

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* LEA Superintendent's Name:

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This Local AIG Plan has been developed based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide Public School Units (PSUs) to develop, implement, and monitor thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs. The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C-150.5).

These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what a PSU should have in place, and guide PSUs to improve their programs. In an effort to continue to transform AIG programs and align to the NC AIG Program Standards, each PSU has participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, involving multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process has guided PSUs in their development of this Local AIG Plan for 2025-2028. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the LEA's local Board of Education or charter school's board of directors and sent to NC DPI for review and comment.

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

* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

The Cherokee County Schools AIG program is designed to support North Carolina's vision that "Every public school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society." In alignment with Article 9B and the 2024 NC AIG Program Standards, we recognize that quality and comprehensive AIG programs are essential in supporting these goals and meeting the advanced learning needs of students, including those identified as gifted across North Carolina.

We believe that Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students deserve rigorous, differentiated, high-quality instruction all day, every day. A free appropriate public education for gifted learners means an emphasis on growth and talent development for all advanced learners. Our program aims to provide comprehensive services that develop both academic excellence and the essential competencies outlined in the North Carolina Portrait of a Graduate: adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, empathy, learner's mindset, and personal responsibility. Gifted students excel when they are welcomed, educated, and challenged amongst their peers and they deserve to learn in a school environment where they are regularly and consistently challenged to excel socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 182,346.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification	Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0
Standard 1: Student Identification <i>The LEA's student identification procedures for AIG are clear, equitable, and comprehensive and lead towards appropriate educational services.</i>	* Practice A Develops both screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels. Provides opportunities, including universal screening, for every student to show their strengths and talents. In Cherokee County Schools, we implement a universal screening process beginning in kindergarten to ensure every student has the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and talents. Our screening utilizes multiple assessment measures including mClass and iReady for K-8 students in both Reading and Math, along with BOG Reading assessments for 3rd grade, EOG assessments for grades 3-8, EOC assessments for 8th-12th grade students, PreACT assessments for 10th grade students, and ACCESS Testing for English Language Learners. This comprehensive approach ensures we capture potential giftedness across diverse student populations. In addition to universal screening, we accept nominations or referrals from teachers, parents/guardians, and students themselves throughout the school year. We recognize that no single criterion should exclude a child from identification. Our AIG Team thoroughly reviews all academic records, and when a student meets criteria, we contact the school principal and parent/guardian to obtain consent for AIG testing. Even before an official placement in the AIG program, we strive to recognize and support the learning needs of students who may not be placed in the AIG program but who demonstrate academically advanced learning by consistently outperforming their same age/ grade -level peers by at least one grade level above. This multi-faceted approach supports our commitment to identifying all students who may benefit from AIG services. Steps for Initiating a Referral for AIG testing: 1. Parents or Guardians should discuss their request with their child's classroom teacher. The teacher will review the AIG program requirements with the parent/guardian and inform the school principal of the request. 2. After a review of required placement criteria to ensure the student demonstrates advanced academic need, if deemed appropriate to proceed with the referral, the instructional staff should complete a referral request form and submit it to the school AIG liaison or AIG specialist. 3. After gathering the appropriate documentation, the AIG specialist or liaison completes the AIG request for Screening Google Form . a. Teacher Observation on gifted traits b. Academic performance measures c. Formative and/or benchmark assessment data d. EOG/BOG/EOC results e. Classroom performance and grades f. Work samples or portfolio

4. After thoroughly reviewing the referral documentation, the AIG testing coordinator will contact the parent/guardian to share the recommendation and obtain consent for AIG testing.
5. AIG committee will review nomination and supporting information.
6. Possible placement decisions by committee:
 - a. Student is recommended for placement
 - i. Placement category determined
 - i. AR--Academically Gifted in Reading
 - ii. AM--Academically Gifted in Math
 - iii. AG--Academically Gifted in Reading and Math
 - iv. AIG--Academically and Intellectually Gifted
 - v. IG--Intellectually Gifted
 - ii. Parent notification and request for conference are sent
 - iii. Initial Parent Conference for placement is held
 - i. Review of information that led to placement decision
 - ii. Development of Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)
 - iii. Parent Signatures for Permission for DEP services
 - iv. Parental Rights Documents Receipt
 - v. Contact information for Communication
 - b. Recommendation for further testing (if necessary)
 - i. Parental notifications of nomination and committee's need for additional testing
 - ii. Request for written permission for further individual testing
 - iii. Offer for Conference
 - iv. Copy of Parental Rights Document is sent
 - v. Placement committee reconvenes and decision made
 - vi. Follow-up communication to parents to request conference
 - vii. Parental Rights Documents Receipt

c. Placement on Talent Development List

- i. No parent notification necessary but recommended
- ii. Students may participate in some enrichment activities.
- iii. Nominations will be review yearly

*** 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.

Our Cherokee County Schools identification process at all grade levels provides multiple opportunities to reveal students' aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. We collect both qualitative and quantitative data to develop a comprehensive learner profile. Students may qualify for AIG services through multiple pathways, reflecting our understanding that giftedness manifests in various ways across age groups.

For Academically Gifted identification in Reading (AR), Math (AM), or both (AG), we look at performance relative to peers. In grades K-2, we consider both state-approved assessment results showing performance at least two grade levels above peers and portfolio evidence demonstrating exceptional ability. For grades 3-8, we consider Level 5 performance on state assessments along with progress monitoring showing advanced achievement. In grades 9-12, we look at similar high-level performance on state or national assessments plus progress monitoring data.

Intellectually Gifted (IG) identification applies to students in grades K-12 who score at or above the 90th percentile on a nationally recognized aptitude test. Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students demonstrate both high aptitude scores and exceptional academic performance across grade levels. This nuanced identification system allows us to recognize various forms of giftedness and provide appropriate services.

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Grade Span	Academically Gifted - Reading only	Academically Gifted - Math only	Academically Gifted - Math	Academically Gifted - Reading & Math	Intellectually Gifted	Academically and Intellectually Gifted

K-2	* Student Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading, AND a student portfolio demonstrates exceptional academic ability as measured by the Academic Product Portfolio rubric in the area of Reading Language Arts	* Student Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Math, AND a student portfolio demonstrates exceptional academic ability as measured by the Academic Product Portfolio rubric in the area of Mathematics.	* Student Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading AND Math.
3-5	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of reading AND Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of Reading and Math AND Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).	* Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test AND Student scores a level 5 on two or more state or national assessments in the area of Reading AND Math
6-8	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of reading AND Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of Reading and Math AND Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).	* Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test AND Student scores a level 5 on two or more state or national assessments in the area of Reading AND Math

9-12	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments (or a nationally normed assessment) in the area of reading, AND Student achieves consistently high academic marks (GPA 4.0 or above).	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments (or a nationally normed assessment) in the area of Math, AND Student achieves consistently high academic marks (GPA 4.0 or above).	* Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments (or a nationally normed assessment) in the area of Reading and Math, AND Student achieves consistently high academic marks (GPA 4.0 or above).	* Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test AND Student scores a level 5 on two or more state or nationally normed assessments in the area of Reading AND Math.
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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.

