

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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This Local AIG Plan has been developed based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide Public School Units (PSUs) to develop, implement, and monitor 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 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 a PSU should have in place, and guide PSUs to improve their programs. In an effort to continue to transform AIG programs and align to the NC AIG Program Standards, each PSU has participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, involving multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process has guided PSUs in their development of this Local AIG Plan for 2025-2028. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the LEA's local Board of Education or charter school's board of directors and sent to NC DPI for review and comment.

For 2025-2028, the Local AIG Plan is as follows:

* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

Mission:

To identify and nurture the potential of academically and intellectually gifted students through equitable, rigorous, and engaging educational opportunities that support excellence, creativity, and growth.

Vision:

Alexander County Schools envisions a learning community where gifted learners are recognized, valued, and supported through a continuum of differentiated services that empower them to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 259,844.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 1,815.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification	
Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 1: Student Identification	<i>The LEA's student identification procedures for AIG are clear, equitable, and comprehensive and lead towards appropriate educational services.</i>
* Practice A	Develops both screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels. Provides opportunities, including universal screening, for every student to show their strengths and talents.
The district AIG lead partners with district instructional coaches and AIG-licensed/certified teachers, along with school MTSS teams to review ongoing formative and summative data to identify a list of students that potentially exhibit traits of an AIG student. The data analyzed is both qualitative and quantitative. The data includes, but is not limited to, the following district-wide measures: K-2 literacy and math assessments (eg. ELI, mClass and Math Summative Assessment), Computer adaptive assessments (eg. iReady), BOG3, EOG 3-8, EOC 8-12, Pre-ACT, ACT, Aptitude scores, universal screening through CogAT, historical trends of classroom achievement and performance, and MTSS team discussion in PLCs. A district AIG checklist is used to determine if these students meet one of the pathways that lead to AIG identification or recommended for further evaluation.	District AIG Screening Process: - Grade 2 - Beginning in 2025-2026, CogAT online assessment will be given to all 2nd grade students in the spring. This will be used for screening and identification purposes. - Grade 3-8 - Assessments and screeners such as BOG3, EOG, iReady, NC Check-Ins, and mClass and are reviewed by the school MTSS team and the district AIG lead to identify students that potentially exhibit traits of an AIG student. The district AIG checklist is used to determine students who meet AIG pathways or recommended for further evaluation. Parents are informed in a written letter of the identification and the district AIG process and procedures. Parents/Guardians of students identified as AIG conference with the classroom teacher to discuss student support and the DEP development process. In middle school, this process is also used to recommend students for advanced class placement. - Grades 9-12 - Student EOG, EOC, and Pre-ACT scores are reviewed by the school MTSS team, counselors, classroom teachers, and district AIG lead for AIG identification and recommendation for advanced class placement.
The procedures for screening and referral are shared at the beginning of the year with all stakeholders and can be found on the district-level AIG website. Teachers and parents/guardians may refer any student who demonstrates the need for advanced or accelerated curricula for AIG evaluation. In grades 4-12 the referral may also include a self-referral submitted by a student. Students working with school staff can also create and submit portfolios and/or work samples to build a body of evidence to support AIG identification. The portfolio with the teacher referral will be used to determine identification by the school's MTSS process. The portfolio must show academic achievement two grade levels above the student's current grade level. Additional testing for aptitude will be completed by the District AIG lead.	
* Practice B	Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels, K-12, 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. The following district processes and procedures for identification and placement in AIG is shared with all stakeholders at the beginning of the year and can be found on the district AIG website. Identification areas are Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI), Academically Gifted in Math (AM), Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), and Intellectually Gifted in ability but not achieving to potential (IG). Once a student has been identified for services, classroom practices and

AIG activities will be aligned to area of identification. Services will be outlined in the students Differentiated Education Plan (DEP).

Parents who request early kindergarten admissions will contact the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction to submit a district request form. The form is reviewed in accordance to criteria set in NC HB-1099. The Executive Director will communicate the results of the request with parents/guardians and with the student's school administrator.

Students in grades K-2 may be identified as gifted by meeting the following requirements. If the school's MTSS team and/or District AIG lead determines that the student does meet the qualifications for identification, the student will be identified as Academically Gifted (AG). A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) will be developed by the student's teacher, school AIG lead, and parent/guardian. Enrichment opportunities will be provided for students who do not meet the identification qualifications but demonstrate potential.

1. Demonstrate a need for high level differentiation as documented by the teacher and classroom performance.
2. Score at or above the 95th percentile on a nationally normed aptitude test administered by the District AIG lead or School Psychologist (i.e. NNAT3-nonverbal)
3. Score at or above the 95th percentile in achievement for reading and/or math on a nationally normed universal screener (i.e. mClass DIBELS, iReady, etc.)
4. Produce work samples demonstrating achievement at least two grade levels above the student's current assigned grade.
5. Be referred by a teacher and/or parent/guardian.

Students in grades 3-12 are referred to the school's MTSS team through the screening and referral process. The team, along with the school's and District AIG leads evaluate the referral using the District AIG checklist to determine if one of the 3 pathways are met. In grades 6-12, students that meet the State requirements for advanced class placement and those previously identified in earlier grades are placed in advanced courses for math and/or reading. Students in grades 9-12 also have the choice to self-select advanced courses with the advisement of high school counselors and/or teachers.

The current placement criteria for AIG services are as follows:

Pathway 1: Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) requires all of the following components.

