



SPARK

**Supporting Potential & Advanced Readiness in
Kids**

Ignite Learning Academy's Gifted and Talented Education Program

Vision Statement

Ignite Learning Academy is a destination school for gifted students and teachers because their experience emboldens them to set the world on fire.

Mission Statement

Spark individualizes the learning for every student, provides engaging project-based learning experiences with intellectual peers, ignites their curiosity, and positively changes the trajectory of their future.

What is Spark?

Spark is Ignite Learning Academy's Gifted and Talented Education program. It offers a comprehensive personalized learning experience for K-12 gifted students, live classes facilitated by gifted certified teachers, collaboration with intellectual peers, and opportunities for acceleration and/or enrichment across the curriculum.

- Click [here](#) for an elementary overview
- Click [here](#) for a middle school/high school overview

SPARK students benefit from:

- Online curriculum designed for gifted learners and based on their ability level
- A certified gifted teacher trained and experienced in teaching gifted children online
- Live class discussions, projects, and virtual collaborative learning with intellectual peers
- [Renzulli Learning](#) and Future Problem-Solving supplements to allow personalized content and activities aligned to their age, interest, and ability level
- Jr. Great Book Socratic Seminars for student in 2nd grade and above
- Optional replacement math curriculum from Beast Academy (ages 8-13) or the Art of Problem Solving (pre-algebra and above)
- Freedom to accelerate through curriculum at an appropriate pace for the student
- Interest-based projects and optional field trips (if available in your geographic area);
- High school capstone projects
- A caring environment where students are physically, emotionally, and cognitively safe

SPARK Learning Coaches benefit from:

- A teacher with education and experience teaching gifted children in an online environment who can offer recommendations and support
- Connection with other Ignite Learning Academy parents who are schooling gifted children and understand the gifted parenting experience

- Confidence knowing your child is part of comprehensive gifted program that stimulates your child academically, socially, and emotionally
- Support in an educational setting, even when your child is doing well academically
- Freedom to celebrate your child’s gifts without, apology, hesitation, or judgement
- Assurance that you are making the right decision for your child’s educational career

Scope of Program

It is important to note that differentiated educational programs for gifted students are not designed for the typical superior student, who is an excellent scholar, can earn “A” grades, and achieve academic honors. The educational needs of these students can be met in the classroom.

Gifted programs are reserved for the students who are as far from the superior student in potential as the superior is from the average student. The task is to identify these students and to provide educational opportunities that will challenge and develop their abilities.

Ignite Learning Academy classifies any child who performs at, or shows the potential for performing at, a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment and who:

- Exhibit high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, leadership, or artistic areas; and
- Excel in a specific academic area.

Gifted learners typically demonstrate characteristics that are different from their same-age peers in multiple areas of function: cognitive, affective, physical, and intuitive. There is no singular characteristic that encompasses giftedness. Gifted learners differ from each other as each child has unique patterns of characteristics and interests. Differences commonly found between most gifted learners and their same age peers include:

- A need for acceleration and modification in pacing of the curriculum.
- A need for complexity and intensity.
- A need for depth and the ability to explore certain subjects in extensive detail.
- A search for novelty as gifted students seek to find a way to express their creativity in the creation of projects and research that challenge their thinking in new and unusual ways.

SPARK Identification Criteria

Parents, teachers, administrators, students, and/or SPARK staff may nominate a student as a candidate for the SPARK screening process. Information to be reviewed must include test scores or proof of previous gifted program placement. Gifted students will be placed into either a self-contained or pullout model based on their needs. Student must qualify with one of the following:

Gifted Pullout

- Full-Scale IQ: 125-139; or
- CogAT

- Age percentile score of 95-97 percentile in any one area; or
- Age composite score of 85th - 96th percentile; or
- Proctored Star Test score in math or reading over 95th percentile; or
- Prior school placement in a gifted pull-out program; or
- Ignite Learning Academy gifted teacher recommendation.

Gifted Self Contained

- Full-Scale IQ (FSIQ): 140+; or
- CogAT
 - Age percentile score of 98th percentile, or above, in any one area; or
 - Age composite score of 97th percentile or above; or
- Prior school placement in a self-contained gifted program; or
- Ignite Learning Academy gifted teacher recommendation.

Spark Placement Tracks

Pullout students qualify with one of the following:
 Full-Scale IQ: 125-139; or
 CogAT
 Age percentile score of 95-97 percentile in any one area; or
 Age composite score of 85th - 96th percentile; or
 Proctored Star Test score in math or reading over 95th%; or
 Prior school placement in a gifted pull-out program; or
 Ignite Learning Academy gifted teacher recommendation.

Self Contained students qualify with one of the following:
 Full-Scale IQ: 140+; or
 CogAT
 Age percentile score of 98th percentile in any one area; or
 Age composite score of 97th or above; or
 Prior school placement in a gifted self contained program; or
 Ignite Learning Academy gifted teacher recommendation.