In Cherokee County Schools, we are committed to ensuring our screening, referral, and identification procedures respond to all students, especially those under-represented populations and reflect our demographics. We understand that some students may be overlooked due to language barriers, lack of advocacy by a parent or guardian, or not recognized as gifted due to behavior issues. Thus, our CCS AIG staff uses a more inclusive universal screening process that incorporates ACCESS data for English Language Learners, implementing talent development programming beginning in Kindergarten, and utilizing MTSS academic and behavioral data to provide more equitable identification opportunities. In Cherokee County Schools, our AIG Team is not driven to make a “quota” but dedicated to identifying as many gifted students as possible which means advocating for those who have little or no support. Historically, Cherokee County Schools has experienced little diversity with a homogeneous student population; however, our minority population has fluctuated slightly in the last several years. The current percentage of minority students in our school system is 18%. The percentage of minority students in the AIG program is currently at 12% down from 15% which was recorded during the last cycle. As noted in the Cherokee County Schools Demographic Reporting and Comparison CCS vs AIG, in most reported categories, CCS AIG is within range for proportionally representing our minority population. AIG believes we will comprehensively address student learning needs by using a more inclusive universal screening process, push-in classroom support, and the option of identification based on a portfolio submission. Using these methods, this past year, our AIG Department has already identified 115 additional students to include in our talent development program, screened 90 new students for indicators of gifted behavior, and identified 16 students who qualify for AIG services. Of these students, approximately 11.6% are minority students.

We provide professional development to classroom teachers on recognizing traits of gifted students across diverse populations, offer portfolio-based identification options for students who may not perform well on standardized measures, and regularly disaggregate data to capture students who may have been overlooked. Collaboration with Federal Programs, Exceptional Children, and English Language Learner coordinators ensures a comprehensive approach to identifying all students with gifted potential, regardless of background or barriers.

With respect to gender representation, Cherokee County Schools has a 49% to 51% (Female/Male) representation in our overall population and slight reversal in our AIG student population with 52% to 48% (Female/Male). CCS is a Title 1 district as 70% of our student population qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our recent efforts to work collaboratively with the 21st-Century After School Program will ensure that we make improved strides to provide enrichment and talent development opportunities to this targeted population.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	---	---	---	---	---	8.62%
Male	---	---	---	---	---	---	7.29%
Total	---	---	<5%	---	6.29%	---	7.93%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

* Practice D

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

The AIG Coordinator and Specialist review all student data yearly to monitor progress and identify new students. All information such as the CCS AIG Placement Rubric and Referral Process Chart is stored in a shared Google Drive accessible to all principals, AIG personnel, and teachers. Principals and district leaders receive updates during bi-annual leadership sessions, and any procedure changes are shared during monthly meetings. Our CCS AIG Specialist works closely with our AIG Liaisons to monitor data and advises the group to ensure consistent standards. Through this collaborative approach, our small district ensures consistent implementation of identification processes across all schools.

* Practice E

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

Information regarding screening, referral, and identification processes is disseminated through multiple channels. In Cherokee County Schools, we offer a small stipend to school liaisons to ensure AIG has a professional presence at each school. These AIG Liaisons play a major part in maintaining open communication with principals, teachers, parents, and students about AIG processes as well make contributions to the district's quarterly update/newsletter and maintain their school's social media page.

The district website provides comprehensive AIG information that is readily accessible to all stakeholders. Student handbooks include screening and referral flowcharts to ensure clarity of process. A Canva Presentation is shared with teachers and administrators to help promote the identification of Gifted Learners.

Our AIG specialists maintain an active social media presence at both school and district levels to keep the community informed about AIG opportunities. Quarterly newsletters provide updates on the program, and translated materials are made available upon request to ensure all families can access important information. Through these varied communication methods, we ensure that all stakeholders understand the pathways to AIG identification and services.

*** 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.

For each student considered for AIG placement, we carefully document the evidence gathering and analysis process. This documentation includes assessment results, portfolio evaluations, teacher observations, and other relevant data that supports identification decisions. All documentation is reviewed with parents/guardians to ensure transparency and maintained in student records for future reference. This thorough documentation process supports appropriate educational planning and ensures consistency in identification procedures.

Student placement process

- Instructional staff reviews, gathers required documentation, and contacts the school principal and the AIG Liaison or Specialist to refer a student for AIG testing* (in universal screening years, the AIG specialist will review criteria)
- After thoroughly reviewing the referral documentation, the AIG Liaison or Specialist notifies the parent/guardian to schedule a meeting to discuss the student's referral, provides information regarding AIG testing, and requests consent for AIG testing.
- With collected parent/guardian consent, the AIG specialist will work with the school testing coordinator to schedule a time for the AIG assessment and notify the parents/guardians of the scheduled testing date.
- After all assessments are complete, the AIG Testing Coordinator will contact parent/guardian to schedule a meeting to discuss findings. If appropriate, a recommended placement based on the AIG Placement Criteria by Service Area for Advanced Academic and Intellectual Learners will be made and a service plan information packet for parents/guardians will be developed.
- Based on input from the teacher, parents/guardians, and AIG Program Plan criteria, the AIG Specialist will record the student's placement category and document the student's DEP plan in Infinite Campus.

*** 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.

For each identified AIG student, we develop a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) that articulates the curriculum and instruction services matching their specific needs. DEPs are developed based on assessment data, academic records, teacher observations, and learning style inventories gathered from both students and parents. These plans are developed and/or reviewed annually with parents/guardians in scheduled conferences and modified as needed to ensure effective programming. Our AIG Specialist includes a Progress Report with the student's regular report card on the progress made towards the student's DEP as well as any suggestions or comments.

For students transitioning to high school, the AIG Specialist and/or Liaison integrate a 4-year regular program of study or 3-year accelerated plan into the High School DEP. This forward-looking approach ensures continuity of services throughout the student's educational journey and supports successful transitions between school levels.

All student related documentation is maintained in Infinite Campus by our AIG Team as well as in the SchoolNet Learning Plan section. The latter allows teachers and AIG personnel to share specific student strengths and potential barriers, shared goals, and comments in regards to a student's learning needs

and interests.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

NA

Planned Sources of Evidence

* CCS AIG Referral Process and Screening Rubric	
* CCS AIG Screening Request Form	
* CCS Demographics Sheet	
* CCS >Student Services>Academically and Intellectually Gifted>Canva AIG Service Presentation Link	
* AIG Student/Parent Handbook	
* CCS AIG Data Review (Admin & District staff)	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A		 Portrait of a Graduate Website

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

Cherokee County Schools (200) 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.

