

Virginia Governor's Foreign Language Academies



and



Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy:

2008 Virginia Foreign Language Academies: A Global Village

Guide for School Personnel

Sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education

2008 VIRGINIA FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACADEMIES GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS

The 2008 Virginia Foreign Language Academies: A Global Village will consist of six Virginia Governor's Foreign Language Academies (GFLA) for French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish; and a Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy (VSCA). The VSCA is funded by the STARTALK grant program administered by the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland. Funding for STARTALK comes from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and STARTALK is one of several language programs under the umbrella of President Bush's *National Security Language Initiative* (January 5, 2006). **The Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy is dependent upon annual grant funding and may or may not be available in future years.** Information about the national STARTALK program is available at http://www.nflc.org/projects/current_projects/startalk/. Please note that the VSCA nomination process runs on a separate timeline, which begins in February following notification of the grant award.

The process for submitting applications and student data for nominees has been modified FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS to allow for direct entry of student data into a secure Web site. This change in procedures will result in more time for students and schools to prepare the applications, increased accuracy in student data, and a faster application review process. The process may be expanded to include private schools at a later date. At this time, private school student data will be entered by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Much of the information in this guide is pertinent to both public and private schools, and private school procedures, if different, are clearly indicated.

The 2008 Virginia Foreign Language Academies' selection process is consistent with the mission of the VDOE to provide eligible students in the Commonwealth equitable access to programs and services. All information, applications, and testing material order forms are available online at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Language/GAindex.html>.

The 2008 Virginia Foreign Language Academies' selection of nominees will continue to be conducted by the schools and the Virginia Department of Education. The VDOE works with the school's foreign language department chairperson (or designee) as the primary contact for all information. As in past years, schools are encouraged establish dates for the submission of the various parts of the application in a manner that meets their needs. Each school's foreign language chairperson is encouraged to provide the foreign language teachers in the school with information regarding the application submission process and due dates. The designated contact person with the final authority for problem solving with the VDOE is the private school regional coordinator or the public school division foreign language supervisor or gifted education coordinator.

This administrative guide outlines the specific process from nomination through completion of the summer program. Additional information is available at the Web site above.

PROGRAM DATES AND LOCATION

Governor's French Academy	60 students	June 21, 2008 - July 13, 2008	Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond, Virginia
Governor's Spanish Academy			
Governor's German Academy	45 students	June 22, 2008 - July 13, 2008	
Governor's Latin Academy			
Governor's Russian Academy	38 students	June 22, 2008 - July 13, 2008	
Governor's Japanese Academy			
STARTALK Chinese Academy	32 students		

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

#	COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	GFLA	VSCA
1	Dissemination of Information	Each school division or private school coordinator is responsible for disseminating the pertinent information from this document as early as possible.	October 2007	February 2008
2	Criteria for Eligibility	Each school is responsible for ensuring that all nominees meet the established criteria for application. Principals or headmasters are required to sign each application to indicate that each nominee submitted is eligible for the program.	October-December 2007	February 2008
3	Schools' Selection Process	Schools' selection committees (if necessary) meet to determine which candidates to send forward for the state's selection process.	December 2007-January 2008	February 2008
4	Testing	Nominees to the French, German, Latin, and Spanish academies must undergo testing to determine their language abilities. These tests must be ordered from the VDOE no later than December 14, 2007 .	December 2007-January 2008	N/A
5	Internal Notification	Suggested date for students to submit completed applications to school. For GFLA, chairpersons notify division gifted education coordinators or private school regional coordinators of the names of all nominees.	January 11, 2008	N/A
6	Schools' Nominee Submission Process	Postmark deadline for schools to mail original application packets to the VDOE. Deadline for entry of student data on the VDOE's secure Web site. (Public schools) GFLA only: Public division coordinators must mail/fax the verification report, signed by the superintendent. Private schools mail the signed Head of School Tuition Certification form (Attachment B).	January 17, 2008	March 7, 2008 <i>(no verification report or tuition certification)</i>
7	VDOE's Selection Process	VDOE verifies completeness of application packets and prepares materials for state-wide selection committees. For an overview of the state selection committee evaluation criteria, please see Attachment A.	January-March 2008	Early March 2008
8	VDOE's Student Notification Process	Students receive letters concerning the status of their applications. Prior to this, regional and division coordinators will receive lists indicating the status of individual nominees.	Mid April 2008	Mid April 2008
9	Payment Process	Students notify the VDOE of their acceptance of the invitation. GFLA only: Public school divisions and private schools will be invoiced in late May. Revised invoices, if applicable, will be sent after the first day of the program.	May-June 2008	May 2008 <i>(no invoices)</i>