1. Aptitude test composite score of 95th percentile or above, and
2. Achievement tests of 95th percentile or above in Reading and Math

Pathway 2: Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), Academically Gifted in Math (AM), or Academically Gifted in Reading and Math (AG) requires all the following components in each category.

1. Academically Gifted in Reading (AR): (A) Aptitude test composite score of 90th percentile or above in Reading, and (B) Achievement test of 90th percentile or above in Reading
2. Academically Gifted in Math (AM): (A) Aptitude test composite score of 90th percentile or above in Math, and (B) Achievement test of 90th percentile in Math
3. Academically Gifted in Reading and Math (AG): (A) Aptitude test composite score of 90th percentile or above in Reading and Math, and (B) Achievement test of 90th percentile or above in Reading and Math

Pathway 3: Intellectually Gifted (IG) requires one of the following components be met:

1. Aptitude test composite score of 95th percentile or above, or
2. Aptitude test verbal score of 95th percentile or above, or
3. Aptitude test quantitative score of 95th percentile or above

If a student on the potentially identified list does not place through one of the three pathways, they will be considered for further testing. Testing will be done using the NNAT-3 for students needing a non-verbal ability assessment, OLSAT for aptitude, or IOWA for achievement, and will occur using a computer-based assessment in a one-on-one setting.

Students working with school staff can also create and submit portfolios and/or work samples to build a body of evidence to support AIG identification. The portfolio with the teacher referral will be used to determine identification by the school's MTSS process. The portfolio must show academic achievement two grade levels above the student's current grade level. Additional testing for aptitude will be completed by the District AIG lead.

For students who enter Alexander County Schools as an AIG identified student from another district or state, the receiving school's MTSS team will review the previous district's records and make a recommendation to the District AIG lead.

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*** 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, multilingual learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

To ensure representation of underrepresented populations, stakeholders from these groups are consulted in the referral and identification process through the school MTSS team. There are traditional and non-traditional measures used as criteria for placement as evidenced on the district AIG checklist. To ensure all populations have equal access to identification, all 2nd grade students (beginning in 25-26) will be given the online CogAT, and have an opportunity for further testing if they show potential for giftedness but do not qualify through one of the 3 pathways.

Assessments used in each of the identification pathways specifically include non-verbal assessments which assist in the identification of underrepresented populations. AIG student recommendations are held in a MTSS setting and PLC data discussions that include support services representation to further identify underrepresented populations. Our underrepresented groups in the district AIG programs are culturally/ethnically diverse and Multilingual Learners. The district will focus on implementing extension strategies and structures, educator resources and professional development specifically to identify and support underrepresented populations and students identified as dual exceptional.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	---	---	---	---	---	9.75%
Male	---	---	<5%	---	---	---	10.93%
Total	---	---	<5%	---	6.28%	---	10.38%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

*** Practice D**

Monitors the screening, referral, and identification processes for consistent implementation across the LEA.

All district screening, referral, and identification processes are consistently implemented across the district. This is monitored by the District AIG lead, school administrators, school AIG leads, and school MTSS teams. School AIG leads monitor the mandated processes and procedures at the school level to ensure fidelity, and the District AIG lead monitors the same at the district-level in coordination with school-based leads and administrators. Tests are administered by trained and certified AIG personnel and parents/guardians have the opportunity to meet with AIG leads to review identification materials for their child.

The District and school-based AIG leads annually audit AIG folders using a district-created checklist to ensure all processes and procedures are implemented consistently and with fidelity. Any discrepancies are reviewed with the school administrator and MTSS team, and action is taken to ensure corrections are made

in a timely manner. If trends are identified across schools, the district AIG lead will implement professional development or a review team to ensure improvements are made district-wide.	* Practice E Disseminates information regarding the screening, referral, and identification processes to school personnel, parents/guardians, students, and the community-at-large. Information on the screening, referral, and identification process are shared on the district website making it accessible to all stakeholders. The District and school AIG leads and school administrators, ensure these items are shared with school personnel annually. As an AIG student qualifies, documenting paperwork is filled out and sent to the school's AIG contact. Every student that is identified and placed in AIG will have a folder with identification paperwork signed by the District AIG lead and the student's parent/guardian to ensure school personnel, students, and parents/guardians are all informed. Information is disseminated in the following ways: 1. Classroom teachers share AIG information with parents/guardians as directed in the district process and procedures. 2. Informational meetings are provided to parents/guardians in the elementary schools annually. 3. The district and school website include information on AIG. 4. The district and school AIG leads are available upon request. * Practice F Documents the evidence gathered and analyzed to support an AIG identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/guardians and maintained in student records. District and school AIG leads gather evidence as described in the district AIG process. This evidence is collected on a district spreadsheet that is used to complete the district AIG checklist. These items are analyzed by the school MTSS team and the district AIG lead to determine eligibility through one of three pathways. If the student is identified, the parents are informed in writing of the identification and schedule a conference with the classroom teacher. The teacher reviews the district forms and the DEP development process, and the forms are signed by the District AIG lead, student's parent/guardian, school administrator, and classroom teacher. These forms and evidence (and those henceforth) are reviewed annually and collected in the student's AIG folder that is housed and travels with their cumulative folder until graduation.
* Practice G 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 developed and reviewed annually with parents/ guardians to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions. Following the identification process and parent/guardian approval, the MTSS team along with the teacher develop a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) specifically targeting the student's needs. The plan is a district template for consistency and includes student demographics, data, differentiated instructional plan and services. It is reviewed and revised annually with updated data and identified needs and coordinating supports, and reviewed with parents/guardians through teacher/parent conferences in the Fall. When transitions occur from school-to-school and/or in programming/services, the coordinating MTSS teams, classroom teachers, parents/guardians, and students (when applicable) consult to ensure their is not a gap in support.	* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard 1. Complete a comparison study to ensure district number and services of AIG identified students compares to the state and regional average and procedures. 2. Increase consistency in district forms, evidence and communication across all schools. 3. Focus on supporting teachers with differentiating curriculum and support for AIG identified students.