Our Cherokee County Schools program provides comprehensive services addressing academic and intellectual needs through a continuum of options across grade levels. At all grade levels (K-12), we support cluster grouping of AIG students to create opportunities for collaboration among intellectual peers. Teachers receive supplemental resources to support academic acceleration, allowing students to move quickly through required curriculum content to access more advanced material. Shifting the mindset away from the "one-size-fits-all" model, our multi-level and multi-dimensional curriculum provides lessons and activities that extend learning opportunities for advanced learners. Cherokee County Schools uses the MTSS to ensure that our AIG population receives interventions that meet their needs as well as to aid in meeting eligibility requirements of those potential gifted learners.

For elementary students (K-5), we offer access to an AIG and Advanced Learners Canvas course containing state-designed AIG Learning Labs and project-based learning resources. Curriculum Engineers (Instructional Coaches) support teachers in differentiating instruction and developing appropriate interventions to meet each student's needs. Our AIG Specialist provides small group face-to-face and virtual "pull-out" opportunities to engage in problem-solving academics as well as supporting opportunities for students to pursue independent projects based upon their individual interest.

Middle school students (6-8) receive academic advisory services from school-level AIG liaisons supported by guidance counselors and career coordinators. Qualified students may enroll in Advanced Math courses based on EOG performance and teacher recommendations. Eighth grade students may earn high school credit through courses like Math 1, Earth & Environmental Science, and World History, laying the foundation for accelerated high school pathways.

High school students (9-12) have access to Honors and Advanced Placement courses. Credit by Demonstrated Mastery options, and virtual school classes through Cherokee County Virtual School or North Carolina Virtual Public School. Eligible students may also participate in dual enrollment with community colleges. This comprehensive approach ensures challenging academic experiences throughout a student's educational journey.

Our AIG Team offers additional support to general education teachers and administrators through professional development and coaching tailored to best practices in teaching gifted students as well as practices on increasing engagement and rigor in the classroom. Grant provided STEAM activities are offered to enhance Science and Math classrooms to engage and meet the needs of our AIG population.

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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 Cherokee County Schools, we recognize that gifted students often have unique social and emotional needs requiring deliberate support. Our AIG liaisons monitor students' areas of interest and progress toward personal goals, as well as their classroom behavior and social-emotional development. Monthly wellness checks conducted with students individually or in small groups provide opportunities for students to discuss their progress, revise goals, and address any social-emotional concerns they may be experiencing.

Our AIG staff communicates regularly with school counselors to ensure students receive support from various stakeholders. We have developed partnerships with community organizations focusing on leadership and service, recognizing that service is an integral component of leadership, emotional efficacy, and intelligence. Student-centered community-building activities using Restorative Practice "Circles" allow students to share feelings and voice concerns in a supportive environment. Through these varied approaches, we address the whole child, not just academic achievement.

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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.

Our Cherokee County Schools AIG program connects with district priorities through intentional collaboration with various departments. We support Learning Focused district goals through curriculum alignment and extension opportunities. By working with Testing and Accountability, we access data that helps identify students with advanced potential and monitor their progress. Partnerships with Curriculum and Digital Teaching/Learning/STEM departments allow us to provide enrichment opportunities that support district initiatives.

AIG liaisons serve on MTSS committees to ensure that the needs of advanced learners are not overlooked in the intervention planning process. We also work closely with Career and Technical Education to increase student access to career and future-ready skill development. This integrated approach ensures that AIG services support and enhance district-wide educational goals while meeting the specific needs of gifted learners.

AIG Team members often participate in District/School Improvement Team meetings to provide recommendations and ensure that the needs of our AIG students are being addressed.

*** Practice D**

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

In Cherokee County Schools, we implement intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG and other students with advanced learning needs. Following a Blended Learning model, we utilize EVAAS growth predictions to create a 5-level grouping system that supports

differentiated instruction. Classroom teaching is designed to meet the accelerated learning components of content standards and address the specific needs of advanced learners. When appropriate, AIG and advanced learners receive access to accelerated content through curriculum compacting, honors course options, and advanced course placement. Additionally, AIG students have opportunities to work with intellectual peers on enrichment activities provided by the AIG specialist. At all levels, there is time built into the master schedule that allows for intervention and enrichment (MTSS Interventions, Club or Choice Time, SMART time). This flexible approach allows for targeted instruction based on student readiness rather than a one-size-fits-all model.	* 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.	In Cherokee County Schools, we ensure that all teachers, administrators, and support staff are informed about differentiated services for AIG students. Information about the AIG program is shared during district principal and administrator meetings, through a shared Google Team Drive containing AIG plans and resources, and via the district website. A Canva Presentation is shared during these meetings and can also be found on the Cherokee County Schools website. This common language and resource sharing creates a unified understanding of how to support gifted learners across all schools. The AIG Team provides annual updates to schools and classroom teachers regarding AIG identification and instructional adaptation resources. New information is shared as students are identified or as program changes occur. Through these communication channels, we build capacity among all educational staff to meet the needs of gifted learners in various settings.	* Practice F Communicates among and between teachers and schools to ensure an effective continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points. To ensure effective continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points, we have established clear communication systems between schools and grade levels. During transition years, the AIG Coordinator and Specialist meet with next-level administrators and liaisons as well as ML and EC teachers to exchange information and planning documents. This process includes sharing lists of identified AIG students and making recommendations for services and class assignments. All AIG information is housed in a Google Shared Drive accessible to administrators, teachers, and liaisons at all times. Student data such as eligibility, DEP, portfolio, and any communication regarding the student's academic, intellectual, and/or social and emotional needs can be easily accessed in the Google Drive. This centralized information system ensures that student needs are communicated clearly as they progress through their educational journey. The consistent documentation and communication process supports smooth transitions and continuity of appropriate services. When a student transfers in/out of Cherokee County Schools, our school liaisons or AIG Specialist will communicate with the other school to ensure the continuity of AIG services.
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*** 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.

In Cherokee County Schools, we offer a variety of acceleration opportunities for students who demonstrate readiness for advanced content. Compacted content differentiation with vertical standard alignment allows students to progress through curriculum at an accelerated pace. Qualified 6th and 7th grade students may enroll in Advanced Math courses based on EOG performance and teacher recommendations. Eighth grade students may take high school credit courses including Math 1, Earth & Environmental Science, and World History.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery options are available during both Fall and Spring testing windows for students who want to accelerate in specific subject areas. Advanced, Honors, and AP courses are offered in face-to-face and virtual formats to provide academic challenges. In exceptional circumstances, grade-skipping or subject acceleration may be considered based on comprehensive assessment of intellectual ability, academic need, and social-emotional readiness. These varied acceleration pathways allow us to match services to individual student needs. Cherokee County Schools offers digital learning tools such as Edmentum, iReady Math and Reading, IXL, and NC Virtual School courses to provide student opportunities for accelerated learning.

Grade-Skipping or Subject Acceleration, in exceptional circumstances students at any grade-level may be considered for grade-skipping or subject acceleration based on tested intellectual ability and academic need.

