



# DAVIDSON ACADEMY ONLINE

## THE SCHOOL AND MISSION

Davidson Academy Online is an academically rigorous, synchronous online school for profoundly gifted middle and high school students living in the United States and Canada, with options for full-time or single-course enrollment. Profoundly gifted students are at least three standard deviations above the norm on the bell curve of the IQ continuum. The school opened in the 2017-2018 school year as an online campus of the Davidson Academy, a Nevada public school with CEEB code 290207. Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, Davidson Academy Online is an independent (private) school separate from Davidson Academy.

To attend Davidson Academy Online, students must score in the 99.9th percentile on accepted intelligence and/or achievement tests; perform at a required academic level; exhibit intellectual and academic achievement; and demonstrate motivation, social and emotional maturity, and overall readiness for a fast-paced educational environment.

Unlike traditional school settings, Davidson Academy Online classes group students by ability rather than age. With an overall enrollment of 95 students and 28 faculty and staff members, class sizes are small, and students receive personalized attention. Students, faculty, and staff at Davidson Academy Online leverage the flexibility of online learning and communication platforms to engage in synchronous and asynchronous activities with their intellectual peers to create vibrant online communities.

## CURRICULUM

High school students engage in a blend of advanced high school and undergraduate-level courses. These courses employ curricular and pedagogical techniques appropriate for gifted and highly able students, including acceleration, compacting, and differentiated instruction and assessment. We emphasize breadth and depth rather than teaching to any particular standardized test or curriculum. Our coursework stresses higher-order thinking skills, critical and creative engagement, seminar-style classroom discussion, and experiential learning opportunities. The hallmark of our courses are our synchronous live sessions, where students meet for three hours each week via video conferencing software to discuss concepts and collaborate on challenging activities. Many courses employ a flipped model, where students complete readings or watch videos ahead of the synchronous live sessions, thus preparing them for discussion and instruction. In addition to the synchronous live sessions, each core course requires approximately 5-7 hours of work per week utilizing materials that are housed in our Learning Management System.

Full-time students must take at least five graded courses each semester. Due to the time commitment of courses, students wishing to take more than seven courses must receive permission for an overload schedule from the Director. During senior year, full-time students are required to take at least four graded courses each semester; the class of 2024 is enrolled in an average of seven classes.

### Grading Scale

GPA's are calculated on an unweighted 4.0 scale for all courses.  
Davidson Academy Online does not rank students.

Grade	Percent	Weight
A	93 – 100	4.0
A-	90 – 92	3.67
B+	87 – 89	3.33
B	83 – 86	3.0
B-	80 – 82	2.67
C+	77 – 79	2.33
C	73 – 76	2.0
C-	70 – 72	1.67
D+	67 – 69	1.33
D	63 – 66	1.0
D-	60 – 62	0.67
F	00 – 59	0.0

### COVID-19 Response

*Spring 2020 and the 2020-2021 School Year*  
While student attendance, performance, and expectations remained unchanged, the school recognized individual students affected by the pandemic. These students were offered options that could lighten their academic burden as needed, provided that they remained in at least five graded courses. Students were given a choice to continue with regular letter grades or utilize one of these options:

- Switch from letter to pass/fail grades for all high school classes. A pass is 70% or higher.
- Switch from taking a course for credit to audit status with an "AU" recorded on their transcript.
- Withdraw from one or more courses without a "W" on their transcript.

### Testing

Students are not required to take the SAT or ACT exams as a graduation requirement. As an online school, Davidson Academy Online cannot coordinate opportunities for students to test together in person, and local access to testing for students can vary.

### Advanced Placement

Davidson Academy Online neither offers Advanced Placement (AP) courses nor encourages students to take exams, but many students choose to take AP exams after self-study if local testing is available. Below is a summary of AP testing in 2023:

- 85 tests taken
- 67% students received a score of a 5
- 19% students received a score of a 4

### Faculty and Staff

Davidson Academy Online instructors and staff have years of experience working with profoundly gifted students and are experts in their content areas.

- Master's Degrees – 68%
- Doctorate Degrees – 18%

## SCHOOL PROFILE

2023 – 2024

### Director

Ashley Zahn

### Counseling Team

Lauren Bowman, Erin McKenna, Raenell Rafferty  
CollegeAndAdvising@davidsononline.org

### Accreditation

Fully Accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Between the 2017-2018 and 2021-2022 school years, Davidson Academy Online was accredited by Cognia as a campus of Davidson Academy, and all courses were approved for A-G credit from the UC High School Articulation System under The Davidson Academy of Nevada. Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, all courses are approved for A-G credit from the UC High School Articulation System under Davidson Academy Online.