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DETAILED PROCESS INFORMATION

1. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

- Each public school division's foreign language supervisor or gifted education coordinator is encouraged to provide all high schools with information regarding the application submission process. For private schools, this may be done by the regional coordinator already responsible for the student application process to the Summer Residential Governor's Schools.
- Schools should publicize information about the Governor's Foreign Language Academies to all tenth- and eleventh-grade foreign language students during the fall. *Schools should publicize the Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy following grant approval notification in February, if applicable.*
- Each public or private school must not discriminate upon the basis of religious conviction, race, gender, age, national origin, disability, or parent/guardian occupation.
- Public school divisions and private schools are responsible for the local share of the tuition costs for any student nominated to the Governor's Foreign Language Academies. The local share for the public school division is based on its current ability-to-pay composite index, not to exceed 50 percent of the tuition cost. The local share for private schools is 50 percent of the tuition cost. *(This does not apply to the VSCA, which is fully funded through a federal grant.)*

NOTE: Students who reside in Virginia but attend private schools within or outside of the Commonwealth may be nominated by their schools following the same general process as public schools if they meet all other eligibility requirements. Home-schooled students must participate in the nomination process through the public school they are zoned to attend.

2. CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

The school shall provide an application to any student who meets the eligibility criteria listed below. Schools are strongly encouraged to review the selection criteria with students and to assist them in recognizing the competition they face at the state level. Applications are available online at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Language/GAindex.html>. The following criteria shall be met for a student to be eligible for consideration for a Governor's Foreign Language Academy or the Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy:

All nominees:

- must be neither a current applicant to a 2008 Summer Residential Governor's Schools (SRGS) or another GFLA, nor a former participant in these programs; **(A student may attend only one program during his or her high school career.)**
- must be at least juniors but may be mature sophomores during the current school year, 2007-2008, and must not have graduated before the opening of the academy;
- must be nominated by an accredited public high school from a Virginia public school division or by a private school that is accredited by the Virginia Council for Private Education or other appropriate accrediting agency;
- must be genuinely interested in attending the academy and have the emotional maturity, stability, and self-discipline to live away from home for an extended period;

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- must be recommended by two teachers, or a teacher and another individual, who know the academic ability and strengths of the student in the selected area; and
- must be eligible to attend public school in Virginia tuition-free. (For information regarding residency, please refer to Superintendent's Informational Memorandum Number 140, issued by the Virginia Department of Education on July 27, 2007, available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2007/inf140.html>.)

Additional requirements

Nominees for Immersion Academies (French, German, Spanish)

- must have completed at least level three of the language prior to the beginning of the academy;
- must have developed good proficiency in using this language; and
- **must be willing to use the target language for all social and academic interactions.**

Nominees for Latin Academy

- must have completed at least two years of Latin prior to the beginning of the academy.

Nominees for Partial-Immersion Academies (Chinese, Japanese, Russian)

- must have successfully completed two years of ANY language prior to the beginning of the academy (but may also be students of Chinese, Japanese or Russian).

Please note: The immersion academies are not designed for students with native or near-native fluency in the target language. The following could cause an applicant to be eliminated in the selection process:

- Prior residence in a country where the language of the academy is spoken;
- Extensive travel experiences in a country where the language of the academy is spoken;
- Extensive full-immersion experiences (24 hrs/day) with the language of the academy; or
- Residence in a family where the language of the academy is spoken in the home.

“Extensive” is defined as equivalent to an academy in length and intensity. Students with highly developed oral language skills do not find the rigors of the academy as challenging or rewarding as students of lesser proficiency who, for the most part, have learned the language entirely in a classroom setting. Furthermore, it is difficult for staff to accommodate students whose language skills are already sufficiently developed. It is suggested that such students consider application to one of the other foreign language/area studies academies, i.e., Japanese or Russian.

3. SCHOOLS' SELECTION PROCESS

Committee Process

Each secondary school may select nominees for the academies. Each school may convene a committee to consider applicants from the school. Schools should consider including school counselors and educators and/or professionals knowledgeable in each of the program languages as members of the committee.