Early Admission to Kindergarten packets are available on our district website as well as at our central office for those parents seeking information on sending their potentially gifted learner to school early.

The Accelerated Pathway to Graduation (3-Year plan) information is shared with school counselors, administrators, and students. For those students interested in graduating in three years, regardless of AIG classification, a plan is developed with all parties (student, parent/guardian, and school personnel) to ensure student success and needs are met. The plan is revisited every grading period to assure the student is still on track to graduate in three years or to make any necessary adjustments.

The School Admin can make an administrative decision to accelerate a student based upon the available data and student interest.

- CCS Acceleration Criteria
 - 99%ile composite score on standardized aptitude
 - 99%ile composite score on standardized achievement tests in both reading and math
 - Work Sample Portfolio demonstrating mastery in reading and math
 - Social and emotional maturity is demonstrated by IOWA Acceleration Guide.
 - Independent learner in school environment
 - Teacher recommendation
 - AIG Specialist recommendation

• Parent support and recommendation	
* Practice H Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students with early intervention and talent development opportunities through purposeful and intentional programming.	In Cherokee County Schools, we cultivate the potential of young K-3 students through early intervention and talent development opportunities. These young learners receive adapted instruction, resources, and materials with a focus on cluster grouping and targeted pull-out enrichment. Our talent development program allows AIG specialists to work with students and teachers on developing Higher Order Thinking, Creativity, and Critical Thinking skills that foster intellectual curiosity and love of learning. Programs such as Primary Education Thinking Skills, early digital learning experiences, citizenship development, and introductory coding and robotics challenge students to think creatively and develop foundational skills for future success. This early nurturing approach helps us identify and develop talent before formal AIG identification typically occurs.
* 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.	In Cherokee County Schools, we promote equity and excellence by broadening access to advanced learning opportunities for all students. The AIG specialist regularly works with classroom teachers to design curriculum-aligned, project-based learning activities that introduce advanced content to all students. These "push-in" learning events demonstrate that all students have capacity for higher-level thinking and help identify students who might benefit from talent development services. We also utilize our "WIN" time to provide additional learning experiences that give students an opportunity to develop their talents. Our district supports an Early College program where students receive rigorous instruction leading to both a high school diploma and associate degree or transferable college credit. The College and Career Promise program offers tuition-free college courses to qualified high school students with early access to AIG students . Advanced math pathways begin in middle school, with students who score a level 5 on EOGs being offered advanced coursework. Through these varied approaches, we cultivate talent across the student population while providing appropriate challenges for identified gifted students. Criteria for Talent Development In Cherokee County Schools, we use data obtained from a variety of sources to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities with a concentration on reaching those underrepresented populations. Students who perform or who are predicted to perform at least one grade level above their same age/grade level peers will be included in our talent development program and will receive targeted support services to cultivate and develop academic and intellectual talent abilities. These students will be included in AIG enrichment activities. Cherokee County Schools students have had the opportunity to participate in programs like Battle of the Books and Odyssey of the Mind as well as the Summer Bridge Academies. Our middle schools offer a "Boot Camp" for those upcoming 6th graders to help orientate the new environment as well as expectations. During this time, our students are informed of all advanced opportunities available in middle school.

* Practice J Enhances and further develops the talents and interests of AIG students through extra-curricular programming during and outside of the school day.		
In Cherokee County Schools, we enhance student talents through various extracurricular opportunities during and outside the school day. Partnerships with school clubs, Career and Technical Education, STEM programs, and Safe and Healthy Schools initiatives provide enrichment beyond the regular curriculum. Community service learning opportunities allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world situations while developing leadership capabilities.		
We collaborate with local arts organizations like the Murphy Arts Council, Murphy School of Dance, and the John C. Campbell Folk School to offer artistic enrichment. STEM/STAC, SmartTank, and Science Olympiad programs provide outlets for scientific exploration and innovation. Through these varied extracurricular offerings, students can pursue passions, develop talents, and connect with like-minded peers outside the regular school day.		
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard		
NA		
Planned Sources of Evidence		
* Liaison Responsibilities Document		
* CDM Documentation		
* IOWA Acceleration Guide		

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction	
Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction	<i>The LEA employs challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum and instruction to accommodate a range of academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of K-12 gifted learners.</i>
* Practice A Adapts the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-12 to address a range of advanced ability levels in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas as appropriate by differentiating curriculum and instruction, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration strategies. In Cherokee County Schools, we believe AIG services should be integrated within the regular classroom and through extension opportunities. Our district offers compacted math curriculum and academic acceleration through Honors, AP, and College and Career Preparatory courses. Teachers receive supplemental resources that allow students to move quickly through required content to access more advanced material and cross-curricular investigations. Additionally, in our K-8 grades our Math and Reading program allow for personalized accelerated and differentiated learning pathways based upon each student's needs. Co-teaching opportunities demonstrate highly effective practices and establish supportive partnerships for AIG students. Our multi-level curriculum provides activities that extend learning opportunities for advanced learners. As a Learning Focused district, we have developed standards-aligned pacing guides that include vertical alignment to address differences in learning rate, depth, and pace. The AIG Specialist supports flexible approaches to curriculum, providing problem-solving academic opportunities through both face-to-face and virtual sessions. In pull-out learning groups, the AIG Specialist supports opportunities for students to pursue independent projects based on their own individual interests. Independent projects encourage creativity and original thinking among gifted students. The AIG Specialist also provides and hosts opportunities for students to participate in academic contests and extracurricular activities that involve academic skills. Our AIG Team and Curriculum Engineers work closely with the general education classroom teachers to provide support on enriching, extending, and/or accelerating the NCSCoS for AIG students.	
* Practice B Uses students' identified abilities, readiness, and interests to address a range of learning needs K-12. Following research-based recommendations from NCDPI's Digital Teaching and Learning division, Cherokee County Schools employ a personalized approach to learning. This approach incorporates Learner Profiles through platforms like SchoolNet, IXL, and iReady to document students' skills, interests, and potential barriers. Individual Learning Pathways outlined in Differentiated Education Plans help teachers customize instruction to match student needs and preferences. Flexible Learning Environments, including virtual options through Cherokee County Virtual School and North Carolina Virtual Public School, allow students to access courses that might not otherwise be available in our rural district. As we continue developing our program, we plan to incorporate Competency Based Progression as an option for students to demonstrate mastery and advance at their own pace. This personalized approach honors the individual nature of giftedness while ensuring appropriate academic challenges.	

*** Practice C**

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

In collaboration with Cherokee County Schools curriculum, accountability, and digital teaching and learning departments, we implement evidence-based resources that enhance differentiated learning. Our current mathematics curriculum (ReadyMath and EnVisions) and English Language Arts curriculum (Wit and Wisdom) are designed to support diverse learners, including those with advanced abilities. Digital programs such as ActivelyLearn, NoRedInk, iReady, Plasma Games, and IXL provide adaptive content that responds to student performance.

