

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Cabarrus County Schools (130) 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. 115C150.5).

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)

Cabarrus County School's AIG Mission- We strive to inspire a love of learning and a deep curiosity about the world around us.

We believe in:

- Fostering the academic, intellectual, and social and emotional development of gifted students
- Creating an environment where all students can develop their gifts and experience academic growth
- Nurturing the potential of K-12 gifted learners
- Fostering professional growth for AIG specialists
- Supporting classroom teachers professional growth of gifted student

Vision Statement:

Our vision is to nurture the potential of K-12 gifted learners through a comprehensive program that fosters intellectual, social, and emotional growth while ensuring access to appropriate challenges and support for all students. Beginning with Talent Development (K-2) and Strategies, Opportunities, Activities, and Resource, SOAR, (3-5), we strive to provide opportunities for all students to thrive. Dedicated AIG specialists will support gifted learners, with staffing tailored to each school's needs and a commitment to diverse representation. Through partnerships with high school academies, CTE programs, and community connections, we will enrich students' experiences, including career development and family engagement opportunities. Our program supports middle and high school students with tailored social-emotional learning and skill-building aligned to AIG standards. We prioritize professional growth for educators to foster lifelong learning and ensure gifted learners are consistently challenged and engaged.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 2,125,855.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification

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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 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.

Screening

To support equitable identification, CCS administers a universal screener in all 2nd grade classrooms across the district. The Naglieri Non-Verbal Aptitude Test (NNAT3) serves as this universal screener, allowing all students—regardless of background or prior academic performance—to showcase their cognitive abilities. The results from the NNAT3 will be shared with schools and the district's accountability department for inclusion in student records. Additionally, families will receive NNAT Student Reports with the end of year report cards.

Beyond the 2nd-grade screening, students in 1st and 2nd grade are further screened for gifted potential through the Learning Interventions for the Talented (LIFT) Cultivating Potential program. This initiative provides whole-class lessons designed to encourage high-level thinking in various formats. Throughout this two-year program, teachers document students' high-ability thinking in student portfolios. The portfolio artifacts and teacher observations serve as a part of the body of evidence considered during the referral process, helping to identify students with emerging gifted characteristics.

In addition to second grade screening, CCS also conducts universal data reviews in grades 3rd–4th grade, evaluating students' achievement performance data to ensure all students with gifted potential are included and nominated for identification. Any student that meets our nomination criteria for achievement is then referred for further review by the AIG Program Team at the school. In grades 5th through 7th grade, CCS conducts universal data reviews evaluating students' achievement performance data to increase student access to rigorous coursework. Students meeting an 80th%tile or higher are placed in the Advanced Course Pathway for reading or math.

Referral/Nomination Process

Students may be referred for AIG identification through multiple pathways to ensure broad and fair access. Referral sources include:

- Teacher or administrator referral
- AIG Specialist referral
- Parent/guardian nomination
- Student self-nomination

When a student is nominated, the AIG Specialist first reviews the nomination to ensure completeness and to determine if additional data collection or alternative assessments are needed. After this initial review, the nomination is presented to the AIG Program Team at the school for further evaluation.

Parent Nominations

If a parent requests their child be evaluated for gifted services, they should first contact the AIG specialist or the child's classroom teacher, who will notify the AIG specialist. The parent nomination will be noted on the AIG-1. The AIG-1 and parent request is first reviewed by the AIG Specialist. The AIG Specialist first reviews the parent request and any available student data. After this initial review, the nomination is brought to the AIG Program Team for further consideration.

The AIG Program Team is composed of classroom teacher representatives, curriculum specialists, a school counselor, an administrator, and the AIG Specialist (who serves as the chairperson). This team conducts a comprehensive review of the nomination, including the AIG-1 form, student performance data, and any relevant student work or portfolios. Based on this review, the team will determine appropriate next steps, which may include additional assessments or formal identification for AIG services.

Identification & Placement Considerations for K-12

Grades K-2:

Formal AIG identification does not occur in grades K-2. However, multiple opportunities are provided for students to demonstrate advanced potential during these early years. All 2nd-grade students participate in a universal screener for aptitude using the NNAT3 at the end of the school year. Results from the NNAT3, along with data collected through the LIFT Cultivating Potential program—including classroom observations, performance tasks, and student work portfolios—are used to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

These data points are considered in 3rd grade during the formal identification process and may serve as the foundation for referral or nomination. Additionally, score reports from private evaluations or transfer documentation from a previous district's gifted program may be submitted for review. Private testing must include nationally normed aptitude and achievement assessments administered by a licensed psychologist recognized by the North Carolina Psychology Board.

Grades 3-5:

Each year, students in grades 3-5 are reviewed based on their EOG test scores to identify additional candidates for AIG services. The AIG Program Team evaluates students' eligibility, and if necessary, may require additional data collection, including prior aptitude scores or new aptitude testing, before making a final determination.

Grades 6-12:

For students in grades 6-12 who have private testing data or transfer scores from a previous school's gifted program, placement decisions are reviewed by the school's assistant principal overseeing gifted education and the district AIG specialist. They will determine the most appropriate placement based on student performance data.

Placement Considerations for 6-12

Grades 6-8: Students who meet the established criteria may enroll in advanced coursework.

Grades 9-12: All students have access to rigorous coursework through open enrollment in advanced courses, ensuring opportunities for academic challenge.

Cabarrus County Schools remains dedicated to ensuring access to gifted identification and services through a transparent, data-driven process.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) maintains a comprehensive and systematic process for identifying academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students across all grade levels (K-12). The identification process utilizes multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate aptitude, achievement, and potential,

incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

Identification Measures

CCS AIG identification pathways are based on three primary measures:

- Aptitude: Assessed using nationally normed aptitude tests, including the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT).
- Achievement: Measured through standardized assessments such as the North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) tests, Iowa Assessments (IOWA), or Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT).
- Performance: Considered through classroom grades, teacher recommendations, and student work samples from the LIFT portfolio (for K-2 students).

CCS provides multiple opportunities for students to be assessed, including scheduled screening windows and on-demand testing opportunities based on referrals from parents, teachers, or school personnel.

AIG Identification by Grade Level

Grades K-2: Early Identification and Talent Development: CCS focuses on early talent development through whole-group and flexible small-group instruction. While formal AIG identification is not required for service at this level, students with previous AIG identification from another district or through private testing may qualify under the following criteria:

Primary Identification Pathways for K-2:

1. Pathway 1 (IG – Intellectually Gifted): 98th percentile or higher on a nationally normed composite aptitude test
2. Pathway 2 Aptitude Pathway (AI, AM, AR – Academically Gifted in Reading and/or Math): 93rd percentile or higher on a nationally normed achievement test (Reading or Math) AND 95th percentile or higher on a nationally normed aptitude test (subtest or composite score)

Students who do not qualify for early AIG identification continue to engage in LIFT curriculum experiences designed to nurture high-potential learners.

Grades 3-8: Formal Identification and Service Eligibility

Students in grades 3-8 may be assessed for AIG identification and services prior to or during the first semester of the school year. The primary assessment windows are:

- Grades 4-5: September
- Grade 3: October

Outside of these primary windows, AIG testing is available on an as-needed basis through school referrals until January.

All assessments are administered by trained AIG Specialists, the AIG District Specialist, or school testing coordinators. Scoring is conducted at the district level through Riverside and Pearson testing services.

Identification Pathways for Grades 3-8:

1. Intellectually Gifted (IG) Pathway

Designed for students with very high aptitudes who may or may not demonstrate high academic achievement.

Criteria: 98th percentile or higher on a nationally normed composite aptitude test

2. Achievement-Based Pathway (AI, AR, AM)

Identifies students with strong academic achievement who may not have as high of an aptitude score.

Criteria:

- 90th percentile or higher on a nationally normed composite aptitude test OR a 90th percentile or higher on a Verbal or Quantitative subtest
- 93rd percentile or higher on the NC EOG test OR another nationally normed achievement test (Reading or Math)
- AIG Program Team recommendation or teacher recommendation

3. Aptitude-Based Pathway (AI, AR, AM)

Identifies students with strong aptitude scores who may not yet demonstrate equally high achievement.

Criteria:

- 93rd percentile or higher on a nationally normed composite aptitude test OR a 93rd percentile or higher on a Verbal or Quantitative subtest
- 90th percentile or higher on the NC EOG test OR another nationally normed achievement test (Reading or Math)

AIG Program Team recommendation or teacher recommendation

Students qualifying under Achievement and Aptitude pathways are identified as:

AI (Academically Gifted in Both Math and Reading)

AR (Academically Gifted in Reading)

AM (Academically Gifted in Math)

Grades 9-12: Continuous Enrollment and Self-Enrollment in Advanced Courses

Once identified as AIG in CCS, students maintain their gifted designation throughout their K-12 education. High school students have open access to enroll in advanced coursework (Honors, Advanced Placement, and college-level courses).

Students transferring into CCS from another district or with private testing results are added to the AIG headcount in Infinite Campus if they meet CCS identification criteria. Cabarrus County Schools provides multiple options for students to demonstrate aptitude, achievement, and potential. To ensure consistent opportunities for identification, CCS uses:

- Flexible assessment options to allow students to test during designated windows or as needed
- Traditional and non-traditional measures to ensure all learners have access to AIG programming
- Alternative testing options (e.g., NNAT for Multi-Language Learners and students with strong non-verbal abilities and utilizing the Partial composites for the CogAT with Non-verbal sub-test scores)
- Portfolio and teacher recommendations to consider qualitative aspects of giftedness

By integrating multiple data points and offering ongoing opportunities for identification, CCS ensures that AIG identification is comprehensive, consistent, and developmentally appropriate for all students, K-12.

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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.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) recognizes the importance of early identification and talent development to ensure that gifted potential is nurtured consistently across all student populations. To support this goal, CCS has traditionally implemented the LIFT program (Learning Interventions for Talented) in 1st and 2nd grades to cultivate potential in students who may demonstrate non-traditional signs of giftedness. The program includes:

- Whole-class LIFT lessons ensuring all students have equal access to enrichment opportunities.
- Collaboration between AIG Specialists and classroom teachers, using observation tools to recognize diverse gifted characteristics.
- Teacher professional development, addressing misconceptions about giftedness and fostering a deeper understanding of how gifted traits present across various demographics.
- Implementation across all elementary schools, ensuring students from all backgrounds benefit from early exposure to advanced learning opportunities.

Expanding LIFT: Beginning in the next school year, CCS will expand LIFT to include small groups of the top 10% of kindergarten students at each school based on observational checklists completed by classroom teacher and AIG Specialist, providing earlier exposure to enrichment and critical thinking skills.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Screening & Identification

To ensure consistent identification practices, CCS has adopted multiple pathways that consider multiple expressions of giftedness. These include:

- Collaboration with the Multilingual Learner (ML) Department to utilize WIDA score growth data as an additional consideration for nominations, broadening the talent pool for students from a broad range linguistic backgrounds.
- Universal Screening with Nonverbal Measures:
 - The Naglieri Nonverbal Aptitude Test (NNAT) is administered to all 2nd-grade students, providing an objective measure that minimizes language and cultural biases.
 - The NNAT is also available as an alternative aptitude test for students in grades 3-8.
- Expanded Use of CogAT for Aptitude Assessment:
 - The CogAT partial composite score incorporates nonverbal subtest performance alongside verbal and quantitative reasoning.
 - This method ensures students with strengths in visual-spatial reasoning or non-traditional cognitive abilities have access to gifted identification pathways.
- Flexible Testing Options for Special Circumstances:

- School-based AIG program teams may request alternative aptitude or achievement assessments for students with unique circumstances.
- Requests are submitted to the district's shared Google Drive via the Secondary Test Request Form, with supporting rationale.
- IG Pathway for High Aptitude Learners:
 - Students scoring at the 98th percentile or higher on any aptitude test qualify for AIG identification without additional criteria, ensuring access for highly gifted students across all backgrounds.
- Twice-Exceptional (2e) Student Considerations:
 - Students with identified disabilities can qualify for AIG services based on a single qualifying score in either the verbal or quantitative subtests of the CogAT.
 - This flexibility ensures that students with exceptional abilities, despite learning challenges, receive appropriate enrichment and support.

To improve the accessibility and accuracy of the nomination process, CCS has revised the teacher nomination checklist to explicitly include culturally and linguistically gifted characteristics. This revision will help teachers recognize potential gifted traits in students who may not traditionally be identified, ensuring a more comprehensive and holistic approach to gifted nominations.

Over the next three years, CCS AIG specialists will collaborate with 3rd-5th grade teachers to develop the talents of all students and broaden access to critical thinking opportunities in the classroom. This initiative will integrate advanced learning strategies into the general education setting, ensuring that all students, regardless of identification status, benefit from enriched instructional practices.

Cabarrus County Schools remains committed to identifying and serving gifted students from all backgrounds, ensuring our practices align with the district's diverse demographics. Through early intervention, teacher collaboration, data-driven identification practices, and expanded talent development opportunities, we aim to reduce disproportionality and support the potential of historically underrepresented gifted learners.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	26.48%	5.77%	<5%	---	11.79%	---	19.39%
Male	28.62%	5.40%	5.64%	21.57%	11.81%	---	20.44%
Total	27.55%	5.58%	5.30%	18.52%	11.80%	---	19.94%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

<5%

*** Practice D**

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

Monitoring Screening, Referral, and Identification Processes for Consistency

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) ensures that all schools follow a standardized, consistent, and transparent screening, referral, and identification process for AIG services. The district has established clear protocols, shared resources, and accountability measures to maintain consistency across all schools. All CCS schools use the same AIG screening, nomination, and identification criteria, with equal access to standardized assessment materials. AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures are reviewed annually with AIG specialists and chairs at all grade levels by the District AIG Specialist. All required forms and procedures are documented in a centralized digital AIG handbook, accessible to all AIG staff.

To ensure consistent decision-making for AIG identification:

- Decision-Making Tree for Testing Requests: A standardized decision-making tree guides AIG specialists in making data-driven decisions on testing requests. This tool ensures that decisions about aptitude and achievement testing follow clear, consistent guidelines across all schools.
- Standardized Secondary Testing Request Process: If an AIG specialist determines that a student may need an alternative aptitude or achievement assessment, they must submit a formal request using the Secondary Testing Request Form. This form requires documentation of student data and a rationale for testing that must be approved by the District AIG Specialist before alternative testing is administered. This approval process ensures that alternative assessments are implemented consistently across all schools.
- Standardized Student Information System Platform AIG Identification and Service Level Changes: Students identified for AIG services must meet district-approved AIG identification criteria before being officially added to the Student Information System (SIS) Platform. A standardized SIS Platform Change of Service Level form is required for any updates to a student's AIG designation, ensuring accuracy and uniformity across schools.

Standardized Use of Screening & Observation Tools

LIFT Program Consistency: AIG specialists at all elementary schools implement standardized LIFT lesson plans and student observation forms to ensure fidelity in program implementation. A consistent list of work samples is collected for each student's LIFT portfolio in grades K-2, ensuring that evidence of advanced potential is uniformly documented across schools.

Universal Aptitude Screening for 2nd Grade: The NNAT screener is administered in all 2nd grade classrooms during a district-assigned spring testing window unless the parent opts out. This ensures that every 2nd grader has an equal opportunity to be screened for gifted identification.

AIG Student File Standardization: Every student referred for AIG identification has an AIG file, which includes standardized documentation of assessments, referrals, and placement decisions. A "Model AIG File" template is provided to all AIG teachers to maintain uniform organization and documentation. The District AIG Specialist conducts annual audits of AIG files at all elementary schools. These audits verify that identification decisions and student documentation are complete and consistently maintained.

All AIG assessment materials are housed in the Gifted Education Department at the district office. Schools can request any needed assessment tools to ensure equal access to identification resources across all schools. Through these standardized procedures, approval processes, and monitoring systems, Cabarrus County Schools ensures that the AIG screening, referral, and identification process is consistent and transparent across all schools. The decision-making tree, annual audits, and standardized testing request process ensure that every student is evaluated under the same rigorous and fair criteria, maintaining fidelity and integrity in AIG identification across the

*** Practice E**

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

Screening Notification: A screening letter is sent home to the parents/guardians of all 2nd-grade students no less than one week prior to the administration of the NNAT screener. The letter notifies families of the nature of the screener, the testing window, and provides an option to opt out of NNAT testing if desired. Student Score Reports are provided to parents/guardians in either digital or paper format based on preference, alongside the 4th Quarter report cards. Score results are also added to each student's test history one-pager for school records.

Referral and Identification Process: The AIG referral process and identification pathways are detailed on the district's gifted website, with common AIG nomination and identification questions addressed in an FAQ section. The AIG referral process and identification pathways are communicated to regular elementary education teachers annually through the AIG Services training module, the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) course, and meetings between elementary AIG specialists, grade-level PLCs, and school administration during key referral and identification windows to ensure clarity and consistency. Families of students nominated for AIG testing receive a Consent for Evaluation form, outlining the testing process. After testing, families receive the AIG-3 Notification of Results and Placement letter, which includes, scores from all tests administered for AIG identification and the final identification decision. Identified AIG students and parents receive copies of standardized district forms related to AIG services, along with a letter explaining the data used in the identification decision. These forms are available in Spanish for multilingual learner (ML) families and can be accessed in both digital and paper formats.

Parent Meetings & Communication: Parents/Guardians of students identified as gifted are invited to a meeting that provides an overview of Cabarrus County gifted education services. Translators are provided as needed to ensure families have full access to the information.

To strengthen this standard, CCS would like to explore methods for dissemination of screening, referral, and identification processes for our high school students.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools has consistently maintained accurate and comprehensive documentation regarding the AIG identification process and is committed to effectively communicating identification decisions and data with families. AIG documentation is reviewed with families at multiple points in the process and maintained at the school site in secure, designated locations by the school-based AIG point of contact or specialist. The documentation process differs slightly by school level, as outlined below:

Grades K-8

The AIG-1 Nomination Form is used to document all data gathered and analyzed to support an AIG identification decision. This includes test scores, observations, and additional qualifying information. Each time a student is nominated and assessed, a new AIG-1 form is completed and placed in the front of the individual student's AIG file, creating a cumulative record of nomination and performance data. Following testing and review by the school-based AIG committee (led by the AIG chair or specialist), a meeting is held with the family to review the student's data and the identification decision. During this initial parent meeting, families are provided:

- Copies of all aptitude and achievement performance reports from the assessment process,
- An explanation of how to interpret scores, along with recommendations for support.
- A copy of the AIG-3 Notification of Results and Placement letter (available in digital and paper formats),

These documents are discussed in detail, and signatures are collected from all appropriate parties to confirm receipt and understanding. A signed Consent to Serve form is required from parents/guardians before services begin. This form is housed in the AIG file and reviewed annually as part of the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) update. Students identified for AIG services are entered into the Student Information System (SIS) using a standardized AIG SIS Change of Service Level Form. A signed copy of this form is maintained in the back of the AIG file and submitted to the school data manager for processing. DEP progress for students receiving Strategies, Opportunities, Activities, Resources (SOAR) services is documented and reviewed throughout the year. Updates on progress are stored in the AIG file and follow the student in case of school transfer, ensuring that future schools have access to the student's historical AIG data and services. To ensure consistency across schools, all AIG chairs use a standardized Parent Meeting PowerPoint to explain AIG identification criteria, services, and procedures. This presentation is shared during beginning-of-year AIG parent meetings and distributed via email or ParentSquare for families unable to attend.