	K-5 ELEMENTARY PULLOUT	K-5 ELEMENARY SELF-CONTAINED	6-12 SECONDARY PULLOUT	6-12 SECONDARY SELF-CONTAINED
CURRICULUM	Pearson Gifted above 2nd grade	Pearson Gifted above 2nd grade	Pearson Gifted	Pearson Gifted
MODEL	Cluster Grouping with 1 day a week pullout	Self Contained Gifted	Cluster Grouping with 1 day a week pullout	Cluster grouping with one day pullout and 1:1
TEACHER	Homerom teacher with additional K-5 Gifted Specialist	K-5 Gifted Certified Teacher	Secondary teachers with Gifted specialist	Secondary teachers with Gifted specialist
WEEKLY STUDETN CONTACT WITH A GIFTED SPECIALIST	1+ hours	5 hours	1+ hours	1.5 hours
OFFICE HOURS	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
CLASS SIZE	Up to 12 students	Up to 10 Students	Up to 12 Students	Up to 10 students

Delivery of Gifted Services, Elementary & Secondary

The SPARK program follows the school’s adopted curriculum and teachers enrich and enhance the learning opportunities for students.

Course Placement: All students are placed in courses appropriate to their current academic level. In many cases, students will be working above grade level in one or more of their courses. Teachers frequently draw upon outside resources to enrich the curriculum, including websites and games that promote learning, research, student skills, reading materials (both fiction and non-fiction), and provide opportunities for students to present alternate perspectives on issues. Student work is supervised by a certified teacher and a gifted-certified teacher directs the learning and completion of the quarterly/semester/year-long projects.

Spark Placement Tracks: Gifted students will be placed into either a self-contained or pullout model based on their grade and test scores.

Gifted Pullout: Gifted students are placed in cluster groups with a general education teacher who is trained in gifted strategies and other gifted students with similar abilities. These students attend Spark for at least one hour each week.

Gifted Self Contained: Gifted students are placed full time with a gifted certified teacher and other highly gifted students. These students attend Spark for one hour each day focusing on Critical and Creative Problem solving that spans the curricular areas.

Live sessions: Live class sessions are an opportunity for intellectual peers to work on collaborative problem solving in an interactive and engaging environment. Spark classes present students with relevant, real-world problems that will empower them to use their strengths, practice their grit, and present their solutions to the classroom community and beyond. Live Spark sessions are led by teachers who have extensive experience with gifted learners. Your children are in very good hands.

Spark Getting Started FAQ's

- **When do live Spark classes begin?** The Spark self-contained begin the first day of school. Students who are in the Spark Pullout program spend the first 4 days of school learning the routines in their general education classroom and begin Spark pullout classes the first Friday of the week. Middle/High School students will come the first day Spark is scheduled.
- **How do I know who my teacher is, what time my classes are, and how I login?** You will find everything you need on your course home page inside of the online school. When you open your class the first time you will see a picture of your teacher and all her information.
- **How will my teacher communicate with me?** Important information will be shared regularly on the course announcement page. On Fridays you will receive an email newsletter with important information. You can email or call your teacher anytime and she will reach out and communicate with you too. You will find your teacher's contact information on the landing page in Buzz (where the curriculum live.)

- **How can I communicate with other Spark Parents?** Feel free to join our Spark Parents Facebook group by clicking [here](#). This is a great place to ask questions, share resources, and get to know one another.
- **What materials does my child need for Spark?** You will want to help your child put together a makerspace for class projects. This will include arts and crafts supplies and recycled materials for creating projects. Here is a [video](#) with information for putting this together. Also, please make sure they have standard size post it notes for annotating literature (2nd-12th grades.)
- **How do we log into Renzulli Learning?** Every Spark Student will have access to Renzulli Learning on their first week of school. Click [here](#) to login and their username is their first.last last name (lowercase with no space ie. brandi.maynard) and their password is 2021. Click [here](#) for a student introduction to Renzulli.
- **How do I complete the profiler?** Please have your child complete the Renzulli Profiler prior to the first day of class. This will give her valuable insight into your child and will allow us to jump in right away and talk about your child’s superpowers! Click [here](#) for video directions with step-by-step and step by step directions for completing Renzulli Learning Profiler are listed below:
 - [K-4 Directions](#)
 - [5-12 Directions](#)
- **What access do we need to other platforms?** Your student will receive access to Microsoft365 and Canva. These are the other two learning tools students will use in the Spark Classroom and more information will be emailed with specific information. Do not sign up for a Canva Account. Your teacher (2nd-12th grades) will send you an invite link to sign up for our classroom Canva account. This will give you free access to all the great features.

Meet the Spark Team

[Brandi Maynard, PhD: Director of Gifted Education and K-12 Gifted Teacher](#)

Fun Fact: When Dr. B was young, she was a barrel racer and now she rides dirt bikes in the mountains with her husband and their two boys. She was born to ride!

[Brittany Balog, M.A.: Elementary Gifted Teacher](#)

- **Fun Fact:** On a family trip to Glacier National Park, Mrs. Balog nearly ran into a Grizzly bear and her cubs on a hiking trail. Fortunately, she was able to get away safely, but that was one of the scariest experiences of her life! She now makes certain to have her bear spray handy when hiking in her home state!

[Leta Hamilton: Elementary Gifted Teacher](#)

- **Fun Facts:** Mrs. Hamilton had a bone graft, metal plate, and six screws put in her knee after breaking it in high school! She loves to cook and bake, and her favorite quote is “be the light you wish to see in the world.”