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Schools are limited in the number of students they may nominate based on Average Daily Membership in **grades 10-12** as of September 30, 2007. Note that 9th graders are NOT included in the count.

Enrollment in grades 10-12 as of September 30, 2007	Number of nominees to French, German, Latin, or Spanish	Number of nominees to Chinese, Japanese, or Russian
1-750	1 per academy	1 per academy
More than 750	2 per academy	

4. TESTING

Testing Process

The nominees for French, German, and Spanish must be tested on their writing and speaking abilities in those languages, and Latin nominees must write a composition and take a Latin grammar test. The foreign language department chairperson must order these testing materials from the VDOE by December 14, 2007. Schools are asked to order only as many as are needed. The order form is available online from the previously mentioned Web site under "Testing Materials." Schools should arrange suitable testing locations and appropriate proctors. **Please note that current or former foreign language teachers (including Latin) may not proctor any of the tests.** All immersion students use the same materials, and, therefore, must be tested during the same block of time. Likewise, all Latin students from a school should be tested during the same block of time. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure ahead of time that recording equipment is in proper working order and that required testing procedures are carefully followed. Nominees to the immersion academies must provide their own (regular-sized) cassette tapes for the speaking portion, and all students should come prepared with paper and pencils.

There is NO TEST for Chinese, Japanese, and Russian Academy nominees, since these academies accept beginners. The essay that is required may be completed at home and does not need to be proctored, although the students should not receive any help. The essay topic is included in the student application.

5. INTERNAL NOTIFICATION

For the GFLA, it is recommended that students submit completed applications to the school by January 11, 2008, to allow time for chairpersons to verify the completeness of the applications and notify their coordinators of the names of all nominees. For PUBLIC schools, this allows for one week to complete data entry and for division coordinators to prepare the Verification (Nominee) Report Form and obtain the necessary signature. Schools may set an earlier deadline, if they wish. Ideally, data entry should be completed at the school level by the foreign language chairperson. Local data entry will increase accuracy and speed the VDOE application review process. For information about the data entry process, see below under "School Nominee Submission Process." *For the VSCA, we also recommend that students submit completed applications to the school one week prior to the postmark deadline. The data collection window will be reopened at that time. However, there is no need to submit a Verification Report or Head of School Tuition Certification form.*

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6. SCHOOL NOMINEE SUBMISSION PROCESS

Responsibilities of the Foreign Language Department Chairperson

Completing the Application

The chairperson should check each student's application for completeness before submission. Incomplete applications received by the VDOE will be returned to the school for completion. Due to the large number of applications, the VDOE may not be able to check the completeness of an application until well after the deadline for submission. However, the student will not be considered until the completed application is resubmitted. It is recommended that schools keep a copy of the completed application (minus any testing materials) for each nominee. These copies of the applications should be destroyed in August 2008.

Each student's application should also indicate the names and titles of the school's selection committee members on the Principal's/Headmaster's form. This form, which acknowledges that the nominee is worthy to represent his/her school, is included with the student application and is available at the previously provided Web site.

The PUBLIC SCHOOL foreign language department chairperson may be asked to assist with data entry into a VDOE secure Web site, especially in larger public school divisions. If so, this must be done **prior** to mailing the applications and **before** the coordinator can print and mail the final, signed verification report. (The verification report certifying local payment of tuition is not required for the VSCA, although schools must enter the data into the secure Web site.) Local data entry will increase accuracy and speed the VDOE application review process. For details about the data entry process, please see the section below entitled "Entering Student Data."

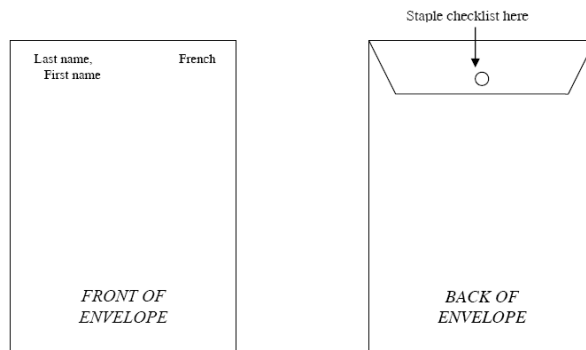
Submitting Applications to VDOE

The foreign language department chairperson mails originals of the applications for the selected nominees to the VDOE. The chairperson should verify that the applications are complete and include all required (original) signatures, and may need to reorder the materials according to the checklist, as well as transfer information to the cover sheet. The student application packet must also include all completed testing materials, if required. **TESTING MATERIALS MAY NOT BE MAILED SEPARATELY FROM THE STUDENT'S APPLICATION.** Although all of the applications from a single school should be boxed and shipped together, the individual application packets must be separated into labeled manila envelopes, as described on the next two pages.