Planned Sources of Evidence		
*	Referral and identification information shared with stakeholders	
*	District data spreadsheet template and AIG checklist	
*	DEP samples	
Type	Documents	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	Document Template N/A	

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community	
Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community	
<i>The LEA provides a K-12 AIG program with an array of services by the total school community to meet the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners. These services will develop students' strengths through intentional learning experiences in various domains that are not dependent on the students' demographic background or economic means.</i>	
* Practice A	Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the academic and intellectual needs of AIG students, across all grade levels, K-12, and learning environments, through collaboration with a variety of personnel. Services are aligned to students' advanced learning needs and AIG identification. The district AIG programs and services are comprehensive in meeting the needs of gifted learners in all grade levels and classrooms. K-2: While not typically identified in the early grades, classroom teacher and school AIG leads are in partnership with the MTSS team and district AIG lead to provide strategies and support to continue growth for advanced learners. When a student demonstrates characteristics of a gifted learner, staff use data to identify the specific needs of each student and provide and/or develop materials that meet the needs of the student. School schedules are organized to include time outside the core curriculum for acceleration where all students have the opportunity to work on their level. For advanced learners in K-2, students may be clustered (depending on the grade level membership) and given advanced instruction and/or enrichment opportunities. 3-8: AIG identified students are usually clustered in local/state endorsed AIG teacher classrooms. These teachers, administrators, and school AIG leads review the data and grade level membership to determine if clustering is the best structure to support gifted learners each year. Clustering allows targeted opportunities for compacting, differentiating, and/or accelerating instruction. School counselors monitor the social-emotional needs of gifted learners and provide support when needed. School schedules are organized to include time outside the core curriculum for acceleration where all students have the opportunity to work on their level. In grades 6-8, AIG identified students are placed in advanced courses for reading and/or math upon the advisement of school counselors and classroom teachers. 9-12: AIG students are offered advanced courses and graduation tracks (aligned to legislation and state policies). School counselors consult with the students about their graduation and post-graduation plans and help develop a course plan and schedule that supports their learning goals. They will also have extracurricular opportunities available to help advance their learning and experiences. The counselors will support the social-emotional needs of the students to help them be successful. All schools utilize PLC and MTSS structures which provide regular times to analyze data and plan instruction to meet the needs of all learning including advanced or AIG students. These meeting structures include key stakeholders to ensure underrepresented students are receiving the appropriate opportunities and support aligned with their identified needs.
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* Practice B	Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the social and emotional needs of AIG students, across all grade levels, K-12, and learning environments, through collaboration with a variety of personnel based on student needs.

Administrators, district and school AIG leads, and classroom teachers will continue to work together with support personnel through the school MTSS team to provide teacher and families tools and resources to support the social and emotional needs of AIG students. The district strategic plan (revised for 2025) includes a goal focused on comprehensive student support, including meeting social-emotional needs of all students. As part of this goal, MTSS teams analyze student data to identify trends for groups of and individual advanced learners. This analysis will guide the district and school team to develop and deliver appropriate social-emotional interventions and instructional support for students that need it. Students receive character-development curriculum in the general classroom, and AIG identified students have the opportunity to meet with the school counselor in groups or individually to work specifically on skills that directly affect advanced learners.	  Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.
* Practice C Integrates and connects the AIG program and services with the district's priorities and resources through policy and practice.	The district strategic plan (revised 2025) addresses student success, professional excellence, collaborative community, educational technology, optimal operations, and well-being of students and staff. The goals and objectives are developed to support all students and staff, including AIG students, teachers, leads, and programming. The following are examples from the newly revised strategic plan. The schools create their School Improvement Plan goals and objectives in alignment to and reflective of the district. ▪ Use data to drive instructional decision-making and improve student outcomes by adapting instructional pacing and strategies based on student learning trends to ensure growth for all learners. ▪ Foster a learning-centered culture focused on reflection, ownership, and continuous improvement by (1) Using data to differentiate instruction and provide timely intervention and enrichment with fidelity (2) Increase instructional rigor and engagement through relevant, standards-based learning that integrates higher-order thinking and real-world application. ▪ Provide every student with a clear, supported pathway to graduation and postsecondary success by (1) strengthening partnerships with colleges, businesses, and military to expand career pathways and real-world learning (2) Expand access and exposure to college and career readiness programs using CCP, Dual Enrollment, AP Academy, Early College, and JROTC. ▪ Strengthen relevance and rigor in secondary instruction to promote connection and success by (1) increasing access to rigorous coursework and differentiated supports for advanced learners (2) expand transitional support for key academic shifts to improve retention and readiness (3) enhance relevance and engagement through real-world, career-connected learning, supported by professional learning in designing rigorous, learner-centered instruction in all content areas. ▪ Identify and define academic, behavioral, and other factors that may impact student success by applying best practices and evidence-based strategies to address identified student needs in alignment with instructional goals. ▪ Monitor and continuously improve the effectiveness of student support systems by establishing a progress monitoring system that uses academic, behavioral and engagement data to evaluate outcomes and inform adjustments. As part of the MTSS process, AIG students will be discussed in PLCs, addressed as part of differentiated core instruction so that student advanced learning needs are met on a regular basis. The MTSS team includes the school AIG lead and/or certified AIG teacher, along with the school counselor to address academic and social-emotional needs. Professional development is provided to staff that support AIG students to ensure best practices are provided within the classroom and extracurricular activities. Beginning in 2025, AIG curriculum will be explored to provide consistency across the district, along with the implementation of an early learning program to support advanced learners.
* Practice D Develops procedures for intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG and other students with advanced learning needs. Student data from formative and summative assessments are regularly analyzed at the district and school level. Students are grouped according to performance on triangulated data from multiple sources in ELA and Math. Intervention/Acceleration groups are often fluid and change when data reveals one is needed to continue student growth. In grades 3-8, AIG students can be clustered or flexibly grouped when the grade level demographics determine it is the best way to serve advanced learners. In grades 6-8, additionally students may be placed in advanced courses, including Math 1 in 8th grade. Upon reaching	

