

# Noor Academy Earns Cognia 'Accredited with Merit' Status

*Honoring a Legacy of Learning: From Historic African American School to an Internationally Recognized Secular-Islamic Academy*

CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE, VA, UNITED STATES, February 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Noor Academy announced today that it has earned Cognia® Accreditation and achieved the status of Accredited with Merit. This is a status conferred to an institution in excellent standing that displays results above expectations across Cognia Performance Standards. Cognia is a forward-thinking nonprofit organization dedicated to helping institutions grow and improve through accreditation, certification, assessment, and improvement services.



Noor Academy, now Accredited with Merit by Cognia, celebrates the opening of its school building at a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Center: Amantullah Rauf, Co-Vice principal. Right: Head of schools, Khadija Bint-Abdus Salaam. Left: Fatima Brewster, Co-Vice Principal

“This prestigious recognition affirms our dedication to nurturing the whole student through a holistic approach rooted in good moral character and conduct—the very principles of the Noor Academy Way. It’s a standard every child can achieve here, equipping them with high school diplomas and college-ready skills, giving parents confidence in their child’s foundation for lifelong learning. Noor Academy operates at the former J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School, a building constructed in 1952 as an African American school during segregation. Once labeled a “Coloured” school on its original blueprints, the site has been renovated to reclaim its legacy, transforming into a vibrant center of high-quality learning and opportunity.” said Khadija Bint-Abdus Salaam, Head of Schools, Noor Academy.

Noor Academy participated in Cognia’s rigorous Accreditation Engagement Candidacy and Review processes, which is grounded in research-based performance standards. The process includes a third-party review of evidence by education experts, interviews, and classroom

observations. The review evaluates institutions and seeks evidence of growth in learning, a healthy culture for learning, engaging and high-quality instructional environments, and effective leadership for learning—all characteristics Cognia expects to see in quality schools that also demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement.

“I am pleased to congratulate Noor Academy for their designation of Accredited with Merit, a status which recognizes public and non-public institutions that demonstrate high-quality education and service to learners,” said Dr. Mark A. Elgart, president and CEO of Cognia. “Cognia Accreditation is already a mark of school quality recognized around the world. Achieving the Accredited with Merit status further recognizes when an institution operates above expectations in its dedication to student learning and continuous improvement,” Elgart added.



Students at Noor Academy's learning lab, connecting faith, learning, and technology.

Cognia is the parent organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). Parents and interested community members can learn more about Cognia Accreditation at [cognia.org](http://cognia.org)

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*Khadija Bint-Abdus Salaam,  
Head of Schools, Noor  
Academy*

#### About Noor Academy

Noor Academy was founded in 2020 to provide meaningful Islamic and secular education, online and in-person, that propels the next generation toward self-discovery and leadership. Established for K-12 students, it cultivates scholars who actively seek beneficial knowledge, preparing them to excel as model citizens and leaders through holistic growth—spiritually, academically, intellectually, and physically. [Learn more at noor-academy.org](http://noor-academy.org).

#### About Cognia

Cognia® is a forward-thinking nonprofit improvement organization committed to serving schools and other education providers. We offer accreditation and certification, assessment, improvement services, and professional learning within an evaluation and continuous

improvement framework. Serving over 40,000 public and private institutions from early learning through high school in more than 100 countries and territories, Cogna brings a universally recognized perspective to advancing teaching and learning. [Learn more at cognia.org](https://cognia.org).

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