High School

Students who were previously identified in Cabarrus County Schools, were identified in another district, or present qualifying outside test results maintain their AIG identification. At this time, new high school students are not evaluated for AIG identification under the current district model. The AIG SIS form is completed by the AIG chair or counselor and submitted to the school's data manager for entry into the SIS. A copy of the form is placed in the student's AIG file, which is maintained in a secure location at the school. School counselors conduct annual academic reviews with each AIG student to support appropriate and challenging course selection aligned with their area(s) of giftedness.

Individual AIG student files are kept at the school site in a secured location managed by the AIG chair or designee. Files include all nomination forms, testing data, signed consent and SIS forms, and DEP records. Files are maintained throughout the student's time in the district and are transferred to the receiving school if the student changes schools within CCS. If a student withdraws or transfers out of the district, the file is sent to the central office and housed. At graduation, files are retained for up to three years.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) utilizes the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) to document and align gifted services with a student's identified strengths and needs. The DEP serves as a guiding and collaborative planning document to ensure that AIG students receive appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction. It provides a continuum of services, supports school transitions, and facilitates ongoing communication between teachers, students, and families. DEPs are reviewed annually with parents/guardians to ensure services remain appropriately matched and to make necessary adjustments based on student progress and evolving needs.

DEP Implementation Across Grade Levels

Grades K-8

A DEP is developed for each identified AIG student, specifying the areas of gifted identification, the differentiated services the student will receive, and instructional strategies and curricular modifications designed to provide enrichment, acceleration, and appropriate depth and complexity. Data used to determine appropriate services includes results from aptitude and achievement assessments, classroom performance, teacher observations, and student interests. This multi-source data informs the DEP to ensure a meaningful match to student strengths and academic needs. The DEP is collaboratively developed by the school-based AIG specialist or AIG point of contact in consultation with classroom teachers and reviewed with parents/guardians during an annual DEP meeting. During the annual DEP review parents/guardians are invited to attend a Parent Meeting where a copy of the updated DEP is provided. Signatures are collected from the family and staff to confirm review and agreement. The AIG specialist also meets with grade-level teachers to ensure that the documented strategies and services are embedded into daily instruction and core academic experiences.

High School

The DEP process in high school is integrated into course selection, career and academic planning to ensure that gifted students are appropriately challenged in their areas of identification. The DEP includes: Recommended Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), IB, and Early College coursework aligned to student strengths, opportunities for enrichment and mentorship in areas of interest, or college and career readiness planning to ensure students are on a pathway to postsecondary success. School counselors, in collaboration with the High School Counseling Coordinator and AIG District Specialist, oversee DEP reviews to ensure appropriate academic challenge and equitable access to rigorous coursework. High school students who were previously identified as AIG in CCS or in another district maintain their identification and services.

The DEP serves as a formal tool to guide and document:

- Instructional strategies used by classroom teachers to ensure challenge and differentiation in both the regular classroom and AIG resource services.
- Communication with families, who review and sign the DEP annually to stay informed about their child's gifted programming and opportunities for acceleration or enrichment.
- Monitoring and transition planning as students move between schools or grade bands, ensuring continuity in services.

AIG specialists, AIG points of contact, counselors, and administrators use the DEP to make informed decisions and adjustments that reflect student progress and changing needs.

Cabarrus County Schools remains committed to refining and enhancing the DEP process to ensure that all AIG students receive high-quality, individualized services that match their identified strengths and needs. As part of this effort, a standardized communication process is being developed for middle and high schools to improve consistency in DEP documentation and review. An audit process will be implemented to ensure fidelity in DEP development and service alignment. Efforts are ongoing to enhance high school gifted services, including structured mentorship, research opportunities, and expanded AP/IB/CCP/Honors pathways. By leveraging the DEP as a dynamic and collaborative planning tool, CCS ensures that gifted students receive differentiated services that evolve with their academic journey, equipping them with the skills and challenges necessary for continued success.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

While we have made some progress in the area of identification for high school students in partnership with student services, there is still work to be done. We do not currently identify new high schoolers as gifted. Students that are identified as gifted in our district previously, have outside testing results, or transfer in with the gifted identification all maintain that identification. High school students self-select their coursework, but we continue to be interested in developing more focused or direct services for high school students. There are pockets of this happening in the district through Early College and IB Seminar courses, but it is not currently consistent due to lack of personnel and master schedule constraints. We have developed an AP/Honors course recommendation letter for teachers and counselors that see potential in any student, however we would like to ensure that it is used with fidelity and that students, regardless of AIG identification, are encouraged and supported in the decision to take more rigorous courses when appropriate to their needs and goals.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG Student Files

* AIG-1 Nomination Form (Digital/Paper)

* Teacher Recommendation (Digital/Paper)
* AIG-2 Consent for Evaluation (Digital/Paper)
* AIG-3 Notification of Test Results (Digital/Paper)
* AIG-4 Invitation to Meet & Consent to Serve (Digital/Paper)
* Spanish Forms
* Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) Elementary, middle, and high school
* AIG NC Student Information Systems Form
* Math Double Acceleration Criteria document and identification paperwork
* AIG Nomination Spreadsheet
* LIFT Portfolios
* NNAT District data
* NNAT Parent Letter & Student Score Reports
* NNAT test records on cumulative one-pager
* Middle School Advanced Course Pathway Criteria document
* English Learner Progress Measure Guidance from NCDPI
* WIDA ACCESS Assessment Scores

* AIG Decision Making Tree Map for Referrals	
* Secondary Test Request Form	
* Kindergarten Observational Checklist	
* Universal Screener Parent Opt Out Form	
* AIG student file audit forms	
* Elementary AIG Handbook forms	
* Advanced Academics Canvas Course	
* AIG Services Training Module	
* AIG Services Parent Meeting presentation	
* CCS Gifted Education Webpage	
* Career Plans	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources		N/A	

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

Cabarrus County Schools (130) 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

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.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools strives to deliver AIG programs and services that accommodate the diverse academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and learning environments. Through a multi-dimensional support model, services are aligned to students' demonstrated strengths and formal identification in reading, math, or intellectual giftedness. Services are provided through collaboration among AIG specialists, classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators, and are continually refined to ensure equitable access to rigorous learning experiences.

Elementary School (Grades K-5)

While students are not formally identified in K-2, students who have met identification criteria will be served through LIFT (Learning to Identify & Foster Talent) services, as well as, differentiated instruction delivered by the general education teacher. LIFT provides a systematic enrichment experience aimed at fostering talent and critical thinking skills. Classroom teachers, in collaboration with the AIG specialist, will implement differentiated strategies to extend student's learning.

To support early talent development, CCS implements the LIFT program in grades K-2:

- In kindergarten, the top 10% of students (based on observation checklists from teachers and the AIG specialist) receive small group instruction.
- In first and second grades, all students experience enriched thinking routines through a push-in model; second graders demonstrating potential receive small group instruction.
- Future expansion aims to include all kindergarten students in early enrichment experiences.

_Students identified as academically and/or intellectually gifted in grades 3-5 receive services aligned to their identification area—reading, math, IG, or reading and math—through a combination of pull-out instruction and, beginning in 2025, expanded push-in support. Identified students work with a certified AIG teacher to extend and enrich their identified areas through instruction that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, and academic challenge.

Intellectually Gifted: The district recognizes that students identified as intellectually gifted may exhibit cognitive abilities that outpace their current academic performance. To support these learners, services will be provided through a consultative model. Under this model, the AIG Specialist will work in collaboration with classroom teachers to monitor student progress, recommend enrichment opportunities, and guide differentiated instructional practices.

This approach acknowledges that intellectual potential and academic achievement may not always align concurrently. The consultative model ensures that intellectually gifted students have access to appropriate intellectual stimulation while their academic development is supported within the general education environment. Student progress will be reviewed periodically to determine if additional services in academic areas is warranted.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted: Services are aligned to student's identification area- reading, math, or reading and math- through a combination of pull-out instruction, and expanded push-in support. Identified students work with a certified AIG specialist to extend and enrich their identified areas through instruction that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, and academic challenge.

Collaboration, Support, & Indirect Services:

- AIG specialists consult with classroom teachers to support flexible grouping, differentiated strategies, and enrichment planning.
- Specialists attend PLC meetings when possible and will begin attending regularly over the next three years as part of a broader coaching initiative.
- AIG specialists provide support through modeling lessons, co-planning, and resource development to foster a culture of advanced learning for all students.

AIG SOAR Curriculum

The SOAR curriculum supports students in:

- Developing original ideas and innovative solutions through creative thinking strategies (e.g., brainstorming, SCAMPER, question-storming),
- Engaging in real-world problem solving and rational decision-making
- Applying convergent and divergent thinking strategies
- Conducting independent research and creating meaningful products
- Building leadership, empathy, and self-awareness
- Strengthening communication through presentations and collaboration.

All elementary students demonstrating high achievement through the AIG screening process are considered for flexible enrichment and acceleration opportunities within the regular classroom. Cluster grouping of identified AIG students is recommended in regular education classrooms whenever possible.

Middle School

Middle school AIG services include advanced content pathways and structured placement based on identification and achievement data. Services are aligned to student strengths in math, reading, or both, and performance is monitored to ensure continued alignment.

Academic Programming Includes:

- Advanced Math Placement Services (AMPS): A compacted course sequence covering 6th–8th grade math content across two years, preparing students for Math 1 in 8th grade.
- Advanced Language Placement Services (ALPS): Focuses on analytical reading and writing, rhetorical analysis, and argument-based writing. Curriculum fosters independence, speed, and complexity of thought.
- Early High School Credit: Eligible students may take Math 1 in 8th grade.
- Double Acceleration in Math: Exceptional students may qualify to take Math 1 in 7th grade and Math 2 in 8th grade.
- Cluster Grouping: Encouraged at all middle schools to support collaboration and advanced instruction.

Collaboration & Support:

- AIG points of contact collaborate with general education teachers on student placement and service plans.
- Annual AIG parent meetings at each middle school provide an overview of the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), available services, and social-emotional supports specific to gifted adolescents.

High School

High school AIG services focus on aligning rigorous academic opportunities with student strengths, areas of identification, and future goals. Students self-select into challenging coursework through open enrollment, with support from counselors and teachers.

Academic and Intellectual Opportunities Include:

- Advanced Coursework: AP, Honors, International Baccalaureate (IB), and Career and College Promise (CCP) dual enrollment opportunities at local colleges.
- Program Choice: Students can apply to district options aligned with academic and intellectual interests (e.g., STEM, Early College, Fine Arts, CTE Academies).
- DEP Review: High school AIG students and school counselors annually collaborate to review the student's course selection in alignment with the student's DEP. This process guides course selections, enrichment opportunities, and postsecondary planning.

Collaboration & Support:

- Counselors, the High School Counseling Coordinator, and the District AIG Specialist collaborate to ensure that DEPs reflect student goals and access to rigorous learning.
- Each October, the district hosts a "Future's Fair" night for all students. During this time, the Advanced Academics Department will include a booth dedicated to informing students and families of advanced opportunities in high school to support planning and awareness of options.

Commitment to Growth and Collaboration

Cabarrus County Schools is building the infrastructure needed to scale differentiated services and coaching support across all levels. Over the next three years:

- AIG specialists will expand push-in services in 3-5th grade, collaborative coaching, and resource sharing across classrooms.
- The district will formalize cluster grouping practices and enhance integration with the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).
- Collaborative service planning will continue to include ML and EC personnel when supporting twice-exceptional students or multilingual learners.
- Ongoing professional development will ensure that all staff are equipped to meet the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners.

By embedding advanced learning opportunities into a collaborative and inclusive model, Cabarrus County Schools ensures that gifted students receive services that are rigorous and responsive to their individual strengths and 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.

In alignment with our comprehensive approach to serving gifted learners, Cabarrus County Schools implements a robust and intentional framework to support the social and emotional needs of AIG students across all grade levels (K-12) and learning environments. This framework is embedded in a collaborative, multi-tiered model and ensures that services are developmentally responsive, data-informed, and aligned with the whole child.

These supports are coordinated by the AIG Student Support Team, composed of classroom teachers, school counselors, AIG specialists, MTSS coordinators, administrators, and district-level staff. This team collaborates to plan, deliver, and monitor services that address the range of social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Elementary School (Grades K-5)
General Classroom Teacher

Classroom teachers receiving the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) are trained in core topics related to the social and emotional development of gifted students, including:

- Overexcitabilities
- Underachievement
- Perfectionism
- Asynchronous development
- Social development

- Unique learner profile

- All students participate in Positivity Project lessons, which foster character development and social-emotional learning.
- Teachers implement strategies aligned to DEPs when social-emotional needs are noted.

School Counselors

- Elementary counselors have access to The Survival Guide for Gifted Kids by Judy Galbraith, used to inform individual and group counseling sessions, as needed.
- Counselors provide small-group or individualized support as needed, and collaborate with AIG specialists to tailor services based on student needs.

AIG Specialists

As part of the district's commitment to supporting the whole gifted child, AIG Specialists create and implement lessons through the *nAviGate* curriculum. These lessons address the unique social and emotional needs of gifted learners by focusing on topics such as fostering a growth mindset, understanding how the brain grows and develops, building resiliency, exploring how gifted brains function differently, recognizing diverse gifted learner profiles, and reflecting on personal experiences to build future success. Through *nAviGate*, students develop the self-awareness, perseverance, and confidence needed to thrive both academically and personally.

Collaboration

- The district AIG specialist provides ongoing training to school counselors and MTSS leads on the unique characteristics and needs of gifted learners.
- Teachers and counselors work together to integrate social-emotional strategies into classroom environments and small-group interventions.

Middle School (Grades 6–8)

MTSS Coordinator & AIG District Specialist Collaboration

- Together, the MTSS coordinator and AIG district specialist developed a Student Support Plan for advanced pathway students experiencing academic or social-emotional challenges.
- Support plans are integrated into MTSS processes and may include escalation to Tier 2 or 3 supports as needed.

School Counselors

- Middle school counselors utilize The Gifted Teen Survival Guide to design targeted small-group sessions on topics such as identity development, stress management, and peer dynamics.
- Counselors also help students navigate the increasing rigor of middle school placement and transitions, including course acceleration and double math placement.

Classroom Teachers

- Teachers discuss student support through PLC meetings and collaborative planning to ensure alignment between academic rigor and social-emotional readiness.

High School (Grades 9–12)

School Counselors

- Each high school designates a counselor as the AIG Liaison, who supports AIG file management and serves as a point of collaboration with AIG Points of Contact.
- Counselors partner with students during academic advisement to discuss both course selection and any identified social-emotional needs.

Student Services Collaboration

- The district's High School Counseling Coordinator collaborates with the AIG District Specialist to support academic planning and transitions related to college and career pathways.
- Ongoing dialogue between counselors, AIG specialists, and administrators ensures that SEL considerations are factored into course advisement, workload management, and postsecondary planning.

District-Wide Supports

Professional Development & MTSS Integration

- The AIG District Specialist educates MTSS coordinators, counselors, and administrators to support early identification and response to social-emotional needs in gifted learners.
- SEL goals and supports are incorporated into the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) when appropriate, and shared with classroom teachers and counselors.

Panorama Data & Data Digs

- Panorama SEL data is analyzed by both district and school-based teams during district level Data Digs to identify patterns and emerging needs among AIG learners. These discussions influence professional learning, counseling practices, and MTSS interventions.

Parent & Community Engagement

- Cabarrus County Schools offers annual SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) parent groups led by trained facilitators. These groups provide resources, guided discussions, and networking opportunities for families of gifted learners. The number of sessions varies each year based on family interest and available budget.

Collaborative Structures

- Existing team structures such as grade-level PLCs, MTSS meetings, and district department meetings (e.g., Student Services, Multilingual Learners, Exceptional Children) are used to share tools, analyze data, and co-develop strategies to meet the social-emotional needs of AIG students.

Cabarrus County Schools remains committed to the continuous improvement of social and emotional programming for gifted students. By leveraging multi-disciplinary collaboration, data-informed planning, and responsive interventions, we ensure that the holistic development of AIG students is a priority throughout their academic journey.

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*** Practice C**

Integrates and connects the AIG program and services with the district's priorities and resources through policy and practice.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) intentionally aligns its Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) program with district strategic priorities and resources through collaborative practices, policy integration, and data-driven instructional models. The AIG program is a key lever in advancing the district's commitment to access, opportunity, academic growth, and rigorous personalized learning opportunities for all students.

The CCS AIG program is directly aligned with the district's Destination 2025 strategic plan and its extension, Destination 2027, which emphasize:

- High levels of academic achievement and growth,
- Expanding access to advanced instruction,
- Whole-child development and wellness,
- Strong, personalized teaching and learning experiences.

Through enrichment, acceleration, curriculum compacting, and advanced coursework, the AIG program supports rigorous instruction aligned to the district's Common Instructional Framework Guides for both elementary and secondary schools. These guides outline expectations for flexible grouping, independent learning, and instructional design tailored to student readiness levels.

AIG strategies, including talent development, early identification, and support for underrepresented populations, are embedded in instructional planning, teacher development, and student services—ensuring alignment with district goals.

CCS allocates both local and state resources to ensure effective implementation of the AIG program, including:

- Certified AIG specialists and points of contact at each school,
- Instructional and enrichment materials such as the SOAR curriculum and LIFT program resources,
- Ongoing professional development, including the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) and Honors Coursework Onboarding,
- Access to district-wide assessment tools and instructional platforms, such as Mastery Connect and Panorama for SEL needs,
- Centralized funding for identification testing, family engagement efforts, and staff training.

A systematic structure ensures every school receives access to personnel, materials, and professional learning. The district AIG team monitors resource use, supports implementation fidelity, and collaborates with building leaders to adjust based on student need.

The needs of AIG students are addressed through clear district policies and embedded practices:

- Automatic enrollment in advanced courses (in compliance with HB 986 for Math) for students scoring at or above the 80th percentile on EOG assessments,
- Cluster grouping of gifted students in elementary and middle school classrooms to provide appropriate academic challenge,

- On-ramp courses to support students entering accelerated pathways after initial placement windows,
- Flexible grouping models informed by common formative and benchmark assessments analyzed through PLCs.

The AIG program is also reviewed as part of the district's policy cycle to ensure that services for twice-exceptional (2e) and multilingual learners are effective, and aligned to best practices. A task force will be convened during this plan cycle to evaluate and recommend updated policy language for these populations.