CEEB Code: 292246

[www.DavidsonOnline.org](http://www.DavidsonOnline.org)

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RESPONSIBILITY • INTEGRITY • BALANCE  
LEADERSHIP • PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE • RESPECT

## BY THE NUMBERS

Total enrollment grades 6-12: **95**



Full-Time / Single-Course Enrollment **85 / 10**

Different States / Countries **20 / 2**

Students Receiving Financial Aid/NV Tuition Waiver **14%/16%**

Students Receiving Merit Scholarships **17%**

2024 National Merit Semifinalists **7**

Class of 2024 Average ACT Score **35.25**

Class of 2024 Average SAT Score **1549**

## STUDENT LIFE

With the rigor and demands of our curriculum, we encourage our students to participate in a balanced and meaningful amount of extracurricular activities both inside and outside the school community. As a result, we have 20 student-run clubs ranging from scholastic to interest-focused clubs.

### A sampling of extracurricular activities:

Athletics (club and high school)  
Chess Club  
Competitive Business Club  
Computer Science Team  
Cooking Club  
Math competitions  
Music ensembles  
Neurodiversity Alliance

Poetry Club  
Robotics competitions  
Science Bowl  
Sexuality & Gender Alliance (SAGA)  
Speech and Debate  
Star Wars Fan Club  
Students of Color Alliance (SoCA)  
Theatre

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE OFFERINGS

The Davidson Academy Online diploma is awarded based on the following requirements:

- Cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.0 or higher
- 28 total credits

Department	Diploma Req.	Courses Offered	
<b>English</b>	4 credits	Composition & Analysis Intro to Research & Communication Rhetoric & Literary Analysis American Literature	British Literature Advanced Rhetoric Value Theory
<b>Mathematics</b>	4 credits	Geometry Algebra II Algebra II/ Pre-Calculus+ Pre-Calculus Statistics Calculus I	Calculus I/II+ Calculus II Calculus III Linear Algebra* Intro to Proofs* Intro to Real Analysis+
<b>Science</b> <i>Advanced science courses have a 0.5 credit co-requisite lab section.</i>	4 credits: 1 Bio 1 Chem 1 Phys 1 Elective	Biology Chemistry Physics	Advanced Biology Advanced Chemistry Advanced Physics
<b>History</b>	3 credits: 1 World 1 US 1 Gov	Patterns in Modern History Conflict & Resolution in the 20th and 21st Centuries History of the US	Principles of American Gov Asian Studies Imperialism & Post-Colonialism
<b>World Language</b> <i>2 credits in the same language.</i>	3 credits	Chinese I Chinese II Chinese III* Chinese IV* Chinese V* Chinese VI* Classical Chinese	Spanish Fundamentals I/II Intermediate Spanish I/II Advanced Spanish I* Advanced Spanish II* Hispanophone Lit & History* Spanish Practicum*
<b>Physical Education</b>	2 credits	Fitness Independent Study PE	
<b>Health</b>	0.5 credit	Health	
<b>Financial Literacy</b>	0.5 credit	Financial Literacy	
<b>Arts &amp; Humanities Electives</b> <i>Elective courses change yearly based on student interest and faculty expertise.</i>	2 credits	<i>Sampling of A &amp; H Electives:</i> 3D Modeling Animal Ethics Intro to Film Studies	Music Theory I/II Science Fiction Speech and Debate
<b>General Electives</b> <i>Beginning Fall 2022, all juniors are required to take College Seminar.</i>	5 credits	<i>Sampling of General Electives:</i> College Seminar Introduction to Aviation	Technology I/II Yearbook

\*semester-long 1 credit courses, +year-long 2 credit courses

## SPECIAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

These are credit-bearing academic programs beyond our traditional core and elective offerings.

- **Academic Independent Study:** Designed to mirror a college-level independent study course, students select a project mentor and develop a course curriculum and assignment structure of their design before submitting it for approval. Past approved independent studies include Amharic Language and Ethiopian Culture, Bulgarian Solitaire and Open Problems, and Analytical Number Theory & Real Analysis.
- **Dual Enrollment:** While students may earn credit toward high school graduation by completing coursework at any approved post-secondary academic institution, Davidson Academy Online maintains an enrollment and articulation agreement with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Students who receive approval (based on academic and personal/social readiness) are embedded into traditional UNR courses with undergraduate students.
- **English Student Aide Workshop:** Designed as a student-facilitated writing workshop and mentoring program, selected students from advanced English classes offer peer feedback on written work, assist with understanding of grammatical concepts and varied disciplinary writing conventions, and actively promote student use of the Writing Center.
- **STEM Mentors:** Designed as a student-facilitated tutoring and mentoring program, STEM Mentors are student leaders who offer weekly office hours to assist students with concepts, homework, and preparation for assessments.
- **World Language Center:** Designed as a student-facilitated tutoring and mentoring program, World Language Center aides offer feedback on written world language assignments, clarify grammar or vocabulary concepts, and allow students additional opportunities to practice their expressive language skills.

