Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Cleveland County Schools (230) 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)

Our Mission
To cultivate excellence by providing student-centered exceptional educational experiences while challenging all students to perform at their highest potential.

Our Vision
To cultivate excellence and student success through exceptional educational experiences.

Slogan
Cultivating Excellence

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* $ 852,469.00	* $ 24,000.00	* $ 0.00	* $ 0.00

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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.

Referrals for AIG (Academically or Intellectually Gifted) services can be made by teachers, parents/guardians, or students. Placement decisions are based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to ensure a comprehensive evaluation.

All second-grade students take the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), which measures nonverbal reasoning skills. This assessment is designed to be equitable across diverse student populations by minimizing the impact of language and cultural differences.

In addition to the NNAT, other standardized assessments such as the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Beginning-of-Grade Test (BOG), and End-of-Grade Tests (EOG) are administered annually and may also be reviewed as part of the identification 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.

Placement in AIG services is determined using multiple, research-based screening tools that include both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative Measures

- Observed behaviors checklists
- Anecdotal records
- Student portfolios and work samples

Quantitative Measures

- Achievement: BOG (Beginning-of-Grade), EOG (End-of-Grade), and STAR assessments
- Ability: NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test) and CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

Grades 3–5 Placement Criteria

To qualify for AIG services, students in grades 3–5 must meet three criteria:

- One qualitative measure, and
- Two quantitative measures, with at least one of the following:
  - A percentile score at or above the 92nd percentile
  - An aptitude score of 121 or higher (NNAT, CogAT)
  - Performance at least two grade levels above current grade placement (STAR)

Early Identification

All CCS second graders take the NNAT in the spring as part of the universal screening process.

For students in grades 2 and below, eligibility for the CCS Enrichment Program is determined using a qualifying rubric that includes DIBELS and STAR performance data.

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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.

The CCS Enrichment Program is designed to foster critical thinking and enhance problem-solving abilities in young learners. The program provides engaging opportunities that promote higher-level thinking skills, preparing students for advanced academic pathways.

In evaluating students for enrichment services, the Needs Determination Teams consider both DIBELS and STAR performance data, while also making a conscious effort to recognize potential in students from traditionally underrepresented populations.

Staff across all CCS schools receive training to identify and interpret behaviors that may mask giftedness, ensuring a more equitable and inclusive identification process.

To expand access and opportunity, CCS also partners with external agencies to offer advanced classes and programming that are available to all students, regardless of background.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	24.53%	5.90%	7.31%	---	7.69%	---	16.08%
Male	22.00%	<5%	7.24%	---	12.97%	---	18.34%
Total	23.30%	5.15%	7.27%	---	10.39%	---	17.24%

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.

Each CCS school has a Needs Determination Team (NDT) responsible for overseeing the referral, monitoring, and identification processes for both AIG and Enrichment programs. These teams typically include, but are not limited to, an administrator, a guidance counselor, the AIG Specialist, and a classroom teacher.

The NDT ensures that all procedures are implemented with fidelity and in alignment with CCS identification guidelines. To support consistency and best practices, the AIG Specialist provides annual training to the NDT at each school.

* **Practice E**

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

The CCS AIG Program publishes its identification procedures through both written and electronic formats, ensuring transparency and accessibility. These procedures are clearly outlined on the district AIG website for families, staff, and community members.

To maintain consistency across schools, the district AIG Coordinator provides annual training for all AIG Specialists on current identification pathways and best practices.

All procedures, including the AIG Plan and identification protocols, are formally reviewed and approved by the CCS Board of Education, ensuring alignment with district goals and state standards.

* **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.

CCS AIG Specialists maintain individual documentation for each identified student that is reviewed annually with parents/guardians/ This documentation includes results from all qualifying assessments and evaluations considered in AIG placement decisions signed by NDT members, signed permission to test forms, and signed Differentiated Education Plans. The DEP includes student's area(s) of placement, service options, and differentiated education options.