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Instructions for Assembly of Applications

- Use a separate manila envelope (approximately 9" x 12") for each student.
- Neatly label the FRONT of the envelope with a black marker as indicated below (see diagram):
 - Student's name (last name, first name) in the UPPER LEFT HAND CORNER
 - Language academy to which the student is applying in the UPPER RIGHT HAND CORNER
- Place ALL materials for that student into the envelope, except for the checklist.
 - Keep the checklist separate and use it to ensure that the application packet is complete.
 - Include all documents on the checklist (in order), including the speaking tape, envelopes containing the composition(s), Latin grammar test, signed student/proctor sheets, and optional reply card, as appropriate.
 - Do not use staples to keep any pages of the application together.
- Staple the checklist to the BACK of the sealed envelope as indicated below (see diagram).



- Repeat the above process for each student.
- Place the labeled manila envelope(s) containing the assembled application(s) into a larger mailing envelope or box.
 - Please stack applications neatly and do not fold.
 - Address and seal the envelope or box.

All materials must be packed in the order indicated on the checklist and must be postmarked by 5 p.m. on Thursday, January 17, 2008 (GFLA) or Monday, March 7, 2008 (VSCA). Submit original completed applications to the following address:

U.S. MAIL

Helen Small
Specialist for Foreign Languages
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

FEDEX/UPS

Helen Small
Specialist for Foreign Languages
Virginia Department of Education
James Monroe Building – 23rd Floor
101 North Fourteenth Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

(Schools shipping applications by a carrier other than U.S. mail must use the street address.)

NOTE: Students may include a **self-addressed, stamped postcard** for confirmation of receipt of their materials. Alternately, schools may wish to send the materials via registered or certified mail. Due to the large volume of applications, the VDOE cannot otherwise acknowledge receipt of materials.

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Each nominee application should include the following (in order):

- A stamped and self-addressed acknowledgement postcard (optional)
- Checklist (stapled to back of manila envelope)
- Cover sheet – completed (attention to the following categories)
 - Number of points in designated areas for teacher recommendations entered
 - 7-digit school ID number (public schools only) entered
- ONE original application that includes:
 - Student section, with original signature and including up to 4 pages of response
 - Parent's or Guardian's Form, with original signature
 - Current or Most Recent Language Teacher's Form, with original signature and including pages of response
 - Second Teacher's/Counselor's/Sponsor's, etc., Form, with original signature and including pages of response
 - Principal's or Headmaster's Form, with original signature and including names of local selection committee, if applicable
 - Student's transcript
- Testing materials, if applicable:
 - For immersion academies:
 - Cassette audio tape, labeled and suitably packaged for mailing
 - Sealed envelope (A) containing signed student and proctor tape instruction sheets
 - Sealed envelope (B) containing original compositions, one copy of each composition, and signed student and proctor composition instruction sheets
 - For Latin academy:
 - Sealed envelope (A) containing the grammar test and signed student and proctor instruction sheets
 - Sealed envelope (B) containing the original essay, one copy of the essay, and signed student and proctor essay instruction sheets

It is the joint responsibility of the student and the nominating teacher or foreign language chairperson to ensure that applications have been completed, packaged properly, and delivered to the VDOE or postmarked by January 17, 2008 (GFLA) or March 7, 2008 (VSCA).

Responsibilities of the Regional Coordinator or Foreign Language/Gifted Education Coordinator

Entering Student Data (PUBLIC SCHOOLS ONLY)

Nomination information will be submitted to the VDOE via a secure Web site. Public school division foreign language supervisors or gifted education coordinators should contact their division's Single Sign-On for Web Systems (SSWS) account manager for access.