We encourage teachers to utilize Quantile and Lexile Frameworks to understand assessment measures, gain insight into individual learning needs, and provide appropriately leveled materials. The integration of ISTE standards encourages teachers to consider how students think about and communicate their learning, promoting student ownership of the learning process. These varied resources support differentiation and provide multiple entry points for advanced content exploration.

Quantile

The Quantile Teacher Assistant and the Quantile Math Skills Database is used to understand and leverage the interconnectedness of the math standards in order best to meet the learning needs of the advanced learner. The Math Skills Database helps teachers dig deeply into their focus standards and locate resources to support student learning. The Quantile Teacher Assistant provides teachers with an adjustable quantile range for each state standard, thus enabling teachers at all levels to understand how to best support and extend the learning for their advanced learners. The Quantile Teacher Assistant also links teachers to resources that enable them to customize their instruction based on student needs.

Lexile

The Lexile framework is used to help students locate books of interest, analyze the Lexile level of classroom texts, and locate an appropriate interest level book using the Lexile codes. The Lexile framework also aids teachers in extending student learning by helping teachers build customized summer reading lists and guiding students to take ownership of their reading choices.

AIG support personnel, including school-based liaisons, will work with grade-level/subject-specific teams and the MTSS teams at their schools to explore recommended resources, inventory current curriculum resources to determine how to best meet the needs of our advanced learners, and reflect upon and research potential programs that may enhance our current programs to meet the needs of their current population.

In Cherokee County Schools, we address the social-emotional needs of gifted students through integrated approaches that recognize the interconnectedness of academic learning and emotional well-being. Partnerships with Safe and Healthy Schools provide resources for overall wellness and opportunities for students to contribute as youth advisors. Our AIG liaisons maintain information about community resources that support student well-being.

Our AIG Team and liaisons meet regularly with the school counselors to access resources and strategies for addressing student needs. We create a visible presence during school transition events (5th to 6th grade and 8th to 9th grade), providing information about resources and opportunities for advanced learners. A digital resource library offers teachers materials specifically aligned to social, emotional, and academic goals for gifted students. This comprehensive approach supports the development of well-adjusted, emotionally healthy gifted learners.

*** 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.

Cherokee County Schools AIG partners with the Digital Teaching and Learning (DTL) Program to encourage the integration of the PPRC framework into classroom instruction. The PPRC framework for CCS schools guides teachers in planning lessons incorporating Personalized, Progressive, Real-World, and Collaborative learning throughout the instructional day. In this planning cycle, we are beginning to build more partnerships with our stakeholders both within and outside of the school system. Our AIG Team works more closely with the DTL program to incorporate a comprehensive SEL program within the digital citizenship units included in each virtual course.

In Cherokee County Schools, we intentionally foster the essential competencies outlined in the North Carolina Portrait of a Graduate as well as the seven ISTE standards. Through deliberate attention to these competencies, we prepare gifted students, at all levels, not just for academic success but for life beyond the classroom.

In our Learning Focused classroom environments as well as student driven clubs such as Odyssey of the Mind, Lego League (Robotics), and SMART Tank provide opportunities for students to:

- Develop adaptability through experiences that require agility in thought processes, accepting feedback, and demonstrating flexibility in challenging situations. (Empowered Learner)
- Collaboration skills grow as students contribute to group goals, leverage strengths to resolve conflicts, and interact respectfully in various settings both inside and outside the classroom. (Global Collaborator)
- Communication skills are enhanced through opportunities to articulate ideas effectively, listen for understanding, and engage in productive discourse. (Creative Communicator)
- Critical thinking develops as students analyze and assess information, evaluate solutions to problems, and implement creative improvements. (Computational Thinker)
- We nurture empathy through activities that demonstrate understanding and respect for diverse perspectives.
- A learner's mindset is cultivated by encouraging curiosity, embracing challenges, and developing positive attitudes about learning.
- Personal responsibility grows as students adhere to core values, recognize how their actions impact others, and take ownership of their decisions.

In addition, our AIG Team is working to develop a partnership with our CTE department, particularly with our Middle and High School Career Development Coordinators, to provide opportunities for our academically advanced students. AIG plans to take a more active role in supporting the talent development and real-world preparation our students need to be successful throughout their time with CCS and after high school. Plans with our CTE department, NCWorks Career Development Center, and Tri-County Community College will offer opportunities to increase student curiosity and interest in emerging career pathways for our Middle and High School students. These activities will include opportunities to learn more about community planning and to participate in community enrichment events.

*** Practice E**

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

In Cherokee County Schools, we use ongoing assessment to guide instruction and inform flexible grouping practices. Our district implements iReady progress monitoring for Reading and Math in grades K-8 and Edmentum's Exact Path for grades 9-12. These adaptive tools provide personalized practice and

acceleration opportunities. State Check-ins for Reading, Math, and Science help identify learning gaps and acceleration needs. Curriculum Associates iReady program provides a plethora of tools that aid the teachers in intervention, enrichment, and differentiation. The Standards Mastery and Comprehension Checks allow the teacher to use the Pre-Assessment data to drive the instruction and create cluster groups to meet all students needs. District testing reports help us identify students with advanced potential and inform flexible grouping. The Academic Achievement Chart with EVAAS growth predictions helps teachers understand expected proficiency levels for advanced learners and assess whether students are making adequate progress. Including AIG representatives in MTSS meetings ensures that the specific growth needs of advanced learners are considered in instructional planning. This data-informed approach allows us to match instruction to student readiness levels. Our AIG Coordinator, in collaboration with our Instructional Coaches, encourage teachers to utilize the Lexile/Quantile charts to promote achievement level material as well as monitor the growth of our AIG students. We understand that “iron sharpens iron”. To accomplish growth in AIG students, they must be given the necessary tools based upon their achievement levels as well as time to collaborate with peers.	* Practice F Collaborates with a variety of personnel, based on student needs, to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction. In Cherokee County Schools, we develop and implement differentiated curriculum through collaboration with various stakeholders. An AIG representative (Coordinator, Specialist, Liaison) regularly participates in MTSS meetings at each school, providing data, guidance, and resources to support advanced learners. Through collaborative planning, teachers, parents, and specialists design instruction to meet individual intellectual and academic needs. During PLCs or MTSS meetings, our AIG Team members work in collaboration with the Instructional Coaches to provide teachers with resources, model rigorous lessons, and share best practices designed to challenge gifted learners. Additionally, we provide funding for substitute teachers to allow regular classroom teachers time for professional development related to gifted education. Working with curriculum, digital teaching and learning, and exceptional children's departments, we create comprehensive supports for twice-exceptional learners and others with specific needs. This collaborative approach ensures that differentiation occurs across learning environments and addresses the full range of student needs.				
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard	NA				
Planned Sources of Evidence	<table> <tr> <td data-bbox="1323 63 1421 2037">* AIG Canvas Course</td><td data-bbox="1421 63 1531 2037"></td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1323 2037 1421 2089">* CCS Facebook</td><td data-bbox="1421 2037 1531 2089"></td></tr> </table>	* AIG Canvas Course		* CCS Facebook	
* AIG Canvas Course					
* CCS Facebook					

