

Northampton County Schools
Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan
Effective 2019-2022

Approved by local Board of Education on: 10-JUN-19
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Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on: 27-JUN-19

Northampton County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and relate to the categories related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C-150.5). These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what an LEA should have in place, and guide LEAs to improve their programs.

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs and align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2019-2022. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

For 2019-2022, Northampton County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Northampton County Schools Vision for local AIG program: Northampton County Schools provides gifted students the opportunity to become independent learners and decision makers, inspires the love of learning, facilitates high achievement capabilities and fosters individual interests. The educators believe they have a duty to nurture highly able learners from all populations and produce independent learners for the 21st century who will maximize their intellectual potential.

Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2019)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$87700.00	\$0.00	\$2000.00	\$0.00

Table of Contents

Standard 1: Student Identification	3
Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community	12
Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction	24
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	36
Standard 5: Partnerships	41
Standard 6: Program Accountability	45

Standard 1: Student Identification

The LEA's student identification procedures for AIG are clear, equitable, and comprehensive and lead towards appropriate educational services.

Practice A

Develops screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels.

District Response: Northampton County uses typical as well as atypical standardized evidence as part of the screening and referral process to ensure students from all populations are considered. The procedures incorporate measures that reveal student aptitude, student achievement, or potential to achieve in order to develop a comprehensive profile for each student. These measures include both non-traditional and traditional measures that are based on current theory and research.

Screening includes teacher observation, data analysis, examining atypical evidence, and mass testing at the second grade level. The referral process includes the submission of the referral form (by teacher, parent, or administrator) which is first reviewed by the AIG team to consider if information warrants a formal testing for eligibility. Once a student is referred, the parent is to receive a Parental Consent to Test form and copy of the Appeals Procedure.

Procedures For AIG Considerations (K-12)

For Teachers (& Admins):

- a. Teacher referring student(s) will use the Observation Student Form as one measure of documenting gifted behaviors and/or characteristics.
- b. Compile materials to document behaviors student is being considered for and validate gifted behaviors (i.e. work samples, portfolio, drawings, poems, leadership qualities/activities...)
- c. Gather information for Student Interest, Parent Inventory, Teacher Inventory forms and any documentation for special projects in school or outside.
- d. Collect data from EOG tests, Benchmark Assessments, or any other academic assessments/measures.
- e. Bring data, pictures, samples and resources from child to the AIG Team meeting for discussion and recommendation(s).
- f. Teacher wishing to make a referral should obtain AIG referral and parent consent to test forms (AIG Referral; AIG-1) from the AIG coordinator or online (under district templates).
- g. Complete AIG Referral form and return it to AIG coordinator.

For Parents:

Parents have the option of referring his/her child. A parent should obtain a copy of the Referral form from his/her child's teacher. Once the referral has been submitted, the above procedures (a-e for teachers) are followed.

For AIG Coordinators: Coordinators screen at the beginning and throughout the school year by analyzing state testing data (EOG, benchmark, etc.) . Students scoring 80% and higher are recommended to the classroom teacher to begin the above process (a-g for teachers).

AIG Coordinators facilitate the testing of all second grade students in the county in the spring of each

year. The referral process begins for students scoring 75% or higher on the aptitude test (CogAT).

Practice B

Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels that provides multiple opportunities to reveal a student's aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. The criteria may include both qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

District Response: Employing multiple criteria for AIG student identification ensures that students from all populations are targeted. The use of multiple criteria lessens the risk of potential bias in the identification process and allows flexibility when needed.

The Individual Student Eligibility form (on NCS & AIG website) that is in place is broad enough to reflect

the demographics of the district. This tool considers student aptitude, achievement, teacher observation, classroom performance, and student motivation to expose students' latent talents and abilities.

Research and theory supports the use of traditional and non-traditional standardized measures. These assessment instruments help create an identification system that is responsive to students from all intellectual, cultural, and socioeconomic groups.

Traditional measures utilized include aptitude and achievement tests; non-traditional measures include teacher observations, student self-assessments, and performance based assessments. The Individual Student Eligibility and Placement Record tool (on NCS & AIG website) documents traditional and nontraditional measures. Continuing to use this tool allows for the inclusion of students with disabilities, ESL students, and students with socially/economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Traditional assessments for consideration include:

- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT)
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- Kuhlman-Anderson Aptitude Test
- North Carolina End of Grade Tests
- North Carolina End of Course Tests

Non-traditional assessments for consideration may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Performance-based assessments
- Checklists
- Portfolios
- Observations
- Gifted Behavior Scale Checklists
- Individual work products with evaluation rubrics

- Literacy Assessments
- Anecdotal/Case Studies
- Awards/Achievements

The following definitions are used for each area of giftedness:

Academically/Intellectually Gifted (AIG): State Definition of AIG Students, Article 9B. (N.C.G.S. § 115C-150.5) Academically or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both the intellectual areas and specific academic fields.

AIG Identification Procedures (Grades K-12):

Complete the referral and screening process.

Secure parental permission for an evaluation (AIG-1); circle information requested (Aptitude, Educational), and provide parent with an Appeals Procedure Booklet.

Student(s) is assessed.

When all information is collected, the AIG Coordinator schedules the Eligibility Determination meeting with the AIG team in order to complete the Eligibility Form (AIG-3) and consider recommendations for placement/service options.

After Eligibility Determination meeting is held, the AIG coordinator will schedule a meeting to share data and recommendations with parent(s). At this meeting, Service Delivery Options will be determined and a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) will be developed to meet/match student's needs.

Northampton County Schools utilizes identification pathways in alignment with Article 9B.

Pathway I:

Pathway I supports "high performance capability in intellectual areas"

Intellectually Gifted (IG) - Students possessing notably higher abilities than their same age peers, demonstrated by scoring 95% or higher in at least one area of a nationally normed aptitude test, but who fail to demonstrate advanced achievement in the classroom are considered Intellectually Gifted. Opportunities for these students include curriculum and instructional modifications based on need. Students are automatically identified as gifted when obtaining a score of 95% or higher on an aptitude test. Students are identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG), and services begin with consultation and services outlined in the Individual Differentiated Education Plan.

Pathway II:

Pathway II supports AG placement in Language Arts and/or Math.

Academically Gifted (AG)- Students possessing and demonstrating high aptitude in math and reading necessitating differentiated learning beyond the standard course of study are considered Academically Gifted in Math/Language Arts. Opportunities for these students include but are not

limited to problem based learning, subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, and/or clustering in the regular classroom.

Academically Gifted in Math (AM) -Students possessing and demonstrating high aptitude in math necessitating differentiated learning beyond the standard course of study are considered Academically Gifted in Math. Opportunities for these students include but are not limited to problem based learning, subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, and/or clustering in the regular classroom.

Academically Gifted in Reading (AR) - Students possessing and demonstrating high aptitude in reading necessitating differentiated learning beyond the standard course of study are considered Academically Gifted in Reading. Opportunities for these students include but are not limited to problem based learning, subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, and/or clustering in the regular classroom.

The criteria for identification will consist of aptitude and achievement assessments, teacher observation, classroom performance, and student motivation.

Students meeting 5 of the following criteria will be identified:

- Nationally Normed Standardized Aptitude Test Score of 85% or greater
- Nationally Normed Standardized Achievement Test Score of 85% or greater (must score 85% or higher in the area identified)
- Student Observation Checklist
- Student classroom performance (grades or EOG/EOC test scores)
- Indicators of Performance Checklist
- Student Inventory
- Work Samples - Portfolios

Pathway III

Pathway III supports the identification of students that are Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG). These students have extremely high aptitude coupled with achievement.

Students possessing notably higher abilities than their same age peers, demonstrated by scoring 95% or higher in at least one area of a nationally normed aptitude test and 90% or greater on a Nationally Normed Standardized Achievement Test Score.

The criteria for identification will consist of aptitude and achievement assessments, teacher observation, classroom performance, and student motivation.

Students meeting the following criteria will be identified :

- Nationally Normed Standardized Aptitude Test Score of 85% or greater and
- Nationally Normed Standardized Achievement Test Score of 90% or greater (must score 90% or higher in the area identified)

Students must meet three of the following criteria:

- Student Observation Checklist
- Student classroom performance (grades or EOG/EOC test scores)
- Indicators of Performance Checklist

- Student Inventory
- Work Samples - Portfolios

According to district response, use of alternative and innovative evidences for eligibility need to be in place so as to support the use of qualitative evidences (interviews, observation tools, and portfolios) as a criteria for screening and identification. Alternative evidences will be researched and other districts' input will be solicited prior to implementing AIG identification measures that are qualitative versus quantitative in nature.

Practice C

Ensures AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures respond to under-represented populations of the gifted and are responsive to LEA demographics. These populations include students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

District Response: Based on data from the AIG headcount, it is necessary to ensure the AIG population is representative of the overall demographics of Northampton County Schools. Student populations from minority and low socioeconomic groups have been identified as being under-represented based upon current demographics of gifted students in the district.

Classroom teachers and AIG coordinators gather informal evidence for students as part of the screening process. At the second grade level, all students are assessed using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). The CogAT Form 7 is based on current research used to create new test items that reduce language barriers and make it a more appropriate assessment for ESL/ELL children. These measures identify students who show clear evidence of needing AIG services or show the potential for needing AIG services.

Multiple pathways for identification are provided for all students. Multiple identifying measures (including qualitative and quantitative) are being used in order to identify diverse student populations for gifted services. Alternate identification requirements such as portfolios, that don't place emphasis on one subject or skill are instrumental in identifying under-represented students. Nonverbal testing opportunities are provided for all students.