high school, AIG students meet with their counselor and develop a graduation plan and coordinate a schedule that helps them reach their goals. This plan might include increasing academic courses taken in 9th and 10th grade to take AP courses, CCP courses, Dual Enrollment, etc. Throughout all grades, student data is analyzed to provide the best program and services within the goals and resources of the district. If individual student data or performance does not support acceleration, enrichment or extensions, an AIG student may remain in the core curriculum or remediation. This does not take away the AIG identification, but rather the programming and services are adapted to meet their specific needs. At the end of the academic calendar, overall AIG achievement and growth data in reading and math per grade level is analyzed by the District AIG lead and supporting personnel to determine trends and evaluate current practices and grouping strategies to determine any revisions or additions that need to be made to best support AIG students throughout the district.	* Practice E 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. Communicating about gifted education is an ongoing process in the district. To ensure teachers and staff are aware of the district AIG process and procedures, an information session is provided at the beginning of each school year, and as requested throughout. They are always provided information on Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) and the needs of AIG students and how to best differentiate instruction for them. Student AIG plans are reviewed during conferences and a current DEP is signed by the teacher, administrator, and parent/guardian, then added to the student's AIG folder each year. Communication is also maintained through the following methods: administrators and AIG leads are provided information on updates relevant to AIG students/programming/policies; the district maintains an AIG focused website that provides information and resources; AIG trained teacher participant in MTSS teams and planning meeting where AIG students and processes are to be addressed.
	* Practice F Communicates among and between teachers and schools to ensure an effective continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points. Collaboration between school AIG leads, administrators, counselors, and MTSS teams is imperative to maintain effective communication on AIG services and initiatives. Elementary and middle school counselors and school AIG leads assist 5th grade students with the transition into middle school. A meeting is held to discuss student needs as they transition, and teacher fill out rating scales on each student with recommendations on academic placement. High school counselors meet with 8th grade students in the spring of their 8th grade year to discuss options for the graduation plan, enrichment opportunities, university requirements, etc. Middle school teachers fill out rating scales and recommendation forms for students to assist in appropriate academic placement at their new school. Middle school counselors meet with high school counselors to discuss any needs that may affect student growth and success in high school. At each transition level a meeting is held with parents during conferences and information sessions to discuss enrichment opportunities for advanced learners and to annual discuss the student's DEP.
* Practice G Develops policies and procedures for a variety of acceleration opportunities, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, dual enrollment, subject and/or grade acceleration. Acceleration for gifted learners can be both social and academic. The district utilizes the MTSS process to identify potential AIG students to accelerate and strategies/services/programming that best supports their needs. Specific types of acceleration include, but not limited to, the following. ▪ Early admission to kindergarten following state and district policy as outlined in Regulation Code: 4100-R. ▪ Grade and subject acceleration must meet the following guidelines: Recommendation by classroom teacher, AIG leads, principal and/or parent/guardian; Completion of the Iowa Acceleration Scale; Demonstrating student performance at 2 years above grade level on individual achievement tests; and social development, motivation and interest level as compared to same-age peers ▪ Compacting instruction for students that have demonstrated mastery of course content and standards as indicated through assessment data, teacher recommendation, check-ins, and classroom evidence.	