IDEPs are developed for unique AIG students who need services not listed on the DEP. The DEPs of students in grades 6-12 document accelerated coursework, honors courses, AP courses, dual/concurrent enrollment, Cleveland Early College, and/or early graduation options.

* **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.

CCS AIG Specialists maintain individual documentation for each identified student. This documentation is reviewed annually with parents or guardians to ensure continued alignment with student needs and program goals.

Each student's file includes:

- Results from all qualifying assessments and evaluations used in the placement decision
- Signed permission to test forms
- Signed Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs)

Signatures from Needs Determination Team (NDT) members

The DEP outlines the student's:

- Area(s) of AIG placement
- Available service options
- Planned differentiated instructional strategies

For students with exceptional needs beyond the standard DEP offerings, an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) is created to ensure personalized support.

For students in grades 6–12, the DEP may also include:

- Accelerated coursework
- Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes
- Dual or concurrent enrollment
- Cleveland Early College High School option
- Early graduation pathways

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

To ensure accurate identification, students with an aptitude score of 118–120 or those scoring in the 90th–91st percentile should be administered the full Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), including the verbal, mathematics, and nonverbal subtests. This additional data helps support more informed decisions regarding potential AIG placement.

While most AIG identifications occur at the elementary level, ongoing staff development focused on identification procedures in grades 6–12 is encouraged. Continued professional learning ensures that students at the secondary level—particularly those who may show late-emerging giftedness—are appropriately recognized and supported.

Sources of Evidence:

- Authentic student work samples that demonstrate advanced thinking, creativity, or problem-solving
- The Observed Behaviors Checklist, completed by trained educators
- Nationally normed test scores for students who transfer into CCS from other school districts
- Achievement and/or aptitude testing administered by outside agencies, when appropriate and aligned with CCS guidelines

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	1
*	1
*	1

Documents

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

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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.

Cleveland County Schools (CCS) provides access to comprehensive services to meet the academic and intellectual needs of AIG students, across all grade levels (K-12) and learning environments. CCS AIG Specialists collaborate with Classroom Teachers, CCS AIG Teachers, School Counselor, Special Area Teachers (Music, Art, PE, Media Specialist, STEM), EC Teachers, ESL Teacher, Speech-Language Pathologist, CTC (Instructional Reading/Math Coach), Instructional Technology Facilitator, and MTSS/LT/Student Problem Solving Team to provide continuous support and resources at the elementary, intermediate, and middle school levels.

Grade band-specific programming and service options are outlined below:

Elementary/Intermediate- AIG Specialists provide early primary enrichment to students with the intention of cultivating potential in every K-2 student. The enrichment program is a flexible grouping of students based on mCLASS data, STAR Reading and Math scores, and other assessment data. The enrichment program provides students with critical thinking and problem-solving activities.

Through participation in grade-level PLCs and school-wide “Data Dives”, AIG Specialists and teachers regularly review summative assessments, formative assessments, benchmark assessments, universal screening assessments, Reading-Beginning of Grade Test, and/or End of Grade (EOG) Tests to identify students who are consistently performing well above grade level in their local learning environments. Multiple indicators are considered on an ongoing basis in addition to collaboration between the AIG Specialist and classroom teacher. AIG students receive services according to their identification area/areas (reading, math, both, or intellectually gifted). Identified AIG students in grades K-12 receive research-based specialized units of study emphasizing 21st century skills and learner needs. Some of the programs used are: The Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program, Hands on Equations, Primary Education Thinking Skills, and Mentoring Mathematical Minds. Teacher-created and other resources are available to AIG specialists on the shared Google docs. The annual review of the DEP/IDEP provides an evaluation of service options and student needs.

Intermediate/Middle (6-8)- In middle schools students are placed in accelerated classes in Language Arts and Math aligned to their advanced learning needs

High (9-12)- The high schools have an AIG administrator who assists in providing resources and support to help differentiate the curriculum for gifted learners. High school students are offered accelerated course work, honors courses, Advanced Placement courses, Cleveland Early College High School, various enrichment activities and/or early graduation options. Cleveland County high school students are offered enrollment in the Career and College Promise dual enrollment program as well as internships and numerous other opportunities.