Practice D

Implements screening, referral, and identification processes consistently within the LEA.

District Response: Fair and equitable guidelines for screening, referral, and identification processes are in place and being implemented district-wide. These clearly articulated guidelines ensure consistency in all aspects of the identification process.

Procedures for screening, referral, and identification process are reviewed at the beginning of each school year with faculty and parents. Ongoing screenings and referrals for students with high academic potential occur throughout the school year and at any grade level. These processes include teacher referrals based upon classroom observation using provided checklists and formative/summative assessments. Parents have the right to make referrals and the AIG specialist, classroom teacher, or school guidance counselor gives documentation of the process/requirements upon request. AIG Procedures and Identification guidelines are adhered to for each student referred (they are posted on the NCS & AIG website).

- The AIG team reviews referrals, secures parental permission to test, and collects documentation.
- The AIG team reconvenes after testing to determine eligibility and recommendations for placement.
- Parents are included in all of phases of the process and receive information concerning the appeals procedures.
- Parents are notified in writing of the screening, referral, and identification processes and procedures, as well as when his/her child is to be tested and the testing results. The AIG brochure details this information.
- The AIG Coordinator oversees and plays an active role in the screening, referral, and identification processes at all seven schools in the county which ensures consistency within the LEA. Clearly articulated guidelines provide the framework for lack of deviation within the LEA.
- The AIG Coordinator inputs identification and service information into Powerschool. This ensures that gifted students' teachers have access to the same information.
- Review of student AIG files and cumulative folders by the AIG Coordinator is essential in verifying all schools within the LEA are following the same procedures. The AIG Compliance Check document assists with this process.
- The LEA director is responsible for ensuring that screening, referral, and identification processes are consistently implemented. This is accomplished through PLC meetings, faculty meetings, and professional development, compliance checks/checklist.

Teacher feedback indicates that a simplified AIG referral process is needed. In response, the implementation of a district-wide electronic submission process for referral will make documents readily available and facilitate the collection of data. This can be accomplished by using Google docs and the AIG team is responsible for ensuring this is implemented.

Practice E

Disseminates information regarding the screening, referral, and identification processes to school personnel, parents/ families, students, and the community-at-large.

District Response: Procedures for screening, identification, and referral procedures are reviewed with teachers and staff at the beginning of each school year by the AIG Coordinator. These procedures are available to parents and students being referred through the LEA's AIG website, brochures, newsletters, and handbook. The AIG Coordinator is available for PTA/Faculty meetings and one-on-one conferences with parents to review screening, identification, and referral processes at the beginning of the year. The AIG brochure outlines the identification and qualifying process for the county and made available throughout the year at the individual schools. Data indicates that only a small percentage of AIG referrals are being submitted by parents. This suggests that parents need to be informed about the referral process. Brochures explaining the AIG referral, identification, and testing procedures will be included in first week student information packets to parents. AIG specialists are responsible for ensuring that this occurs.

Practice F

Documents a student's AIG identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/families and maintained in student records.

District Response: The Student Eligibility form that is in place to clearly document identification evidence including data gathered and how the data is used to make an identification decision. This form documents student aptitude and achievement data, teacher observation, classroom performance (work samples/portfolio can be attached), and student motivation (as determined from student interviews/checklist). This form is the AIG folder for every identified student and also to be placed in the cumulative folder. It guides the AIG team's decision for identification eligibility.

Each step of the nomination, screening, and identification process is maintained in students' confidential folders. All decisions regarding students are documented and filed. Copies of documents are provided to parents. The AIG Coordinator completes a checklist to ensure all documentation is completed and shared with parents (and other stakeholders if needed).

Each student's folder should contain:

- Protocols for Individual Assessments
- Signed Parental Consent to Test form
- Evaluation Results (Parent signs)

- Minutes of the Parent Meeting
- Student Eligibility Form
- Supporting documents (portfolio of evidence, student work samples, student/teacher/parent checklists)
- Student's DEP/IDEP with parent signature

These documents are available for annual review with parents and at any other needed time. AIG students are protected through written policies that state required parental consent and procedures for resolving disagreements. Guidelines for reassessment and transfer students from other LEAs are adhered to by Northampton County Schools.

Policies regarding assessment are updated and disseminated to the parents/guardians. Policy regarding transfer students from other systems is adhered to explicitly. Students whose DEP no longer meets their needs are evaluated and services adjusted as appropriate by the AIG team at each school.

Policies regarding reassessment were updated by the AIG committee and information is disseminated via website, flyers, and placement/annual review meetings. DEPs (including those of transfer students) are evaluated and services modified as needed based on assessment data and teacher input during the annual review process.

Survey data shows that the identification process and service options available are not clearly understood by all stakeholders. In response, brochures outlining AIG identification procedures and service options will be included in first week of school information packets and distributed/explained during open house.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Develop a confidential electronic file to house students' individual documentation. AIG coordinator will have checklist to determine if all required documents are present.

Integrate distribution of program and placement information for stakeholder groups open houses and PTA meetings, and/or in conjunction with other school and district wide informational nights (curriculum nights, etc.).

Distribute program and identification brochure in family packets and student registration materials (to be distributed at the beginning of the year and when new students enroll).

Translate all program and placement information into student's native language. Work with translator during parent gatherings or meetings to distribute materials regarding AIG (in native language).

Present training for each school at the beginning of the year to familiarize staff with the process for AIG screening, referral and identification processes.

Develop and utilize a digital presentation outlining the screening, referral, and identification processes (to be housed on the district website).

Sources of Evidence: Schedule of Open House/PTA Meetings

Copy of AIG brochure

Copy of translated materials

Schedule of training, agenda, sign-in sheets

Digital presentation

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

The LEA provides an array of K-12 programs and services by the total school community to meet the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Practice A

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and learning environments. These services are aligned to a student's AIG identification.

District Response: AIG students are provided with programs and services which are comprehensive of the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners across all classroom environments, grade levels, and settings. These services are aligned to a student's AIG identification.

Services for Grades K-2

Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), Math (AM), or both (AG):

Pull-out services

Counseling

Intervention/enrichment blocks

Guided reading cluster grouping (TRC)

Learning centers (higher level)

STEM activities

Project/Problem Based Learning

Interest based projects (independent study)

Differentiation within the classroom

Interest based/enrichment clubs

Intellectually Gifted (IG):

Consultative services

Counseling

Intervention/enrichment blocks

Project/Problem Based Learning

Interest based projects (independent study)

Differentiated instruction in the classroom

Interest based/enrichment clubs

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG):

Pull-out enrichment services

Counseling

Intervention and enrichment blocks

Cluster grouping
Curriculum compacting
Learning centers (higher level)
Project/Problem Based Learning
Interest based projects (independent study)
Differentiated instruction in the classroom

Services for Grades 3-8
Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), Math (AM), or both (AG):
Pull-out enrichment services
Counseling
Enrichment reading/math groups
Project Based Learning
NCVPS course offerings (6th-8th)
Cluster groups
STEM activities
Differentiated instruction in the classroom
Subject acceleration
Interest based/enrichment clubs
Clubs, competitions, trips

Intellectually Gifted (IG):
Consultative services
Counseling
Interest based/independent projects
Differentiation within the classroom
Clubs, competitions, trips

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG):
Pull-out enrichment services
Counseling
Enrichment reading groups
Problem Based Learning
Cluster groups
Teacher required differentiation within the classroom
Clubs, competitions, trips
NCVPS course offerings (for grades 6-8)

Services for Grades 9-12
Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), Math (AM), or both (AG):
Counseling
Concurrent enrollment -Honors & Advanced Placement courses
Early College admission
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)
NCVPS course offerings
Dual Enrollment Learning
Extra Curricular Programs
Special Schools for the Gifted (ex. NC School of Science and Math)

Differentiated instruction in the classroom
Clubs, competitions, trips

Intellectually Gifted (IG):
Counseling
Consultative services
Clubs, competitions, trips

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG):
Counseling
Concurrent enrollment -Honors, Advanced Placement courses
Early College admission
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)
Dual Enrollment Learning
Extra Curricular Programs
Special Schools for the Gifted (ex. NC School of Science and Math)
NCVPS course offerings
Differentiated instruction in the classroom
Clubs, competitions, trips

Talent development in K-2 is an interdisciplinary program in math and language arts designed to promote both academic achievement and thinking skills for all students. The program creates a learning environment that enables talents to emerge and these special abilities are nurtured as potential ability is discovered. The AIG Coordinator may teach lessons to all students in K-2 and create focused lessons for students demonstrating high potential.

The AIG resource option (3rd-8th) at the elementary and middle school levels is a pull-out service option which seeks to differentiate, enrich and extend the NC Standard Course of Study. A strong emphasis is placed on research, use of technology and development of digital literacy skills for 21st century. Instruction also focuses on critical and creative thinking skills. The AIG Specialist also collaborates with classroom teachers to plan for differentiation in the regular classroom and to discuss the individual needs of AIG students. The AIG specialist also "pushes-in" to the classrooms to facilitate instruction that focuses on creative/critical thinking, collaboration/communication, problem solving and leadership skills.

Academic needs of AIG students at the high school level are met through honors and advanced placement classes. Procedures are in place for enrollment in distance learning opportunities. Independent study options are available to qualifying students. Early college is an excellent opportunity for high school students.