▪ Credit by Mastery is available at the high school level following state and district policy outlined in Policy Code: 2420 G and the process is supported through the counseling department. ▪ Dual Enrollment (Career and College Promise/Supplemental College Courses-Course for Credit) is available at the high school level through a partnership with Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC) following state and district policy outlined in Policy Code: 3101 and CCRE-001. Dual enrollment is also offered through the district's Early College program that is an alternative high school option presented to students in the spring of 8th grade. ▪ Students may earn a diploma on a 3 year track and graduation endorsements following state and district policy outlined in Policy Code 3460 ▪ AP Academy is an available pathway within the high school where cohorts of students participate in AP level coursework along with an optional Capstone experience.	* Practice H Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students with early intervention and talent development opportunities through purposeful and intentional programming. When a K-2 student demonstrates characteristics of a gifted learner, staff use data to identify the specific needs of each student and provide and/or develop materials that meet the needs of the student. School schedules are organized to include time outside the core curriculum for acceleration where all students have the opportunity to work on their level. For advanced learners in K-2, students may be clustered (depending on the grade level membership) and given advanced instruction and/or enrichment opportunities. This is an area we plan to expand beginning in 2025.	* Practice I Develops mindsets, policies, and practices to promote equity and excellence by broadening access to advanced learning opportunities through a variety of talent development efforts, including frontloading, in grades 4-12. Most of our gifted students are served in the classroom, but elementary and middle schools have a scheduled intervention/enrichment time daily. This time allows students to receive instruction specific to their needs as evidenced by data and observation including advanced learning opportunities beyond what is provided in core curriculum. Advanced learning options are provided during school hours, but are also provided outside of school as well, such as STEM clubs/camps, mentorships, job shadowing, field trips, etc. MTSS teams are utilized to ensure all students have equitable access to identification leading to advanced learning opportunities including underrepresented populations. District processes, procedures, and policies are annually reviewed to ensure they provide consistency in how students are screened, identified, and served in AIG. Through MTSS, support staff and classroom teachers collaborate to establish best practices and strategies, determine talent development opportunities, and frontloading options to ensure advanced learners, no matter their background.	* Practice J Enhances and further develops the talents and interests of AIG students through extra-curricular programming during and outside of the school day. The district encourages a wide range of activities that meet the needs and interests of AIG students including, but not limited to, the activities listed below. AIG students and parents access information about these programs through their school. ▪ Battle of the Books ▪ Spelling Bee ▪ Junior Beta Club and Beta Club ▪ District Holiday Card Art Contest ▪ Career Development Days ▪ Innovative Days ▪ STEAM Days and Camps ▪ Little Read (in partnership with Lenoir Rhyne University) ▪ CTE Career Exploration Camps ▪ Internships/Job Shadowing
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- Poetry Competitions
- Envirothon
- Real Money/Real World Program
- Advanced Arts Courses
- All District Band and Chorus
- NCSSM class
- Governor's School

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

- Focus on increasing rigor and relevance in core curriculum, instructional strategies, and enrichment/intervention programs.
- Provide professional development and trainings to school staff to ensure best practices are being implemented to support advanced learners.
- Implement/Expand talent development and frontloading options to expand and supplement service and programming for advanced learners.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* DEP samples

* MTSS meeting notes and implementation evidence

* Documents evidencing the most current policies, procedures, and processes supporting AIG and advanced learning opportunities.

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources		N/A	

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction	
Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction	<i>The LEA employs challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum and instruction to accommodate a range of academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of K-12 gifted learners.</i>
* 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 by differentiating curriculum and instruction, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration strategies.
	District and school AIG leads collaborate with educators and administrators to discuss individual student needs and provide instructional assistance with identified AIG students. Additionally, the AIG leads plan with classroom teachers to enrich the curriculum within the general classroom. As part of the district's goal to integrate AIG identification and services into the MTSS process, our service options are prescriptive tiers. As with all students, core (tier 1) occurs within the general curriculum with differentiated core to meet AIG students' needs. At this tier, curriculum is modified and adapted to address the different levels of student needs and interest. Teachers of AIG students modify or adapt core curriculum to address the identified student needs. The content is differentiated by increasing the pace of instruction or deepening the skills within the standard in order to challenge gifted learners. The teachers also provide alternative ways for learners to demonstrate mastery. Supplemental instruction (tier 2) occurs in the form of enrichment or intervention and is built into the school's instructional schedule. Tier 2 instructional time and opportunities for remediation and enrichment are determined through the school MTSS team, and outlined in the student's intervention plan to address his/her specific needs. Intensive instruction (tier 3) comprises of a smaller portion of our AIG students. The service options at this level are also determined by the school MTSS team and is outlined in his/her intervention plan. This may include grade/content acceleration, advanced placement, Credit by Mastery, etc.
	The district will implement a revised instructional framework and strategic plan beginning in 2025. The framework provides guidance on instructional expectations that coordinate with the strategic plan goals. This guidance is reflective of the intentionality of meeting the individual needs of students as identified through the MTSS process. The framework will coordinate with supporting resources that provide support and strategies for educators to address the different ability levels in each classroom and across grade levels/content areas. Each School Improvement Plan will reflect the district guidance specific to its student needs. Professional development for educators and administrators will provide knowledge, strategies and structures to better understand advanced learners and how to provide enrichment, extension and acceleration within their classroom and throughout the school.
* Practice B	Uses students' identified abilities, readiness, and interests to address a range of learning needs K-12.
	The district will provide professional development and guidance for educators and administrators addressing best practices in curriculum and instruction that includes meeting the needs of advanced learners. School AIG leads and teachers will model and share strategies during PLCs and professional development based on the analysis of student data. Surveys, formative and summative assessments, observation, and feedback will be used to gain data from multiple areas to help identify the needs and interests of all learners. This data will be collected annually and tracked to identify trends and specific areas of success and improvement. Findings will determine district and school level professional learning, resources, and supporting structures to be implemented from year to year.
* Practice C	Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that address the range of academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of AIG students.
	The district has an instructional resource collection that includes those that support the needs of advanced learners such as Breakout Boxes and STEAM project materials. These may be checked out by all instruction staff and media coordinators and lead teachers are trained on how to best implement them. Individual schools purchase materials to support enrichment and intervention that is specific to their identified needs and student interests.