Special Programs- Gifted students are also offered other opportunities including but not limited to: Math Team competition, Mystery Day (deductive-reasoning), Robotics, Science for a Day, Spelling Bee, and Cleveland County Book Challenge.

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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.

Cleveland County Schools provides opportunities for school personnel, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders to collaborate on addressing the social and emotional needs of gifted students, as well as students who demonstrate gifted characteristics. CCS utilizes a variety of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs to ensure that all students develop into well-rounded individuals capable of navigating both academic and social challenges.

AIG Specialists actively engage in school-based Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with regular education teachers and counselors to share resources, tools, and strategies that enhance the social and emotional support available to gifted students. The Needs Determination Team (NDT) will collaborate with other school staff to address and meet the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. AIG specialists will be available for regular conferences with teachers and parents to support these needs.

In elementary and intermediate settings, school counselors will lead guidance lessons in classrooms or small groups to address the typical social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Topics covered in these lessons may include perfectionism, organizational strategies, sensitivity, anxiety, and social acceptance, among others. In middle and high school settings, guidance counselors, ninth-grade academies, and external organizations such as the College Board will facilitate sessions and lessons to address the unique social-emotional needs of gifted students.

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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.

The CCS AIG program will provide services that are aligned with the district's priorities and resources through policy and practice to provide all students a program that includes a rigorous curriculum, enhanced with technology, opportunities for involvement in the arts, and complex problem solving. The strategic plan for Cleveland County Schools states that we will cultivate excellence by providing student-centered exceptional educational experiences while challenging all students to perform at their highest potential. The CCS AIG plan aligns and connects with these areas. Our policies and plans are created and delivered through equitable identification and services based on individual student needs.

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

By developing clear procedures and strategies for intentional, flexible grouping, schools can create an environment where AIG students are challenged, engaged, and supported in their learning. The flexibility of groupings ensures that gifted students are consistently exposed to new ideas, skills, and learning opportunities, while also fostering collaboration and leadership. Regularly assessing groupings, monitoring progress, and adjusting based on needs will help maximize the achievement and growth of AIG students.

In the elementary and intermediate levels, flexible grouping consists of but not limited to: intervention groups, guided reading groups, Accelerated Reading, IXL, iReady, and flexible enrichment groups. STAR Reading and Math along with mCLASS data and math summative data help drive the flexibility of the

groups in enrichment. Data obtained from standardized testing as well as other research-based assessments are used to determine the grouping of students in elementary and intermediate school. Middle and high school students have opportunities for advanced or accelerated courses, including online courses. High schools also offer dual-enrollment with the local community college, Early College High School, Governor's School, North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics Summer Ventures and opportunities in subjects/courses other than the standard placement areas of reading and math. Assessments and rubrics are used to determine the grouping of students for the purpose of enrichment activities to include: Robotics, Math Team, Cleveland County Book Challenge and other academic competitions.

* **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.

Effective communication with all stakeholders is a crucial element in providing students with a quality 21st-century education and ensuring global competitiveness. Deliberate communication creates opportunities to present and discuss various components of the AIG plan, AIG-related topics, and guidelines.

AIG Specialists will ensure school staff are well-informed about the local AIG program, the delivery of differentiated services, and the CCS AIG plan. This will occur within the first quarter of the school year, allowing staff to understand the differentiated services available to AIG students and the structure of the program. An overview of the AIG plan will be shared, and the full plan can be accessed on the Cleveland County Schools website.

Stakeholders are key participants in the ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the AIG program. The AIG plan, program components, and AIG-related topics will be communicated during designated meetings, such as grade-level meetings, site staff meetings, and meetings of the AIG specialists.

At all school levels—elementary, intermediate, middle, and high schools—an NDT (Needs Determination Team) will be formed, with selected members from the school. The NDT will convene as needed to discuss student placement and the needs of students in the AIG program.