Leadership Engagement and Representation

AIG is embedded in the district's leadership structures to ensure ongoing visibility and advocacy:

- The Advanced Academics Coordinator is a member of the Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Team. The District AIG Specialist and the Advanced Academics Coordinator attend a variety of department level meetings outside of curriculum and instruction.
- AIG is a recurring topic during leveled Data Digs, incorporating strategies and best practices for gifted learners on an as-needed basis as identified through the data.
- AIG specialists when needed are integrated into MTSS teaming structures at the school level to ensure advanced learners are represented in conversations about tiered supports and enrichment needs.

Ongoing Commitment

Cabarrus County Schools remains committed to:

- Ensuring AIG services are resourced and fully integrated into instructional design and school operations,
- Regularly reviewing local and board policies to ensure alignment with state guidance and best practices,
- Representing gifted learners in strategic planning, school improvement efforts, and leadership conversations,
- Expanding policies and supports for 2e students and underrepresented gifted populations.

By embedding the AIG program into district policies, instructional frameworks, and leadership teams, CCS ensures that gifted learners are supported by a system designed for excellence and student-centered growth.

*** Practice D**

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

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) implements intentional, research-based grouping strategies designed to meet the needs of AIG and other advanced learners. Grouping practices are guided by district expectations outlined in the Common Instructional Framework Guides for both elementary and secondary schools. These frameworks emphasize differentiated instruction through small-groups and provide specific guidance for flexible grouping and independent learning.

Beginning-of-Year Grouping Procedures

Student grouping decisions are initiated before the school year begins using a combination of:

- End-of-year benchmark and EOG data from the prior school year,
- AIG identification data and service plans (DEPs),
- Teacher input and classroom performance data,
- Enrollment in ALPS, and AMPS programming based on demonstrated readiness.

Elementary and middle school administrators and AIG specialists work together during scheduling to place identified and advanced learners in appropriate groupings, including cluster groups when possible. Middle school placement into advanced math and language arts courses is determined based on EOG performance and eligibility criteria outlined in House Bill 986.

Flexible Grouping Procedures During the School Year

Throughout the school year, grouping is dynamic and adjusted in response to student growth. Districtwide practices include:

- Quarterly benchmark assessments and common formative assessments used to evaluate current performance and regroup students for both core instruction and enrichment.
- Grade-level and subject-area PLCs review performance data to ensure instructional groupings reflect current learning needs. Teachers use data from platforms like Mastery Connect to identify students demonstrating mastery and plan for enrichment or compacted instruction.
- In elementary schools an intervention and enrichment block allows teachers to instruct students based on readiness as evidenced by common assessments and teacher observation. The LIFT intervention program also uses fluid, small-group structures to nurture high-level thinking skills.
- In middle school, students may shift into advanced courses from year to year, as supported by data, using an onboarding course model that addresses prerequisite content.

The District AIG Specialist and school-based AIG staff provide consultation and training on grouping strategies. This includes:

- Supporting school administrators with scheduling AIG cluster groups,
- Providing example grouping structures and service delivery models,
- Collaborating with teachers on lesson planning and pacing adjustments for high-ability groups.
- Providing professional development on strategies and best practices for gifted learners.

Integration with MTSS and School Schedules

Grouping practices are supported through existing Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) structures. At most schools, Intervention/Enrichment (I/E) blocks are scheduled into the master calendar to provide additional opportunities for:

- Enrichment and acceleration outside of core classroom instruction,
- Targeted skill development for students with asynchronous learning profiles,

- AIG service delivery aligned to students' DEPs.

MTSS teams consider not only academic data, but also attendance, behavior, and social-emotional observations when forming flexible groups. AIG specialists are increasingly participating in school-based MTSS team meetings to ensure that the needs of advanced learners are part of the holistic support planning process.

District Oversight and Review

After each major benchmark assessment, CCS hosts district-wide Data Digs, where:

- AIG subgroup achievement and growth data are reviewed,
- Schools receive feedback and recommendations from the District AIG Specialist,
- Decisions are made about targeted support, regrouping strategies, and enrichment needs.

Ongoing collaboration between the AIG department and school leadership teams ensures that grouping procedures remain responsive, effective, and aligned to student performance.

*** 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.

The Cabarrus County Schools AIG Department is committed to ensuring that all educators and staff understand the delivery of differentiated services, the local AIG plan and programming, and state legislation related to gifted education. To achieve this, the AIG team uses multiple structures and communication platforms tailored to meet the needs of different stakeholder groups, including teachers, school administrators, and support personnel.

District-Level Communication and Leadership Integration

The Advanced Academics Coordinator and District AIG Specialist participate regularly in:

- Cabarrus County Schools K–12 administrator meetings
- Department leadership meetings, including Curriculum & Instruction and Student Services
- Gifted and Advanced Learning working groups and district data digs

These meetings ensure consistent messaging and visibility of AIG program expectations, updates, and service delivery requirements.

Informing Stakeholders about AIG Services, the Local Plan, and Regulations

To support stakeholder understanding, Cabarrus County Schools provides the following structures:

Advanced Academics Webpage

This resource includes:

- The full Local AIG Plan for transparency and reference
- A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section
- Curated resources and links for families
- State guidance and legislation related to gifted education

Annual AIG Program Overview

Each year, the AIG Department shares a districtwide AIG Overview Presentation, which includes:

- A summary of referral, screening, and identification procedures
- Service delivery models for each grade span
- Expectations for Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) collaboration
- Teacher responsibilities for providing instruction aligned to a student's AIG area of identification
- Key updates to state or local policy and regulations

This presentation is used as a standard resource across schools and available to all staff on the internal site.

Stakeholder-Specific Communication Tools

- AIG Specialist Handbook: Access to the Google folder that houses the documents for the handbook is provided at the beginning of each school year to school-based AIG leads, with instructions on identification, documentation, and service expectations.
- Monthly AIG Specialist Newsletters: Sent by the District AIG Specialist, including reminders, best practices, timelines, and updates.
- CCS Weekly Leadership Updates: District leadership receives timely announcements and updates through internal communication channels related to AIG and Advanced Academics.

Site-Level Engagement and Professional Collaboration

Each school engages in site-specific AIG implementation supported by AIG specialists and school-based AIG chairpersons. Key practices include:

- School-Level AIG Student Rosters: Distributed at the start of the year to AIG chairs, administrators, and support staff to ensure visibility of identified students and their service areas.

- DEP Collaboration: AIG Specialists co-develop Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) with classroom teachers. This process builds shared ownership of instructional differentiation and ensures clear communication of the student's service plan.
- School-Based Professional Development and Meetings: AIG specialists host back-to-school meetings, faculty presentations, or grade-level team check-ins to introduce or reinforce information about the AIG program, differentiation expectations, and DEP guidance.
- Participation in PLCs: AIG Specialists attend grade-level or content-area PLC meetings to support planning for instruction aligned with the needs of gifted students.

Integration with MTSS and Support Structures

Information about AIG services and differentiated instruction is also shared through:

- MTSS meetings, where AIG students are considered for intervention and enrichment placements
- Collaborative teaming structures, including instructional coaching and problem-solving teams

School counselors, instructional coaches, and administrators receive information through these collaborative groups to ensure they are equipped to support AIG students throughout the year.

Ongoing Support and Monitoring

The AIG Department continues to refine communication processes to ensure accurate, timely, and consistent messaging. This includes:

- Expanding on-demand resources like recorded overviews, handouts, and short video tutorials for new staff
- Incorporating AIG-related content into beginning-of-year onboarding for educators
- Providing AIG chairs and specialists with dedicated time during district meetings to clarify service expectations and problem-solve school-based needs

Through these layered communication strategies, all school personnel are equipped with the tools and knowledge needed to support the successful delivery of AIG services and to uphold state and local gifted education policy and practice.

*** Practice F**

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

Cabarrus County Schools implements a structured communication plan to ensure smooth transitions for AIG students from grade to grade, school to school, and from other districts. This communication plan includes teacher collaboration, parent communication, digital and physical file management, and student support at key transition points to support the effective continuation of gifted services throughout the K–12 continuum.

Districtwide AIG Student Data and Communication Infrastructure

A secure, centralized database is maintained by the Gifted Education Department and each school, housing student names and identification areas. This allows school-based AIG specialists, teachers, counselors, and administrators to access information needed for service planning, classroom differentiation, and

student scheduling.

Each year, school teams receive:

- Updated AIG rosters by identification area,
- Student service details through the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) process,
- Transfer protocols for incoming or outgoing students, and
- Annual professional development on using the database and managing AIG transitions.

Grade-Level Transitions Within Schools

- In elementary schools, AIG specialists meet with 1st and 2nd grade teachers to guide LIFT portfolio development. These portfolios support nominations and provide early data on potential gifted learners. As students progress to 3rd grade, AIG specialists share student identification data and work with classroom teachers to guide differentiation based on student strengths.
- In middle and high schools, transition planning is integrated into end-of-year team meetings. Teachers of rising grade levels are provided with student lists, access to DEPs, and opportunities to review performance trends, enrichment needs, and instructional history.

AIG specialists and/or school-based AIG contacts participate in PLC meetings where they review student data, plan differentiation strategies, and support teachers in adapting services based on student progress.

School-to-School Transitions

Elementary to Middle School:

- 5th grade- AIG specialists share AIG files, service recommendations, social-emotional concerns, and placement suggestions with middle school AIG points of contact.
- During the county-wide AIG exchange, AIG files are formally transferred to receiving middle schools.
- Transition meetings and orientation sessions provide 6th grade teams with student-level information for scheduling and support planning.
- The CCS Accountability department provides a transition spreadsheet to identify students who qualify for services as a method to cross-reference and ensure enrollment in the appropriate opportunities.

Middle to High School:

- At the end of 8th grade, AIG files are delivered to high school AIG contacts.
- AIG points of contact and high school counselors collaborate to advise rising 9th graders on scheduling courses that reflect their area(s) of identification and interest.
- Students are encouraged to enroll in Honors, AP, IB, or dual enrollment courses aligned with their strengths.

Transfers

In-District Transfers:

- AIG files are sent directly to the receiving school's AIG chair. Services continue without interruption based on the student's DEP.

Out-of-District Transfers:

- Student records are reviewed by the school's AIG Program Team. If the student meets CCS AIG criteria, services begin immediately.
- If additional evidence is needed, the student receives classroom differentiation with reassessment opportunities.

Military Family Transfers:

- Per state guidelines, identifications for military-connected students are honored immediately. Services begin as soon as the school is notified and records are confirmed.

Outgoing Transfers:

- Records are archived centrally at the Education Center and sent to the receiving district upon request.

Structured Transition Meetings and Documentation Practices

- Countywide file exchanges take place at the end of 5th and 8th grades to ensure smooth transitions.
- Middle and high school AIG staff conduct audits of student files at the beginning of the school year to confirm enrollment and service plans.
- Any discrepancies or missing files are recorded in a shared document and resolved collaboratively between schools.

Parent Engagement in Transitions

- Parents of rising 6th graders are invited to attend transition meetings or informational sessions.
- For rising 9th graders, one-pagers that explain the services available at the next level and how placement decisions are made will be shared via ParentSquare.
- Communication includes printed and digital materials outlining the AIG service model and next steps.

Enhancements for Communication and Continuity.

- Digital platforms (e.g., Google Drive) are used to provide real-time access to AIG rosters, file transfer logs, and student service data.
- Annual professional development sessions review transition expectations, documentation protocols, and communication strategies.

- AIG specialists attend site-based team meetings to monitor student progress and offer insights into how services should evolve in the next grade band.
- Through consistent communication between schools, departments, and families, Cabarrus County Schools ensures a seamless and supportive transition process for AIG students. By maintaining updated student records, offering structured handoffs, and actively engaging stakeholders, CCS provides a comprehensive K–12 pathway that sustains and adapts gifted services throughout each student’s academic journey.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) is committed to providing a variety of acceleration opportunities to meet the needs of gifted learners. Acceleration options include compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM), dual enrollment, subject acceleration, and grade acceleration. These opportunities are designed to challenge advanced learners appropriately while ensuring academic and social-emotional readiness.

Compacted Curriculum

Curriculum compacting is implemented across middle school math and language arts classes to eliminate redundancy in instruction for students who demonstrate mastery of grade-level standards. Through pre-assessment in core subjects such as mathematics and ELA, teachers identify content that students have already mastered. In response, instruction is adjusted to allow for acceleration, enrichment, or deeper learning. AIG specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to support planning, documentation, and differentiation. Compacted curriculum may take the form of flexible grouping, replacement content, cross-curricular projects, or independent study. All compacting decisions are recorded in Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) or individual student support plans.

Early Admission to Kindergarten

Cabarrus County Schools follow North Carolina’s guidelines for Early Admission to Kindergarten. Children who have reached their fourth birthday by April 16th may be considered for early entry if they demonstrate extraordinary academic and intellectual ability and maturity. Eligibility criteria include:

- 98th percentile score on a nationally normed intelligence test.
- 98th percentile score on an achievement test in reading or math.
- Portfolio of outstanding academic work.
- Demonstration of social and developmental maturity through recommendation letters and behavioral assessments.
- Principal and educator committee review to assess readiness.

Families interested in early kindergarten admission must submit all required documentation within the first 30 calendar days of the school year. More information on the application process is available through CCS.

Acceleration

Grade Acceleration:

Grade acceleration decisions are made carefully, using research-based guidelines to determine whether whole-grade advancement is in the best interest of the student. Schools may follow one of the following procedures:

- Administrative Decision: The school administrator may approve acceleration based on all available data and in the best interest of the student.
- Formal Acceleration Assessment: Schools may utilize the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) to guide decision-making, considering factors such as:
 - 99th percentile composite score on standardized aptitude and achievement tests (reading and math).
 - Portfolio demonstrating mastery in core subjects.
 - Social and emotional maturity as indicated by a formal assessment.
 - Independent learning skills and strong motivation.
 - Teacher, administrator, AIG Program Team, and parent support.

Math Acceleration Pathways

Students demonstrating exceptional mathematical ability have access to the Advanced Math Placement Course Track.

Advanced Math Placement Track:

- 6th Grade: 6th and 7th Grade Advanced Math Placement Course (AMPS)
- 7th Grade: 7th and 8th Grade Advanced Math Placement Course (AMPS)
- 8th Grade: NC Math 1 (High School Credit)

Students demonstrating a highly gifted mathematical ability have access to the CCS Math Double Acceleration Track.

Math Double Acceleration Track:

- 6th Grade: 7th Grade Advanced Math Placement Course
- 7th Grade: NC Math 1 (High School Credit)
- 8th Grade: NC Math 2 (High School Credit)

Students demonstrating exceptional English Language ability have access to the CCS Advanced Language Placement (ALPS) Track.

ALPS (Advanced Language Placement) Track:

6th-8th grade NCSCOS with deeper content knowledge and complexity through Advanced Curriculum From Vanderbilt University's Programs for Talented Youth.

Alternative Acceleration Opportunities:

In 8th grade, students at select schools may take compacted coursework including high school-level World Language 1.

Digital learning platforms such as iReady, CANVAS, and Blended Learning through the Cabarrus County Virtual School support personalized acceleration opportunities.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

CCS offers two Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) windows each academic year, in the fall and spring. Middle and high school counselors receive training to guide students and families through the CDM process, serving as liaisons between students, families, and the Gifted Education Department. CDM consists of two phases:

Phase 1: Students must demonstrate mastery through a state-approved assessment.

Phase 2: Students must complete a performance-based assessment or project that further demonstrates mastery of the content.

Successful completion of both phases results in course credit without traditional seat time, allowing students to advance to higher-level coursework.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment provides eligible high school students with the opportunity to take college-level courses through our partnership with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC) as a part of the North Carolina Career & College Promise (CCP) program. This pathway enables students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously.

- Dual Enrollment Process and Guidelines:
- Eligibility Requirements: Students must meet the prerequisites set by the partnering institution, including a 2.8 minimum GPA requirement and course prerequisites.
- Application and Enrollment: Students work with their high school counselors to apply, select courses, and complete enrollment procedures.
- Credit Transfer and Impact on GPA: Students should consult with counselors regarding how dual enrollment courses align with their future goals, Career Development Plans, high school graduation requirements and impact on GPA.
- Logistics and Transportation: Some courses are available online, while others require travel to a college campus.

Continued Monitoring: Students enrolled in college courses receive guidance from their high school counselors to ensure they are meeting academic expectations and balancing their course loads effectively

Counselor Guidance for Early Graduation

High school counselors play a crucial role in advising students on pathways for early graduation. Under policy GRAD-006, students who wish to accelerate their high school experience may work with counselors to develop a graduation plan that meets all state and district requirements. Considerations for early graduation include:

- Meeting all course credit requirements.
- Planning for post-secondary goals (college, career, or military pathways).
- Ensuring readiness for independent learning beyond high school.
- Aligning coursework with future academic and career plans.

By providing these acceleration opportunities, Cabarrus County Schools ensures that gifted students are appropriately challenged and supported in their academic growth. Families are encouraged to consult with school counselors and the AIG Department for further information and guidance regarding

acceleration pathways.

*** Practice H**

Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students with early intervention and talent development opportunities through purposeful and intentional programming.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to cultivating and developing the potential of young learners (K-3) through purposeful and intentional programming. Our early intervention and talent development model, LIFT (Learning Interventions For Talented), is designed to identify, nurture, and expand the potential of all students, including those with emerging or untapped strengths. Through research-based curriculum, collaborative planning, and differentiated instructional strategies, our district supports both academic and social-emotional growth to prepare students for future success in advanced learning pathways.

LIFT Program for Grades 1 and 2

The LIFT program provides a structured and tiered enrichment experience:

- Grade 1: Gifted education specialists deliver whole-class enrichment for 11 weeks using the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum. These lessons emphasize critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving.
- Grade 2: AIG specialists expand support with whole-class and small group instruction for 13 weeks. These sessions deepen students' cognitive engagement and allow for more individualized extension.

The goal of LIFT is to recognize and support emerging potential, particularly among students who may not yet meet criteria for formal gifted identification, but show promise across a range of thinking modalities.

Student Observation and Portfolio Development:

Throughout LIFT, both classroom teachers and AIG specialists engage in ongoing observation of students using the PETS behavior checklist. Students are observed across a variety of learning settings—including whole-group lessons, small-group work, independent tasks, and collaborative activities—to allow for multiple avenues for gifted behaviors to emerge.

- Portfolios are collaboratively developed over the two-year period to document evidence of advanced thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- These portfolios serve as formative tools to guide instructional planning and support future AIG nominations in Grade 3.
- In addition to academic potential, teachers monitor and support students' social-emotional readiness, including perseverance, curiosity, flexibility in thinking, and leadership during collaborative learning.