Type	Documents	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	 CCS AIG Plan 2025-2028 Board Approved

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	
Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	
<i>The LEA recruits and retains highly qualified professionals and provides relevant and effective professional development concerning the diverse needs of gifted learners that is ongoing and comprehensive.</i>	
* Practice A Employs an AIG-licensed educator as lead coordinator to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. Cherokee County Schools employs an AIG-licensed coordinator who provides leadership for the program at all levels. The coordinator holds a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, a K-12 principal's license, and AIG certification. This leadership position involves monitoring program implementation, participating in professional development opportunities, developing identification processes, and maintaining appropriate documentation of student services. The coordinator provides resources to support educators in meeting the needs of advanced learners, develops partnerships with stakeholders, and evaluates program effectiveness. Through these varied responsibilities, the coordinator ensures that the AIG program maintains high-quality services aligned with state standards and local needs.	
* 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. In Cherokee County Schools, we currently employ one AIG-licensed specialist who directly addresses the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of K-12 gifted learners. Our specialist implements the AIG Program according to the district plan, coordinates the identification process, and consults with school teams on appropriate programming for individual students. Our AIG Specialist, together with the AIG Coordinator, develops deep knowledge of curriculum to support differentiation and provide professional learning opportunities for teachers. Our AIG specialists: ▪ use data to guide instruction, collaborate with school-based liaisons, and maintain communication with all stakeholders. ▪ organize enrichment activities and showcase opportunities for AIG students via social media, newsletters, and local newspaper. ▪ Through weekly visits to schools, specialists provide direct services to students and support for classroom teachers, creating a consistent presence across the district. ▪ Maintains regular communication with AIG students and Parents ▪ Promotes and supports gifted programs such as Governor's Schools, STEM Competitions, and NCSSM	

*** 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 Cherokee County Schools, we establish professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services. Annual professional development is required for staff working with AIG students, with content addressing identification procedures, differentiation strategies, and social-emotional needs. We provide self-guided options through iReady, NCEES, and NCDPI allowing teachers to access training when it fits their schedule. Study.Com is also available to those teachers seeking courses dedicated to Gifted Learners such as "Using Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom," "Teaching Gifted Students," "Implementing Competency-Based Education," or "Using Data for Improvement."

AIG staff meetings include data review and "booster shot" training to address specific program needs. Liaisons and specialists must complete continuing education in gifted education each year. Through collaborative planning with other district departments, we ensure that professional development aligns with broader educational goals while addressing the specific needs of gifted learners.

*** 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.

In Cherokee County Schools, we provide services through personnel with appropriate qualifications and preparation. When possible, AIG-licensed teachers provide direct services to gifted students. School administrators create cluster grouping arrangements to ensure time for academic exploration and effective instruction. Liaisons and counselors guide students toward appropriate academic offerings and provide support for social-emotional development.

The school MTSS team monitors student placement and progress, with an AIG representative serving as a consultant to ensure that gifted learners' needs are addressed. Staff members are encouraged to pursue AIG certification, with resources provided to support this professional growth. This multi-faceted approach ensures that qualified professionals deliver appropriate services across all schools.

*** Practice E**

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

With limited funding, we have creatively expanded our AIG presence in Cherokee County Schools by offering stipends to school-level personnel who serve as AIG liaisons. These liaisons maintain communication with principals, teachers, parents, and students regarding AIG services. They monitor student progress, distribute program information, and serve as advocates for gifted learners at their schools.

Newly certified AIG staff receive recognition through the superintendent's report at board meetings, acknowledging their commitment to professional growth. We provide resources and encouragement for teachers interested in pursuing AIG certification, building capacity throughout the district to serve gifted learners effectively.

WRESA has added an AIG Credential Course where teachers will review and understand their own district-specific Academically/Intellectually Gifted Services Plans. Educators learn how to recognize the characteristics of gifted learners and understand their unique learning needs as well as learn more about differentiation strategies for the regular classroom. Our AIG department funds any general education teacher who wants to attend this 2 day workshop.

AIG Liaison Job Description

Nature of Work

The AIG Liaison works under the general supervision of the AIG Coordinator and performs a variety of professional work to address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of all gifted learners. In addition, this individual will support the AIG students at the school level and coordinate with the objectives and goals of the AIG Director and the AIG program.

Key Responsibilities

- Maintain regular communication with AIG students and families (at least one per month)
- Distribute and collect AIG documents and paperwork
- Monitor and document the AIG students:
 - Academic goals and progress (benchmarks, grades, etc.)
 - Classroom behavior and social/emotional development
 - Areas of interest and progress toward personal goals
 - Career and college plans and objectives (cfnc.org)
- Develop relationships with local stakeholders and seek out opportunities for AIG students and families
- Meet with principals and school guidance counselors to determine school needs in regards to the AIG program areas.
- Communicate weekly with teachers of AIG students to ensure system-wide implementation of the local AIG plan and accountability of the AIG program.
- Conduct weekly checks with school guidance counselors for updates on scholarships, internships, and or other potential opportunities for AIG students
- Communicate learning and experiential opportunities with AIG students and families
- Share noteworthy events and opportunities with the AIG Coordinator or Specialist and maintain a social media presence, along with a regular update/newsletter for the school's AIG program and activities.
- Organize, prepare and/or attend key AIG events and stakeholder meetings
- Serve on the Advisory Committee for AIG.
- Coordinate/disseminate routine surveys to program participants and stakeholders.