* **Practice F**

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

Cleveland County Schools believes that communication is essential for both student success and the overall success of our LEA. The AIG program ensures that teachers and schools are informed about AIG students and the areas identified for AIG services through annual meetings focused on the DEP/IDEPs. Effective communication is particularly crucial at key transition points for students.

AIG Specialists at the elementary, intermediate, and middle school levels will meet during the final quarter of the school year to discuss students who will be transitioning to the next level (intermediate or middle school). These meetings will focus on reviewing the DEP/IDEPs and addressing the needs and concerns of AIG students. Additionally, communication will occur between AIG Specialists if a student transfers to another county school during the year to ensure continuity of services and support

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools develops countywide, systematic, research-based policies and procedures for acceleration, including instructional and placement options for gifted students. Communication takes place with appropriate school personnel when there is a need. At present, school personnel utilize formal and

informal information, observations, checklists, and examples of above-grade level work, test scores, and teacher recommendations. Cleveland County Schools' policy defines the criteria for early admission to kindergarten. Students meeting the criteria may be considered for early entry to kindergarten.

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

Cleveland County Schools believes in the need for targeted programs designed specifically for younger students (K-3) to identify and nurture their potential early on. AIG Specialists work with classroom teachers and the Needs Determination Team (NDT) to review the data of K-3 students who may qualify for the Nurturing program (K-2) and AIG program (3rd grade). The county uses a common criteria sheet to ensure equity across the district. Student data includes Dibels, STAR Reading & Math, and Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test (NNAT) scores. The NNAT is given to every second grader in Cleveland County Schools.

Differentiated instruction and enrichment activities with the AIG Specialist along with specific programs designed to challenge critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity provide opportunities to thrive and develop student gifts at an early age. AIG Specialists use research based programs like Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS), Jacob's Ladder, and M3- Mentoring Mathematical Minds along with curriculum based AIG Specialist created materials.

* **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.

This initiative aims to provide a well-rounded, rigorous education to all students, with particular focus on removing historical barriers to advanced learning opportunities. By developing these mindsets, policies, and practices, Cleveland County Schools would work towards narrowing achievement gaps and creating more equitable educational outcomes for all students. Teachers, students, and staff are encouraged to embrace a growth mindset to emphasize that all students have the potential for success. AIG students in grades 4-12 are provided summer enrichment opportunities and other special programs to help them get ready for more advanced coursework. These opportunities include Math Team competition, Mystery Day (deductive-reasoning), Robotics, Science for a Day, Spelling Bee, Cleveland County Book Challenge, accelerated course work, honors courses, Advanced Placement courses, dual/concurrent enrollment, Cleveland Early College High School, various enrichment activities and/or early graduation options.

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

Enhancing AIG students' experiences through extracurricular programming is an essential part of ensuring that they are not only academically challenged but also supported in exploring their passions and talents in a holistic manner. These programs help AIG students become well-rounded, confident, and capable individuals who are prepared for success both in school and in their future careers.

CCS students have opportunities to select from a variety of programs and events. Elementary and middle school students may participate in Robotics competitions and Cleveland County Book Challenge (elementary)/Battle of the Books (middle). Elementary students may also participate in a county-wide Math Day, Mystery Day, Science for a Day, and curriculum related field trips, such as a trip to The White Water Center for 5th grade AIG students. Fourth-grade AIG students may take a trip to the Biltmore House. Other opportunities include NC Honors Chorus, school productions, talents shows, art competitions, special programming provided to students through the Cleveland County Arts Council, and an array of other opportunities available to students through schools and the AIG program.

Middle school students have many of the same opportunities as elementary students. Many middle schools host science fairs, participate in competitions such as Battle of the Books and Science Olympiad. Middle schools also have clubs, service project clubs, sports, and competitions related to the arts. High School students select from a variety of opportunities to enhance their development; some of the choices are similar to middle and elementary selections, such as

music, drama, art, sports, special programs, clubs, poetry, and writing competitions. The AIG program will continue to encourage programs and events that are integral in developing the needs, talents and interests of gifted students.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Continue to strengthen communication within the total school community

-Continue to align gifted and advanced resources to appropriately supplement the district curriculum in a variety of content areas.

