DAVIDSON ACADEMY

SCHOOL PROFILE | 2026 – 2027

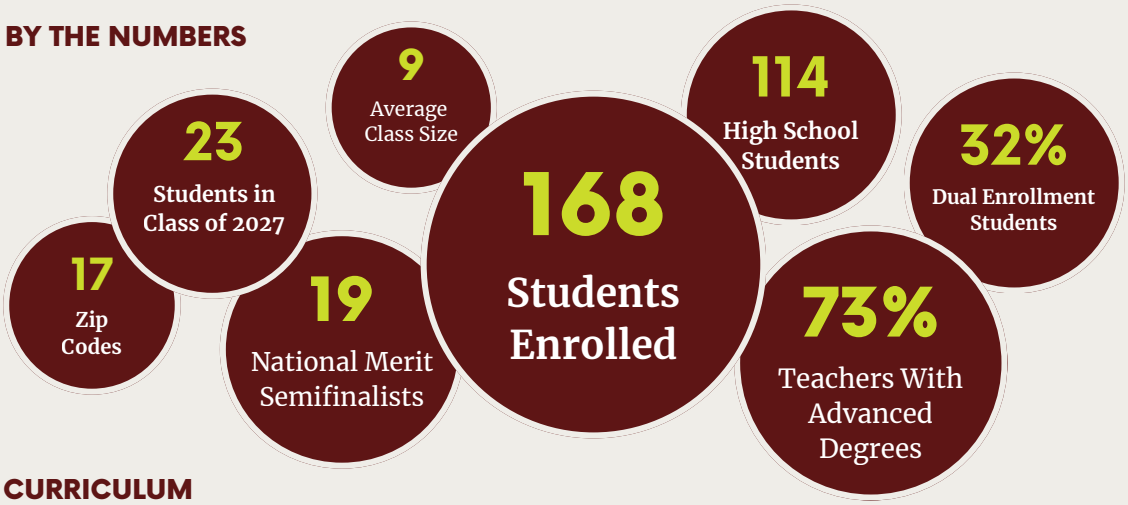
INTRODUCTION

Established in 2006, the Davidson Academy is a public middle and high school located on the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) campus, designated by Nevada legislation as a "university school for profoundly gifted pupils" (NRS Chapter 388C). Driven by the mission to provide profoundly gifted young people an advanced educational opportunity matched to their abilities, strengths, and interests, students are grouped by ability, not by age or grade. All students must meet the following eligibility criteria and be accepted to the Davidson Academy:

- A score of 99.9% or above on nationally normed intelligence tests and/or nationally normed achievement tests.
- Demonstrate social and emotional maturity, an overall readiness for a rigorous school, and individual student commitment to participate in an accelerated education.

The Davidson Academy launched its online campus in 2017, available to students anywhere in the U.S. and Canada. Davidson Academy Online is an independent school with CEEB code 292246.

BY THE NUMBERS



CURRICULUM

Each student develops a Prospective Learning Plan (PLP) to serve as a roadmap for their academic and personal goals. These plans guide students through a rigorous core curriculum and help them make elective decisions based on their interests and abilities. PLPs are consistent with the Academy's philosophy of treating students as individuals invested in their own learning. High school students engage in a blend of advanced high school, undergraduate, and graduate-level courses. Breadth and depth are emphasized rather than teaching to any particular standardized test or curriculum. Coursework stresses higher-level thinking skills, critical and creative engagement, collaborative discussion with fellow classmates, and opportunities for experiential learning. Classes are designed to require students' active participation in their learning. Core subject classes take place from Monday to Thursday, and most electives take place on Fridays. Students take an average of five core classes and two or three elective classes. Students must be enrolled in at least five credit-bearing courses. During senior year, students are required to be enrolled in at least four.

EXTRACURRICULAR CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Due to the rigor of the curriculum, students are encouraged to take part in a modest, but meaningful amount of extracurricular activities within and outside the school community. Students are not required to complete volunteer hours.

sampling of school-based clubs and activities

DECA	Art	Finance
HOSA	Basketball	Future Physicians
NACLO	Chess	Green Earth Community
Math Competitions	Christianity	Math
Science Bowl	Community	Musicians
Science Olympiad	Dance	Philosophy
Speech and Debate	Dungeons and Dragons	Vocalist
Peer Advising Liaisons	Engineering	Women in Stem

Responsibility ▪ Integrity ▪ Balance ▪ Leadership ▪ Pursuit of Knowledge ▪ Respect

Director: Colleen Harsin
Counseling Team: Jesse Kachurak, Laurie Parish

collegeadvising@davidsonacademy.unr.edu
www.DavidsonAcademy.unr.edu

Davidson Academy
P.O. Box 9119
Reno, NV 89507
775-446-7778

CEEB Code: 290207

Accreditation
The Davidson Academy is accredited by Cognia on August 27, 2024. Schools in good standing can maintain their accreditation for a six-year term.

Governing Board
The Davidson Academy Governing Board is a public body and is hereby given such reasonable and necessary powers, not conflicting with the Constitution and the laws of the state of Nevada, as may be required to attain the ends for which the school was established and to promote the welfare of pupils who are enrolled in the school (according to Nevada Revised Statute 388C).

The governing body is comprised of three individuals selected by senior elected officials of the state of Nevada; four individuals selected by the founding entity (The Davidson Institute for Talent Development); the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (ex officio); and the President of the University of Nevada, Reno (ex officio). Public meetings are held four times a year, once every quarter.