Materials for Battle of the Books are purchased and provided annually to encourage student participation in the competition. Elementary schools in partnership with Lenoir-Rhyne University Visiting Writers Series provide a book, curriculum, author meet and greet, and art/writing competition annually. The 1:1 technology initiative allows students K-12 to access resources and courses that enrich and support learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Field trips and alternative learning opportunities allow AIG students to experience learning that challenges them to continue growing in confidence, knowledge, and skills.	* Practice D Fosters the development of durable skills and mindsets which support post-secondary success. These skills include adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, empathy, learner's mindset, and personal responsibility. Utilizing the district's 1:1 technology initiative and learning management systems teachers are better able to individualize instruction and allow for development of durable skills and mindsets. Teachers utilize tools like Google Classroom and Canvas to create differentiated lessons and instruction for all learners, including those that are advanced. Media coordinators support project-based learning experiences that expand the standards and call for the use and development of durable skills and mindsets. The district and schools utilize partnerships with community resources and businesses to provide materials, experiences, instruction, and resources to the teachers and students through field trips, guest speakers, mentoring, job shadowing, and/or apprenticeships. These partnerships help students to see a connection between what they are learning and how it can be applied in a career. The district strives to bring in innovative practices within the school and classroom. Our classrooms have interactive whiteboards, document cameras, computers, and student devices. Specific content areas have additional innovative resources to support the application of standards. At each grade level, a variety of technologies are used to engage and motivate students. Teachers participate in professional development to learn best practices in digital teaching and learning. The district is developing a resources to support the implementation of AI tools in a safe and responsible manner to further engage learners throughout the district.
* Practice E Uses ongoing assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction. The district uses a variety of universal screeners (K-8) such as iReady and mClass, formative assessments such as district benchmark assessments/pre-post assessments through SchoolNet, and summative assessments such as EOG and EOCs. The data collected from these assessments are analyzed through PLCs and MTSS and disaggregated at a school and district level to inform and improve instruction and student support. The results of the data analysis can result in differentiation of instruction, fluid grouping, development of enrichment or intervention plans, and identification of additional resources or professional learning for educators and administrators.	* Practice F Collaborates with a variety of personnel, based on student needs, to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction. District and school AIG leads collaborate with educators and administrators to discuss individual student needs and provide instructional assistance with identified AIG students. Additionally, the AIG leads plan with classroom teachers to enrich the curriculum within the general classroom. The district and schools utilize partnerships with community resources and businesses to provide materials, experiences, instruction, and resources to the teachers and students through field trips, guest speakers, mentoring, job shadowing, and/or apprenticeships. These partnerships help students see a connection between what they are learning and how it can be applied in a career. Support personnel such as counselors, social workers, nurses, behavior specialist, EC specialist, and ESL teachers are incorporated in MTSS discussion and student tier plan development. Their expertise is utilized to provide perspectives outside of the general classroom teacher to build a support/enrichment plan specific to the student's needs. They also provide guidance, resources, and professional learning to educators and administrators to expand their knowledge and instructional toolbox to differentiate within the classroom.
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard - Expansion of resource bank, curriculum and tools that advance learning opportunities - Provide professional learning that enhances understanding of advanced learners and supporting their needs in the classroom - Increase partnerships within and outside the community to support advanced learning opportunities.	

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Evidence of learning opportunities outside of the classroom	
* DEP sample	
* PBL lesson plan and work sample	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources		N/A	

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	
Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	<i>The LEA recruits and retains highly qualified professionals and provides relevant and effective professional development concerning the diverse needs of gifted learners that is ongoing and comprehensive.</i>
* Practice A Employs an AIG-licensed educator as lead coordinator to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. The AIG district lead is a locally-endorsed AIG educator, who will take the Praxis in Fall of 2025 to receive state certification. The responsibilities of the district AIG lead includes: guiding, planning, developing, implementing, revising and monitoring the AIG plan and program; consulting with school AIG leads and administrators; making decisions with the guidance of school AIG leads to ensure the needs of AIG students are being met to support their growth and well-being. The school AIG leads are included in school-level MTSS processes, and when needed, provide professional development and teacher support. The school AIG leads help review the AIG plan every 3 years and provide annual feedback.	
* Practice B Engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of K-12 AIG students and supports the implementation of the local AIG program and plan. All teachers are responsible for delivering differentiated and appropriate content at high levels. They have the opportunity to attain regional AIG endorsement through NWRESA. The district's goal is for all core instruction teacher will attain the endorsement, and more importantly the training it involves. With the assistance of the district AIG lead, school AIG leads are responsible in part for: ▪ Implementing the standards detailed in the district AIG plan. ▪ Reviewing and analyzing data for AIG students. ▪ Differentiating curriculum appropriate for gifted students. ▪ Creating instruction targets based on data analysis. ▪ Collaborating with support staff to meet the cognitive, academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted students. ▪ Facilitating parent information sessions on the AIG identification process and criteria. ▪ Advocating for gifted learners. ▪ Participating and documenting AIG student discussion at MTSS problem solving session. ▪ Develop and discuss opportunities for advanced courses and programs. ▪ Track AIG student outcomes in advanced courses and programs and provide support.	
* Practice C Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, instructional specialists, student services personnel, and school administrators. All certified teachers receive professional development specific to the needs of the students across the district and within their school. This training includes differentiation strategies for advanced learners. It also includes training on innovative teaching practices that support the advancement of curriculum and deepening the application of the standards. Many of the learning opportunities for educators is job embedded with the support of experts outside of and within the district. This is an ongoing area of growth for the district.	