-Develop collaborative partnerships with the EC, Title I, and ELL department.

-Analyze current AIG student achievement and growth data to inform grouping practices and procedures at the school and district level.

-Consistently integrate program standards, legislation, and regulations around gifted programs into locally offered PD, administrative meetings, and site team meetings.

-Develop a system to ensure all school-based staff receive an annual update that includes identification procedures, gifted services, best practices for gifted and advanced learners, instructional materials provided by curriculum resources, compliance requirements, and opportunities for gifted and advanced learners

-Provide targeted support to schools so they can expand service-learning projects, clubs, and enrichment programs in an effort to increase the number of consistent opportunities offered to students at all schools across the district.

Sources of Evidence:

-AIG specialists meeting documentation

-NDT meeting documentation

-Nurturing criteria sheets

-Schedules from special events

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	1
*	1

* 1

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

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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.

The K-12 gifted curriculum is grounded in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS). However, this curriculum must be differentiated to enrich, extend, and accelerate learning for academically and intellectually gifted students through the use of a collection of units, lessons and activities, arranged by grade level, which may include interdisciplinary connections, field-trips, project-based learning, research and presentations. These opportunities are, but not limited to:

*Science for a Day-A day to provide acceleration and enrichment for students in grade 5 to enhance the science curriculum.

* Mystery Day- A day to provide enrichment for students in grade 4 to enhance the ELA curriculum.

* Math Field Day -A day to provide acceleration and enrichment to students in grade 5 to enhance the math curriculum.

* Cleveland County Book Challenge- A day to provide interaction for teams (often including many AIG students) as they face-off over a list of novels that tie to the ELA curriculum.

* Robotics -An ongoing STEM experience for teams (often composed of many AIG students) who compete against other district teams in the spring.

Published lesson plans/units meet the criteria of a developed rubric to ensure rigor and alignment with AIG best practices. These resources are tailored to differentiate the curriculum of those students identified as AM, AR, AG, and AI, and IG, ensuring that each learner receives appropriate challenge and support. Elementary AIG specialists collaborate with other LEA AIG specialists to provide consistency in curriculum and delivery. AIG specialists plan consistency in curriculum and instruction.

AIG specializes in research and provides K-2 classroom programs designed to nurture early elementary students. Teachers are provided the tools to adapt the NCSCS, identify abilities, readiness, interests and learning profiles of gifted students by collaborating with the AIG specialist/contact and the Needs Determination Teams.

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

The LEA provides diverse and effective instructional practices for the gifted learner by offering a curriculum that is organized by key concepts and principles of a discipline. The content is real-world with activities that cause them to process information at a higher level of thinking there by products which allow them to struggle with meaningful problems and propose defensible solutions. This allows students to engage with content at a depth and pace that matches their

learning profiles. It offers the gifted learner a chance to learn at a higher level of difficulty with less scaffolding from the teacher, while at the same time providing for a certain amount of risk taking needed to advance the gifted learner in their endeavors.

The LEA uses a variety of instructional strategies to provide rigor, depth, and complexity to the AIG curriculum. High level questioning, problem-based learning, tiered task/products, group investigations and inquiry-based learning are just some of the strategies used to promote a more rigorous curriculum for the gifted learner.

By continuously analyzing student data and collaborating with classroom teachers, AIG specialists ensure that instruction remains dynamic, student-centered, and aligned with the evolving needs of gifted learners. This commitment to differentiation fosters intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and a love for lifelong learning across all grade levels.

* **Practice C**

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

The AIG specialist /contact person at each school is given sufficient time to research and identify various research-based supplemental resources that enhance the AIG curriculum. The elementary AIG specialists meet to collaborate and discuss current trends in AIG curriculum and share those ideas to enhance their instruction. To support the social-emotional needs of gifted learners, AIG specialists address topics such as perfectionism, resilience, and peer relationships. Additionally, collaboration with counselors, classroom teachers, and families ensures a holistic approach to student success. Cleveland County Schools AIG Program will continuously research best practices, update and enhance the curriculum, and acquire resources to support the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

The AIG specialist/contact person at each school collaborates with their curriculum technology coordinator to ensure the needs of the gifted learner are being met within the framework of the school's curriculum model.