Recognizing that gifted potential can manifest as early as kindergarten, CCS includes a targeted enrichment model for our youngest learners:

- During the third quarter AIG specialists observe students within natural classroom routines, collaborating with kindergarten teachers to identify early indicators of advanced potential.
- Kindergarten teachers receive a range of evidence-based resources to implement during core instruction, including:
 - Kindergarten PETS

- CANVAS Math Differentiation Course

- Jacob's Ladder
- Junior Great Books

- In the fourth quarter, AIG specialists provide small-group instruction to students in the top 10% as based by observational checklists, who demonstrate consistent indicators of advanced thinking or problem-solving.

These early interventions help bridge opportunity gaps by recognizing and developing talent before formal identification processes begin.

Targeted Small-Group Instruction:

During 2nd grade, AIG specialists begin working with small groups of students who have consistently demonstrated advanced thinking skills.

These small-group lessons serve to further develop students' cognitive abilities and provide supporting evidence for the AIG nomination process in 3rd grade.

The CCS approach to early intervention reflects a talent development philosophy that:

- Values the potential of all students, including those whose abilities may not yet be fully visible.
- Emphasizes intentional observation environments to uncover a variety of strengths.
- Fosters creativity, curiosity, collaboration, and leadership through engagement with complex tasks and discourse.
- Includes students from all backgrounds and learning profiles, ensuring access to advanced learning opportunities for all.

Our district's commitment to early talent development lays the groundwork for lifelong learning, ensuring every student has the opportunity to be recognized, supported, and challenged according to their potential.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to expanding access to advanced learning opportunities and implementing purposeful talent development practices across the 4–12 continuum. Our district believes all students should have the opportunity to engage in rigorous academic environments that cultivate their strengths and prepare them for future success.

The district maintains an open enrollment policy for Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses, allowing any high school student to enroll in challenging coursework, regardless of prior identification or placement. This approach ensures students are not limited by past experiences and encourages broader participation in advanced academic opportunities.

To support student and family engagement with these opportunities, school counselors provide tools such as the AP Potential letter, a Career Development Plan, and a comprehensive course catalog outlining rigorous academic offerings.

Cabarrus County Schools also offers three Early College High Schools, where students—particularly those who may be the first in their families to attend college—can earn both a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit or an associate degree at no cost. Additional Program Choice offerings at

the high school level include International Baccalaureate (IB), STEM academies, and themed academies in areas such as Health Sciences, Aviation, and Financial Technology.

Through the Career and College Promise (CCP) program, eligible students may earn tuition-free college credits during high school, further expanding college and career readiness.

Advanced Pathways in Middle School

In middle school, students may qualify for Advanced Math or Advanced Language Arts by scoring at or above the 80th percentile on their respective End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments. These placements are based on clearly defined, research-supported criteria and are available to all students who meet performance benchmarks.

Students may also participate in Program Choice offerings at the middle school level, including IB, STEM, Dual Language Immersion, and the School of Fine Arts, providing diverse access points to enriched academic and creative opportunities.

To support student and family engagement with these opportunities, school counselors assist students with a Career Development Plan outlining rigorous academic offerings.

Talent Development in Elementary Grades

In the early grades, the district's LIFT (Learning to Identify & Foster Talent) program provides foundational enrichment through whole-class instruction in Grades 1 and 2. Lessons delivered by AIG specialists are based on the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) framework, which fosters development in convergent, divergent, visual/spatial, and evaluative thinking.

Students who demonstrate strong potential during these lessons are selected for small-group enrichment, allowing further development of critical and creative thinking. AIG specialists also collaborate with classroom teachers to extend enrichment opportunities into core instruction and build capacity for recognizing student strengths.

Elementary students have access to Program Choice schools, including IB, STEM, Dual Language Immersion, and Fine Arts, further supporting talent development from an early age.

Identification and Flexible Service Pathways

To recognize a wide range of advanced learners, the district employs multiple entry points and assessment options:

- Universal screening in Grade 2 using the NNAT provides early identification of students with strong nonverbal reasoning, which is especially helpful for students whose strengths may not be fully visible through traditional classroom performance.
- CogAT partial composite scores offer additional insight into students' academic potential.
- Students achieving a 98-99th percentile composite score on an aptitude test automatically qualify for identification.
- Twice-exceptional (2e) students may qualify based on subtest strengths in specific areas, ensuring access to support and challenge across learning profiles.

AIG specialists collaborate with teachers and families to develop Individual Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs) that support flexible service delivery, especially for students who benefit from nontraditional learning pathways.

Data Use and Shaping Mindsets

District teams regularly review disaggregated student data, including referral, assessment, and service participation trends. These data reviews inform decisions about professional development, identification practices, and program access. For example:

After reviewing AIG referral patterns across schools, school teams implemented professional learning to expand teacher understanding of student potential beyond conventional achievement indicators.

By examining trends, teams are better equipped to design outreach, instructional strategies, and policies that reflect the full spectrum of student strengths. These conversations help shape more inclusive mindsets among teachers, administrators, and families, reinforcing the belief that many students can benefit from advanced learning opportunities with the right support in place.

Changing Mindsets to Support Gifted Learners through Belonging, Consistency, and Coherency

Cabarrus County Schools is aligning its instructional vision with the pillars of Belonging, Consistency, and Coherency, as defined by TNTP's The Opportunity Makers. These principles are not only guiding district-level initiatives but are also being woven into the daily practices of school leaders as they provide feedback during instructional walkthroughs. Leaders are learning to frame their coaching around these pillars—ensuring that every student experiences classrooms where they feel valued, where expectations are reliably upheld, and where learning experiences make sense across subjects and grade levels.

This framework is especially powerful when applied to the needs of gifted learners, who often thrive in environments where their strengths are recognized and nurtured. By using Belonging as a lens, educators are rethinking how advanced learners are invited into enriched experiences—not only those who already perform at the top, but also those who may demonstrate potential in nontraditional ways. Consistency encourages schools to apply clear and fair pathways for accessing advanced learning opportunities, reducing variability in identification practices that may unintentionally exclude capable students. Coherency ensures that data systems like Mastery Connect, the Panorama Success Dashboard, and iReady are not used in isolation, but as part of a unified approach to understanding and supporting student growth.

As these tools are integrated with the three pillars, they help educators recognize patterns in student engagement, progress, and readiness. This, in turn, supports a shift in mindset: from seeing giftedness as fixed or rare to understanding it as something that can emerge and develop in many learners when the right conditions are in place. By tying everyday practices to this shared vision, schools are fostering a culture where all students—including those with high potential—can experience challenging, meaningful learning that affirms their capabilities and aspirations.

Cabarrus County Schools is actively working to build readiness for advanced learning through early exposure and structured transitions. Key efforts include:

- Whole-class enrichment (LIFT) in Grades 1 and 2 to introduce higher-order thinking skills.
- Middle School Advanced Math Onboarding courses are offered asynchronously over the summer for students who meet the Advanced Math Legislation Criteria and have not yet been exposed to advanced math content.

These frontloading efforts help students enter new academic stages with the confidence and preparation needed to succeed in rigorous learning environments.

Over the next three years the CCS AIG department would like to work towards expanding frontloading opportunities, particularly at key transition periods.

Cross-Departmental Collaboration

The district fosters strong collaboration between AIG specialists, general education teachers, EC teachers, ML staff, and other key student services personnel to identify and support student strengths across contexts. Service options are shared intentionally with these teams to ensure advanced learning opportunities are accessible and responsive to needs of all learners.

Cabarrus County Schools promotes a learning culture where all students are encouraged to pursue excellence and engage in challenging academic experiences. Through intentional policies, data-informed practices, early talent development, and thoughtful planning across departments, the district ensures that advanced learning pathways are accessible, purposeful, and responsive to student strengths.

*** Practice J**

Enhances and further develops the talents and interests of AIG students through extra-curricular programming during and outside of the school day.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to providing AIG students with multiple opportunities that extend beyond the traditional classroom setting, fostering their intellectual curiosity, creativity, and leadership potential. These opportunities support students' academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development and are available during and outside of the school day. Programming varies by school and is influenced by annual budget allocations and staffing.

To support families and students in identifying enrichment opportunities, the district maintains an online Gifted Education resource hub featuring a curated list of enrichment programs, including summer camps and other experiences tailored for advanced learners. Program descriptions and access information are publicly available and regularly updated. AIG teachers share opportunities with families through newsletters, email, and school-based communications via Parent Square, while middle and high school students receive updates via school social media, counselor meetings, and enrichment coordinators.

Cabarrus County Schools provides enrichment through the following programs, organized by grade span:

Elementary_(K-5)

- Academic Competitions: Participation in Young Authors, Math Olympiad, Science Olympiad, Vex Robotics, Battle of the Books, and Spelling Bee.
- Elementary Club Days: Club experiences during school hours, often led in partnership with high school student mentors.
- Arts Programs: Partnerships with the local Arts Council provide access to artist residencies and live performances. Many schools offer drama performance opportunities for students wishing to pursue arts.
- Showcase Events: Many schools host Family STEM Nights, Art Shows, or Author Celebrations where students present work and projects.

Middle School_(6-8)

- Academic & Interest-Based Clubs: Schools offer clubs such as coding, debate, creative writing, and environmental science. Participation in Vex Robotics, Battle of the Books, and Spelling Bee.
- Service Learning Projects: Students engage in purposeful civic initiatives that blend academic learning with community engagement.
- STEM and Robotics Clubs: VEX Robotics and technology-based clubs support design thinking and engineering skills.
- Field Experiences: Guest speakers, virtual field trips, and experiential learning deepen content understanding.

High School (9–12)

- Advanced Course Extensions: AP Seminar, research opportunities, and academic symposiums allow students to explore topics deeply.
- Career-Based Clubs: Access to entrepreneurship, finance, and aviation clubs tied to Program Choice offerings.
- Academic Competitions: Participation in regional and national events in math, science, humanities, and business.
- Internships & Mentorships: Some schools facilitate interest-aligned internships or shadowing opportunities with community partners.
- Leadership & Service Programs: Students take part in leadership councils, service clubs, and volunteer initiatives to build skills in communication, collaboration, and civic responsibility.

Cabarrus County Schools also partners with community organizations to expand enrichment access and offer guest speaker series, artist collaborations, and summer programs that challenge and inspire AIG students. These programs allow students to showcase their learning and passions, building confidence and community connection.

By providing authentic, interest-driven, and developmentally appropriate enrichment opportunities, our district strengthens its commitment to nurturing the whole child and enhancing the educational journey of gifted learners.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To strengthen our district's implementation of Standard 2, we aim to expand and enhance the array of services available to gifted learners through deeper collaboration, targeted talent development, and more intentional academic and social-emotional support structures.

While we have begun expanding talent development efforts in kindergarten, our next goal is to extend frontloading opportunities beyond third grade. We plan to develop and implement district-wide enrichment lessons that emphasize critical thinking, depth and complexity, and problem-solving to provide advanced learning experiences for all students. These lessons will be delivered within the core classroom environment to support early access to rigorous content prior to formal identification.

To broaden the reach of gifted services, AIG Specialists will partner with the Multilingual Learner (ML) and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) departments. This collaboration will help embed talent development and enrichment strategies into general instructional practices and existing support structures, allowing more students to benefit from advanced learning opportunities.

In addition, we plan to work closely with Student Services and MTSS teams to integrate gifted-specific social and emotional learning (SEL) lessons into middle and high school settings. These lessons will address the unique needs of gifted adolescents—such as perfectionism, asynchronous development, and identity formation—and ensure students receive meaningful support as they grow academically and emotionally.

These efforts reflect our commitment to delivering a comprehensive, K–12 continuum of gifted services that meet the diverse academic and social-emotional needs of our gifted and advanced learners.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* SOAR AIG Curriculum
* LIFT Curriculum
* Kindergarten observational checklist
* Continuum of services document
* PLC Meeting agendas
* Individualized Differentiation Education Plans
* K-12 Differentiation Education Plans
* Middle and High School Advanced Course Progressions
* Middle School Advanced Course Brochure
* 6th-8th AMPS curriculum
* Middle School Advanced course Onboarding Canvas Course
* Middle School Advanced Course Onboarding Course Letter & Consent
* CCS Program Choice Website
* AIG Services Annual Parent Meeting Slides
* CCS Future's Fair Flyer
* AIG Headcounts

* Gifted Local Endorsement Course (GLEE) website and Canvas Courses
* Positivity Project Curriculum
* Panorama Data
* Advanced Learner Support Plan
* SENG Website and group registration information
* Benchmark Data
* AIG ES/MS Transition Spreadsheets
* Books: The Gifted Teen Survival Guide by Judy Galbraith and Jim Delisle and The Survival Guide for Gifted Kids by Judy Gailbraith
* Book: Collaboration, Coteaching, and Coaching in Gifted Education by Emily Mofield & Vicki Phelps
* CCS Strategic Plan: Destination 2025 & Destination 2027
* CCS Common Instructional Framework
* Honors Coursework Onboarding Course
* CCS AIG Webpage
* CCS Weekly Leadership Updates
* Gifted Gazette- Monthly AIG Specialist Newsletters
* CCS AIG Shared Drive

* Early Entry to Kindergarten Packet for Parents and Principals	
* CCS Guidelines for Grade Acceleration	
* IOWA Acceleration scale	
* Junior Great Books	
* Jacob's Ladder	

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

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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.

*** 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.

In Cabarrus County Schools, students are placed in the most appropriate educational environment based on their intellectual abilities. Our differentiated curriculum is designed to provide greater depth and complexity than the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and is implemented based on each student's level of service. Grade acceleration remains an option for students who require extensive differentiation.

Elementary Enrichment, Extension, and Future Vision for Service Delivery.

At the elementary level, CCS provides a range of differentiated learning experiences designed to cultivate potential and extend learning beyond grade-level standards.

- SOAR Curriculum: The AIG SOAR curriculum emphasizes process skills and global competencies such as research, communication, technology, critical thinking, and creative thinking, as well as those outlined in North Carolina's Portrait of a Graduate.
- AIG-Designed Units of Study & Lessons: These units align with and extend NCSCOS objectives and allow gifted learners to explore high-interest topics.
- LIFT (Learning Interventions for Talented) Lessons: All students in 1st and 2nd grade receive cultivating potential (core +) enrichment in the regular classroom. AIG specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to integrate gifted thinking skills into instruction.
- AIG at Home Resource Site: An online platform providing enrichment opportunities categorized by subject, thinking skill, and grade level is available for students and families.
- Math Differentiation Courses (K-5): Developed by the AIG Department, these courses are housed in Canvas and offer structured opportunities for students to engage with advanced math concepts.
- CCS Curriculum Documents: These include embedded extension and enrichment lessons, ensuring that differentiation occurs within the general education classroom.

Future Vision for Elementary AIG Services

Over the next three years, Cabarrus County Schools will implement a more dynamic and responsive AIG framework that integrates pullout services based on continuous data review while strengthening push-in support through coaching, collaboration, and co-teaching with classroom teachers.

This approach will:

- Ensure flexibility in service delivery by allowing students to receive targeted instruction based on their demonstrated needs.
- Enhance collaboration between AIG specialists and classroom teachers to foster best practices in differentiation.
- Expand access to AIG services by identifying and nurturing potential talent in underrepresented populations.
- Provide a systematic approach to gifted instruction through ongoing assessment, data analysis, and adaptive programming.

This vision will allow CCS to better meet the needs of elementary AIG students while fostering a district-wide culture of advanced learning.

Middle and High School Acceleration and Differentiation

At the middle and high school levels, CCS provides differentiated curricula and acceleration options to meet the unique needs of AIG learners.

Middle School Acceleration Options

Advanced Language Placement (ALPS): Uses NCSOS objectives while incorporating best practices for gifted and advanced students such as, Depth & Complexity, Socratic Seminar, Tabo Concept Development, and incorporates accelerated, rigorous texts and concept-based ELA lessons from Vanderbilt University's Program for Talented Youth.

Advanced Math Placement (AMPS): Compacts the 6th-8th grade math curriculum, allowing students to complete Math 1 in 8th grade for high school credit.

Double Math Acceleration: Exceptionally advanced math students may take Math 1 in 7th grade and Math 2 in 8th grade.

High School Credit Opportunities: At some middle schools, students may take World Language 1 in 8th grade for high school credit. Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, middle school students will also have the option to take Introduction to Data Science for high school credit.

High School Differentiation and Acceleration

Honors and AP Courses: Teachers follow the Honors Blueprint and AP Common Core and Essential Standards to extend learning and prepare students for advanced coursework.

Dual Enrollment Options: Students may accelerate beyond CCS-offered courses through NCVPS, NCSSM, or Rowan-Cabarrus Community College dual enrollment.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM): Students in grades 8-12 may earn credit by proving mastery of course content through comprehensive assessments and portfolio submissions, which are reviewed by a district-based team.

Cabarrus County Schools remains dedicated to adapting and differentiating the NC Standard Course of Study to meet the diverse needs of advanced learners. By strengthening early talent development, expanding service delivery models, and increasing acceleration opportunities, CCS ensures that AIG students receive the challenging and engaging education they need to reach their full potential.

*** Practice B**

Uses students' identified abilities, readiness, and interests to address a range of learning needs K-12.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to differentiating instruction and curriculum to meet the diverse needs of gifted learners based on their abilities, readiness levels, and interests. Services and instructional practices vary across grade levels, ensuring students receive appropriately challenging and engaging learning experiences.

Elementary School Differentiation

At the elementary level, both classroom teachers and AIG specialists implement a range of instructional strategies designed to meet students at their current level of readiness and ability, while also supporting their individual interests. Instructional strategies are selected based on each student's area(s) of identification, ensuring that services align with demonstrated strengths and potential.

Tailored Differentiation Based on Abilities and Readiness

Play-Based Kindergarten Learning: In kindergarten classrooms, play is used as an intentional instructional approach to support student readiness and early cognitive development. Open-ended play tasks allow educators to observe strengths in creativity, problem solving, language use, and symbolic thinking—early indicators of gifted potential. Activities are differentiated by complexity, enabling learners to engage at personally challenging levels while building social-emotional and intellectual capacity.

Cluster Grouping: Recommended for all regular education classrooms, ensuring that gifted students learn alongside academic peers while receiving differentiated instruction aligned with their strengths.

Flexible Small Groups: AIG specialists and classroom teachers use ongoing county-wide assessment data and observational insights to adjust instructional groupings dynamically throughout the year.

Acceleration Opportunities: High-ability students have access to advanced content through grade acceleration as needed.

Interest-Based Learning Opportunities

SOAR AIG Resource Program: Designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles and interests, providing choice-driven tasks, creative expression, and interdisciplinary challenges with academic strengths.

LIFT (Learning Interventions for Talented) Program (Grades 1-2): Whole-class enrichment nurtures potential in all students while allowing teachers to observe students' strengths across various thinking skills. Students demonstrating exceptional abilities in specific areas receive targeted small-group instruction in second grade.