* Practice F Provides focused professional learning opportunities to realize equity and excellence in gifted education including changing mindsets, policies, and practices.	
In Cherokee County Schools, we provide professional learning focused on equity and excellence in gifted education. The NCDPI's Educational Equity and Significant Disproportionality Webinar Series offers resources for addressing representation issues in gifted programs. Through this professional development, we aim to change mindsets, policies, and practices that may create barriers to identification and service for underrepresented populations. Training helps teachers recognize and develop talent in students from all backgrounds, particularly those who may not display traditional indicators of giftedness. This equity focus supports our goal of creating a more inclusive program that reflects the diversity of our student population.	
* 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.	
In Cherokee County Schools, we align professional development with local program goals, district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education. Our Study.com account and other online professional development resources provide just-in-time training on topics such as differentiation, teaching gifted students, competency-based education, and data analysis. These resources support district strategic goals related to data-informed instruction, curriculum implementation, and multi-tiered support systems. AIG representatives participate in district leadership planning through Indistar, collaborating with other departments to design professional development that aligns with both district and AIG initiatives. Through this integrated approach, we ensure that professional learning supports broad educational goals while addressing the specific needs of gifted learners.	
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard	
NA	
Planned Sources of Evidence	
* **Cherokee Scout Newspaper Articles * CCS Websites	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources		N/A	
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Standard 5: Partnerships	
Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 5: Partnerships <i>The LEA ensures ongoing and meaningful participation of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the local AIG program to develop strong partnerships.</i>	* Practice A Develops intentional, two-way partnerships with parents/guardians to support the following needs of AIG students: ▪ academic and intellectual ▪ social and emotional. In Cherokee County Schools, we develop intentional partnerships with parents and guardians to support the comprehensive needs of gifted learners. To address academic and intellectual needs, our AIG Specialist and Liaisons use a variety of methods (Class Dojo, email, Progress Reports, Messenger, Phone Call, etc.) to maintain regular communication about student progress, provide resources for extending learning at home, and share information about curriculum and acceleration options. This collaboration ensures that parents understand their child's academic program and can support learning beyond the school day. For social and emotional support, our AIG Team members offer guidance on understanding the unique characteristics of gifted learners, including perfectionism, asynchronous development, and intellectual intensity. Regular communication about student interests and goals helps create a unified approach to supporting the whole child. Through these varied partnership efforts, we create a supportive network that enhances the effectiveness of our AIG program.
* 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.	In Cherokee County Schools, we collaborate with community stakeholders to enhance and support our AIG program. ▪ Working with Safe and Healthy Schools, we develop community outreach initiatives that allow students to apply their talents to address local needs. ▪ Partnerships with career coordinators and our community college create opportunities for internships and advanced coursework that prepare students for future careers. ▪ The 21st Century Afterschool Program offers enrichment activities that support talent development, particularly for underrepresented students. ▪ Our Parent Advisory committee helps plan social events that bring together gifted students from across the district.

▪ Collaboration with the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce provides opportunities for students to learn about business leadership and community development. ▪ Partnerships with WRESA, Cherokee Preservation Foundation, and Tennessee Valley Authority ▪ There is a saying we have in Cherokee County, “We are about 2-hours from anywhere.” Our closest NC University, Western NC University (WCU) as well as several local colleges from Georgia and Tennessee offer access to cultural and academic experiences that enrich our program. Our AIG students are provided access to plays, concerts, guest speakers, and summer experiences. These varied partnerships extend learning beyond the classroom and connect students with real-world applications of their talents.	* 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. In Cherokee County Schools, we have established an advisory group representing the diverse populations of our district to guide program development and implementation. This group includes community members, parents of AIG students, AIG teachers, and other instructional support staff who bring varied perspectives to program planning. The advisory group meets regularly to discuss program implementation, provide feedback on current services, and contribute to plan revisions. Our members advocate for gifted education in the community and help communicate program goals and achievements to various stakeholder groups. Through active participation in this advisory group, stakeholders have meaningful input into the direction and improvement of our AIG program.
* 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.	In Cherokee County Schools, we inform all stakeholders about our AIG program through various communication channels. The district website provides access to the Local AIG Plan, program services information, policies related to advanced learning, and opportunities available to AIG students. Student handbooks include key information about the program and how to access services. We maintain an active social media presence that promotes events and opportunities for gifted learners. Our automated call system and translated materials ensure that information reaches all families, regardless of language barriers. School liaisons and teachers maintain regular contact with students and parents to discuss progress and share potential opportunities. Through these varied communication methods, we ensure that all stakeholders understand and can access the services available through our AIG program.

Standard 6: Program Accountability	
Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 6: Program Accountability <i>The LEA implements, monitors, and evaluates the local AIG program and plan to ensure that all programs and services are effective in meeting the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.</i>	
* Practice A Develops a written AIG plan to describe the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy (N.C.G.S. §115C-150.5-.8 {Article 9B}), based on a comprehensive program evaluation. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.	In Cherokee County Schools, we develop our AIG plan in accordance with Article 9B legislation and State Board of Education policy. Based on comprehensive program evaluation that includes input from various stakeholders, the plan articulates our vision for serving gifted learners across the district. Following approval by the Cherokee County Schools Board of Education, the plan is submitted to the NC State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction for review and comment. Our AIG plan serves as a roadmap for program implementation over a three-year cycle, guiding all aspects of identification, service delivery, professional development, and evaluation. The structured planning process includes: ▪ Feedback from stakeholders (AIG Team, Parents/Guardians, Students, Teachers, etc.) - review of old plan and suggestions for improvement; ▪ A Timeline for completion in order to meet the July deadline ▪ A method for communicating updates to all stakeholders during the revision process (share Google Drive with access to plan as it develops) ensures that our program meets both state requirements and local needs. Our plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and revised as necessary to meet the needs of our AIG population.
* 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.	In Cherokee County Schools, we monitor the implementation of our AIG program through regular review of procedures and outcomes. Annual stakeholder surveys (Google Forms) provide feedback on program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. School-level communication channels ensure that implementation concerns are addressed promptly and that successful practices are shared across the district. Regular reporting to district leadership keeps administrators informed about program progress and needs. Through these monitoring processes, we ensure consistent implementation of our AIG plan and make adjustments as needed to improve service delivery.

* 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. In Cherokee County Schools, our district develops and monitors the AIG budget to ensure appropriate use of allotted state funds. Based on current funding formulas, approximately 75% of our budget supports personnel costs, including the AIG coordinator, specialist, and school liaisons. About 10% is dedicated to professional development resources and opportunities, while the remaining 15% funds materials and services for students. This careful allocation ensures that resources support the full implementation of our AIG plan in accordance with state policy. Regular budget reviews allow for adjustments based on changing needs and priorities throughout the school year.	
* 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. In Cherokee County Schools, we maintain and analyze multiple sources of student data to monitor program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. ▪ EVAAS provides achievement and growth measures that are disaggregated by demographics to ensure equitable outcomes for all student groups. ▪ Annual dropout data for AIG students helps us identify potential risk factors and develop preventive strategies. ▪ Career and College Promise (CCP) AIG enrollment is monitored as well as the number of students who are earning Associates Degrees during their highschool years. ▪ The MTSS process includes review of advanced learners who may not be achieving at expected levels, with AIG representatives providing guidance on appropriate interventions. Progress toward expected growth targets is monitored to ensure that gifted students continue to make academic gains appropriate to their abilities. ▪ This comprehensive data analysis informs program adjustments and helps us advocate for resources to address identified needs.	
* 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. In Cherokee County Schools, we regularly analyze program demographics to ensure proportional representation across all student groups. During the current plan cycle, we will create demographic reports and use EVAAS predictions to identify potential candidates for talent development and screening. This approach has already identified additional students for talent development opportunities and AIG testing, with approximately 11.6% representing minority populations. Our analysis extends beyond racial and ethnic representation to consider economic status, English language proficiency, twice-exceptionality, and gender balance. ▪ CCS is a Title 1 district as 70% of our student population qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our recent efforts to work collaboratively with the 21st-Century After School Program will ensure that we make improved strides to provide enrichment and talent development opportunities to this targeted population.	