The elementary AIG specialists are given a chance to attend NCAGT when funds are available in order to gather new programming and research-based resources to support the gifted learner.

The AIG elementary and intermediate program uses a variety of research-based resources within their pull-out program as a part of their extended, accelerated curriculum. Some of these are:

* The Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program

* Hands-on Equations

* Primary Education Thinking Skills

* Fraction Sense

Middle and high schools use a variety of resources to provide rigor and relevant curriculum and instruction to extend the AIG instruction. Such as but not limited to:

* Advanced/accelerated/honors courses

* Virtual courses

* College and Career Promise

* Dual enrollments

* Early College High School

* Battle of the books/academic competitions/competitions in the arts

* Keys to Literacy

* NC School of math and science

* Internships

* Special programs such as Governor's School, legislative nominations, leadership programs, etc

* **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.

The AIG curriculum fosters the development of 21st century content and skill development opportunities by integrating real world contextual learning into its program. The focus includes global awareness, civic and economic literacies, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration, research skills, applied information and media literacy, and applied life skills for leadership and social responsibility. Integration of STEM/STEAM encourages students to think critically, collaborate, creativity, and promote curiosity when demonstrating their learning. Emphasis is placed on self-directed and personalized learning, goal setting, and reflective practices, empowering students to take ownership of their educational journey.

Units, lessons, and activities designed to support 21st-century learners are created and organized in Google Drive and Google Classroom, accessible via the LEA email server. These lessons are developed through the collaboration of the LEA AIG specialists, regular education teachers and the CTC's at each school. Professional development is made available to each school which addresses the teaching and fostering of 21st century content and skills. The AIG program ensures that gifted learners develop the confidence, independence, and adaptability necessary for success in post-secondary education and beyond.

Real world learning opportunities are made available to the gifted learner outside the parameters of the AIG curriculum such as:

* Model UN

* Robotics

* Duke Pre-College formerly known as Duke TIP (Talent Identification Program)

* Maker Space

* NC School of Math and Science

* Mystery Readers Book Club

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

The AIG program utilizes ongoing formative and summative assessments to ensure that curriculum and instruction are appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of gifted learners. Assessment data provides teachers direction in these areas by revealing students' strengths and weaknesses in content areas but also by providing information on the AIG students' interest and learning styles.

*Pre-assessments, performance tasks, student self-reflections, and standardized test data guide instructional decisions, allowing AIG specialists and classroom teachers to tailor learning experiences that enrich, extend, and accelerate student growth.

*Formative assessments, such as exit tickets, classroom discussions, and observational checklists, provide continuous feedback, enabling adjustments to instructional pacing and depth.

*Summative assessments, including portfolios, project-based evaluations, and mastery-based assessments, measure long-term growth and ensure that students are progressing at an appropriate challenge level.

The data collected is used to promote and inform flexible grouping practices used throughout the LEA. Research based assessments are used to group students for the purpose of differentiating the curriculum in areas such as math and ELA. Assessments are also used to determine the grouping of students for the purpose of enrichment activities such as robotics team, math team, and other academic competitions.

Resources are used to support the AIG and classroom teachers' ability to evaluate the data collected. The AIG specialist/contact is involved in the collection and interpretation of the data process at each school level.

The assessments used measure a range of students' needs and abilities and include but are not limited to:

* Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

* Naglieri Non-verbal Ability Test (NNAT)

* DIBELS/MClass

* Curriculum-based measurements

* Benchmark testing

* STAR reading and math

* End of grade testing

* NC Check-Ins

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

AIG specialists actively collaborate with a variety of personnel to design and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction that meets the unique needs of gifted learners. Through ongoing partnerships with classroom teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, and support staff, AIG specialists provide resources, model best practices, and co-plan lessons that enrich, extend, and accelerate student learning. Regular collaboration ensures that differentiation

strategies—such as curriculum compacting, flexible grouping, and tiered assignments—are effectively integrated into the instructional framework. By fostering a collaborative approach, the AIG program ensures that gifted learners receive appropriately challenging instruction that supports their continuous academic growth.