Project-Based and Problem-Based Learning: Encourages students to explore real-world problems connected to their interests while developing research, critical thinking, and communication skills. Projects often stem from student-driven questions or interest areas, allowing learners to explore content with personal relevance and intrinsic motivation.

Choice Boards and Menus: Students select learning activities aligned with their strengths and interests, fostering autonomy and engagement.

Integrated Higher-Level Questioning and Inquiry-Based Learning: Encourages deep thinking and conceptual exploration across subject areas.

Expanded Enrichment and Program Choice Opportunities

Cabarrus County Schools provides specialized programs that allow students to pursue areas of interest while engaging in rigorous academic content. These programs include:

- International Baccalaureate (IB) – Focus on global perspectives and inquiry-based learning.
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) – Hands-on, innovation-driven curriculum.
- Fine Arts – Emphasizing creativity and artistic expression.
- Language Immersion (Mandarin and Spanish) – Bilingual education opportunities.

Future Vision for Elementary Differentiation

Over the next three years, Cabarrus County Schools will strengthen differentiation efforts by implementing a more dynamic AIG framework, incorporating:

- Continuous data-driven pullout services for targeted enrichment based on identified strengths.
- Increased push-in coaching and co-teaching by AIG specialists to support differentiated instruction within the regular classroom.

▪ Grade-level PLCs and AIG teams meet regularly to analyze student data, plan differentiated instruction, and collaborate on enrichment strategies. These teaming structures support both consistency and responsiveness in service delivery.

- Enhanced collaboration with classroom teachers through ongoing professional development in gifted education strategies.
- Greater focus on early identification and nurturing potential, ensuring underrepresented gifted students receive appropriate support.

Middle and High School Differentiation

Middle School

Students continue to receive differentiated instruction and advanced course options based on their ability, readiness, and interests:

- ALPS (Advanced Language Placement) for ELA – Acceleration using advanced texts and concept-based lessons.
- AMPS (Advanced Math Placement) for Math – Compacts three years of math into two, culminating in Math 1 in 8th grade for high school credit.
- Double Acceleration in Math – Allows exceptionally advanced students to take Math 1 in 7th grade and Math 2 in 8th grade.
- Early High School Credit Opportunities – Options for World Language 1 in 8th grade.

Flexible Learning Strategies in the Classroom:

- Socratic Seminars
- Small group instruction
- Canvas courses for blended learning
- Project- and problem-based learning

Middle school programs continue to offer interest-based pathways, including:

- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- STEM
- Dual Language Immersion (Spanish)

High School

At the high school level, self-selection allows students to customize their learning pathways based on academic ability, career goals, and personal interests.

Advanced Curriculum and Acceleration

- Honors and AP Courses – Designed to provide rigorous academic challenges.
- Dual Enrollment with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College – Early college credit opportunities.
- NCVPS, Cabarrus County Virtual Academy and NCSSM Online Courses – Additional advanced coursework options.
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) – Allows students to earn credit through assessment and portfolio review.
- Program Choice and Specialized Programs

Students can further tailor their learning through specialized magnet programs, including:

- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- STEM
- Career Academies in Public Safety, IT, Hospitality, Health Sciences, and more
- Early College High School Programs

Cabarrus County Schools continues to prioritize student abilities, readiness, and interests as the foundation for gifted services. By using flexible grouping, differentiated instruction, interest-based learning, and specialized pathways, the district ensures that gifted students at all levels receive the challenge and engagement needed to reach their full potential.

*** Practice C**

Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that address the range of academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Cabarrus County Schools utilizes a variety of evidence-based resources to support the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of AIG students. These resources provide differentiated instruction, enrichment, and support for the unique social and emotional development of gifted learners.

Academic and Intellectual Enrichment Resources

The following research-based instructional resources are integrated into both AIG resource classrooms and regular education settings to extend and challenge gifted students:

- Understanding by Design (UbD) CCS Curriculum Documents – Evidence-based differentiation strategies embedded in curriculum planning.
- nAviGate Curriculum Units and Resources – A framework for academic and social-emotional development in grades 3-5.
- Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) Curriculum & Textbooks – Equipping educators with best practices for gifted learners.
- Mastery Connect – Assessment and data tracking for personalized learning.
- Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) – Early childhood critical thinking development.
- Junior Achievement Curriculum – Financial literacy and entrepreneurship education.
- Vex Robotics – STEM-based problem-solving and engineering design experiences.
- Math Olympiad – Advanced mathematical problem-solving competitions.
- Creative Problem-Solving Strategies – Encouraging innovative and divergent thinking.
- Junior Great Books – Inquiry-based literature studies.
- William & Mary Units – Research-based advanced reading and critical thinking lessons.
- Jacob's Ladder and Navigator Novel Studies – Higher-level reading comprehension and analysis.
- Project U-STARs PLUS – Early identification and talent development.
- Wordly Wise – Vocabulary enrichment and word study.
- ELA Curriculum Enrichment Units (Vanderbilt University) – Advanced literacy studies.

Curriculum Maps and Extension Opportunities

To ensure ongoing intellectual challenge, extension activities are embedded within district curriculum maps. These extensions allow students to explore topics in greater depth, engage in independent inquiry, and apply advanced critical thinking skills. Classroom teachers and AIG specialists collaborate to align enrichment experiences with core instruction, ensuring that students' academic readiness and intellectual curiosity are consistently nurtured.

Social and Emotional Support Through nAviGate and the Positivity Project

Cabarrus County Schools recognizes that gifted students have unique social-emotional needs and provides structured support through the nAviGate curriculum and the district-wide Positivity Project (P2).

- nAviGate: Social-Emotional Support for Gifted Learners (Grades 3-5)
- The nAviGate program is embedded in all 3-5 SOAR resource classes to help students develop self-awareness, resilience, and advocacy skills. The program builds on prior learning each year, helping students develop skills in:
 - Common Characteristics of Gifted Learners – Understanding their unique strengths and challenges.

- Growth Mindset – Encouraging persistence and adaptability in learning.
- Learning Characteristics and Self-Awareness – Helping students identify their personal learning styles.
- Methods of Self-Advocacy – Teaching students how to communicate their academic and emotional needs.

The Positivity Project (P2): Fostering Character Strengths for All Students

As a district-wide initiative, the Positivity Project (P2) helps students build positive relationships and strong character traits, which are essential for gifted learners navigating their academic and social world. The program aligns with social-emotional learning by:

- Teaching 24 character strengths, such as perseverance, curiosity, kindness, and leadership.
- Helping students understand how their strengths impact their learning and relationships.
- Encouraging self-reflection and emotional regulation, which is especially important for gifted students who experience intensities, perfectionism, and heightened sensitivity.
- Supporting a culture of acceptance and empathy, helping gifted students feel understood and valued in their learning environments.

The combination of nAviGate and P2 ensures that AIG students receive targeted social-emotional support while also participating in a broader district-wide initiative promoting emotional well-being and personal growth.

Professional Development for Educators

To ensure teachers are equipped to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of AIG students, Cabarrus County Schools provides professional learning opportunities:

- Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) – A structured course that provides research-based strategies for identifying and supporting gifted learners, including those with social-emotional challenges.
- Collaboration and Coaching with AIG Specialists – Supporting classroom teachers through co-planning, modeling differentiation, and providing strategies to support gifted students' well-being.
- Early Identification and Support (K-3)

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to developing and nurturing young gifted learners by incorporating:

- Observational tools in early elementary classrooms to identify potential giftedness in underrepresented populations.
- LIFT (Learning Interventions for Talented) lessons in grades 1-2, providing structured opportunities for teachers to observe advanced thinking skills.
- Flexible grouping models that allow young students to explore their intellectual potential before formal identification.

Cabarrus County Schools remains committed to providing a comprehensive gifted education program that supports students academically, intellectually, and socially-emotionally. By incorporating evidence-based instructional resources, integrated enrichment opportunities, social-emotional learning through nAviGate and the Positivity Project, and professional development for teachers, the district ensures that AIG students receive the support needed to thrive in both their academic and personal growth.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to developing durable skills and mindsets that prepare AIG students for success in a rapidly changing world. These skills—adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, empathy, a learner's mindset, and personal responsibility—are embedded

throughout the AIG curriculum and instructional practices from primary grades through high school.

A key framework guiding this development is the CCS Portrait of a Graduate, which defines the competencies all students need to thrive in college, career, and life. District AIG leadership also draws on resources from the NCDPI Portrait of a Graduate site to inform curriculum planning, professional development, and instructional design that fosters advanced skill development. Durable skills are intentionally integrated across all grade spans—from primary enrichment through high school career academies—ensuring a continuum of opportunities that evolve with student development and readiness.

Elementary: Building the Foundations of Durable Skills

The primary grades talent development program incorporates Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) as a foundational curriculum, ensuring that students engage in early creative and critical thinking activities. Play-based learning in kindergarten also provides a developmentally appropriate context for observing empathy, curiosity, symbolic reasoning, and collaborative problem solving—early indicators of gifted potential.

The SOAR program (Grades 3–5) further fosters durable skills through curriculum goals that challenge students to:

- Explore complex questions and develop techniques for innovative solutions.
- Use rational decision-making strategies to analyze and solve real-world problems.
- Make connections between prior knowledge and new learning, validating conclusions through research and discussion.
- Develop self-awareness of strengths, needs, and interests to cultivate personal growth and meaningful societal contributions.
- Use effective communication skills across various media to collaborate, construct knowledge, and share ideas.

Portrait of a Graduate attributes are intentionally reinforced through enrichment units and instructional strategies utilized by AIG specialists. These include:

- Adaptability through problem-solving challenges and open-ended learning experiences.
- Collaboration via cooperative learning, peer feedback, and group inquiry projects.
- Communication through structured presentations, Socratic discussions, and reflective writing.
- Empathy by exploring diverse perspectives in literature and project-based learning.
- A learner's mindset through goal-setting, reflection, and perseverance-building activities.
- Personal responsibility by fostering independent learning and self-directed projects.

Technology and Digital Learning Tools for Gifted Students

All K–12 gifted learners have access to digital platforms that foster collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and independence:

- 1:1 Technology (Chromebooks) for independent and collaborative learning in grades 3-12.
- CANVAS for digital literacy and interactive, self-paced learning environments.
- iReady Math and Reading to provide adaptive learning pathways tailored to individual student readiness.

Middle and High School: Expanding Durable Skills for Future Readiness

At the secondary level, students refine their future-ready skills through advanced coursework, research-based instructional strategies, and specialized programs. These include:

Middle School AIG and Advanced Learning Pathways

- Advanced Language Placement (ALPS) – Builds communication, critical thinking, and adaptability through concept-based ELA instruction.
- Advanced Math Placement (AMPS) – Strengthens problem solving, abstract reasoning, and collaboration.
- Early High School Credit Opportunities – Encourages personal responsibility and learner mindset in courses like World Language 1 and Math 1.

Inquiry-Based and Collaborative Learning Strategies

- Socratic Seminars and Shared Inquiry – Promote discussion-based critical thinking and structured academic discourse.
- Project-Based and Problem-Based Learning – Offer real-world application of academic concepts, fostering adaptability and innovation.
- Cooperative Learning Models – Strengthen teamwork, empathy, and leadership.

Students also engage in enrichment activities and peer discourse through clubs and competitions that challenge their thinking and communication, such as:

- Science Olympiad

- Book clubs

- Math competitions

High School: Career and Post-Secondary Readiness

At the high school level, students continue to build durable skills through personalized learning pathways and rigorous academic opportunities:

- Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment Courses – Support high-level thinking and independent learning.
- Early College High Schools – Provide structured pathways in Liberal Arts, Technology, and Health Sciences that align with career and college success.
- Blended Learning with CANVAS – Cultivates digital literacy, time management, and learner autonomy.
- Career and College Readiness Programs – Offer workshops on resume building, interview preparation, personal branding, and soft skills.

Service and Real-World Learning

- Service-Learning Projects – Promote civic responsibility, empathy, and collaboration.
- Junior Achievement & JA BizTown – Deliver financial literacy and entrepreneurship programming.
- Career Academies and Internships – Offer hands-on experiences and mentorship in fields such as:
 - Public Safety
 - Health Sciences
 - Engineering & Automation
 - Construction & Architecture
 - Informational Technology
 - Hospitality & Tourism

- Aviation
- Financial Technology
- Air Force JROTC

Enrichment Programs that Foster Durable Skills

Students also engage in advanced extracurricular programming that supports the Portrait of a Graduate competencies:

- Global Ready Schools – Promote cultural awareness and adaptability.
- STEM and Fine Arts Programs – Encourage innovation, creativity, and self-expression.
- Odyssey of the Mind & Future Problem Solving – Develop critical and creative thinking while addressing global challenges.

Commitment to Post-Secondary Success

Cabarrus County Schools ensures that gifted learners are not only academically challenged but also equipped with the durable skills and mindsets necessary for lifelong success. Through the integration of the Portrait of a Graduate framework, embedded instructional practices, real-world applications, and intentional skill development across all grade levels, CCS fosters adaptable, responsible, and innovative thinkers who are ready to thrive in post-secondary education, the workforce, and beyond.

* Practice E

Uses ongoing assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to using ongoing formative and summative assessments to inform differentiated instruction and ensure gifted learners receive appropriate challenge and support. A variety of assessment tools guide instructional decisions, flexible grouping, and curriculum adaptations for AIG students.

Assessment Tools Used to Inform Differentiation

CCS utilizes the following research-based assessment tools to identify student needs and adjust instruction accordingly:

- Mastery Connect – Formative assessments in reading and math to track proficiency and inform targeted instruction.

- MVPA (Mastery View Predictive Assessments) Benchmarks – Summative assessments providing data on student proficiency.
- mCLASS Amplify – Early literacy assessments to monitor reading development.
- i-Ready Reading and Math – Adaptive assessments providing personalized data on student strengths and areas for growth.
- Digital Formative Tools – Platforms like Kahoot, Quizizz, and Quizlet are used by teachers for real-time formative assessment and student engagement.
- Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) – Teacher-developed and curriculum-embedded assessments to inform daily instruction.

Assessment data is intentionally used to differentiate curriculum and instruction for gifted and advanced learners. Strategies include:

- Pre-assessments to determine readiness and inform acceleration or enrichment decisions.
- Flexible grouping based on ongoing data to provide appropriately leveled tasks and collaborative experiences.
- Curriculum compacting to eliminate redundancy and allow advanced learners to move more quickly through mastered content.
- Targeted extension activities that deepen learning and promote complexity, creativity, and critical thinking.

Early Talent Development

The LIFT early nurturing model uses ongoing observation and formative assessment to help both classroom and AIG teachers identify students showing potential in specific thinking skills. These insights guide flexible grouping, targeted enrichment, and differentiation in early grades.

Collaborative Data Analysis and Instructional Planning

Assessment results are analyzed collaboratively at multiple levels to ensure data-driven instructional planning:

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) – Teachers examine assessment data to plan for core instruction, enrichment, and scaffolding based on student performance.
- District-Wide Data Digs – Structured sessions provide a forum for identifying trends in student performance. Target support stops with a focus on AIG learners' growth and instructional alignment.
- School-Level MTSS Meetings – Teams use structured protocols to evaluate student response to instruction and adjust differentiation strategies accordingly.

AIG specialists actively participate in these teams and facilitate reflection using guiding questions, such as:

- Are students provided opportunities to work at an accelerated pace?
- Are students regularly engaged in learning that extends beyond grade-level expectations?
- Are instructional experiences tailored to students' interests and strengths?
- Are high-performing students encountering productive challenge?

AIG Specialist Support and Professional Development

The District AIG Specialist and school-based AIG staff support classroom teachers through:

- Support Stops – On-site coaching and model lessons aligned to areas of need revealed by assessment data.

- Professional Development – Sessions focused on analyzing assessment data, compacting curriculum, and designing differentiation strategies for gifted learners.
- Resource Curation – Sharing of instructional materials and sample tasks that align with assessment results and promote depth and complexity.

Cabarrus County Schools remains dedicated to using data strategically to enhance instruction, ensuring that gifted learners receive appropriate challenges and support. By leveraging ongoing formative and summative assessments, district-wide data digs, and AIG specialist-led instructional support, the district fosters an adaptive, student-centered approach to differentiation for all AIG students.

*** Practice F**

Collaborates with a variety of personnel, based on student needs, to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) is dedicated to providing advanced learners with appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction through collaborative efforts among instructional personnel. AIG specialists, general education teachers, and district-level leaders work together to ensure that gifted learners are consistently challenged and supported in ways that match their readiness, interests, and learning profiles.

The District AIG Specialist actively participates on district-level instructional teams, including the MTSS Leadership Team and curriculum committees. These roles provide ongoing opportunities for AIG personnel to advocate for instructional practices that support the needs of gifted students across all content areas. At the school level, collaboration occurs through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), where AIG student needs are intentionally integrated into instructional conversations.

AIG Specialists collaborate with one another and with building-level staff to plan and deliver nAviGate lessons in a developmentally appropriate, scaffolded format, supporting the social-emotional needs of gifted students.

Additionally, CCS has prioritized AIG involvement in the adoption and rollout of a new district-wide ELA curriculum for grades 2 through 8. Gifted Education Specialists participated in planning committees to ensure vertical alignment and the inclusion of advanced content and extension opportunities. As a result, the curriculum includes embedded enrichment, acceleration, and tiered differentiation options to meet the needs of high-ability students. AIG Specialists support classroom teachers in identifying students' readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles, and collaborate to implement advanced instructional practices, including:

- Flexible grouping and curriculum compacting
- High-level questioning and problem solving
- Opportunities for depth, complexity, and interdisciplinary connections

This team structure provides regular opportunities for:

- Collaborative planning of advanced content, ensuring alignment with standards and student readiness
- Problem-solving instructional challenges related to acceleration, enrichment, or student engagement
- Refining instructional delivery based on classroom implementation and student response
- Evaluating effectiveness of curriculum and instruction through student work and performance data

To ensure effective planning and instructional decisions, AIG personnel use guiding questions during collaboration with teachers and PLCs. These include:

- Are AIG students provided opportunities to accelerate based on demonstrated readiness?
- Are they encouraged to explore content beyond surface-level understanding?
- Do they engage in work that requires sustained effort and creative thinking?
- Are their personal interests and strengths incorporated into classroom learning?

A variety of curated resources are made available to instructional staff to support the planning and implementation of differentiated instruction. These include rigorous questioning examples, project-based learning models, and unit frameworks designed to promote deeper understanding. The Honors Level Coursework Development and Evaluation Tool is also used to plan high-level tasks and ensure instructional rigor for gifted learners.

In addition to collaborative planning and instructional refinement, CCS addresses the range of learning profiles within the AIG population by providing tailored support for students with diverse needs. AIG specialists collaborate with the Student Services Department, which supports students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Section 504 plans, or who are receiving ML (Multilingual Learner) services. Together, these teams strive to provide each gifted learner with an educational experience that reflects their individual strengths and support needs. Instructional models include scaffolds that promote access to challenging content and strategies to manage learning differences. A menu of accommodations and modifications is available to guide personalized instructional planning for these learners.