Authorized users will be able to open the 2008 Governor's Foreign Language Academies Nominations Report. The VDOE cannot give public school personnel this access; it may only come from the division's SSWS account manager. The Verification (Nominee) Report form will be available at <https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/ssws/login.page.do>.

The cover sheet of the student application includes all information needed to enter data into the system. The first screen, after successful login, will give general instructions and show options based on user level. School-level users should click on the "Nominee Submission"

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link to start entering student data. (Division-level users will choose "Submission by Division.") After selecting the current school year and clicking the submit button, the user may begin entering student data. The user will be notified when he/she attempts to nominate a student if the school's quota has been filled, or if a required field is left empty. Users will have the ability to edit or delete data for nominees after they have been entered. However, the window will be locked as soon as the coordinator prints the verification report required for the GFLA. If additional entries or edits must be made after that time, but before the deadline of January 17, 2008 (GFLA), or March 7, 2008 (VSCA), the coordinator should notify the VDOE. The VDOE will re-open the window for the division, and the coordinator may edit the student data. For the GFLA, the coordinator must reprint and resubmit the verification report following final edits.

Division coordinators may prefer to have this data entry completed by the foreign language department chairperson of each school. The division's SSWS account manager would have to grant access to each chairperson.

Submitting the Verification Report (DOES NOT APPLY TO THE VSCA)

PRIVATE SCHOOLS should fill in and print Attachment B, the Head of School Tuition Certification Form, obtain the necessary signature, and mail to the VDOE postmarked by January 17, 2008. This form will replace the Private School Nominee Report Form used in past years. All other information in this section refers to public schools. **This form is not necessary for students nominated to the VSCA in the spring.*

PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISIONS should follow all remaining instructions in this section. Once the coordinator has verified with chairpersons that all nominee information has been entered, the user should print the Verification Report following directions shown on the screen. (The Verification Report has previously been called the Nominee Report.) This report requires Adobe Acrobat to be read. If the user's computer does not have that software, it may be downloaded without charge from the Web site www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html. **This form is not necessary for students nominated to the VSCA in the spring.*

Users should save the verification report to their computers, print a copy, and have it signed by the division superintendent or designee. The verification report must be printed **after** all nominee information has been entered in order to indicate the correct number of students for whom the division is guaranteeing tuition. Divisions indicate, through the signed verification report, that they are **guaranteeing tuition for all students nominated**. The division's verification report lists pertinent information that has been transmitted to the VDOE about its nominees. If the user has an interruption in the online submission process, submission of the data will not be lost. Further information and specific step-by-step instructions will be posted to the Web site listed on page 1 and sent via e-mail to all division coordinators by January 1, 2008.

The division coordinator must mail the verification report signed by the division superintendent (or designee) to the VDOE, **postmarked by January 17, 2008**.

****The VSCA is fully funded through a federal grant program. Therefore, the students nominated to the Chinese Academy are not included on the Verification Report or the Head of School Tuition Certification form.***

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7. VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SELECTION PROCESS

The VDOE receives and processes all required materials **postmarked by January 17, 2008 (GFLA), or March 7, 2008 (VSCA)**. Selection of program participants is made by state-wide selection committees and will be based on the strength of the student's application, language abilities (where applicable), and requirements of the program. Nomination does not guarantee acceptance.

The selection committees will consist of foreign language teachers, supervisors, and other experts nominated by their school divisions. Many of the selection committee members are former teachers or directors of Governor's Foreign Language Academies. Selection committee members follow strict guidelines and evaluate all materials according to pre-established rubrics. Each student's overall application, transcript, and teacher recommendations as well as speaking test, grammar test, and/or compositions are evaluated independently by two committee members of that language group in a blind scoring process. In cases where the assigned points differ by a greater than acceptable margin, a third committee member will evaluate the materials in question. See Attachment A for an overview of selection criteria.

8. VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Each GFLA nominee will be sent a letter regarding his/her application status in mid-April. VSCA nominees will be informed of their status by the end of April, at the latest. Prior to mailing the letters to all nominees, the regional coordinators and gifted education or foreign language coordinators for each public school division will receive a status list indicating "invited," "alternate," or "declined" status for individual GFLA nominees. Each student's letter will be sent directly to the home address indicated on the nomination report and nominee's application, and a copy will be sent to the nominating teacher. Students invited as participants or alternates to the GFLA must indicate by May 5, 2008, whether they intend to accept the invitation. After May 5, qualified students of similar demographic backgrounds will be chosen to replace any students that have declined. *The VSCA will follow a slightly later timeline.*

By May 30, all students will receive a packet containing additional information relating specifically to their academy. This packet will contain a variety of forms that must be returned to the academy director by June 10, as well as detailed information about what to bring and what to expect.