* 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. Elementary students demonstrating advanced academic achievement through assessment and observation may be clustered with peers of similar learning capacity in the classrooms with teacher who have completed at a minimum local AIG endorsement (dependent on enrollment). AIG students are flexibly grouped in core academic areas within the classroom and across the grade level. Middle school AIG students may be placed in classrooms with other identified students in at least two core subjects led by teachers who have completed at a minimum local AIG endorsement (dependent on enrollment). High school students are given preferential admission to Honors, Advanced Placement, Capstone Courses, NCVPS, etc. All AP teachers are required to attend content specific week long AP Summer Institute provided by the College Board. The AIG district lead keeps documentation of personnel that have attained AIG endorsement or certification. The information is shared with administration prior to the start of the school year to support placement of AIG students. Teachers who attain AIG certification/endorsement are recognized at a Board meeting and receive a completion stipend.
* Practice E Develops strategies for the recruitment and retention of AIG-licensed professionals, including those of diverse backgrounds. Information about teacher with AIG certification/endorsement is share with principals prior to the start of the school year. Administrators work with teachers inside their buildings to encourage them to participate in the NWRESA AIG course for endorsement and/or complete the requirements for State certification. A stipend is provided to those completing the NWRESA AIG course based on the receipt of the certificate. District and school administrators will continue to search for and emphasize teacher with AIG certification/endorsement as they recruit, interview, and hire teachers to continuously expand our AIG team.
* Practice F Provides focused professional learning opportunities to realize equity and excellence in gifted education including changing mindsets, policies, and practices. The district will develop resources and professional development for educators on identifying and supporting advanced learners in the early grades. The AIG district lead will analyze AIG student demographic data as compared to the overall population. They will work to develop ways to identify underrepresented populations to ensure equity and excellence in gifted education. The current MTSS processes use PLC and SST teams to identify students at all grade levels through data disaggregation. In school based teams, service needs are determined and adapted based on the data findings and identified individual needs. The district and school leads will provide professional learning on the identified needs to guide educators and administrators to change mindsets, policies, and practices to meet the needs of gifted learners.
* Practice G Aligns professional development opportunities with local AIG program goals, other district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education with opportunities to refine applications of professional learning. AIG professional development is developed in alignment with the district strategic plan goals. The district and school professional development plans support quality instruction and high achievement. These trainings guides educators and administrators to individualize and differentiate instructional practices in coordination with the MTSS framework. In order to ensure all staff receive professional development regarding gifted learners resources will be provided by the district and monitoring of implementation will be ongoing. A portion of the training will be embedded into PLCs and staff meetings throughout the year. Follow up support is offered after professional development opportunities to ensure implementation and application of learning. Administrator walk-throughs and teacher learning walks will include the practices provided in professional learning, and expected through district initiatives to provide accountability.
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard - Continue working to expand number of AIG certified/endorsed teachers across all grade levels and contents. - Develop an AIG professional learning digital catalog that can be accessed by all educators and administrators.

Planned Sources of Evidence		
* Professional Learning Agendas/Attendance Rosters		
* AIG Certified/Endorsed List		
* PLC Meeting Notes		
Type	Documents	Document/Link
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	Document Template	N/A

Standard 5: Partnerships	
Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 5: Partnerships	<i>The LEA ensures ongoing and meaningful participation of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the local AIG program to develop strong partnerships.</i>
* Practice A Develops intentional, two-way partnerships with parents/guardians to support the following needs of AIG students: ▪ academic and intellectual ▪ social and emotional.	Partnership with parents/guardians is met through formal and informal community, district and school-based communication. These partnerships are expedited via the district website, online and printed regular communication, advisory meetings, parent nights, conferences, surveys and email. AIG updates, parent surveys, and progress reports are provided, at a minimum, annually. Parent surveys facilitate feedback from families of AIG students regarding the program and support offered through the district. Their feedback is used to advise revisions on the AIG plan and methods of support. The AIG website and other district/school communication methods provide information to parents/families on community and school-based activities and opportunities that address intellectual and social-emotional needs of AIG students.
* Practice B Partners with community stakeholders, such as institutions of higher education, local business and industry partners, and others to enhance and support the local AIG program and services.	The district AIG program partners with a variety of stakeholders to provide expertise and support for AIG services and learning opportunities for students and teachers. Through these partnerships students can execute special projects, engage in challenging materials and activities, participate in academic competitions, and experience mentorships, job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships. Community groups and business offer student scholarships and teacher grants to support advanced learners. Partnerships with universities and community colleges allow for expanded learning opportunities and access to advanced coursework.
* Practice C Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, monitor, and revise 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/guardians, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.	The district AIG advisory group consists of a variety of stakeholders from the district, school, and community and reflects the diversity of the community. This group meets, at a minimum, annually to monitor and revise/develop the district AIG plan and programs. These meetings are documented and findings of the review are shared with the Board of Education in the annual AIG update.
* Practice D Informs all students, parents/guardians, and the community of the following: ▪ Local AIG Plan ▪ Local AIG program services	

- Policies and procedures relating to advanced learning and gifted education
- Ways to access advanced learning opportunities

Communication is ongoing and responds to the diverse language and other needs of the community.