The AIG Department is developing tools and processes to monitor the implementation of differentiated instruction across schools. These tools clearly define expectations for instructional staff and provide a framework for targeted coaching and support. Observations, teacher reflections, and student performance data are used to assess progress. These data sources help ensure implementation fidelity and allow instructional teams to make informed adjustments that continuously enhance differentiation for gifted learners across the district.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To strengthen our implementation of Standard 3, our district is committed to providing rigorous, relevant, and appropriately challenging instruction that addresses the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of K–12 gifted learners. A key focus will be increasing collaboration between AIG Specialists and classroom teachers to support intentional differentiation.

AIG Specialists will coach and collaborate more closely with teachers to ensure that curriculum and instruction are responsive to student readiness and demonstrate depth, complexity, and higher-order thinking. At the elementary level, specialists will join PLCs to engage in data-driven discussions around differentiated instructional planning, particularly when students demonstrate mastery on pre-assessments. This will allow teams to explore flexible grouping, compacting, and enrichment pathways that extend learning meaningfully.

At the middle school level, the district plans to work more intentionally with the MTSS department to align gifted services within the intervention and enrichment block. This collaboration will help ensure that high-achieving and advanced learners receive appropriate challenges and opportunities during dedicated instructional time. These efforts reflect our goal to embed gifted instructional practices into the daily classroom experience, increasing access to curriculum that meets learners where they are and moves them forward.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Continuum of Elementary AIG services

* Continuum of Secondary AIG services
* SOAR AIG Curriculum Goals
* SOAR AIG Lessons
* LIFT scope & sequence
* LIFT lessons
* Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) Junior Achievement Curriculum
* AIG at Home Google Site
* ELA Curriculum Units from Vanderbilt University
* District-wide assessment data and score reports
* CCS Instructional Frameworks for Elementary, Middle, and High School
* CCS CDM website and resources
* Kindergarten Play-Based Guidebook
* CCS Program Choice Website
* Middle School Advanced Course Progressions
* Middle School Advanced Course Brochures
* ALPS & AMPS Curriculum Maps

* Math Double Acceleration documents	
* VEX Robotics Lessons	
* Math Olympiad Curriculum	
* William & Mary Units	
* Junior Great Books	
* Jacob's Ladder	
* nAv/Gate curriculum	
* Positivity Project Lessons	
* NCDPI Portrait of a Graduate	
* I-Ready reports and lessons	
* Honors Onboarding Course	
* Honors Lesson Artifacts from Teachers	
* Data Dig Meeting Agendas	

Documents

Document/Link

Document Template

N/A

AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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.

*** Practice A**

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

Cabarrus County Schools currently has a full time AIG-licensed educator serving as the lead specialist for gifted education. The AIG Specialist is responsible for guiding, planning, developing, implementing, revising, and monitoring gifted programming across the district.

Key responsibilities of the AIG specialist include:

- Facilitate and support AIG chairs and personnel for elementary, middle and high school levels. *Interview and hire new licensed AIG teachers.
- Manage state and local AIG funding.
- Coordinate and monitor district AIG testing and placement.
- Monitor AIG student files and paperwork and AIG teacher schedules.
- Collaborate with other district leaders and administrators to ensure the needs of gifted learners are considered in instructional planning and policy decisions.
- Facilitate professional development opportunities related to gifted education for district teachers, including the Gifted Local Endorsement course for educators.
- Facilitate support opportunities for parents of AIG students, including responding to parent inquiries at the school and district level related to AIG services and programming.
- Develop, monitor and evaluate effective AIG programming and curriculum for elementary, middle and high schools.
- Oversee the development and implementation of the local AIG plan, as well as the Department Improvement plan for the district.
- Monitor and analyze school and district data related to AIG student performance.
- Reviews and facilitates the AIG Headcount audits.

Cabarrus County Schools also currently employs an Advanced Academics Coordinator that oversees Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, Honors Course Legislation, Advanced Placement Programming, and College and Career Promise Coursework. In addition to these roles, the Advanced Academics Coordinator analyzes various data points to monitor and ensure the district is meeting targeted goals in subject areas and subgroups. Some of this data includes subgroup performance on EOGs/EOCs, ACT, ACT/WorkKeys, AP and IB assessments, and overall identification and placement trends for gifted students. Further, the Advanced Academics Coordinator collaborates with the Accountability Department to identify areas of focus, as well as Elementary, Middle, and High School Assistant Superintendents to ensure all student needs are being met, including providing access to advanced opportunities to students beyond those labeled "gifted." The Advanced Academics Coordinator also works with The North Carolina AP and IB Networks, and partners with the NC AP Partnership to identify strategies for improving AP and IB programs - both as a district and at the school level.

As part of the ongoing revision process, the AIG specialist gathers and analyzes multiple data points—including student achievement, subgroup performance, placement trends, and stakeholder input—to inform annual updates to the Local AIG Plan. These revisions ensure that programming remains aligned with state expectations and responsive to student needs. Additionally, the AIG specialist communicates program updates and responsibilities through shared resources such as an AIG Handbook and facilitates AIG PLC meetings to support consistent implementation across the district.

Together the AIG Specialist and Advanced Academics Coordinator meet weekly to collaborate and ensure programming is enhanced.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools is committed to providing strong support for gifted education through a structured system of AIG specialists, teachers, and administrative liaisons at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. This multi-tiered approach is intentionally aligned with the vision, mission, and goals of the Local AIG Plan, ensuring access to services, high-quality instruction, and support for the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development of gifted learners.

As of the 2024-2025 school year, Cabarrus County Schools employs 22 full-time elementary AIG specialists who hold AIG licensure and serve gifted students in a variety of capacities. Elementary AIG specialists are key collaborators and instructional leaders within their buildings, working to support gifted student growth through the use of enrichment and extension opportunities tailored to students' needs and readiness. This structure supports the AIG Plan's goals by ensuring consistent implementation of differentiated services and fostering professional capacity in gifted education throughout all elementary schools.

Their responsibilities include:

- Completing all testing and paperwork for AIG screening, nomination, and identification.
- Managing AIG student files and required annual documentation, such as Differentiation Education Plans (DEPs) and Progress Reports.
- Meeting with AIG parents annually and maintaining ongoing communication with AIG families.
- Supporting classroom teachers in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) by providing differentiation strategies and best practices for gifted learners.
- Facilitating Gifted Local Endorsement (GLEE) cohorts at school sites to expand gifted education knowledge among educators.
- Conducting professional development within the district on academic and social/emotional needs of gifted learners.
- Monitoring and approving AIG Headcounts in PowerSchool to ensure accurate program enrollment and tracking.

As Cabarrus County Schools transitions its gifted education service model over the next three years, elementary AIG specialists will serve on committees based on grade levels and subject areas. These committees will focus on developing enrichment and extension activities tailored to students' needs and readiness, aligning gifted instruction with core content areas to enhance differentiation and rigor, and creating instructional resources that classroom teachers can implement to support gifted learners in diverse settings.

At the elementary level, the timeline of duties for AIG specialists and chairs are outlined in the AIG Chair Responsibilities Document, which is reviewed annually at the first PLC meeting or mentoring session for new AIG teachers.

At the middle school level, each school designates, one teacher to serve as a point of contact for AIG and Advanced Academics and one administrator to support AIG programming and student needs. These roles support the AIG program by maintaining consistent services during a critical transition period, ensuring that gifted students are challenged academically while their unique social-emotional needs—such as peer relationships, self-concept, and organization—are supported.

They also facilitate:

- AIG student file management, paperwork, and testing processes.
- Collaboration with classroom teachers to ensure differentiation for gifted learners.
- Communication between the AIG Department and faculty members enrolled in the local Gifted Endorsement course.
- Support for schoolwide enrichment opportunities related to advanced academics.

At the high school level, each school has a designated team to oversee AIG and Advanced Academic programming, consisting of an Assistant Principal, who oversees AIG services, identification, and program implementation, a Teacher Liaison, who, supports differentiation strategies for gifted learners and serves as a point of contact for AIG and Advanced Academics programming, and a School Counselor Liaison, who assists AIG students in selecting rigorous coursework, dual enrollment, and advanced learning pathways. The team helps students navigate advanced academic pathways while providing guidance on college readiness, course selection, and social-emotional needs related to performance pressure, identity, and future planning.

Their responsibilities include:

- Managing AIG student files, paperwork, and testing logistics.
- Serving as a resource for classroom teachers on differentiation strategies.
- Facilitating parent and student outreach related to high school Advanced Academics programming (e.g., AP, IB, CCP, and Governor's School).
- Supporting students in accessing opportunities such as internships, early college, and specialized academic programs.
- Coordinating communication between the AIG Department, faculty, and families regarding gifted education.

By maintaining dedicated support structures at all levels, Cabarrus County Schools ensures that AIG students receive the academic and social-emotional support necessary to thrive. The district remains committed to expanding professional development, improving differentiation practices, and strengthening AIG and Advanced Academic programming across all schools. These efforts align with the district's AIG vision to cultivate potential and ensure access to meaningful, challenging, and supportive learning experiences for all gifted learners.

*** 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.

In Cabarrus County Schools, elementary AIG specialists are required to obtain the AIG add-on licensure within 2 years of hire. Cabarrus County Schools, in compliance with the North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted State Standards, offers local training to classroom teachers working with gifted students. This training, the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE), is not comparable to AIG state licensure and is non-transferable to other school districts. The GLEE program is facilitated by licensed gifted educators and promotes basic understanding of the characteristics and social-emotional needs of gifted students, as well as the implementation of differentiated content and instructional strategies for advanced learners. Teachers have 2 years to complete the course and receive 2.8 CEUs. The goal of this endorsement course is for teachers to feel more effective in working with cluster groups of gifted learners in the classroom setting, and to develop a clear understanding of best practices for teaching gifted students. Additionally, teachers may opt to take parts of the course to learn more about aspects of gifted learners without completing the full certification. It is highly encouraged that any educator who works with clusters of gifted learners on a regular basis acquire this local endorsement. This includes teachers of Honors, AP, or other advanced level courses. As part of the legislative amendment to the State Board of Education Course for Credit policy, CCRE-001, Cabarrus County Schools created an asynchronous course requirement for all high school teachers who teach an honors level section of a course. This asynchronous course will satisfy a portion of the gifted local endorsement requirement, should a teacher choose to pursue the credential. As of the 2024-2025 school year, CCS has approximately 367 teachers and/or administrators who have completed the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators. Lists of educators with the Gifted Local Endorsement, and more information about the course can be found on the CCS GLEE website.

Over the next three years of this plan cycle, CCS would like to reevaluate professional learning opportunities for all staff, including administrators and instructional support staff to ensure each stakeholder is equipped to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted students.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) is committed to ensuring that general education services for gifted learners are provided by teachers who have earned an AIG add-on license or have met LEA requirements to effectively differentiate instruction for advanced learners.

At this time, CCS K–12 classroom teachers are not required to hold an AIG add-on license to teach gifted students in general education classrooms, middle school advanced courses, or Honors and AP courses. However, to ensure high-quality instruction for gifted learners, the district has created and implemented the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) course. Enrollment in GLEE is highly encouraged for all teachers who work directly with gifted students, including those teaching advanced-level courses in middle and high school.

To comply with State Honors legislation, all teachers instructing an Honors course must:

- Be GLEE-certified, OR
- Hold an AIG add-on license, OR
- Complete the CCS Honors Onboarding Course, which introduces differentiation and instructional strategies tailored to gifted learners.

Teachers who complete the onboarding course receive two hours of credit toward full GLEE certification should they choose to continue the endorsement.

At the elementary level, AIG students are placed in cluster groups in general education classrooms led by teachers who are GLEE-certified or in the process of earning certification. Cluster grouping is defined in the Local AIG Plan as a group of at least five identified students placed with a teacher trained in gifted education strategies. School administrators collaborate with AIG specialists annually to ensure correct placement and service delivery that meets each student's learning needs.

Each semester, school-based administrators review GLEE enrollment and certification status with district leadership. The AIG Department maintains updated rosters of certified teachers, which are shared with principals and available on the county's Gifted Education website. The district also monitors AIG student assignments to verify that students are placed with appropriately prepared teachers, and this data is used to inform scheduling and staffing decisions at the school level.

By providing multiple pathways for teachers to develop expertise in gifted education—and by actively monitoring placements and credentials—CCS ensures that advanced learners receive instruction that meets their academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs in all classroom settings.

*** Practice E**

Develops strategies for the recruitment and retention of AIG-licensed professionals, including those of diverse backgrounds.

Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) has a strong tradition of attracting district personnel who are interested in joining the licensed AIG Specialist team. This interest is largely driven by the leadership and expertise of our current AIG Specialists, who actively foster a culture of excellence in gifted education. To support recruitment efforts, CCS offers the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE), a high-level overview of gifted learners designed for K-12 teachers. GLEE provides educators with foundational knowledge on the unique academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted students. The course explicitly outlines the process for obtaining AIG licensure and includes direct guidance on registering for and taking the Praxis for AIG certification. Participants who complete GLEE are provided with additional resources and information necessary to pursue their AIG licensure. In addition to recruiting new AIG professionals, CCS has established a comprehensive retention program that provides structured mentorship and ongoing professional development. Key components include:

- AIG Mentoring Committee: A team of experienced AIG Specialists who meet monthly with new specialists to provide targeted support on essential topics such as, files and forms, CCS nomination and Identification process, test administration and interpretation, scheduling and grouping strategies, nAviGate and SOAR curriculum training, robotics and LIFT program training, GLEE facilitation techniques

- One-on-One Mentorship: Each new AIG Specialist is assigned a dedicated mentor who provides individualized guidance, answers questions, and supports their transition into the role.
- Professional Learning Community (PLC): The AIG Specialist PLC meets 6-8 times per year to foster collaboration, share best practices, and ensure alignment with gifted education initiatives.

To further support diverse recruitment efforts, the AIG Department collaborates with Human Resources and university partners to promote AIG licensure opportunities, including graduate certificate and master's programs in gifted education. CCS actively seeks to attract educators from diverse backgrounds to ensure that our AIG staff reflects the diversity of our student population.

By implementing these recruitment and retention strategies, Cabarrus County Schools is committed to building and sustaining a highly qualified, diverse team of AIG-licensed professionals who are well-equipped to support gifted learners across all grade levels.

*** Practice F**
 Provides focused professional learning opportunities to realize equity and excellence in gifted education including changing mindsets, policies, and practices.

To expand excellence in gifted education, the district will implement a comprehensive professional learning plan that supports changing mindsets, policies, and practices. This plan will address gifted education best practices, challenge misperceptions about giftedness, and promote identification and support of gifted learners across all student groups.

Identifying District Personnel Needs:

1. By the end of the 2026-2027 school year, CCS will conduct a district-wide survey and focus groups with teachers, administrators, and specialists to identify current understanding, gaps, and perceptions about gifted education.
2. Review disaggregated AIG program data to identify trends and areas where efforts need to be emphasized.
3. Professional Learning Plan guided by key resources such as NCDPI's Call to Actions and Guidebook
4. Core Training Modules
5. Develop a series of Safe Schools modules for all certified staff, focusing on:
 - Understanding Giftedness: dispelling myths, exploring diverse gifted profiles, including multilingual learners and twice-exceptional students.
 - Expanding Excellence in Gifted Education: addressing bias in identification and placement processes and highlighting success stories of diverse gifted learners to shift perceptions and promote inclusive identification practices.
 - Social-Emotional Learning: addressing the unique needs of gifted learners.

Ongoing Professional Development Opportunities:

1. Partner with district leadership to offer workshops and webinars tailored to staff needs. These may include:
 - 1a. Collaborative Planning - Integrating AIG best practices within grade-level and departmental PLCs to support differentiation and talent development.
 - AIG Specialist participation in PLC+ - the district focus on ensuring every school has strong professional learning communities

- AIG Specialist attendance in district-led professional learning including TLT (Teacher Leadership Teams) and Curriculum Implementation

Training

2a. Integration with Existing Initiatives - Collaborate with district and school leadership teams to ensure alignment with broader efforts to increase access and opportunity.

Evaluation and Feedback:

1. Monitor the impact of professional learning by collecting feedback from participants and analyzing shifts in AIG identification data and instructional practices.
2. Adjust professional learning opportunities based on ongoing evaluation and stakeholder input.

This structured and integrated approach will ensure that all district personnel are equipped to provide an excellent education for gifted learners, with a focus on changing mindsets, policies, and practices.

*** 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.

The Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) Gifted Education Department is committed to providing professional development opportunities that align with AIG program goals, district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education. By equipping teachers with the knowledge, strategies, and collaborative skills needed to support advanced learners, we enhance the learning experiences of gifted students across all grade levels.

Professional Development Opportunities

The Gifted Education Department utilizes professional development funds to offer a range of opportunities for K-12 teachers of gifted students. When feasible and aligned with district initiatives, CCS brings in presenters and professional learning experiences to support teachers in implementing best practices. Additionally, district AIG funds, when available, are used to send educators to professional development events such as:

- Socratic Seminar Training
- NCAGT (North Carolina Association for the Gifted & Talented) Conference
- NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children) Conference
- SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) Training
- NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching)

To expand the role of AIG specialists as instructional leaders, the district has implemented a coaching and collaboration book study for AIG specialists. This initiative deepens their ability to coach and support general education teachers in differentiating instruction for gifted learners. AIG specialists also engage in coaching professional development, further strengthening their skills in collaborative instructional planning and expanding their reach beyond direct gifted services.

District-Led Professional Development and Embedded Support

Elementary AIG Specialists provide professional development for classroom teachers upon request, covering best practices in gifted education. Topics include:

- K-2 and 3-5 Differentiated Reading and Math Strategies for Advanced Learners
- Social/Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners, Growth Mindset, Perfectionism, and Underachievement
- Jacob's Ladder (William & Mary) Reading Strategies

- Socratic Seminar Implementation
- Depth & Complexity Icons for Advanced Thinking

AIG specialists actively participate in and present at the district's RISE Conference, providing sessions on fostering curiosity and creativity, advanced math and ELA strategies, depth and complexity icons, perfectionism, and underachievement. AIG specialists will attend and participate in professional learning and onboarding for the new ELA curriculum, in order to support classroom teachers with enriching and extending content for gifted learners.

To support district-wide Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) efforts, the District AIG Specialist has trained MTSS coordinators and counselors on the characteristics of gifted students. Additionally, the District AIG Specialist is a member of the district MTSS team, ensuring that gifted learners are considered in broader instructional support initiatives. The district's walkthrough tool includes a focus on rigorous tasks and student engagement, providing data that informs school and district professional development needs.

Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) and AIG Licensure Pathways

The implementation of the Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE) course provides K-12 teachers with an overview of best practices in gifted education while spotlighting the district's support for the social-emotional needs of gifted learners.