Social and emotional needs may be met through:

- individual meetings/counseling sessions with students (AIG coordinator/guidance counselors)
- being clustered with others of advanced academic ability helps meet students' affective needs
- developing/implementing a counseling and guidance plan with specific attention to issues and concerns of high ability children
- encourage extracurricular activities, hobbies, and physical outlets

- provide college and career guidance appropriate to advanced opportunities for high ability students
- arrange for mentors for high ability students in areas of interest or ability by persons from outside the school

Based on student feedback, gifted learners need to have the opportunity to research and explore specific topics based upon students' interests. AIG specialists will serve as a facilitator as student plans, designs, reflects, and evaluates project. DEP modifications will reflect this self-initiated/self-directed learning experience.

Practice B

Integrates and connects AIG services with the total instructional program and resources of the LEA in policy and practice.

District Response: The needs of the gifted learners are best met when programs and services are aligned with the state curriculum and correlate with the focus of the total instructional program. NCS delivers AIG programs and services that are integral and connected to the total instructional program of the LEA in policy and practice. Collaboration between classroom teachers, AIG specialists, counselors, and parents ensures that AIG programs and services are integrated with the total instructional program of the LEA. Collaboration among stakeholders promotes a curriculum that is differentiated and enriched to challenge AIG students with rigorous and flexible learning opportunities. Gifted and regular education teachers collaborate and work together to provide differentiated curricular experiences. Activities focus on specific process skills such as critical thinking, research skills, and specialized content investigations. NCS will maintain the AIG programs and services connected to the total instructional program currently in place. Professional development will serve as a tool to enhance these services.

The AIG coordinator will collaborate with other instructional departments to assist in developing enriched lesson plans that incorporate integrated and aligned challenging activities. Accelerative and grouping practices and differentiated curriculum/instruction are supported by the AIG program. All Local Board of Education policies will be reviewed to ensure those policies are effective/based on best practices and make new recommendations for new policy needed. NCS will establish a procedure to ensure all schools in the LEA have access to all resources, programs, and services. All available resources will be shared among the schools.

A demonstrated need based upon district feedback is for opportunities for the AIG program to partner with other programs within the county. AIG personnel will seek to form partnerships with various established programs in order to deliver services that are an integral part of the complete instructional program in NCS.

Practice C

Develops procedures for intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG and other students with advanced learning needs.

District Response: NCS clusters AIG students within grade level in elementary and middle school. AIG and classroom teachers monitor assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction to promote the academic growth of AIG students. Summative and formative data is used continuously

to create flexible grouping at all grade levels and instruction is aligned to best meet student needs. The AIG specialist further supports flexible grouping by working with non-identified students who have mastered a skill being taught.

Historically, data indicates that AIG students do not show expected growth on district and statewide assessments. Teachers and AIG specialists will meet regularly with students and use data to set academic goals and monitor mastery of goals. Student groupings will be flexible based upon need according to data.

Practice D

Informs all teachers, school administrators, and support staff about delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan.

District Response: The AIG Program Standards establish a framework to guide LEAs in developing, coordinating, and implementing comprehensive AIG programs. NCS informs all teachers, school administrators, and support staff about the delivery and regulations of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students. Classroom teachers, administration, and support staff working with AIG students will be informed of the student's individual service options in order to provide differentiated instruction that matches students' learning needs. Access to student DEPs, the AIG plan, and regulations related to gifted education will be made available to these personnel as well. Staff, administrators, and teachers will be informed about the AIG plan and program implementation through a variety of information resources including the NCS website, the AIG website, the AIG plan, informational meetings, staff development, emails, Google drive, and newsletters. Regulations are publicized via the district and state websites. PowerSchool will also be used as a means for disseminating information from the student's DEP.

A multimedia presentation will be created and utilized to explain instructional services and programs for gifted learners to be shared with teachers, staff, and administrators at the beginning of each school year. This presentation will also be posted on the AIG website for future reference.

Practice E

Communicates among and between teachers and schools to ensure an effective continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points.

District Response: Communication between schools is essential to ensure effective continuation of AIG services. Transition meetings will transpire when students transfer between schools within the LEA. The DEPs provide written documentation to ensure continuity of services in grades K-12. At key transition points, AIG specialists will have a more direct involvement. AIG specialists will work with the regular education teacher to select the appropriate DEP modifications when students transition from elementary to middle school. The high school counselors will ensure the middle school AIG specialist is also a key contact with counselors and AIG students before 8th grade visits to discuss the appropriate courses for the corresponding college pathways. AIG teachers will work with the high school counselors and the students during the spring course registration to ensure students select the appropriate courses.

Practice F

Addresses the social and emotional needs of AIG students through collaboration among school counseling personnel, regular education teachers, AIG specialists, and others.

District Response: NCS acknowledges the powerful impact of collaboration in an effort to best meet the social and emotional needs of the gifted learner. Stakeholders (specifically counselors) will be encouraged to research and develop units of study based on best practices to meet the emotional and social needs of gifted learners. The units will be posted on the AIG webpage. Emphasis is placed on providing professional growth opportunities that promote social and emotional curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of gifted learners.

The AIG specialist supports the social and emotional needs of gifted learners by integrating Social and Emotional Learning curriculum into the AIG pull-out services and by providing counseling services for students. The specialist shall collaborate with the guidance counselor at each school to design and review the curriculum. Guidance counselors will augment meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted learners by providing additional counseling based upon need as determined through intentional collaboration. The AIG Coordinator will collaborate with regular education teachers to determine specific social and emotional needs of the gifted learners and co-plan instruction that meets those needs.

Strengthening parent and school partnerships in addition to strengthening collaboration among the AIG coordinator, guidance counselors and classroom teachers will assure all stakeholders are involved in the process of providing programming and services which meet the social and emotional needs of AIG students. Finding area professionals to match with guidance counselors to promote on-going learning and/or professional development will support the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Practice G

Develops policies and procedures for a variety of acceleration opportunities, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, subject and/or grade acceleration.

District Response: The academic needs of the gifted student may dictate grade/subject acceleration to provide appropriate differentiated instruction. Policies are in place stating criteria for subject and grade acceleration for students who indicate need. The team reviews an appropriate body of evidence for an individual gifted learner.

NCS Policy for Grade/Subject Acceleration:

- a. Early Admission into Kindergarten (Must meet all criteria according to the North Carolina Board of Education Standards):
- b. A minimum score of 98th percentile on a standard individual test of intelligence
- c. A minimum score of 98th percentile on a standard test of achievement in reading/math
- d. Ability to perform tasks well above age peers, along with work samples (The principal may also require an informal reading assessment)
- e. Demonstration of social and developmental maturity, along with two recommendation letters with specific documentation of physical and social maturity
- f. Informal interview with the child and a more structured interview with the parent to determine if the child displays a thirst for knowledge and seeks new and challenging learning situations
- g. Final review and decision made at principal's discretion

Grades K-8 Subject Acceleration: A student receives instruction at a higher grade level in a specific subject, yet remains with his/her peer group for most of his/her instruction. The need for continued accelerated placement should be reviewed quarterly.

Subject Acceleration Policy: The following criteria will be considered by the principal to make a placement decision:

- a. Written request to principal by teacher and/or parent
- b. EOG at 98%ile in subject area(s) for acceleration
- c. Recommendation from teacher
- d. Classroom performance, work samples, anecdotal information, report cards documenting superior acceleration
- e. Standardized aptitude score 98%ile
- f. Social maturity evaluation

*Course Acceleration in Mathematics (3-8): As required by law, a student will receive instruction at a higher level in math if the student has scored a level V on the NC Math EOG test.

Grade Acceleration/Grade Skipping (K-12) Required Procedures

- a. Written request and supporting data for all acceleration options to be submitted to the

current base-school principal.

- b. The current base-school principal will select and convene a school-level review committee.
- c. The committee may consist of teachers from the involved grades/subjects, the AIG Coordinator, the Principal, and the parents/guardians. If two schools are involved, both the sending and receiving principals will also participate.
- d. The recommendation from the committee will be submitted to the principal(s) for the final decision.
- e. The principal will notify the parents with committee recommendations and the final decision.

Grade Acceleration/Grade Skipping (K-5): A student would advance an entire grade level in all subject areas. Acceleration Policy – All criteria must be met:

- a. Written request to principal by parent
- b. EOG (98%ile or above) in reading and math (3-5)
- c. Individual Achievement of 98%ile in reading and mathematics
- d. Recommendation from teacher/principal
- e. Anecdotal information for performance that demonstrates need for acceleration
- f. Standardized aptitude score 98%ile
- g. Social maturity evaluation

Grade Acceleration/Grade Skipping (6-12): A student would be advanced an entire grade level. Grade Acceleration Policy Required Criteria:

- a. Written request to principal no later than the end of the student's first marking period of interest in being considered for grade acceleration. Request may come from parent/guardians or teacher(s) to the Principal
- b. NC EOG/EOC tests with a Level V 98%ile score in Reading and Math
- c. Individual achievement test scoring three years above grade level or 98%ile in English Language Arts and Math and Science if needed
- d. Recommendation from teacher(s)
- e. Anecdotal information such as portfolios, work samples, report cards, or projects reflecting outstanding performance over time
- f. Standard aptitude/ability test score of 98%ile (administered within the last two years)

Policy No. 3710 RELEASE OF STUDENTS TO ATTEND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

I. The Board encourages students to complete high school before seeking admission to a college or community college. However, a high school student 16 years of age and older may be released to attend an appropriate program at a community college if the Superintendent and principal determine that the student has special needs that could best be served by admission to the community college. This requirement may be waived if a student has been out of school at least six months and the student's application for enrollment to the community college is supported by a notarized petition of the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person or agency having legal custody and control. The petition shall certify the student's residence, date of birth, date of leaving school, and the petitioner's legal relationship to the student.