All special academic programs require an application process and/or teacher recommendation, and continued participation requires that students remain in good academic standing.

## COLLEGE MATRICULATION:

Beginning with the class of 2020, Davidson Academy Online has graduated 19 students; 11 under Davidson Academy and 8 under Davidson Academy Online. Students were accepted at the following institutions:

*\*Indicates student enrolled. \*\*Indicates multiple students enrolled.*

Arizona State University, Austin College, Baylor University, Beloit College, Bennington College, Boston College, Boston University, Brandeis University, Bucknell University, California Polytechnic State University (San Luis Obispo), California State Polytechnic University (Pomona), CalTech\*, Carleton College\*, Carnegie Mellon\*\*, Cornell University, Duke University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Hamilton College, Harvard University, Harvey Mudd College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Howard University, Imperial College London, King's College London, Lewis & Clark College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)\*\*, McGill University\*, Miami University (OH), Northwestern University, Oberlin College, Oregon Institute of Technology, Oregon State University, Penn State University, Princeton University, Purdue University, Rhodes College, Rice University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Rutgers University (New Brunswick), Santa Clara University, Stevens Institute of Technology, Swarthmore College, Temple University, Texas A&M (Commerce), Texas A&M University, The College of Wooster\*, The University of Alabama, The University of Manchester, The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Texas at Dallas, Trinity University, UC Berkeley\*, University of Alabama in Huntsville, University of Arizona, University of Arkansas, University of Colorado Boulder, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Iowa, University of Kentucky Lewis Honors College\*, University of Minnesota (Twin Cities), University of Mississippi, University of Nevada (Reno)\*, University of Notre Dame, University of Oklahoma\*, University of Pittsburgh\*, University of Portland, University of Tulsa, University of Virginia, University of Wisconsin, Washington University in St. Louis\*, Whitman College, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

## Notable Achievements

- 6 Caroline D. Bradley Scholarship recipients
- 2 MATHCOUNTS National Champions
- Congressional Award Gold Medal winner
- Laura Allard Future Vision Scholarship recipient
- 2 National Merit Scholarship Winners
- NSDA National Tournament Qualifiers in Public Forum
- Scholastic Art and Writing Silver National Medal recipient
- Tournament of Champions Public Forum qualifiers

John Weinzwieg Centenary Scholarship Senior Award; SET Scholar; numerous AIME/AMC participants with top honors; Canadian Open Mathematics Challenge bronze; USAMO bronze; USAJMO winner; BAMO 12 winner; 2 Kentucky MATHCOUNTS winners; 2nd place Texas MATHCOUNTS; 2nd and 4th place Nevada MATHCOUNTS; multiple Scholastic Art and Writing Awards recipients; Naval Horizons STEM Essay Contest winner with highest honors; NADC Grand Championship Qualifiers in Public Forum; Multiple National Latin Exam medal winners; XIII Chopin International Piano Competition 1st place; Eastern Division MTNA Junior Composition Competition 1st place; member of US Youth Futsal National Championship team; North Texas Junior Competitive Climbing Association Championship 1st place multiple disciplines; CruzHacks 2022 1st place multiple categories; Reserve Section National ChessKid Championship 1st place; Central Illinois Regional (CIR) FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) Finalist; 1st place International Academic Competition-Science Bee 8th grade Division for South Cal.; 2nd place in the Nevada/Central Coast Regional Science Bowl; Youth Ambassadors Program Scholarship recipient; 1st place 64th Science and Engineering Fair of Houston Biomedical Engineering Junior Division; gold and silver medal recipient in the Seattle International Bach Piano Festival; 1st place in the Silver State Classical Solo Piano Competition for 7th graders; First Place Intermediate 3 ACSL Nevada; Bronze Award Intermediate ACSL

## School Recognitions

Awarded when Davidson Academy Online was a campus of the public school, Davidson Academy.

- Named one of the "15 Best Online High Schools" in the nation by College Transitions
- Recipient of Resilient Districts Prize from Future of School
- Named to the "Public Elites List" by the Washington Post's Jay Mathews College Transitions
- Ranked #1 as the "Best Public High School" in Nevada and "Best Public High School" in America by Niche.com's 2022 Best Schools in America Rankings and Grades
- Ranked #6 in "2022 Best Public High Schools" and #1 in STEM High Schools listing by US News and World
- Online Campus - 4x winner of the Blackboard Catalyst Award and 2x winner of the Blackboard Exemplary Course Award