Collaboration among AIG specialists and other school personnel may include the following:

* Classroom teachers

*Instructional Coaches, Curriculum and Technology Coordinator, and AIG Specialists: Data dives, email communication, and professional development at the school level

*ESL, EC, Counselors, Specialists, and AIG Specialists: Email, conferencing

*Administrators and AIG Specialists: Data Dives, email, and professional development

*AIG Department: Google Classroom to share lessons and strategies used with gifted students

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

3F: AIG teachers meet monthly to collaborate about instructional strategies and curriculum modifications for gifted students

3C: To address social emotional strategies, specific folder with lessons/activities

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	1
*	1
*	1

Documents

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

Cleveland County Schools (230) 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.

The LEA employs a licensed educator to oversee the development, implementation, revision, and monitoring of the AIG program in Cleveland County. The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction is the current AIG director. Duties of the AIG Director include: managing the budget of the AIG program, advocating for the needs of gifted students, providing leadership in the planning, development, implementation, and monitoring of the AIG program and plan. The AIG Director participates in all district leadership activities and collaborates with other leadership to develop appropriate AIG services for all students. The director will also participate actively in regional/area meetings and professional development opportunities, in order to gather information about new best practices in AIG.

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools actively engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that address the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of K-12 gifted students while supporting the implementation of the local AIG program and plan. AIG specialists develop and deliver tailored lessons and materials designed to challenge and enrich gifted learners. They collaborate with regular education teachers and school personnel to ensure that instructional strategies meet the unique needs of AIG students. To support appropriate student identification, specialists conduct testing and observations, while the MTSS and PST Leadership Team facilitates schoolwide screening and recommends additional evaluations as needed.

Early talent development is also a priority, with specialists providing direct services to K-2 students who demonstrate potential for future AIG identification. Collaboration with K-2 teachers ensures that young learners experience appropriate academic challenges within the classroom. To continuously refine their expertise, AIG specialists participate in professional development opportunities such as the NCAGT conference, workshops, and district-led training. They also lead and facilitate AIG professional development within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), ensuring that educators across the district are equipped to support gifted students effectively.

Additionally, AIG specialists play a critical role in program evaluation, assessing the effectiveness of the educational experiences they facilitate and making necessary adjustments to enhance student learning. Through these efforts, Cleveland County Schools maintains a strong, research-based approach to gifted education, fostering an environment where academically gifted students can thrive.

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools is committed to ensuring that all personnel involved in AIG programs receive high-quality professional development to support gifted learners effectively. All AIG teachers must be AIG certified or actively working toward certification to maintain instructional excellence. To further support classroom teachers, AIG staff provide annual training during the first nine weeks of school, covering key topics such as the characteristics of gifted students, identification and referral processes, and strategies to support gifted learners in the classroom. Secondary teachers receive specialized training to teach Advanced Placement (AP) and other advanced courses, ensuring that students have access to rigorous academic opportunities. Additionally, students can enhance their learning through North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS), Career & College Promise (CCP) courses, and other college-level programs. By establishing clear professional development requirements, Cleveland County Schools fosters a knowledgeable and well-equipped staff dedicated to meeting the 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.

Cleveland County Schools ensures that AIG services are delivered by highly qualified educators who either hold an AIG add-on license or meet the district's established requirements for their position. Gifted students receive rigorous and challenging educational opportunities both in their assigned classrooms and through dedicated pull-out services for students in grades 3-5. To support high-quality instruction, teachers participate in ongoing professional development designed to enhance their ability to meet the needs of gifted learners. Training opportunities include:

- Reading Research to Classroom Practice
- Foundations of Math
- Eureka Math
- Science of Reading
- Guided Reading Training
- Digital Learning Courses
- NCAGT Conference
- Resources provided by NC DPI for remote learning

By equipping educators with specialized training and instructional strategies, Cleveland County Schools remains committed to fostering an enriching learning environment that challenges and supports gifted students.