II. A high school student may be released to attend appropriate courses, except adult high school, under the following conditions:

1. Students enrolled in a community college pursuant to this policy may earn credit toward high school graduation.
2. Such students must concurrently take at least three high school courses and make appropriate progress toward graduation.

III. This policy does not apply to restrict enrollment in enrichment, non-credit courses offered by a community college during the summer. No credit toward high school graduation may be granted for such courses.

Credit-by-Demonstrated Mastery

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is a process that awards a student credit in a particular course without completing classroom instruction based on demonstrated mastery of course material. The State Board of Education defines mastery "as a student's command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and the ability to apply his or her knowledge of the material."

NCS will follow the state guidelines for this process which are as follows:

- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is the process by which LEAs shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.
- "Mastery" is defined as a student's command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge.
- The LEA may offer Credit by Demonstrated Mastery for NC students in grades 9-12 for high school courses and in grades 6-8 for high school courses offered in middle school (NCVPS). LEA will make CDM available for students in grades 6-8 for middle grades content.
- The CDM policy for NCS is posted on the county website and disseminated to parents as needed.

Compacting content is an accelerated option offered to gifted students who have mastered the content to be taught, and is determined by pretests administered by classroom teachers. Teachers have received professional development focusing on compacting the curriculum. Additionally training will be offered through online modules.

Practice H

Implements intentional strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional. These strategies may include talent development efforts.

District Response: The retention of under-represented students necessitates a program that provides services aligned with the diverse learning needs of this population. Service options intentionally providing differentiated instruction for the unique needs of under-represented populations are offered and documented through the DEP. Teachers will be provided professional development

that enables them to meet the needs of the under-represented AIG students by aligning the instruction to the students' learning styles. These students will be paired with mentors that will serve as academic and social role models. Intentional programming that exposes students to diverse areas of interests, skills, and talents will be incorporated into the AIG program. Opportunities to explore areas of interest, skills, and talents will be provided for the under-represented AIG student.

Opportunities may include:

- Partnerships and programs through local colleges
- Student leadership team
- Independent (interest based) projects
- Clubs and competitions
- Enrichment and Intervention blocks
- Subject/grade acceleration
- Units promoting higher level thinking (Jacob's Ladder, Primary Education Thinking Skills, etc.)

Practice I

Encourages extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students.

District Response: Students are currently provided opportunities and encouraged to participate in extracurricular programs and events. These extra-curricular programs are designed to challenge and cultivate the abilities and interests of gifted learners. Students are encouraged to participate in opportunities provided that promote higher-level thinking and promote inquiry-based learning.

Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Field trips
- Robotics
- Battle of the Books
- Math Champions competition
- AIG showcases
- Word Masters
- AIG Connection Days
- Summer Camp
- Girls Who Code clubs

Students at different schools interact with one another on shared projects virtually and in person. Participation in Duke TIP is encouraged as a resource to nurture the development of gifted students. Student feedback indicates that NCS should continue to seek ways to provide events that appeal to the interests of gifted learners. In addition to this, opportunities for teachers and students of under-represented populations to discuss delivery of services outside of traditional services will be made available.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Give all teachers, specialists, and guidance counselors access to information on student DEPs by utilizing tools on PowerSchool.

Design and implement a tool to provide all teachers access to resources, programs, and services related to the AIG program.

Form partnerships with other AIG programs from neighboring LEAs.

Collaborate with grade level departments to ensure AIG services are integrated with the total instructional program.

Use the AIG Wiki, school websites, and district email to inform teachers, administrators, and other support staff of differentiated services for gifted learners and other pertinent information about the AIG program/plan.

Conduct transitional DEP meetings when students transfer between schools within the LEA to include teachers in current grade level as well as future teachers as to provide information on student modifications and services for the next grade level.

Share tools and resources that support the social/emotional development of AIG students with teachers and other staff members using PLCs, faculty meetings, and informal meetings.

Incorporate opportunities such as distance learning, Early College, and, community college dual enrollment opportunities to accommodate grade/subject acceleration.

Provide opportunities such as mentorships and curriculum compacting for interest based learning to provide for the needs of underrepresented gifted learners.

Develop a reference guide (i.e. AIG Wiki, newsletter) that describes extra-curricular activities within the LEA as a means of communicating with parents, teachers and students.

Consider the academic, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of gifted students when flexibly grouping students for effective instruction facilitation.

Sources of Evidence: Documentation in PowerSchool

Grade level meeting minutes

AIG Wiki

District/School Websites

Transitional Meeting Minutes

Documentation of opportunities for acceleration

Mentorship List

Reference guide

Class rosters/groups lists

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

The LEA employs challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum and instruction K-12 to accommodate a range of academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Practice A

Adapts the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-12 to address a range of advanced ability levels in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas as appropriate through the use of differentiation strategies, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration.

District Response: AIG students will continue to have Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs). Classroom teachers and support specialists will work together to plan enhanced instruction to meet the needs of gifted learners. Online collaboration with teachers and support specialists will be initiated through the use of web-based tools. Teachers and support specialists will contribute ideas and teaching strategies that adapt the Common Core State Standards and are aligned with National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Gifted Program Standards and the North Carolina AIG Program Standards. In addition, co-teaching occurs to support partnerships that give support and differentiated instruction for gifted learners.

AIG specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to provide a challenging and relevant curriculum based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study that meets the diverse needs of gifted learners. Differentiated curriculum that extends, enriches, and accelerates instruction shall be accomplished through collaboration between AIG specialists and classroom teachers must begin with the common core standards.

Key components of differentiated instruction include:

- Instructional practices and materials that are student-centered that are based on the standards and research grounded
- Differentiated instruction with clear objectives and focused activities that meet the objectives
- Future instructional decisions are based upon assessment results
- Pacing, depth and complexity of instruction is varied

Regular education teachers will provide differentiated activities in addition to the rigorous curriculum and enrichment provided by the AIG teacher that align to the Common Core State Standards. Challenging opportunities to optimize student growth will be achieved through these service delivery options:

- Within-class grouping
- Cross-age grouping
- Cluster grouping
- Independent study
- Differentiated units
- Computer-based instruction
- Interest-based enrichment

Learning centers

- Tiered assignments
- Project-Based Learning
- Compacting Curriculum

Service delivery options are aligned with Differentiated Education Plans for students in the identified areas of giftedness. Extension and enrichment that allows for curriculum differentiation and meets the unique intellectual/emotional needs of the AIG students include, but are not limited to:

Elementary level

- tiered assignments
- cluster groups
- AIG resource class
- flexible grouping
- individual conferencing
- grade acceleration
- push-in and pull-out services

Middle school level

- independent studies
- tiered assignments
- flexible grouping
- course/grade acceleration
- mentorships
- push-in and pull-out services
- NC Virtual Public Schools
- AVID

High school level

- advanced placement courses
- dual enrollment at the local community college
- independent study
- grade acceleration
- early college
- NC Virtual Public Schools

AIG students will collaborate with other gifted learners within the district and the region to provide them with the opportunity to think critically and become global and independent learners. This is accomplished through monthly AIG Connection days where AIG elementary and middle school students collaborate and receive differentiated instruction all day. AIG Connections days for middle and high schools students will also be established to provide time for collaboration, enrichment, and acceleration. These "Connection Days" focus on student-centered projects and activities that are directly tied to NCSCO in math, ELA, science, and social studies.

Practice B

Employs diverse and effective instructional practices according to students' identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles, to address a range of learning needs at all grade levels.

District Response: Teachers and support specialists employ differentiation strategies verified by research and adapt the Common Core State Standards to meet the needs of the AIG student. The diverse needs of gifted learners necessitate that teachers have an understanding of research-based strategies that enrich, extend, and accelerate the curriculum. Teacher collaboration with support specialists ensures the Common Core State Standards are adapted based on students' abilities, interests, and learning profiles. Teacher feedback indicates a willingness to collaborate with the AIG specialists to modify instructional practices and resources to meet the abilities, interests, and learning styles of the gifted learner in the classroom. A description of differentiated curriculum resources will be developed to provide teachers with specific strategies to extend, enrich, and accelerate the curriculum. The AIG resource class and accelerated courses provide a rigorous and accelerated curriculum. Support specialists will work with core teachers and gifted learners to develop and implement independent projects which focus on student interests. Instructional practices designed to meet the diverse characteristics of AIG students are needed to provide individualized learning targets for each gifted learner. Strategies and groupings that reflect the needs and strengths of students are used to facilitate the enrichment of the curriculum. Classroom teachers and AIG specialists differentiate to further meet the academic and social/emotional needs of gifted learners through instructional strategies such as:

- tiered assignments
- curriculum compacting
- critical thinking activities
- higher-order questioning
- flexible grouping
- choice boards
- socratic seminars
- problem/project-based learning
- tiered assignments
- curriculum mapping

Practice C

Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that enhance student learning.

District Response: AIG specialists and classroom teachers utilize various differentiated strategies and resources that incorporate research-based methods. These include:

- Primary Education Thinking Skills (talent development program K-3)
- Revised Bloom's Taxonomy
- Junior Great Books
- STEM activities
- Coding
- Robotics
- Paideia Teaching and Seminars
- Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom/Susan Winebrenner
- Marzano's High Yield Instructional Strategies
- How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms/Carol Ann Tomlinson
- Mentoring Mathematical Minds Series
- DPI differentiated lesson plans

Teachers will be offered professional development opportunities for implementing differentiated strategies and using resources to provide for a range of learning needs. There is a need for additional professional development opportunities for classroom teachers that emphasize effective and diverse instructional practices to address the specific needs of gifted learners. This will be accomplished through modules in Canvas that focus on strategies for differentiation. All students would benefit from improved instructional practices (to include differentiation, engaging strategies, and Common Core State Standards).