Course topics include:

- Characteristics of Gifted Learners
- District and State Policies for AIG Students
- Models of Differentiation for Gifted Learners
- Strategies for Addressing Social and Emotional Needs

Participants also contribute to district-wide online discussion forums, collaborating with peers across CCS. GLEE participants have the option to register for the Praxis for AIG certification after completing the course. The course provides explicit guidance on the Praxis exam, including additional study resources.

Collaboration, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and Resource Sharing

One of the most impactful avenues for professional learning among AIG specialists is through district AIG PLC meetings. Elementary AIG Specialists meet monthly with their AIG PLC group and the District AIG Specialist to discuss best practices, refine programming, and collaborate on implementation strategies. SPARK Sharing, a dedicated portion of each meeting, allows AIG teachers to present and train colleagues on new instructional strategies, tools, and best practices. Resources from these sessions are stored in a shared Google Drive folder, ensuring that all AIG educators have access to professional learning materials. AIG Specialists who attend state or national conferences share materials, strategies, and key takeaways with the entire team via Google Drive, fostering continued professional learning beyond the individual conference experience.

Shifting Service Model: Enrichment and Extension Committees

As Cabarrus County Schools transitions its gifted education service model over the next three years, elementary AIG specialists will serve on committees based on grade levels and subject areas. These committees will focus on:

- Developing enrichment and extension activities tailored to students' needs and readiness.
- Aligning gifted instruction with core content areas to enhance differentiation and rigor.
- Creating instructional resources that classroom teachers can implement to support gifted learners in diverse settings.

Leadership Committees within AIG PLCs

Within the elementary AIG PLC, AIG specialists collaborate in specialized committees that drive various aspects of the district's AIG program. These committees provide leadership and professional learning for the AIG team and include:

- Enrichment and Extension Curriculum Development Committees (organized by grade level and subject area)
- Gifted Local Endorsement (GLEE) Committee
- Mentoring Committee for New AIG Teachers
- Math Olympiad Planning and Integration Committee

Expanding AIG Specialists' Reach through Coaching and Collaboration

To enhance collaboration between AIG specialists and classroom teachers, CCS has implemented a coaching and collaboration book study focused on best practices for supporting gifted students within the general education classroom. Additionally, professional development in coaching strategies equips AIG specialists to strengthen instructional coaching skills to support classroom teachers, guide teachers in developing differentiation strategies for gifted learners, and fostering a collaborative approach to enriching advanced learners in diverse instructional settings. By investing in coaching and collaborative learning, CCS AIG specialists expand their impact beyond direct gifted instruction, supporting teachers in implementing high-quality differentiation across all grade levels and content areas.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To strengthen our implementation of Standard 4, our district recognizes the importance of providing intentional and targeted professional development that supports the specific needs of gifted learners. Moving forward, we will offer ongoing, relevant learning opportunities that address both academic and social-emotional characteristics of gifted students at all grade levels.

A primary focus will be helping educators better recognize and respond to gifted potential in a broad range of students, particularly those who may not be identified through traditional academic measures.

We also plan to tailor professional development based on staff roles—offering practical strategies for classroom teachers, administrators, and support personnel—to ensure that all educators are equipped to contribute to the development and support of gifted learners. These efforts will build shared knowledge and strengthen our ability to meet the varied learning needs of gifted students across the district.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Professional Development modules and presentations
* Professional Learning Playbook
* Elementary AIG PLC Meeting agendas and calendars
* AIG Specialist Responsibilities
* AIG Specialist Month-by-Month Tasks

* Shared Elementary and Secondary AIG Google Drives		
* Advanced Academics Canvas Course		
* List of AIG licensed teachers		
* Gifted Local Endorsement courses		
* Honors Onboarding Course		
* List of GLEE certified teachers		
* AIG Mentor/Mentee Meeting agendas and presentations		
* PLC+ Training		
* TLT Sessions		
* SPARK Folder		
* RISE Presentations		

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources		N/A	

Standard 5: Partnerships

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

*** Practice A**

Develops intentional, two-way partnerships with parents/guardians to support the following needs of AIG students:

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

The Cabarrus County Gifted Education Department prioritizes building partnerships that support the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted children. Our commitment to collaboration ensures that families receive the resources and information necessary to support their child's development.

Parent Communication and Collaboration

Parents receive annual summaries of evaluations, notification of placement, and collaborate with the AIG teacher and/or high school counselor to develop their child's Differentiation Education Plan (DEP). Annual AIG parent meetings at the elementary and middle school levels provide parents with information on the unique needs of gifted learners and the opportunities available at each school level. These meetings are standardized across the district to ensure all families receive consistent information. A significant portion of these meetings focuses on the social and emotional characteristics of gifted students, with resources provided to support families at home.

The CCS AIG Department hosts a Governor's School Parent Interest Meeting each fall to share information about Governor's School and how to apply. The department will also host a booth at the district's Future's Fair to share advanced opportunities, including Advanced Placement and CCP opportunities. Parent feedback will be collected during these sessions to guide improvements in communication, resource offerings, and services across high school.

Parent Engagement Opportunities

CCS AIG partners with SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) to offer annual discussion groups for parents of gifted children. These groups engage in a book study on parenting gifted children, using it as a foundation for discussions led by certified SENG facilitators. In the future, we aim to expand SENG opportunities by potentially offering sessions for middle and high school students to support their emotional needs.

AIG SOAR teachers invite parents to actively participate in their child's AIG programming through various roles, such as, chaperoning or volunteering for AIG curriculum events and programs, serving as an audience for student presentations, and acting as judges for competitions like the Invention Fair (Shark Tank)

Two-Way Communication Strategies

AIG specialists use multiple tools to ensure effective and ongoing communication with families, including:

- Email groups for updates and announcements
- ParentSquare for communication regarding AIG class updates and events

- Assignments designed to engage parents, such as:
- 3rd Grade nAviGate student presentations on giftedness for parents
- Problem-seeking interviews as part of the Inventions and Innovations unit
- 5th Grade "Where I'm From" poems, fostering reflection and discussion
- Phone call check-ins for personalized communication
- nAviGate newsletters for 3rd–5th grade AIG families, providing social and emotional strategies. Plans are in place to expand this newsletter districtwide across all grade levels to reach and support a broader gifted student population.

By fostering strong partnerships and continuously improving communication, CCS AIG ensures that gifted students receive the academic and emotional support needed to thrive. To support engagement, CCS is exploring additional strategies to connect with families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including offering interpreters at AIG meetings and translating key communication materials.

Future goals include the creation of a district AIG Parent Advisory Council to ensure consistent two-way dialogue and shared decision-making about AIG program improvements.

*** 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 following partnerships support the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners in Cabarrus County Schools. We continue to expand and deepen these relationships to provide a robust network of enrichment, extension, and acceleration opportunities for students, as well as professional growth for educators.

Academic Partnerships and Accelerated Learning

CCS partners with local community colleges, NCVPS (North Carolina Virtual Public Schools), and the North Carolina School of Science and Math to provide accelerated programming and dual-enrollment options for middle and high school students. These offerings allow gifted students to engage in advanced coursework beyond the standard curriculum.

High school academy and STEM programs collaborate with local industries to provide students with real-world experiences through guest speakers, mentoring, and professional learning. These partnerships extend classroom learning by linking academic content to career pathways and community needs.

Our International Baccalaureate (IB) high schools foster mentorship between IB Diploma Programme students and AIG learners in earlier grades. Additionally, IB and language immersion schools maintain ongoing relationships with their governing organizations to access professional development, curricular extensions, and enrichment resources for both students and staff.

Teachers seeking AIG Add-on Certification enroll in the gifted certification program at UNC-Charlotte and other North Carolina universities. These partnerships support long-term program sustainability and ensure that AIG students are served by trained specialists.

Social-Emotional Support for Gifted Learners

CCS AIG partners with SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) to offer a book study and discussion groups for parents of gifted children. We plan to expand these opportunities and explore the possibility of offering sessions for middle and high school students in the future.

Enrichment and Extracurricular Opportunities

Our AIG program partners with local organizations and businesses to provide students with a wide variety of enrichment experiences, including:

- Field trips, service-learning projects, and career-focused activities
- Guest speakers from law enforcement, architecture, environmental conservation, and other professional fields
- Forensic science partnerships with the Cabarrus County Sheriff's Office and Concord Police Department
- MOEMS (Math Olympiad for Elementary and Middle Schools) curriculum and competitions for advanced math students
- VEX Robotics and coding opportunities in all SOAR classrooms
- Environmental stewardship programs through collaboration with the Cabarrus County Resource Conservation Coordinator
- Several elementary-level SOAR classrooms have secured grant funding from the Cabarrus County Education Foundation and the NC Aquarium, enabling participation in hands-on enrichment programs.

AIG students are encouraged to showcase their learning at competitions and public events. Community partners are invited to attend events such as Shark Tank-style invention fairs, Battle of the Books, robotics demonstrations, and student-led service exhibitions. These occasions serve as both celebratory moments and advocacy opportunities, often inspiring further investment and volunteerism.

Additional Community Partnerships Supporting Student Services

- Atrium Health supports the Early College of Health Sciences.
- Rowan-Cabarrus Community College partners with Early College and Early College of Technology programs.
- The Cabarrus Arts Council schedules various performances for students across all grade levels.
- High school students have access to internship opportunities with local businesses.
- NC School Library Media Association supports Battle of the Books competitions.

Feeder school partnerships, such as #oneW, connect students across Weddington Hills, Winkler Middle, and West Cabarrus High School, fostering collaboration through:

- Volunteer opportunities
- Read-aloud programs
- Club Day experiences
- Shared resources and cross-campus learning

By maintaining and expanding these partnerships, CCS AIG ensures that gifted students receive high-quality academic, social, and extracurricular opportunities that foster growth, engagement, and success.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools utilizes a collaborative approach to developing, monitoring, and revising the Local AIG Plan. Stakeholder input is gathered through both structured advisory groups and ongoing feedback cycles, ensuring a responsive and representative process.

Advisory Group Membership and Structure

The advisory group that contributed to the creation of the current AIG Plan includes the following stakeholder groups:

- Advanced Academics Coordinator
- AIG District Specialist
- Elementary AIG teachers from schools across the district
- District-level Curriculum & Instruction Team, including:
 - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
 - Curriculum Coordinator
 - Multilingual Director and Specialist
 - District Psychologist
 - Director of Administrative Services
- Principal of the Cabarrus County Virtual Academy
- Middle and high school administrators

These stakeholders met monthly throughout the school year to review North Carolina AIG Program Standards and Cabarrus County's Local AIG Plan responses.

In addition to the members above, feedback from surveys and discussions were collected from AIG parents/guardians, community members involved in school partnerships (e.g., grant reviewers, guest speakers, service providers), Gifted Local Endorsement cohort participants, and 1st and 2nd grade teachers that participated in the LIFT program.

We aim to expand the advisory group to formally include additional community members, such as representatives from the local business community, higher education institutions, and cultural arts organizations.

Advisory Group Functions

Throughout the plan-development year, AIG specialists review individual components of the previous AIG Plan, identify strengths and gaps based on ongoing stakeholder feedback, and propose updates aligned to state requirements and local needs. District leadership teams review significant changes before the updated Local AIG Plan is presented to the school board. The Curriculum & Instruction team and AIG District Specialist use annual AIG Department Improvement Plans to monitor the implementation of plan goals, evaluate progress, and determine future professional development and service priorities.

Future goals include establishing clear action steps for the advisory group to support plan implementation, make programming recommendations, and serve as ambassadors for gifted services across the district.

*** 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.

As digital communication becomes increasingly essential and families face time constraints, the CCS AIG Department is committed to providing effective and accessible communication methods for all families. We ensure that students, parents/guardians, and the community receive information regarding AIG services, advanced learning opportunities, and gifted education policies and procedures through a variety of channels.

Standardized Communication and Language Accessibility

The CCS Gifted Education Department utilizes standardized forms and letters regarding AIG placement and services at all grade levels. To support our multilingual community:

- Core documents are translated into Spanish, including AIG pathways, service descriptions, and NNAT screener notifications
- The AIG District Specialist partners with Student Services to access translation and interpretation services, and we are working to expand translation into additional languages reflective of our growing multilingual population.
- Parent meetings offer interpreters upon request. If on-site interpreters are unavailable, district services ensure remote interpretation can be arranged.

Digital Platforms and Online Communication

The CCS AIG Department ensures that students, parents, and the community can easily access information about advanced learning opportunities through digital platforms. The district AIG webpage provides key information, including:

- AIG services, pathways, and programming descriptions
- Identification procedures and policies
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) testing windows
- Governor's School applications and details
- Middle school advanced-level programming options
- List of teachers with Gifted Local Endorsement
- SENG parent group information and registration
- CCS programming and policies related to gifted education
- Links to state and district resources
- Upcoming events and summer enrichment opportunities
- AIG at Home Google Site, offering enrichment resources for families, students, and teachers, including access to OALGE Advanced Learning Labs
- FAQ section to address common questions from parents and the community

High schools share information about advanced programming and enrichment opportunities through:

- Student Services webpages
- Social media platforms (ParentSquare, Facebook, and Nextdoor)
- Ongoing Parent and Student Communication

Parents receive evaluation summaries and notification of placement and have the opportunity to collaborate with AIG teachers and high school counselors to develop their child's Differentiation Education Plan (DEP). Elementary AIG families receive an update on their child's DEP at the end of each semester, summarizing student growth in SOAR units and activities.

Annual AIG parent meetings at the elementary and middle school levels are held at the beginning of the year. These meetings are used to inform parents about the academic programming and opportunities available for gifted students at each school site and provide families with information about the CCS Gifted Website and support resources, including SENG parent groups

High schools inform families of advanced academic opportunities at open houses during pivotal transitions

Showcasing Gifted Education in the Community

AIG program accomplishments and student stories are highlighted through:

- The CCS Communications Department
- The district website and social media pages
- The CCS Engage Publication
- Local newspapers and media outlets

The district ensures that all students, families, and community members are informed about the Local AIG Plan, program services, identification procedures, and available advanced learning opportunities. Communication efforts are ongoing, accessible, and responsive to the linguistic and cultural needs of the community. Multiple platforms and formats are used to promote transparency, increase awareness, and foster family and community engagement in gifted education.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To further improve accessibility and community engagement, CCS AIG aims to:

- Work with Student Services to expand translation efforts for AIG documents and information into additional languages beyond Spanish, ensuring access for all families.
- Continue partnering with district interpreters to provide translation and interpretation support at AIG parent meetings, conferences, and events.
- Enhance digital communication by developing:
 - Short informational videos (with subtitles in multiple languages) explaining AIG services, programming, and pathways
 - AIG family newsletters with highlights on upcoming events, student success stories, and enrichment opportunities
 - More interactive features on the AIG webpage, such as Q&A forums or live chat options for parents to ask questions about advanced learning opportunities
- Strengthen outreach efforts to underserved communities to ensure opportunity and access to AIG services and identification

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Parent Square

* AIG DEPs (elementary, middle, and high)

* SENG website

* Governor's School Parent Interest Meeting Presentation

* Parent nA/V/Gate Newsletters	
* VEX Robotics Curriculum	
* Cabarrus County Education Foundation	
* Math Olympiad licenses	
* AIG Testing & Placement forms	
* District Advisory Team agendas	
* CCS Engage Publication	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources		N/A	
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Standard 6: Program Accountability

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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 diverse 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}), 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.

Cabarrus County Schools has developed a comprehensive AIG Program Plan (2025–2028) that describes the district’s services for academically and intellectually gifted students in alignment with N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-8 (Article 9B) and State Board of Education policy. This plan has been approved by the local Board of Education and submitted to SBE/NCDPI for review and comment as required.

The AIG Plan was evaluated using a multi-dimensional approach to acquire feedback from a variety of stakeholders. These stakeholders include the following:

- Surveys of AIG parents and guardians through our district communication platform (ParentSquare)
- Performance Data from Accountability Department
- AIG Headcount data (district and school level)
- Ethnic Diversity Data from Accountability Department
- Subgroup meetings of High School AIG Chairs/Contacts, Middle School AIG Chairs/Contacts
- Elementary AIG Chairs, K-12 Counselors and Lead Counselor
- SENG Parent Groups
- Classroom teachers enrolled in the Gifted Local Endorsement Course
- Cabarrus County District Leaders including our MTSS Coordinator, Director of EC, Lead School Psychologist, Content Specialists, Director of Administrative Services, Curriculum & Instruction Coordinator

These unique voices allowed the district to evaluate current programming and identify trends, successes, and areas of improvement. The NCDPI Program Evaluation Tool and unpacking documents were used to structure the self-assessment.

The Local AIG Plan was drafted by the District AIG Specialist in collaboration with advisory groups and based on synthesized feedback from the above stakeholder input. Once drafted, the plan underwent internal review with district leadership teams, including representatives from curriculum, instruction, student services, and accountability departments. After revisions, the plan was formally presented to the local Board of Education by the District AIG Specialist and the Chief Academic Officer, and subsequently submitted to the Department of Public Instruction.

Cabarrus County Schools uses existing collaborative structures (e.g., district leadership teams, AIG chair meetings, advisory groups) to continue monitoring implementation of plan goals, evaluating impact of services on diverse student populations, and discussing emerging data and trends throughout the 3-year plan cycle. This ongoing review process fosters a culture of continuous improvement and ensures that the AIG program remains responsive to the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools ensures the ongoing implementation and monitoring of its AIG Program and Local AIG Plan through a multi-tiered system of oversight and accountability that spans elementary through high school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The AIG Program Specialist, who holds AIG certification, leads program implementation and ensures fidelity to the Local AIG Plan across all grade bands. This specialist works closely with the Curriculum & Instruction Department to share implementation data and updates with district leaders.

Elementary Level: Certified AIG teachers are responsible for implementing the SOAR (3rd–5th) and Talent Development-LIFT (K-2nd) programs. Teachers submit annual AIG service schedules, which are reviewed by the AIG Specialist to ensure appropriate service minutes and program fidelity. The AIG Specialist conducts regular school visits and observes lessons, using a standardized form to document fidelity and quality. AIG student files are audited at the school level to ensure completeness and alignment with identification and service documentation requirements.

Middle School Level: Each school has an assistant principal and teacher representative serving as AIG Points of Contact and case managers. These representatives support service delivery, maintain records, and ensure that AIG students are scheduled into appropriate classes. The Advanced Academics Coordinator and AIG Specialist, in collaboration with secondary specialists, audit schedules and student files annually to verify compliance.