▪ Our EL Coordinator works collaboratively with the Curriculum and AIG Director to identify students. ▪ With respect to gender representation, Cherokee County Schools has a 49% to 51% (Female/Male) representation in our overall population and slight reversal in our AIG student population with 52% to 48% (Female/Male). Through careful monitoring and intentional outreach, we work to create a program that reflects the diversity of our student population and provides equitable access to advanced learning opportunities.	
* 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 Cherokee County Schools, we maintain current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students through our district licensure directory. This information helps us match qualified teachers with gifted learners and identify areas where additional professional development or certification may be needed. The data also guides recruitment efforts and professional growth opportunities for staff interested in gifted education. By monitoring personnel qualifications, we ensure that our AIG program is delivered by educators with appropriate preparation and understanding of gifted learners' needs. This attention to personnel quality supports effective program implementation across all schools.	
* 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. In Cherokee County Schools, we elicit regular feedback from all stakeholders to guide program improvement. Surveys collect input from students, parents, teachers, and community members regarding program implementation and effectiveness. The advisory board provides structured opportunities for stakeholders to share insights and suggestions during quarterly meetings. We value all feedback especially from our students because they after all are who we serve on a daily basis. Our website includes a feedback option for stakeholders to share thoughts and suggestions throughout the year. School liaisons serve as conduits for collecting informal feedback at the building level. Through these varied feedback mechanisms, we gather comprehensive information about program strengths and needs, guiding continuous improvement efforts.	
* Practice H Shares local AIG program evaluation data with school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and other community stakeholders. In Cherokee County Schools, we share program evaluation data with all stakeholders to maintain transparency and build support for the AIG program. Reports prepared by the AIG Coordinator to the school board during superintendent updates highlight program achievements and challenges. School and district personnel receive information about identification demographics, student performance, and service delivery to guide instructional planning. All data shared adheres to the rules of FERPA. Cherokee County Schools' parents and students receive updates about program outcomes and opportunities through newsletters, social media, and direct communication from AIG Liaisons and Specialist. Community stakeholders learn about program impacts through advisory committee meetings and public	

information channels. This open sharing of evaluation data builds understanding of the program's value and encourages stakeholder investment in its success. Of course, all feedback is anonymous to protect the confidentiality of all stakeholders.	* Practice 1 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. In Cherokee County Schools, we safeguard the rights of AIG students and their parents through established written policies and practices. Informed consent is required for identification and placement in the program, ensuring that families understand the services their children will receive. We accept AIG designations for transfer students from other districts, with procedures for reassessment if needed to determine appropriate service levels. Our AIG Coordinator and/or Specialist will meet with the student, parents, and staff to review all documentation in order to revise or create DEP. General Statutes 115C-150.7(b)7 and 115C-150.8 provide guidance for the Review of Disagreements. Additionally, Cherokee County School board policy 1740/4010, provides a structured process for addressing concerns about identification or services. Families may decline AIG services at any time, with the option to re-enter the program later if desired. These rights and procedures create a framework that protects student interests and maintains program integrity. Through comprehensive planning, implementation, and evaluation, our AIG program strives to meet the diverse needs of gifted learners across all grade levels. By aligning with both the 2024 NC AIG Program Standards and the North Carolina Portrait of a Graduate, we ensure that gifted students receive appropriate academic challenges while developing the essential competencies needed for future success. This balanced approach prepares our students not only for academic achievement but for life beyond the classroom as productive, engaged citizens in a global society. Procedures to Resolve Disagreements Step 1 The parent/guardian may make a request in writing to the school principal for a conference with the AIG Needs Determination Team to discuss concerns about identification and/or implementation of the student's DEP. Step 2 Appeal to the Superintendent and/or School Board is an agreement cannot be reached. If case reaches the BOE, then a written decision/offer will be made within 30 days Step 3 If above steps fail to resolve the disagreement satisfactorily, the parent/guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the North Carolina General Statutes. This must be done within 20 calendar days after receipt of the written decision of the Board of Education. According to the law, "The scope of the hearing shall be limited to: Whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an AIG student, or whether the local plan developed under G.S. 115C- 150.7 has been implemented properly 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. The administrative law judge shall give a copy of the written findings and the decision to the parties and to the State Superintendent of Public Education
 Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.	* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard NA

Planned Sources of Evidence		
* AIG Budget		
* Stakeholder Survey		
* Policy 1740/4010		
Type	Documents	Document/Link
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	Document Template	N/A

Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/05/2025 

AIG Related Documents

Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Required Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	 <u>Local Board of Education Approval Template</u>	 <u>Cherokee County Schools AIG Board Signature Page</u>
Optional Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>Portrait of a Graduate Website</u>
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>PARENT HANDBOOK</u>
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>CCS AIG Plan 2025-2028 Board Approved</u>
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

Glossary

Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition
Acceleration Models	Content presented at a faster pace and in an earlier sequence.
Achievement	Measure of academic knowledge (EOG/EOC Assessments)
Aptitude	Measure of reasoning ability
Blended Learning	Students learn through a mix of virtual and face-to-face instruction.
Cluster Model	Within a heterogeneous classroom, gifted students are grouped together.
Compacting	Completing more than the traditional years curriculum (i.e. Adv. Math 7)
DEP	Differentiated Education Plan
Differentiation	Modifying curriculum and instructions according to content, pacing, and/or product to meet the needs of the students.
Flexible Grouping	Groups within the classroom that change based upon available data.
Gifted and Talented Students	"Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities." [Title IX.Part A.Definition 22 (2002)]
Heterogeneous Grouping	Grouping by differences
Homogeneous Grouping	An arrangement or set of students who have something in common.
Referral	A request for Screening - can be made by parent, teacher, admin, or even the student.
Screening	Evaluation for AIG Identifications
STEM	Curriculum and activities that are focused upon Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
Talent Development	Talent development efforts create learning environments where teachers can observe and recognize a student's potential through a multitude of ways and respond to develop a student's strengths through intentional learning experiences.
Talent Search	The process of identifying and recruiting highly skilled individuals, particularly for early career roles like summer internships and full-time analyst positions, to foster a strong talent pipeline.

Twice Exceptional	Individuals who exhibit both exceptional abilities (like giftedness) and learning disabilities, such as ADHD, dyslexia, or autism, requiring specialized support to thrive academically and emotionally.
Frontloading	Any deliberate learning experience designed to provide opportunities for students to develop their talents and knowledge prior to identification or a particular learning experience
Comprehensive	Complete services planned in consideration of the variety of the students needs - academic, intellectual, social and emotional - through a range of services and multiple opportunities and experiences that are necessary in developing the holistic needs of each and every child
Program	Comprehensive approach that considers and responds to the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.
Services	Various opportunities in which students engage to support their growth and development in various setting.
Setting	The physical location where services are provided.