The AIG plan will be posted on the district website, and an informational session/annual review will be shared with the Board of Education at a public meeting. Each school will provide information annually to parents to inform them of the AIG programs and services, along with the policies and procedures related to AIG. Resources are provided on the district website to inform the needs of advanced learners and strategies to best support them. Communication about the AIG program and services is on-going. Information is shared on school and district websites, social media, and parent conferences. When appropriate, the parent/guardian's native language is used.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Update information on district website and in information sessions to reflect the revised AIG plan
- Develop a new AIG advisory group with the purpose of monitoring and revising the AIG plan.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Evidence of partnerships

* Board meeting agenda

* Advisory group agenda

Documents

Document/Link

Document Template

N/A

Type

AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources

Standard 6: Program Accountability	
Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 6: Program Accountability	<i>The LEA implements, monitors, and evaluates the local AIG program and plan to ensure that all programs and services are effective in meeting the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.</i>
* 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}), based on a comprehensive program evaluation. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.
	The district AIG lead surveyed a variety of stakeholders to gather feedback on the current AIG plan and recommendations on how to improve for the new plan. In person and virtual meetings with the district advisory group were held multiple times to review each AIG standard in detail. The district developed the AIG plan using the State AIG standards and the support resources provided by NCDPI. The plan was developed using the information from program self-evaluation and in conjunction with the AIG advisory group. The plan will be approved by the Board of Education in June 2025. After approval, the AIG plan will be submitted to NCDPI for approval, review, and comment.
* 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.
	The district advisory group will meet at least twice a year and discussion will be documented and presented at a public meeting of the Board of Education. The advisory group has the responsibility of monitoring the AIG plan and the fidelity of implementation. The team will review data and evaluate progress in the AIG plan, review the components of the plan, and increase stakeholder membership on the team.
* 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.
	The district is a strong proponent of transparency and collaboration. As such, the district AIG lead and Director of Finance ensure that the state funds allocated are spent according to the state policy. The budget is developed and aligned with the district strategic plan priorities and AIG plan. All expenditure decisions are based on student needs and benefit.
* Practice D	Maintains and analyzes multiple sources of student achievement and growth data, as well as annual dropout data for AIG students. Data is disaggregated to recognize patterns and trends over time and inform mindsets, policies, and practices for equity and excellence.
	AIG student data (growth, achievement, underrepresented populations, dropout rates, etc.) is shared annually with the Board of Education, district leadership, administrators, and the AIG advisory group. This data is gathered by the district and school AIG leads and analyzed to determine trends and areas of improvement: annual targets can be developed and communicated to staff in order to support AIG resources and instruction.
* Practice E	Maintains and analyzes multiple data sources focused on the referral, identification, services, and retention of students within the local AIG program to ensure that students' racial, ethnic, economic, or other demographic factors, including other exceptionalities and language differences, do not reduce their likelihood of access to and participation in gifted education.

AIG student data is disaggregated annually for underrepresented populations. This data drives the selection of aptitude and achievement tests. Additionally, the data drives training and identification processes to target the populations not served, attempts to address this gap by educating teachers, and purposeful selection of non-verbal assessments. If a student from an underrepresented population listed does not place by pathway, he/she will be considered for retesting using the NNAT-3, OLSAT, or IOWA. Tests used in the pathways for identification and placement specifically include non-verbal assessments which research shows assist in the identification of underrepresented populations. Particular attention is given to potentially gifted students from culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, or other challenged populations in the placement process.	
* Practice F Maintains and utilizes current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving K-12 AIG students to align with the goals and strategies outlined in the Local AIG Plan.	The district AIG lead maintains records of all state-licensed, locally-endorsed, and regionally-endorsed AIG teachers in the district. On-going and embedded professional learning is monitored and developed annually based on the strategic and professional development plan. In partnership with HR, records of professional development of honors, AP and Capstone course teachers are monitored. This data on credentials of personnel serving K-12 AIG students is used to ensure the number of AIG teachers meets the needs of the students, and the district is working towards increasing this number annually.
* Practice G Elicits regular feedback from students, parents/guardians, families, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the ongoing implementation and effectiveness of the local AIG program to support continuous program improvement.	The district solicits annual feedback from a variety of stakeholders. The feedback on the AIG plan and its implementation is gathered, analyzed, and presented to the AIG advisory group. Parents are given time for questions and feedback at parent meetings and are encouraged to contact the school administrator or classroom teacher with questions or concerns about implementation.
* Practice H Shares local AIG program evaluation data with school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and other community stakeholders.	Annually AIG data is presented to the Board of Education in a written and verbal form, allowing an opportunity for questions. This will include student proficiency data and program evaluation data. Minutes of the meeting are reported on the district website and in Board Docs. The data is also shared at leadership and administrator meetings during the school year. Administrators will disseminate this information to school staff and parent advisory groups.
* Practice I Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians 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.	Parents/guardians must be fully informed and given consent for testing, identification and placement. School AIG leads and AIG teachers will contact parents/guardians to share program details, resources, and answer questions prior to AIG placement. If students are not identified as qualifying for AIG services, they will be placed on a watchlist maintained by the AIG district lead and reevaluated after district and state end of year assessments are completed. Additional testing will be conducted as required to confirm eligibility for AIG placement. This will occur each year after placement procedures have been completed. Students identified as AIG from other districts or states will be reviewed by the school AIG lead and MTSS team, and accepted as with documentation provided by their previous district. The procedure to resolve disagreements is outlined in district policy.
 Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.	
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard - Improve the process of data review for AIG students - Ensure budget aligns with the new AIG plan	

Planned Sources of Evidence		
*	School Board Agenda	
*	Meeting minutes with stakeholder groups	
*	Policies and procedures for AIG placement and identification	
Type		
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources		
Documents		Document/Link
Document Template		N/A

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* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/16/2025 

AIG Related Documents

Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Required Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	Local Board of Education Approval Template	ACS Board of Education Approval Document

Optional Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

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Phrase	Definition