Collaboration with instructional and support staff at the school and district level will ensure that these resources are incorporated within instruction to enhance student learning. A resource library for AIG staff and classroom teachers with available resources such as differentiated lessons and research-based resources promotes enriched/extended instruction as well.

Practice D

Fosters the development of future-ready skills including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and leadership.

District Response: AIG specialists and classroom teachers promote the development of future-ready skills by using:

- William and Mary curriculum units
- Junior Great Books
- Hands-on Equations

- Canvas LMS
 - Distant Learning
 - Technology (GPS units, Multimedia Presentation Software, Coding, Robotics, iPads, Chromebooks)
 - NCVPS

Incorporating more rigorous and relevant instruction in classrooms is critical to foster the development of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and leadership skills. These future-ready skills can be fostered by:

- Providing professional development for all stakeholders (esp. gifted specialists, classroom teachers, and administrators that focuses on developing future ready skills and the upper level of Bloom's taxonomy within authentic real world applications)
- Providing opportunities for collaboration and development of curriculum units across all grade levels that incorporate future ready skills among gifted specialists and classroom teachers
- Promoting opportunities for gifted learners to apply skills in real life contexts such as Odyssey of the Mind, Science Olympiad, Geocaching, and debates
- Promoting future ready skills through partnerships with community organizations/businesses where students can participate in community projects mentoring, job shadowing, and internships
- Providing opportunities for students to have deep discussions/debates that foster the development of future ready skills (across grade level)

Practice E

Uses on-going assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices.

District Response: A variety of formal and informal assessments are used to provide differentiated approaches, choices, and scaffolds for the varying needs, interest and abilities that exist with gifted learners. Data is used to drive teaching practices, form student groups, and provide differentiated instruction. Diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are required district-wide on a regular basis. In addition, pre-assessments enable teachers to match instruction to a student's need and help make informed decisions about flexible grouping.

Research shows students involved in self-direction and planning become responsible for their own learning. Data will be used to enable students to take control of their own learning by teaching them to collect, analyze, and display data to set goals for their academic growth. Data and goals will be shared with parents and classroom teachers.

All teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities. Using the on-going formal and informal data from various assessments, teachers and AIG specialists are able to plan instruction and

design curriculum supplements that are differentiated to meet the needs of gifted learners. This data is also used to flexibly group students. Assessment data has to be consistently monitored to determine the effectiveness of the current grouping practices. Also, the growth of students has to be taken in to consideration during collaborative planning when looking at instruction and grouping. In addition, pre-assessments should be administered in order to match instruction with students' needs, and flexibly group students. AIG specialists should support teachers by guiding them in this process.

Practice F

Addresses the social and emotional needs of AIG students through affective curricular and instructional practices.

District Response: NCS strives to create an environment in which the distinct social and emotional needs of gifted learners at all ages are understood, valued, nurtured, and supported. Application of this knowledge when instructing gifted individuals is essential. Parents, educators, and counselors are informed about the affective development of gifted children. Resource based instructional practices and resources that support the affective needs of AIG students are being utilized.

Academic underachievement and peer relationship difficulties are minimized when the non-cognitive needs of gifted children are met. Guidance counselors, teachers, administration, students, and parents will collaborate to share information concerning the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Strong connections between the AIG team and the counseling department will enable school personnel to become more aware of the social and emotional needs of gifted learners and develop instructional strategies that meet their needs. Professional development opportunities will be offered to provide research-based strategies for creating affective curriculum. Conferencing between the AIG specialist and AIG student will provide support for the affective needs of gifted learners. Creating special units of study which focus on identified social and emotional needs will provide students with additional needed support. Training and research based resource materials will support a greater emphasis being placed on practices that support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

The AIG specialists plan on using *Mindsets in the Classroom: Building a Growth Mindset Learning Community* based on the work by Dr. Carol Dweck and sharing with teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators via book talks and a module in Canvas. Growth Mindset is a philosophy that is embraced throughout the schools and promoted through bulletin boards and integration into instruction. Students learn how to gain power when confronted with challenges.

A lending library for teachers needs to be developed that includes:

- research-based books and other curriculum materials that highlight best practices for meeting gifted students social/emotional needs
- units of study designed by the AIG team and classroom teachers that support the social and emotional development of gifted students

The AIG team will investigate incorporating special units of study to utilize at targeted grades focusing

on the social emotional needs.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Ninth graders enrolling in the NCVPS Success 101 course where emphasis will be placed on the acquisition of study skills, development of techniques for time management, and learning modalities unique to individual students
- A unit of study provided for students that have just been identified as AIG grade level gifted students that could focus on what it means to be gifted

Practice G

Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students through purposeful and intentional differentiated curriculum and instruction.

District Response: The potential of young students should be fostered which compels the LEA to provide a "talent development" in grades K-3. The program will be strengthened to better serve the needs of students who have the potential for academic or intellectual giftedness.

Criteria to be considered for the talent development program include:

- Classroom observations by the teacher and/or AIG specialist
- Student interviews conducted by the teacher and/or AIG specialist
- Classroom performance data and work samples
- Formal test data (if available)

Classroom performance data to be considered:

	1st Semester	2nd Semester
Kindergarten	"D" or above at beginning of the year assessment on Reading 3D TRC	"G" or above on mid-year assessment Reading 3D TRC

and/or

Proficient on 85% of the tasks on
mid-year K-2 Math Assessment

First Grade	"I" or above at the beginning of the year assessment on Reading 3D TRC	"L" or above on mid-year assessment Reading 3D TRC
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and/or

Proficient on 85% of the tasks on the
mid-year K-2 Math Assessment

Second Grade	"M" or above at the beginning of year assessment on Reading 3D TRC	"O" or above on mid-year assessment Reading 3D TRC
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and/or

Proficient on 85% of the tasks on
the mid-year K-2 Math Assessment

Third Grade "P" or above at the beginning "R" or above on mid-year assessment
of year assessment on Reading 3D TRC
Reading 3D TRC

and/or

Proficient on 85% of the tasks on the
mid-year benchmark

Reading and math criteria listed above, in addition to the social, emotional and developmental needs being considered for the student, will be used to determine if the student needs differentiated services provided in the talent development group.

- AIG specialist should provide individual and small group instruction focusing on fostering creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking. Additional personnel is needed to provide small group instruction to all K-3 students needing differentiated services.
- AIG specialists will collaborate with classroom teachers to provide strategies to meet the needs of K-3 learners and differentiated curriculum should be developed.
- Support materials and staff development will be made available in an effort to extend and enhance K-3 differentiation.
- The AIG specialist can model whole classroom instruction in an effort to demonstrate differentiation strategies for the teacher and thus intentionally cultivate the potential of all K-3 students using evidence-based curriculum/resources.
- As the district is becoming 1:1 in 2019, Canvas will be used to provide differentiated instruction to cultivate the potential of all students.
- Canvas will also be used as a means of supporting collaboration among teachers/AIG staff and providing professional development.
- "Building Thinking Skills" and "Habits of Mind" are additional resources that will be acquired and integrated in instruction.
- The P.E.T.S. program will continue to be implemented in grades K-3.

According to teacher feedback, classroom teachers would benefit from additional professional development and resources enabling them to more effectively meet the needs of potential AIG students.

Practice H

Develops and implements differentiated curriculum and instruction through collaboration among regular education teachers, AIG personnel, and other related instructional staff.

District Response: PLCs allow for collaboration and planning among the AIG, classroom, EC, and

ESL teachers. Emphasis is on planning and implementing differentiated instruction that meets the needs of all students. AIG specialists should participate in grade level PLCs which allows for collaboration among themselves and other instructional staff, including the classroom teacher and Exceptional Children's personnel. The primary focus of PLCs is to develop differentiated curriculum and instruction based on current data.

Creating relevant units/lessons where AIG student needs are met will be emphasized. The AIG specialist should use guiding questions when collaborating to assist teachers in reflecting on the differentiated curriculum being implemented and if/how it is meeting the needs of gifted learners. To facilitate and encourage more collaboration among AIG personnel and other stakeholders, an AIG interactive Google website has been developed to foster continuous communication among personnel in order to meet the needs of the gifted learners. Virtual collaboration when properly implemented/utilized will enhance communication and benefit gifted learners.

The AIG team can work with the Curriculum and Instruction department and administrators to ensure differentiated curriculum/instruction is supported and required of teachers. Administrators need to be supplied with a checklist of what to look for when doing walkthroughs to ensure that differentiated curriculum/instruction is implemented.

Practice I

Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

District Response: An individualized plan that reflects the needs of each student is developed and reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness and continuous improvement of modifications and services offered.

A range of service options is offered for kindergarten through 12th grade to meet the unique needs of identified AIG students. The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is developed with the input of administrators, teachers, parents, and students to document modifications that address the student's individual needs. Programming options include, but are not limited to, the following:

- flexible within-class grouping
- curriculum compacting
- subject grouping
- independent study
- differentiated units
- computer-based instruction
- special electives
- interest-based enrichment
- grade/subject acceleration
- cluster grouping
- mentorships
- learning contracts

The AIG team establishes annual meetings with parents to review services documented on the DEP and ensure programming is aligned with student needs. If services stay the same, parents can be made aware of the review through a letter of notification. If there is a change in services, the AIG team should meet with parents and make necessary changes on the student's DEP. As a student transitions from elementary to middle and from middle to high, annual review meetings include the development of a new DEP. NCS will incorporate a four-year plan of coursework within the DEP for high school students which should be reviewed/updated annually with students and parents.

