant and challenging learning environment.

## **Homework**

Homework is designed to be a meaningful extension of classroom lessons and interactions, not just busy work. The Academy staff helps students with study skills and is available to assist them during study halls.

# Student Life

Academy students thrive off of each others' ideas and insights both in and out of the classroom. Students are encouraged to participate in clubs, teams and community activities.

## Student Clubs

Clubs at the Academy include student council, chess, environmental awareness, math, science, community service, newspaper, speech and debate, drama, yearbook, and more, depending on the interests of the student body. Students also organize and plan dances, plays, game nights and fundraisers.

## Extracurricular Activities

Students often take part in academic competitions, such as MATHCOUNTS, spelling bees, geography bees and the Knowledge Bowl. Outside of school, Academy students participate in martial arts, figure skating, gymnastics, swimming, soccer, baseball and Irish dancing. They also perform with local music groups like the Reno Philharmonic, the Reno Chamber Orchestra, the Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra and the Lake Tahoe Music Camp Symphonic Band. Students who wish to participate in high school athletics can try out for Reno-area high school teams.



## Parental Involvement

Parents are instrumental in guiding and supporting their students to take responsibility for their learning and to make the most of this unique educational opportunity. Parents are also encouraged to be active participants in helping the Academy achieve its mission and goals by volunteering to direct specific projects, extracurricular activities and fundraising efforts.



*“The Academy is an environment in which students can shape their curiosity into something tangible, and challenge themselves...”*

– Davidson Academy Student

# Campus Home

In the summer of 2008, the Academy moved into the renovated Jot Travis building, centrally located on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. This 30,000 square foot facility includes classrooms, student study areas, music practice rooms, a school library, a courtyard and a high-tech security system.

Wireless Internet, SMART classroom technology and mobile systems are available throughout the building. Laptops can be checked out for use during the school day, and Academy students have access to University resources including an extensive online library system.



## University of Nevada, Reno – Fast Facts

- Offers more than 170 undergraduate and graduate degree programs
- Recognized as a National Merit Scholarship Program sponsor school
- Has an enrollment of nearly 17,000 students
- Established in 1874 as Nevada's land-grant college
- Located in northern Nevada at the base of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, minutes away from downtown and less than an hour away from Lake Tahoe and skiing

# Applying to The Davidson Academy

## The Davidson Academy is looking for bright students who:

- score 99.9% or above on accepted intelligence tests and/or on the ACT, SAT or Explore tests;
- perform at an academic level of advanced middle school or higher in all subjects;
- exhibit superior intellectual development and academic achievement; and
- demonstrate motivation, social and emotional maturity, and overall readiness for an accelerated educational environment.



## To qualify, applicants must:

- provide transcripts, grade reports and/or homeschooling records;
- submit three letters of recommendation; and
- be a Nevada resident while attending the Academy.

In addition to the submission of a written application and letters of recommendation, an in-person assessment and interview is required for qualified candidates. Once applications are received, they are reviewed by our team of professionals to determine if an assessment and interview will be offered. The assessment and interview are conducted at The Davidson Academy by Academy staff.

Admission qualifications and criteria are subject to change. Please check the website, [www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu/Admissions](http://www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu/Admissions), for the most current information.



*“I get to learn new things every day surrounded by other kids who share my ‘style’ of thought.”*

– Davidson Academy Student

The Davidson Academy of Nevada is a division of the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting our nation's brightest young people through the following programs and services.

To learn more, visit [www.DavidsonGifted.org](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org).

#### **Davidson Young Scholars**

Free consulting services for profoundly gifted youth

#### **Davidson Fellows**

\$50,000, \$25,000 and \$10,000 scholarships for extraordinary achievements

#### **THINK Summer Institute**

Three-week residential summer program to earn college credits

#### **Educators Guild**

Free national service for educators

#### **Davidson Gifted Database**

Free online resource library

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Reno, Nevada