9. PAYMENT PROCESS

Public school divisions and private schools will be invoiced in late May for GFLA students who have accepted the invitation to attend as of May 20, 2008. ***The invoices will not include VSCA students.*** Divisions and private schools may receive a revised invoice after the first full day of the program (after June 23, 2008), indicating students who declined or accepted after the May invoices. Only divisions and private schools with changes will receive revised invoices.

For the GFLA programs (French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish), the cost of tuition, room and board, instructional materials, academic field trips, and other activities

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planned for the program will be paid from state and local funds. The 2008 per-student cost is expected to be \$1,750. The school division that nominates a student stipulates that it will pay its share of the per-student cost, not to exceed 50 percent of the total, as determined by the school division's current ability-to-pay composite index. Public school divisions may verify their composite index at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Finance/Budget/composite.html>. The local share for private schools is 50 percent of the per-student cost, or \$875. The state pays the remaining share.

For the VSCA, the cost of tuition, room and board, instructional materials, academic field trips, and other activities planned for the program will be paid entirely from grant funds; therefore, ***neither individual schools/school divisions nor the state will contribute to the cost.*** The 2008 Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy is fully funded by the STARTALK grant program administered by the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland. Funding for STARTALK comes from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and STARTALK is one of several language programs under the umbrella of President Bush's *National Security Language Initiative* (January 5, 2006). **The Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy is dependent upon annual grant funding and may or may not be available in future years.** Information about the national STARTALK program is available at http://www.nflc.org/projects/current_projects/startalk/.

Contact Information

If you have questions regarding the application, student selection process, submission of the nomination data, or the invoice process, please contact Helen Small, specialist for foreign languages, at the VDOE at Helen.Small@doe.virginia.gov or 804-225-3666.

Selection Committee Evaluation Criteria

French, German, Spanish Academies

Teacher Recommendations:

- Average of points given by the two teachers recommending
- Teachers' general comments and answers to specific questions

Application:

- Student answers to certain questions; honors, activities
- Academic status (principal's form and transcript with emphasis on target language)
- Language travel/experience (no points given if extensive, i.e., equivalent to the academy)

Composition in target language:

- Content
- Clarity of Expression
- Organization
- Vocabulary
- Grammatical Accuracy

Speaking test in target language:

- Amount of communication
- Quality of communication (fluency)
- Pronunciation
- Vocabulary
- Structure

Latin Academy

Teacher Recommendations:

- Average of points given by the two teachers recommending
- Teachers' general comments and answers to specific questions

Application:

- Student answers to certain questions; honors, activities
- Academic status (principal's form and transcript with emphasis on Latin)

Essay in English on Roman topic:

- Content
- Force of reasoning
- Originality and creativity
- Organization: Flow of thought and structure
- Breadth of vocabulary
- Spelling and grammatical accuracy

Grammar test

Chinese, Japanese, Russian Academies

Teacher Recommendations:

- Average of points given by the two teachers recommending
- Teachers' general comments and answers to specific questions

Application:

- Student answers to certain questions; honors, activities
- Academic status (principal's form and transcript with emphasis on language)

Essay in English:

- Content
- Force of reasoning
- Originality and creativity
- Organization: Flow of thought and structure
- Breadth of vocabulary
- Spelling and grammatical accuracy

Avoid these common errors:

Application postmarked after January 17, 2008 (GFLA) or March 7, 2008 (VSCA)

General procedures not followed:

- Application pages out of order
- Missing information/sections
- Second recommendation is from another foreign language teacher
- Missing signatures or Xeroxed signature pages
- Items for same student sent separately
- Cover sheet not completed
- Wrong application form used

Testing procedures not followed:

- Proctor is a foreign language teacher/speaker (includes Latin)
- Missing signatures on student/proctor sheets or envelopes
- Dates/times differ on student/proctor sheets or envelopes

Students at same school tested on different days (all immersion should be on same day; all Latin should be on same day)