School Recognitions

- Ranked #4 Best Public High School in America by U.S. News & World Report
- Ranked #2 Best Public High School in America and #1 Best Public Middle School in America by Niche.com's "2027 Best Schools in America Rankings and Grades"
- Ranked #4 Best Public School in America by The Education Magazine

Personal Development
A set of core values encourages and prepares students to become leaders and contribute their talents and intellect to society. An environment is cultivated where students can experience a sense of independence and ownership over their actions and influences. This applies to their classroom responsibilities and their relationships with educators, friends and family.

DAVIDSON ACADEMY

SCHOOL PROFILE | 2026 – 2027

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE OFFERINGS

An Academy diploma is considered an advanced high school diploma in the state of Nevada. Diplomas are awarded based on the following requirements:

- Cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.0 or higher
- 28 total credits required – 18 core, 6 general electives, 2 arts and humanities, 2 PE

Some classes are not offered every year. Elective courses change yearly based on student interest. Students may design and lead their own elective seminar as approved by the administration.

English 4 Credits	Composition & Analysis Rhetoric & Literary Analysis	American Literature British Literature	Advanced Rhetoric Science Writing & Communications Critical Theory
Math 4 Credits	Geometry Algebra II Pre-Calculus Statistics	Calculus I Calculus I/II Calculus II	Calculus III Year Calculus III Semester Differential Equations
Science 4 Credits	Physical Science Biology Advanced Biology	Physics Advanced Physics Advanced Geosystems	Chemistry Advanced Chemistry
History 3 Credits: 1 World, 1 US, 0.5 Gov, 0.5 Economics	Patterns in Modern History History of the United States		Principles of American Government & Economics 20th Century World History Through Film Understanding the Post 9/11 World
World Language 3 Credits	Chinese 1-2 Chinese 3-4 Chinese 5/6 - 7/8 Chinese 9/10 -11/12		Spanish 1-2 Spanish 3-4 Spanish 5/6 - 7/8 Spanish 9/10 - 11/12
Electives **sampling of current offerings**	The Actor Factor Animation Art: Drawing/Painting Games in Spanish HIIT Health	Monsters in Media Improvisation Journalism Kung Fu Leadership Music Theory	Outdoor Skills Philosophy of Space and Time Plane Geometry Politics in Pop Culture Viva Italia Yearbook	**Student Led:** Biotechnology Blender Decision Making Geography Linguistics Mock Trial Storytelling

DUAL ENROLLMENT

If a student exhausts Academy classes offered in one or more subjects, they may have the option to enroll in courses at UNR in accordance with their PLP. Courses taken beyond graduation requirements are the financial responsibility of the family. Coursework completed at UNR, or another approved dual enrollment provider, is added to the student's high school transcript.

sampling of current UNR courses for academy students	ENGR 100 Intro to Engineering PSY 101 General Psychology PAIT 111 First Year Northern Paiute ECON 103 Macroeconomics PHIL 211 Intro Ancient Philosophy BIOL 223 Human Anatomy & Physiology	MATH 330 Linear Algebra STAT 352 Probability and Statistics CHEM 341 Organic Chemistry I PSY 403 Physiological Psychology BIOL 407 Genomics and Bioinformatics SOC 453 Gender and Society

COLLEGE MATRICULATION: CLASSES 2022-2026
136 GRADUATES, 60 INSTITUTIONS

*two or more students | **five or more students

Bennington; Brown; Caltech*; Cal Poly SLO*; Carnegie Mellon*; Case Western*; Colorado State, Fort Collins; Columbia U*; Cornell; Dartmouth*; Dominican; Emory*; Fordham; Harvard*; Harvey Mudd**; Indiana U, Bloomington; Johns Hopkins*; Lewis & Clark; MIT**; Northeastern; Northwestern*; Oregon Tech; Princeton; Pomona; Purdue*; Reed*; RISD; RIT; Rice; Scripps; Smith College; Stanford**; Swarthmore; Temple; The Ohio State U; USMA – Westpoint; U of Alabama*; UBC; UC Berkeley**; UC Davis; UCSD*; UCSC; U Chicago; UCONN; UIUC*; UMich*; U of Minnesota, Twin Cities*; U of Nevada, Reno**; U of Oklahoma; U of Rochester*; UT Dallas**; USC*; U of Virginia*; U of Washington*; U Wisconsin, Madison; Utrecht; Vanderbilt; Williams; Wittenberg U; Yale*

Responsibility ▪ Integrity ▪ Balance ▪ Leadership ▪ Pursuit of Knowledge ▪ Respect

Grading Scale

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

- Davidson Academy uses a semester schedule.
- GPAs are calculated on an unweighted 4.0 scales.
- Only Davidson Academy and Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) courses are calculated in the GPA.
- Courses graded pass/fail and approved outside coursework are not included in GPA calculations. Some Davidson Academy electives are pass/fail.

For the class of 2027, the mean GPA is a 3.85. Davidson Academy does not rank students.

Testing

Nevada's College and Career Readiness (CCR) assessment is the ACT +Writing. The class of 2027 took the ACT +Writing in the spring of 2026.

Advanced Placement

Davidson Academy does not offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses, but many students choose to take AP Exams. As of 2024-2025 Students may take up to 3 AP exams per year. Below is a summary of testing from May 2026:

- 93 students
- 191 exams
- 100% of test scores 3 or above

Special Considerations

- The Davidson Academy does not have a school breakfast or lunch program and therefore, does not offer free and reduced lunch.
- Due to the small school population, many classes are only offered once in the schedule.
- Many interscholastic school activities, such as athletics, band, and JROTC, are not offered through the Academy. However, students are eligible to participate in these programs at their zoned school.
- The Davidson Academy's academic calendar aligns with UNR's course calendar with the exception of fall break.
- Students must reside in Nevada to attend Davidson Academy. Approximately 50% of families have relocated to attend Davidson Academy.