Based on feedback, a plan will be implemented to ensure the annual review process with high school students is effectively and consistently taking place. This plan will be shared and reviewed via the AIG Google website.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Provide opportunities that enrich, extend, and accelerate the curriculum and address student needs throughout the day.

Examples include:

AIG Connection Days: AIG students in elementary and middle school "connect" for the day and learning is extended through project-based enrichment activities that adapt/integrate all curriculum areas of the SCOS.

Academic competitions: Offer opportunities for students to engage in Battle of the Books, Science Olympiad, Math Champions, and Word Masters.

Provide support and instructional resources for K-12 classroom teachers to adapt/extend the SCOS for AIG students.

Provide core teachers with a variety of strategies and resources focusing on enrichment, rigor, and academic challenges for the advanced learner.

Offer additional enrichment activities and independent projects that focus on student interest.

Increase teacher attendance at NCAGT and other professional conferences when funding allows to gather materials and new research based resources to support gifted programming.

Collaborate with instructional coaches to have an understanding of school/district initiatives and to develop strategies that augment curriculum and instruction in an effort to support the needs of AIG students.

Provide students with opportunities to engage in advanced level activities that foster the development of 21st century skills including:

- Geocaching
- Math Champions/Team building sessions

- Odyssey of the Mind
 - Junk Box Wars
 - Robotics/competitions
 - Rube Goldberg competitions
 - STEM activities/online simulations

Work with teachers in administering pre-assessments on a more consistent basis in an effort to provide for individual academic needs, drive classroom curriculum and instruction decisions, and establish flexible grouping for advanced learner.

Use Google spreadsheet for students to collect and display data

Implement units of study that support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Establish a lending library with resources that address the social and emotional challenges gifted learners encounter.

Using research based curriculum and resources, strengthen the K-3 nurturing program by:

- Fostering creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking
- Varying classroom environments
- Providing professional development and resources to equip teachers to differentiate instruction for advanced learners
- Nurturing potential by differentiation/flexible grouping

Establish defined roles for personnel in an effort to support advanced learners.

Intentional planning/meetings to ensure collaboration among all staff involved in supporting advanced learners are essential.

Utilize PowerSchool's tool to document and monitor AIG program services/information.

Sources of Evidence: Samples of student work (products and assignments).

Student interest inventories

Professional development rosters

Meeting agenda/notes

Lesson plans, student projects, pictures, videos

Pre-assessment data

Units of study

Lending library

Lesson plans, flexible grouping documentation, professional development rosters

Chart defining personnel roles

Meeting minutes/sign-in

PowerSchool's tool for program services

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

The LEA recruits and retains highly qualified professionals and provides relevant and effective professional development concerning the needs of gifted learners that is on-going and comprehensive.

Practice A

Employs an AIG-licensed educator as lead coordinator to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan.

District Response: Northampton County Schools has a full time AIG-licensed educator who develops, implements, monitors, and evaluates the AIG Program and plan.

The NCS Academically or Intellectually Gifted Program Coordinator's role and responsibilities include:

- Establishes and ensures consistency of clear, comprehensive, and equitable screening, referral, and identification processes for all grade levels, including traditionally underrepresented populations.
- Establishes written policies that safeguard the rights of AIG students and their parents/families.
- Organizes opportunities for professional development for personnel involved in the AIG program and services.
- Collaborates with classroom teachers to enrich, extend, and accelerate the curriculum.
- Oversees programming for cultivating and developing the potential of young (K-3) students.
- Forms partnerships and communicates with parents/families and the community at large.
- Uses/monitors state funds allocated for the local AIG program in accordance with state policy.
- Provides teachers support in fostering the development of 21st century content and skills at an advanced level.
- Monitors programs and services to ensure that they are effectively meeting the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners.
- Holds an NC AIG licensure in order to understand the needs of the AIG students.

According to district feedback, teachers need more support at the high school level. A change in the AIG Coordinator's schedule will be made in order to provide ample time for the monitoring of the program and supporting teachers in providing differentiated services for gifted students at the high school level.

Practice B

Engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

District Response: The funding for the AIG program is quite limited in NCS and allows only for an

AIG Coordinator ("specialist") who oversees the program at all levels. The middle schools have a teacher that provides services to the AIG students at the middle school level. The AIG specialist engages students in activities that focus on the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners.

Specifically, the AIG specialist:

- Facilitates the implementation of rigorous curriculum for gifted learners
- Collaborates with teachers to support differentiation by providing materials, instructional strategies, unit planning, and professional development
- Acts as chairperson for the AIG Team
- Facilitates the implementation of a student's DEP
- Screens and identifies students for AIG service options
- Administers achievement and aptitude tests
- Communicates with parents by various means such as conferences, phone calls, emails, and newsletters
- Performs additional duties assigned by the principals
- Facilitates the transition to the middle and high schools
- Purchases appropriate materials to enrich the curriculum
- Attends and provides staff development training

The comprehensive needs of gifted learners are addressed through strategies that intentionally focus on the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs. These strategies:

- are research-based resources focusing on the affective needs of gifted learners
- are utilized to provide for the needs of gifted learners
- encourage the AIG specialist and classroom teachers to collaborate to best provide for all of the needs of the gifted students
- encourage counselors to collaborate with teachers and work with students as needed to address their social and emotional needs

Focus will be placed on meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. The AIG specialist, guidance counselors, and classroom teachers require continuous professional development in order to implement these strategies with increased focus on social and emotional needs. Research-based resources focusing on these needs have been acquired and will be provided to counselors and teachers to integrate strategies that address the affective needs of gifted learners.

Practice C

Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and school administrators.

District Response: It is essential that educators have knowledge of the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of AIG students. In order to provide challenging, differentiated instruction, teachers receive current, research-based professional development. The district will provide targeted professional development modules using a variety of formats for the AIG specialist, classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators to help meet the needs of gifted learners and the local AIG program. Expectations will be established for the knowledge and skills personnel need in order to effectively support AIG students. Training should be modified for the specific roles of the personnel. Training will focus on curriculum differentiation, meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted students, and integrating 21st century skills into instruction. Pending funding, GT Ignite will be purchased to provide professional development opportunities. If this is secured, teachers can be required to complete three modules in order to teach the cluster group of AIG students. The modules focus on the characteristics of gifted students, social and emotional needs of gifted students, and differentiation for gifted learners. School counselors will need to complete the characteristics of gifted students and social and emotional needs modules. Exceptional children teachers will need to complete the module focusing on twice-exceptional learners. Administrators will be encouraged to complete all of the above modules.

Additionally, modules are being created in Canvas to include:

- Gifted Education 101
- Needs of the Gifted Learner
- Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted Learner
- Differentiating Instruction for the Gifted Learner
- Curriculum Acceleration, Enrichment, and Extension that focus

Teachers may complete three of these modules in order to meet the requirements of teaching the cluster group of AIG students.

Teachers will continue to be encouraged to obtain AIG licensure through the coursework that Barton College offers. Pending funding, tuition will be paid by the county if the teacher agrees to teach in the NCS district for a minimum of 2 years upon completion of the program.

Practice D

Provides general education services by personnel who have earned an AIG add-on license or have met the LEA requirements for that position.

District Response: Students' individual needs are best met when placed with a teacher who has had professional development courses that enhance his or her ability to meet the specific needs of AIG students in the regular classroom setting. AIG staff work with school-based administrators to cluster group three to five AIG students in these classrooms. It is the responsibility of the AIG coordinator to ensure students are placed with teachers who are licensed or meet the LEA requirements.

District leaders will work with teachers by providing professional development and classes towards AIG licensure (pending funding) to empower teachers to differentiate instruction for gifted learners within the regular classroom. NCS is committed to supporting teachers who are seeking add-on licensure and expects that all teachers serving AIG students in their gifted area have or are working

toward an AIG license or will work towards the local requirements. The local requirements (pending funding) require completion of modules specified in standard C.

Practice E

Aligns professional development opportunities with local AIG program goals, other district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education.

District Response: Professional development opportunities that are aligned with the practices of the AIG plan will be offered to teachers, administrators, and support staff. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Gifted Education 101
- Needs of the Gifted Learner
- Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted Learner
- Differentiating Instruction for the Gifted Learner
- Curriculum Acceleration, Enrichment, and Extension

This professional development will equip teachers to meet the needs of the gifted learners. Teachers and other personnel involved in AIG programs will employ strategies acquired in training to integrate 21st century skills into instruction, differentiate curriculum, and to meet social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

The needs of the gifted learners should be connected with the goals of the School Improvement Plan and professional development activities aligned accordingly. This can be accomplished through intentional planning with instructional support staff that oversee/plan PD and the AIG team. Best practices for gifted learners should be integrated across professional development settings/topics.

The AIG team will meet with the Curriculum and Instruction department to create goals and strategies for PD to meet the district's goals and AIG state legislated standards. In alignment with the district's goals, the AIG team will continue to seek and facilitate professional development opportunities that allow classroom teachers to further applications of district initiatives in direct relation to gifted students.

Practice F

Provides opportunities for AIG specialists and other teachers to plan, implement, and refine applications of their professional development learning.

District Response: Professional development opportunities are essential to prepare teachers and AIG specialists to meet the comprehensive needs of AIG students. AIG specialists and teachers are better able to collaborate in planning and implementing strategies to enhance the learning environment for AIG students as a result of professional development learning. The AIG Program provides classroom teachers learning opportunities focused on meeting the needs of gifted learners via PD sessions and AIG licensure courses.