High School Level: AIG Points of Contact and AIG Counselor Liaisons serve as case managers and ensure students have access to advanced programming. File audits and course enrollment reviews are conducted, annually, in conjunction with students' Career Development Plans to ensure that AIG students are accessing advanced opportunities aligned with their academic and career goals.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

To ensure that all elements of the Local AIG Plan are being fully implemented, monitoring tools, such as file audit rubrics and nomination spreadsheets are shared with district AIG specialist and used to track program fidelity. Findings are discussed during structured district meetings, such as AIG specialist PLC meetings and Curriculum & Instruction check-ins. Feedback loops with counselors, teachers, and administrators inform adjustments to programming or supports needed for implementation. The AIG Program Specialist and Advanced Academics Coordinator share monitoring findings with district leadership and the AIG advisory group to support accountability and inform mid-cycle adjustments.

Reporting and Adjustments

Progress toward implementation goals is documented throughout the school year and used to guide potential mid-cycle revisions to the Local AIG Plan, should policy shifts or programmatic needs arise. Annual updates are shared with the AIG Advisory Group, District Leadership Teams, and the Cabarrus County Board of Education. These efforts ensure that program documentation aligns with daily practice and that students consistently receive high-quality services as outlined in the district's AIG Plan.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools develops and monitors the AIG budget to ensure funds are used strategically and in alignment with the goals of the Local AIG Plan. The budget supports the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners through investment in staffing, services, materials, and professional learning.

The AIG Specialist and Advanced Academics Coordinator collaborate with the district's Chief Financial Officer to develop and manage the AIG budget in accordance with LEA and NC state guidelines. The team reviews budget procedures annually to ensure compliance and alignment with the NC Allotment Policy Manual and local priorities.

The AIG budget is designed to reflect the goals of the Local AIG Plan, including access, early talent development, and support for rigorous instruction. Priorities are determined based on current AIG headcount and program growth needs, stakeholder feedback (e.g., from advisory groups and teacher input), and evaluation findings from the Local AIG Plan review process.

The majority of state AIG funds support personnel, with 22 AIG-certified elementary specialists serving 1,646 identified students in grades 3–5 and delivering LIFT programming to all 1st and 2nd grade classrooms, as well as, the top 10% of kindergarten. Staff allocations are based on school-level AIG enrollment and the number of primary classrooms at each site.

Additional expenditures include:

- Contracted services for AIG assessments (e.g., Pearson and Riverside testing vendors)
- Instructional supplies and enrichment materials
- Professional development to strengthen gifted instruction and programming
- Stipends for curriculum development, resource creation, and support of district wide initiatives

To ensure that expenditures support the full implementation of the Local AIG Plan the AIG team reviews the PRC 034 budget report quarterly in collaboration with the Finance Department to monitor spending and align expenditures to priorities. Adjustments are made as needed to reflect mid-cycle programming shifts or state/local policy updates. All purchases and staffing requests are reviewed in the context of their alignment to identified student needs and AIG program goals.

The AIG team also reviews service needs across grade levels and uses data to inform requests for local funding support, such as:

- Additional AIG-certified personnel to reduce caseloads and improve services
- Continued funding of universal 2nd grade NNAT screening to ensure access to identification

*** 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.

The district regularly collects, maintains, and analyzes a range of student performance and growth data from multiple sources to inform and improve services for our gifted learners. This data is shared with district leaders, administrators, AIG specialists, and regular education teachers through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and Data Dig meetings to support both immediate and long-term program improvements. Key data sources include:

- EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System)
- Cabarrus County Data Portal
- Mastery Connect
- iReady
- Graduation Rates
- School Report Cards/School Performance Grades

The district's commitment to excellence for all AIG students is reinforced by continuous analysis of disaggregated data, which allows us to identify performance trends and patterns across different demographic and academic subgroups. This data analysis fosters a mindset focused on the potential for every gifted

learner to thrive, recognizing and addressing inconsistencies that may exist within our program. Disaggregated data provides insights into how subgroup needs vary, prompting AIG staff and educators to adopt inclusive, growth-oriented perspectives.

Data over time helps identify systemic factors impacting AIG students' academic and social-emotional outcomes, informing adjustments to our district's policies and practices. For instance: For the 2023-2024 school year, the overall AIG subgroup EVAAS growth index is -8.5, compared to the growth index for all students of 39.44. We are growing students, just not our AIG students. However, our graduation rate for AIG students is greater than 95%, indicating that while our students have successful outcomes, we must improve their educational experience to improve growth.

Policies and interventions are adapted to address areas where trend data indicates disparities, particularly in access to resources or advanced opportunities. Data-driven insights guide professional development for teachers, emphasizing strategies for differentiating instruction, addressing biases, and nurturing the unique strengths of underrepresented gifted learners.

With a focus on program improvement, disaggregated data is used to establish targeted goals at both the district and school levels. Regular goal-setting based on this data occurs within school-level PLCs, enabling data-informed adjustments to curriculum pacing, enrichment opportunities, and instructional practices. The AIG District Specialist, in collaboration with school leadership teams, reports on AIG student growth trends and annual dropout data to the CCS Leadership Team. Historically, our AIG dropout rate has been very low; however, monitoring dropout data ensures that we address the needs of any at-risk gifted students proactively.

Through these efforts, data and trend analysis directly shape our ongoing commitment to ensuring that AIG programs meet the diverse needs of all gifted learners, fostering consistent access to high-quality instruction and support across our district.

*** 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.

Cabarrus County Schools maintains a comprehensive approach to collecting and analyzing data related to referral, identification, services, and retention of students in the AIG program. The goal is to ensure that students' race, ethnicity, economic status, language background, or other demographic factors do not affect their opportunity to access or continue in gifted education services.

The district collects and tracks:

- Referral records from parents, teachers, and others
- Identification decisions based on multiple criteria
- Participation data related to AIG service models and advanced learning options
- Retention data, including continuation in services and advanced coursework over time

This information is organized through a centralized spreadsheet managed by the AIG District Specialist. Data is updated during each testing window and reviewed across demographic groups, including race/ethnicity, economic status, language status, and exceptionalities.

The AIG team collaborates with the MTSS to examine how student needs are being met and to support aligned decision-making across departments.

Analysis of district data has identified differences in AIG identification rates when compared to overall enrollment trends. Specifically, the implementation of the NNAT universal screener in 2nd grade has resulted in an increase in Hispanic student identification and identification rates for Black students have not shown a

similar increase. In response, the district is continuing to evaluate the NNAT and exploring the General Ability Index Assessment, strengthening professional development for teachers to support the recognition of advanced potential in all student groups, and expanding family communication and outreach to raise awareness of AIG opportunities and the referral process.

While Cabarrus County Schools has historically maintained a strong retention rate for AIG students, additional steps are being taken to examine retention by student group and ensure continued participation. These include:

- Disaggregating retention data by race/ethnicity, economic background, and other characteristics
- Tracking course enrollment and participation in advanced opportunities, including AP, IB, honors, dual enrollment, and CTE pathways
- Aligning AIG services with Career Development Plans to ensure students are pursuing programs that support their long-term goals
- Offering support systems that promote continued participation in advanced learning and enrichment programs

The AIG Program Specialist works with Accountability, MTSS, EC, and Multilingual Services teams to monitor trends in referral, identification, services, and retention, review patterns in participation and service delivery, and use findings to guide improvements in communication, identification, and student support. This ongoing review process allows the district to respond to data trends and refine practices to better meet the needs of all students who demonstrate readiness for advanced learning.

*** 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.

In Cabarrus County Schools, elementary AIG teachers are required to obtain the AIG Add-On licensure within two years of hire. The AIG District Specialist actively monitors the certification status of all AIG personnel to ensure compliance with this requirement. At the middle and high school levels, teachers of advanced courses are encouraged to pursue the Cabarrus County Schools (CCS) Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators (GLEE). Beginning in 2025-2026 school year, all teachers instructing Honors-level courses must obtain the local endorsement or complete the asynchronous Honors Course Training. To ensure compliance, the District AIG Specialist collaborates with Human Resources to track which teachers have completed the GLEE certification. Additionally, in alignment with the new Honors Legislation, the Advanced Academics Coordinator and District AIG Specialist will maintain records of Honors teachers who have:

- Completed the required Honors onboarding course,
- Obtained AIG certification, or
- Earned the CCS GLEE certification.

To further ensure the fidelity of Honors instruction, teachers of Honors courses are required to submit three instructional artifacts per semester. These artifacts will be reviewed and monitored by school administrators, the Advanced Academics Coordinator, and the District AIG Specialist. This process provides accountability and ensures that Honors courses are effectively meeting the needs of advanced learners. By implementing these monitoring strategies, Cabarrus County Schools will maintain accurate and up-to-date records on personnel credentials, aligning with the goals and strategies outlined in the Local AIG Plan.

*** 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 Advanced Academics Department in Cabarrus County Schools collects both formal and informal feedback from a broad range of stakeholders to monitor implementation and drive continuous improvement of the AIG program. Feedback is gathered regularly and aligned to program goals and identified areas of need.

Targeted surveys are distributed to key stakeholder groups, including:

- 1st and 2nd Grade Classroom Teacher Survey on the implementation and effectiveness of the L.I.F.T. curriculum
- AIG Parent Survey, which gathers perceptions of communication, services, and student growth
- Gifted Local Endorsement Cohort Feedback on preparation, instructional shifts, and impact
- SENG Parent Group Feedback, focused on the social-emotional needs of gifted learners

In addition, the Advanced Academics Department collects documentation and input from structured meetings throughout the year, such as:

- District AIG Stakeholder Meetings
- AIG Elementary PLC Meeting Agendas and Notes
- Focus groups and discussions during district leadership and curriculum team meetings

These structures provide recurring opportunities for feedback and reflection tied directly to the practices outlined in the Local AIG Plan.

Informal input is collected through:

- Conversations during school visits
- Follow-ups after PD sessions or support stops
- Reflections shared by students during program activities (e.g., LIFT, SOAR, and GLEE assignments)

Beginning in the upcoming year, the district plans to pilot student voice surveys and feedback forms designed to capture student perspectives on their experience in AIG services, including challenge level, relevance, and engagement.

Feedback from all sources is used to evaluate the effectiveness of current services and instructional models, identify staff training needs and PD topics, inform mid-year programmatic adjustments, and guide future revisions to the Local AIG Plan. These inputs are also triangulated with data on participation, achievement, and course enrollment to support a comprehensive view of program effectiveness.

Cabarrus County Schools will continue to ensure that all stakeholder groups—students, families, teachers, and community partners—have structured opportunities to share their perspectives, reinforcing our commitment to a responsive and continuously evolving AIG program.

*** Practice H**

Shares local AIG program evaluation data with school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and other community stakeholders.

The LEA actively shares local AIG program evaluation data with school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and other community stakeholders to foster transparency and continuous improvement. This is achieved through the following methods:

1. School Personnel
 - Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Regular discussions of AIG program data during PLC meetings at each school level (elementary, middle, and high school) to support reflection, collaboration, and targeted improvement in services.
 - Data Digs: Use data digs to interpret data and explore strategies for addressing identified gaps or areas for improvement.
2. District Personnel
 - Curriculum and Instruction Leveled Leadership PLCs: Present program evaluation data annually to district leadership to align AIG services with broader educational goals.
 - Data Dashboards: Develop an internal data dashboard summarizing AIG trends and outcomes, enabling district leaders to access real-time updates and reports.
 - Strategic Planning Sessions: Use evaluation data in strategic discussions for setting priorities and resource allocation.
3. Students
 - Currently, direct data sharing with students is an identified area of growth. Future goals include:
 - Interactive Infographics: Create visual summaries to help students understand enrollment data, services, and program goals relevant to their experiences.
 - School-Level Meetings: Facilitate discussions led by AIG specialists to encourage student input on programming.
4. Parents/Guardians and Families
 - Digital Communications: Publish easy-to-read data summaries via ParentSquare, ensuring accessibility for all families.
 - Family Surveys: Share evaluation data alongside surveys to gather feedback on AIG services and identify areas for improvement.
5. Community Stakeholders
 - Media Releases: Share key data and program highlights with local news outlets, emphasizing achievements and opportunities for collaboration.
 - Publications: Include AIG program evaluation updates in community newsletters and district publications.

By implementing these methods, the LEA ensures that all stakeholders are informed, engaged, and empowered to contribute to the continuous growth and effectiveness of the local AIG program.

*** 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.

The Cabarrus County AIG Department has developed a very consistent and equitable method for safeguarding the rights of AIG students and informing AIG families of information related to gifted education. Families of all students assessed through the AIG Program receive our Consent for Evaluation Form prior to any testing. Copies of this form are placed in the AIG student files. At the same time, families are notified that the Procedure to Resolve Disagreements document is available on the CCS Gifted Education Webpage (in both English and Spanish).

Cabarrus County Procedures are as follows:

In the event that parents/guardians disagree with a decision, it is hoped that the concerns may be resolved at the local level. The following procedures should be followed to resolve any disagreements.

Level 1. School Site Review

If parents have a disagreement concerning search and nomination, identification, or services, they may request in writing a meeting with the Principal to discuss their concerns. The principal may convene the Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program Team to review referral and placement records and the student's current performance.

Level 2 Academically & Intellectually Gifted District Specialist & Advanced Academics Coordinator Review

If the disagreement is not resolved at the school site, the parents may request an administrative review at the system level. This request should be made in writing within 10 days of the school site decision and sent to the Advanced Academics Coordinator or the Academically & Intellectually Gifted District Specialist.

Level 3 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Review

If the disagreement cannot be resolved at the above level, the parents may appeal to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and/or to the Superintendent.

Level 4 Superintendent Review

If the disagreement cannot be resolved at the above level, the parents may appeal to the Superintendent.

Level 5 Administrative Law Hearing

If the above procedure fails to resolve the disagreement satisfactorily, the parents may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the North Carolina General Statutes. According to the law, "The scope of the hearing shall be limited to (i)whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically or intellectually gifted student, or (ii)whether the local plan developed under G.S. 115C-150.7 has been implemented appropriately with regard to the child." Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will make a decision based on the findings of 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. Legal fees are the responsibility of the parents.

Assessments

Prior to the NNAT screening in our second grade classrooms, a letter is sent home giving families notice that the gifted education department will be administering the screening test and the time frame for the assessment. Information about opting a student out of the screening is offered in this letter. Each student that is assessed receives a letter of results. This is sent home to the parents and overviews the dates and scores of the tests given, as well as the final identification decision. A copy is also placed in the AIG student file. Families of students who qualify for AIG Services receive our Consent to Serve form, which is also kept in the AIG student files. (all of these forms are available in Spanish)

Re-Assessments

Any identified AIG student who will undergo a change in service will have a Form D completed for the AIG file. Form D is a narrative form completed by the AIG specialist with the rationale for the change in service. This form is completed in collaboration with the AIG student's family and shared with any relevant school personnel who are involved in the plan implementation.

Identified AIG students in middle school who may benefit from additional support will be reviewed through the Advanced Learner Support Plan in the MTSS structure.

Transfer Procedures

Procedures for transfers coming from other LEA's are available in our AIG Parent FAQ's section of our Gifted Education Webpage and as an informational handout available upon request. The policies are as follows:

Transfer Students - Inbound

A student who was enrolled in a gifted program in another school system may or may not qualify for continued placement in the AIG Program in Cabarrus County Schools. Parents should indicate gifted services previously received when enrolling student in the enrollment platform. This will alert the data manager and AIG specialist of identification. Then the AIG Program Team will review the evaluation material from the previous school system.

The following guidelines will be used:

- Students are placed in a regular classroom until screening and/or identification procedures have been completed.
- The guidance counselor, data manager, registrar, or school secretary informs the AIG chairperson an identified gifted student has enrolled, and records are requested from the previous school.
- Upon receipt of records, regular screening procedure is followed. The AIG Program Team is convened so all information can be reviewed. Then, the screening process proceeds until a service identification decision is made.
- A student who transfers from within North Carolina and is in the Student Information Systems Platform with an AIG Identification will still need to go through nomination/screening procedures.
- Students will stay on CCS AIG Headcount while screening procedures occur.
- If transfer students do not meet the CCS criteria for AIG identification upon initial screening, they will remain on Headcount and monitored. Students will be differentiated appropriately in the classroom and can be re-assessed for AIG identification when new data become available.
- If the transfer student never meets CCS criteria for AIG Resource services, and the student's academic needs are better met in a different setting, students will be exited from the Student Information System as an AIG identified student. A Student Information System's form will need to be completed to exit the student due to "Not Meeting District AIG Criteria".

Transfer Students – Outbound

In the case that an AIG identified student transfers out of a school, AIG case managers are instructed where to send the student's AIG file to allow for continued services at the new school.

Transfer is within Cabarrus County Schools – send to the AIG teacher or chair at the new school.

Transfer is outside of Cabarrus County Schools – send to AIG district specialist if the file was not requested by your data manager, but was requested by the new school. Please include a note stating where the student was going if you have that information.

Transfer Students: Military Families- Often times students of military families can be transient and move frequently. If a child has previously placed into a gifted program, the following guidelines will be used:

- The AIG Program Team will review documentation of US military status (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty or other official documentation of military service).
- Review of Academically Gifted placement from previous school.
- AIG-1 is to be completed based on previous testing and services matched.
- Document the process that was followed on a Form D to explain the placement decision.

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*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To strengthen our implementation of Standard 6, our district is committed to intentionally monitoring the effectiveness of AIG services and using data to support continuous improvement. As we continue to refine and redefine our service model, we recognize the importance of tracking student growth—academically, intellectually, and in areas of social-emotional development—to ensure our programming is responsive and impactful.

We plan to develop more consistent systems for monitoring the progress of identified AIG students, including data collection aligned to service delivery, instructional practices, and student outcomes. This information will be used to inform decisions and guide adjustments to both school-level and district-level implementation.

In addition, we aim to strengthen our advisory groups by broadening participation and creating more regular opportunities for feedback. These groups will play a key role in reviewing the AIG plan, offering input on programming, and supporting ongoing evaluation to ensure the plan continues to meet the needs of our gifted learners across grade spans.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* CCS AIG documents
* Advanced Learner Support Plan
* AIG-3 Notification of Results & Placement Letter
* Consent to Evaluate
* Consent to Serve
* CCS Gifted Education Website
* Procedures to Resolve Disagreements document
* Elementary AIG file audit

* District AIG Subgroup EVAAS data	
* District Benchmark Data	
* AIG Budget	
* 2025-2028 CCS Completed & Approved AIG Plan	
* Local AIG Plan Self-Assessments	
* 3-12 AIG Parent Survey	
* LIFT Survey: Classroom Teacher	
* List of licensed AIG Specialist	
* AIG Nomination Spreadsheets	
* Career Development Plans	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources		N/A	

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/09/2025 

AIG Related Documents

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

Glossary

Cabarrus County Schools (130) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition
ALPS	Advanced Language Placement
AMPS	Advanced Math Placement
AP	Advanced Placement
CCP	College & Career Promise
DEP	Differentiated Education Plan
GLEE	Gifted Local Endorsement for Educators
IB	International Baccalaureate
IDEP	Individualized Differentiated Education Plan
LIFT	Learning Interventions for Talented
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Support
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
SENG	Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted
SOAR	Strategies, Opportunities, Activities, Resources