The schedule of the AIG specialists and classroom teachers needs to allow time for intentional

meetings. These planned meetings will create time, place, and resources to facilitate collaboration among AIG specialists and classroom teachers to build capacity for AIG. This collaboration also facilitates a time to share best practices after professional development opportunities. Early release days will be considered to build time in the schedule to ensure ample opportunities for this to occur.

The use of Canvas will be a resource for sharing new ideas and resource materials. It will also provide a means for posting exemplary lessons based on differentiation strategies learned during professional development sessions.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Work in conjunction with other district leaders to collaborate in order to meet the needs of the gifted learners.

Develop a document that will be used quarterly to provide evidence of specific ways that the academic intellectual, social, and emotional needs of AIG students are being met in the regular classroom.

Work with Human Resources to require classroom teachers who teach AIG students to obtain at least one C.E.U. of district offered differentiated training per renewal cycle.

Offer paid AIG add on licensure opportunities to regular classroom teachers as budget allows.

Create and implement a survey for teachers in order to determine incentives that would encourage them to earn an AIG add-on license.

Develop methods (i.e. AIG Wiki) to share resources to enhance professional development including:

- Collaborating with other schools within the district and with other districts.
- Utilizing resources available from DPI and the LEA
- Incorporating new ideas and grade appropriate resource materials

Utilize grade-level PLCs to reflect, coach, and apply professional development learning in an effort to support the gifted learner.

Sources of Evidence: Meeting minutes

Document stating specific ways the comprehensive needs of AIG students are being met.

C.E.U. documentation

Teacher licenses

Survey

NCS Canvas

PLC minutes

Standard 5: Partnerships

The LEA ensures on-going and meaningful participation of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the local AIG program to develop strong partnerships.

Practice A

Develops partnerships with parents/families that are intentional and meaningful to support the following needs of AIG students:

- * academic and intellectual
- * social and emotional

District Response: Initiatives are currently implemented that deliberately engage parents in significant practices enhancing gifted education. Effective means of communication are in place to inform parents and families regarding services offered. Communication with parents will be available through the AIG website, the district website, emails, and Alert Now messages in order to keep stakeholders abreast of learning opportunities, resources, service delivery options, academic progress, student progress, and celebrations. Mentorship opportunities with community partners and institutions of higher learning will be promoted and extended. Communication with parents is essential to keep parents and stakeholders informed of all aspects of the AIG program. This is achieved through maintaining partnerships and effective communication.

AIG students should be placed in an appropriate learning environment with the program option that matches his/her cognitive/affective needs and aligns with the individual's schools AIG service delivery options. Parents play an active role in the initial placement meeting where services options are discussed and the DEP is developed. Annually, parents are invited to review and revise the most appropriate services for their child. Surveys and other forms of feedback from parents aid in communication and provide important data for program improvement.

The following efforts attempt to assist in engaging all stakeholders in helping to ensure the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of AIG students are being met.

- The Gifted Advisory Council is an advocacy group of parents, community members, and educators who meet to advocate for gifted education.
- Parents are actively involved in various events such as the annual math competition, the robotics competition, and various field trips. Parents that have expertise in the particular areas, also serve as a mentor and/or coach's assistant.
- NCS plans to continuously improve communication/collaboration between the school and parents of AIG students. This is a two-way communication. As technology evolves, modes of communication change and improve.
- Annual informational meetings, emails, social media, newsletters and brochures can serve as means of communicating program information and initiatives.
- NCS would like to initiate parent meetings that focus on providing resources and guest speakers

that discuss meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

- AIG specialists plan/facilitate summer camps for AIG students that focus on the unique interest of gifted learners and also meet their academic, intellectual, and social/emotional needs.
- Parents are also invited to certain events of the camp such as the showcase of the final projects.

District feedback indicates that stakeholders would like the opportunity to participate with their child in AIG sponsored events and stay abreast of the AIG curriculum and projects.

These events include:

- Geocaching
- AIG Showcases
- AIG Connection Days
- AIG Field Trips
- Academic Competitions

Practice B

Shares with stakeholders, including all students' parents/families, information regarding the local AIG program, the local AIG plan, and other policies relating to gifted education.

District Response: Communication is important for all stakeholders to remain informed of local plans, programs, and policies concerning the AIG program. Means of communication are in place to effectively inform parents and families regarding the local program, plan, and other policies. Information and policies posted on the website are updated regularly. The plan, policies, and brochures are shared through parent meetings, district website, conferences, and presentations and disseminated in a variety of formats. A district AIG parent/community listserv will be created and used to facilitate electronic communication via the AIG wiki and email.

Practice C

Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. This advisory group is representative of the diverse populations of the district and is at least comprised of community members, AIG parents and families, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.

District Response: The NCS AIG advisory committee meets to develop, review, monitor implementation, and refine the AIG Plan and program. Members of the committee represent a small sample of the community, but the LEA seeks to have the diversity of the county represented. AIG specialists, teachers, administrators, and directors currently comprise the group. The group should be expanded to include:

- AIG parents
- teachers (from each level-elementary, middle and high school)

- instructional/support staff
 - community members

The current group meets regularly to:

- develop/refine the AIG plan
- evaluate current services (AIG plan)
- focus attention on issues relative to improving services for gifted learners
- stay abreast of current programs, research, and best practices in gifted education

The AIG plan draft is also housed on a (interactive) Google website as it is being developed/refined and disseminated to individuals that represent a diverse population of the district. Feedback from teachers, parents, directors, principals, and community members is requested as the plan is developed and updated on the site.

Partnerships with various populations are being established in order to recruit and include representation from all stakeholders. These partnerships will provide a diverse team to develop, implement, and monitor the local AIG program and plan.

Practice D

Informs parents/families and the community of opportunities available to AIG students on an ongoing basis and in their native language.

District Response: Parents and the community are continuously kept abreast of opportunities available to gifted students via websites, Alert Now messages, media coverage, emails, newsletters, brochures, and other memorandums. ESL teachers and tutors are utilized as needed to translate correspondence in the native language. The AIG department will continue to work with the ESL department and community partners to ensure translations are accurate and meaningful to parents/families in need of the AIG plan and forms translated in their native language. Interpreters/translators will be available at DEP meetings, parent meetings, and other AIG functions as needed.

Practice E

Partners with community stakeholders, such as institutions of higher education, local business and industry partners, and others to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services.

District Response: Partnerships with the community at large have been established and NCS will focus on strengthening communication with stakeholders in the community to enhance and enrich learning for gifted students. Community involvement is a focus of the AIG program as a means of enhancing and gaining support

for AIG programs and services. Partnerships with local businesses and the local university have been formed in an effort to form alliances to support the AIG program. Local businesses and colleges are playing an active role in enhancing and supporting the success of AIG students in NCS. Business partnerships that fund AIG initiatives and programs have been developed and are maintained to increase the opportunities for student engagement. Older AIG students have the opportunity to job shadow, work with a mentor, or provide community service as a result of partnerships with local business and organizations. The AIG department of NCS sponsors a math competition annually for 6 local school districts and the local university serves as a venue. In addition, the local community college serves as a venue and sponsor for the robotics competition. The development of strong relationships with institutions of higher education that provide certification and graduate work in gifted education is needed.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Foster partnerships by offering opportunities for parent/community participation in problem-based learning projects (Mensa Family Night, Odyssey of the Mind, Science Challenge).

Enhance communication with parents, students, and other stakeholders by utilizing electronic communication (Alert Now, email, text messaging).

Intentionally conduct advisory council meetings with stakeholders that represent the district's population (parents, teachers, principals, central office staff, community members, and university liaisons).

Utilize ESL teachers as translators for AIG meetings and documents/communications with parents.

Increase community partnerships and sponsors that allow gifted learners the opportunity to enhance learning experiences through mentorships and academic competitions.

Sources of Evidence: Parent/community sign-in sheets

Communication enhancement documentation (Alert Now, email documentation, text messaging)

Advisory Council meeting minutes/sign-in sheet

Documents in students' native language

Documentation of community partnership initiatives

Standard 6: Program Accountability

The LEA implements, monitors, and evaluates the local AIG program and plan to ensure that all programs and services are effective in meeting the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Practice A

Develops a written AIG plan to describe the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy (N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-.8 {Article 9B}), which has been approved by the local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

District Response: An AIG plan has been developed by the AIG team that is aligned with state legislation and policy. After approval by the Curriculum and Instruction team, the plan was presented to the local school board for review and approval. The plan was shared with administrators and LEA Curriculum and Instruction team electronically. Revisions were made based on input collected on the collaborative Google website. In accordance with Article 9B, an AIG plan is developed and submitted for approval by the local board and SBE/DPI.

Practice B

Monitors the implementation of the local AIG program and plan in accordance with current legislation and state policies to ensure fidelity of implementation for all AIG program components.

District Response: NCS monitors the implementation of the AIG program and plan in accordance with Article 9B. Monitoring of the program and plan will ensure the fidelity of implementation in accordance with the North Carolina AIG standards. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction and the AIG specialists will monitor the implementation and the effectiveness of the plan in the following ways:

- Data reflecting growth of AIG students on End of Grade Tests, District Benchmarks, and Reading 3D
- Department of Public Instruction headcount
- Forms/checklists from administrators' teacher observations that document classroom teachers are providing services stated on the student's DEP
- Budget report of AIG funds
- Consistent monitoring of student referrals and placement
- Ensuring service delivery options for identified students (documentation during walk-throughs)
- Professional development opportunities focusing on differentiation
- Surveys
- Implementation of intentional talent development programs

Practice C

Develops and monitors a budget using allotted state funds, and local funds if applicable, to address the needs of the local AIG plan in accordance with state policy.

District Response: Funds used to support the AIG programs and services are in accordance with state policy. A budget is developed annually to ensure proper use of funds. The AIG department works with the Finance Officer to develop a budget that is aligned with the AIG program/goals, student/stakeholder needs, and each standard of the the AIG plan. State funds are used to employ personnel and to provide staff development, field trips, materials, AIG camp, and enrichment activities. Expenditures and personnel allotments are in compliance with the state budget and monitored by the NCS Finance Department. Budget oversight is conducted at the district level to ensure that state AIG funds are being used to support district AIG program goals. When applicable, teachers are encouraged to apply for grants and donations from businesses in the community to help enrich the curriculum.

Practice D

Maintains, analyzes, and shares student achievement, student growth, and annual drop-out data for AIG students.

District Response: Assessing the individual needs of AIG students necessitates the monitoring of student performance growth. Principals and teachers will be provided with EOG growth reports to assess individual student performance. Records are maintained in folders and PowerSchool for each student that document student performance over time, including identification criteria, service models, and EOG scores. PowerSchool also allows parents and students to have access to student data for monitoring performance and growth. Data will be disaggregated regularly to ensure that AIG student needs are being met. Counselors monitor dropout data throughout the year. Benchmark, EOG, and EOC data is reviewed by appropriate personnel. Assessment results are shared with students and parents promptly. NCS will be looking into software programs (or creating a program) that allow for tracking student performance growth and drop-out data for AIG students. A deeper review of this information will be a focus as data is gathered, analyzed and shared. This tracking of this data will further serve as an early warning for dropout prevention. The testing/accountability and the AIG department will work together to gather, analyze and share AIG student growth and achievement data. Analysis of the student performance should guide further program development.

Practice E

Monitors the representation, performance, and retention of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, including students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

District Response: NCS recognizes the importance of implementing a database to monitor all populations represented in the local AIG program. Data regarding referral and identification trends, enrollment in advanced courses, classroom performance, assessment results, and teacher recommendations is reviewed as a means of monitoring the representation and retention of under-

represented populations.

A software program will enable a systematic procedure of collecting data to be analyzed. Student growth, achievement, and retention data (specifically of under-represented populations) will be examined and shared with appropriate personnel/stakeholders. If disproportionality issues arise, the AIG department will take a closer look at identification procedures.

Practice F

Maintains current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students.

District Response: Information regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students is maintained and monitored by the Human Resource Department. Human Resource Department works with teachers to maintain current records regarding required credentials. Professional development records are updated regularly to reflect current status and qualifications.

Practice G

Elicits regular feedback from students, parents/families, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the local AIG program.

District Response: To ensure the AIG program is effectively meeting the needs of gifted learners, NCS will survey key stakeholders regularly (formally and informally). Throughout the year, ensuring all stakeholders have opportunity to provide feedback can be accomplished by gathering input from focus groups, interviews and discussions during already established meetings.

Opportunities for students, parents/guardians, teachers, and other stakeholders to provide feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the local AIG program also include initial placement meetings, annual DEP meetings, and other parent meetings.

An advisory council assures stakeholders' active participation in and understanding of the AIG program. It provides a means for stakeholders to advocate for the district's plan, policies, and initiatives. The group develops annual goals and establishes priorities for the committee. Regular meetings should be scheduled to gain input regarding the effectiveness of the plan, policies, and initiatives of the program. This group needs to be diversified to represent parents, students, educators, and community members.

Practice H

Utilizes multiple sources of data to review and revise the local AIG program and plan during comprehensive program evaluation.

District Response: The AIG Plan is formally reviewed and revised every three years per state legislation using multiple sources of data. To ensure continuous program improvement, fidelity checks

are done annually to check for plan progress by the AIG department using multiple sources of data for continuous program improvement.

Data used may consist of, but not be limited to:

- Surveys
- Formative and Summative Student Assessments
- Data from Human Resources regarding Teacher AIG Certification
- Budget Report of AIG Funds
- Documentation from administrators' walk-throughs and observations
- Database of Underrepresented Populations, Student Growth, Student Retention
- Informal/Formal Feedback
- Input from the advisory group
- Evaluations from Professional Development sessions
- Self Evaluation
- AIG Plan Review (from DPI)

Interim reports and policy updates from DPI should be used to determine if changes to the AIG plan/program are deemed necessary. NCS would like the advisory group to aid in evaluating the local AIG program's effectiveness.

Practice I

Disseminates all data from evaluation of the local AIG program to the public.

District Response: Effectively monitoring the program is dependent upon a transparent program and consistent communication. To this effect, data will be disseminated to all stakeholders and to the community at large as it is available. Various means of communication such as newsletters, the NCS website, media coverage, and memos facilitate public awareness. The LEA and AIG website will serve as a tool to make annual reports regarding the evaluation of the local AIG program readily available to all stakeholders and the community at large.

Practice J

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents and families through established written policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

District Response: NCS procedures and practices safeguarding the rights of students are in place within the AIG Plan.

- District policies exist that protect all students and their rights as outlined in the Parental Consent

to Test document

- Policies protecting student rights are posted on the AIG website
- Parents are given a step by step Resolution of Disagreements procedure document at the beginning of the identification process; procedures are also posted on the AIG website

Annually, the AIG team reviews documentation aimed at safeguarding student/parent rights. When students are identified as AIG, the parents give written consent for identification and placement using the appropriate forms (DEP, Approval for AIG placement, and minutes forms). If a student is reassessed and services and/or identification changes, a parent meeting is to take place. The appropriate forms (see previous sentence) should document all changes and signatures from the parents and AIG team are required. Students who transfer from another district within NC (as shown in PowerSchool) will automatically be placed in the AIG program. Additional paperwork may be deemed necessary depending upon what is on file at the previous school. Students who transfer into to district from out of state or are not identified in PowerSchool as AIG must meet the district's criteria for AIG identification. This could possibly include additional testing and the identification/placement procedures will be followed.

Appeals Procedures

Parents/guardians have the right to disagree with nomination, placement or service options outlined in the student's DEP and are guaranteed due process.

Appeals Procedures for Parents/Guardians (Identification/Services)

Parents, guardians, and teachers of academically or intellectually gifted students' work together as partners to nurture the growth and progress of children. Frequent conferences and open communication are encouraged in order to maximize the potential of the student. The important relationship between the school, academically or intellectually gifted students and their families usually begins when the student is identified for the services by the school-based committee for gifted education. The parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to discuss the recommended Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) which outlines the service options available to match the strengths of the student. Parents/guardians may request a copy of the following:

- A copy of the individual student eligibility profile
- A copy of the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)
- An outline of the Appeals Procedures (I-IV)

PROCEDURES TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS

LEVEL I SCHOOL SITE REVIEW

If parents/guardians have a disagreement concerning nomination, placement, or service option they shall first request a conference with the school's AIG team. (A written request is required).

LEVEL II ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

If the disagreement is not resolved at the school site, the parents/guardians may appeal the AIG team's decision within ten (10) days to the school's AIG's coordinator , Exceptional Children's Director, and the Superintendent or his/her designee. (A written request is required). They will review the case and respond to the parents/guardians and the student's principal in writing within ten (10) school days of the appeal.

LEVEL III SCHOOL BOARD REVIEW

If the dispute is not resolved at the administrative level, the parents/guardians may appeal to the local Board of Education in writing within ten (10) days of the administrative review. The local Board of Education will offer a final written decision within thirty (30) days.

LEVEL IV ADMINISTRATIVE LAW HEARING

If the Board's decision fails to resolve the disagreement satisfactorily, the parents/guardians may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of the hearing will be limited to consideration of (1) whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically gifted/intellectually gifted student or (2) whether the local plan of services for the student has been implemented appropriately. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will make a decision based on the findings of the fact and conclusions of law. The decision of the administrative law judge is final, is binding on all parties, and is not subject to further review under Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Ensure stakeholders are involved by gathering feedback to guide process and plan development.

Utilize formal and informal data to support the documentation of each AIG standard and practice at the school and district level. Use of data will ensure consistent delivery of services throughout the district.

Review funding with program director to discuss alignment of plan with budgeted resources.

Document how students will benefit with purchases and other expenditures.

Investigate the trends in the identification, placement, and achievement of underrepresented populations and revise current practices to reflect best practice.

Work with HR on a more consistent basis to maintain AIG licenses and other PD requirements.

Take advantage of established meetings such DEP and parent open house meetings to elicit feedback from students, parents, and other stakeholders.

Review and revise the AIG plan using data gathered from

- Feedback from parents, students, and other stakeholders
- Responses from external sources (Teacher Working Conditions, Comprehensive Needs Assessments, Advanced-Ed reviews, SACS)
- Student achievement data

Publish program evaluation data on website, paper brochures, AIG wiki.

Develop an AIG fact sheet to share at DEP meetings and other informational events for AIG students, parents and community members.

Translate all written policies, procedures, and practices in students' native language(s).

Sources of Evidence: Stakeholders' feedback (that guides process and plan development)

Schedule of AIG services

AIG Budget

Notes from meeting with Director

Documentation of revised procedures based on research

HR data that documents personnel credentials

Surveys from parents, students and other stakeholders

Glossary (optional):

See appendix

Appendix (optional):

AIG - Glossary of Acronyms_Terms.pdf (*Appendix*)

Article 9b.pdf (*Appendix*)

BoardApprovalLeter.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)