* **Practice E**

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

Cleveland County Schools is committed to the recruitment and retention of highly qualified AIG-licensed professionals, including those from diverse backgrounds, to ensure excellence in gifted education. AIG specialists receive dedicated support through the Office of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, providing them with the guidance and resources necessary for success. To further strengthen their expertise, specialists have access to ongoing training and professional development opportunities that equip them with innovative strategies and best practices for supporting gifted learners. By fostering a culture of continuous growth and professional learning, Cleveland County Schools remains dedicated to building and maintaining a strong team of AIG educators who can effectively meet the needs of diverse gifted students.

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

Cleveland County Schools is committed to fostering equity and excellence in gifted education through focused professional learning opportunities that promote inclusive mindsets, policies, and practices. AIG specialists collaborate regularly in meetings to share strategies and resources that support diverse gifted learners. Technology is utilized to facilitate the exchange of grade-appropriate materials and innovative instructional approaches, ensuring equitable access to high-quality learning experiences. To remain at the forefront of best practices in gifted education, specialists engage in continuing education through courses, certifications, and professional development credits. Additionally, several AIG teachers attend the North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented (NCAGT) Conference each year, gaining valuable insights into emerging research and effective teaching strategies. Through these initiatives, Cleveland County Schools ensures that educators are well-prepared to meet the needs of all gifted students while fostering a culture of excellence and inclusion.

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools ensures that professional development opportunities for AIG specialists align with local program goals, district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education. AIG specialists collaborate to select training opportunities that support the district's growth goals, ensuring that professional learning directly enhances gifted education services. Ongoing learning opportunities allow educators to refine and apply best practices, continuously improving instruction and support for gifted students. By prioritizing strategic and purposeful professional development, Cleveland County Schools fosters a culture of excellence in gifted education that meets the evolving needs of students and educators alike.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- Develop a comprehensive system for collecting and analyzing data on student performance and program effectiveness. Utilize this data to inform instructional practices and make evidence-based adjustments to the AIG program.
- Train classroom teachers to differentiate our AIG students in the regular classroom setting.
- Develop and share LEA guidelines for the AIG identification and student placement process.
- Increase diversity amongst AIG specialists
- Develop a local endorsement to train classroom teachers in best practices for identifying and supporting AIG students

Planned Sources of Evidence

* 1	
* 1	

*	1

Documents

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

Cleveland County Schools (230) 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.

Enriching events that are open to AIG students include Scripps spelling bee, Elementary and Middle school Cleveland County Book Challenge, Robotics, Science Day, Cleveland County Honors Chorus, Math Field Day, and a variety of field trips. Students may also participate in clubs such as Club Deca, sports clubs, sports marketing clubs, internships, FFA, and other additional clubs. Parents/Guardians often attend these opportunities. Live-streaming of these events allows parents to view the events if they are unable to attend, keeping them involved through media.

Qualified students may be invited and apply to attend Governor's School. Opportunities to join Honor Societies include, but are not limited to Beta Club, National Honor Society, and Career and Technical Honor Society.

All schools have orientations at which parents/guardians can meet teachers and sign/discuss the child's DEp for the year. With the majority of our schools receiving Title 1 funding, all students, including AIG students can benefit from parent involvement activities. Many schools have a science night open to all students, and all fifth graders and middle/high school students are provided a Career Day opportunity.

Gifted Specialists participate in MTSS meetings, as appropriate, for potential gifted students to assist parents and staff with examining gifted characteristics/behaviors when evaluating these students. Information regarding the AIG Program, including information about the screening, referral and identification process, service options, and additional family resources, is made available to parents at Open Houses and Parent/Teacher Conference nights, through in-person and virtual platforms.

* **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.

Partnerships with the community and area businesses provide support and resources to the program. The local media provides support and coverage of events involving gifted students. The AIG program's affiliation with the Cleveland County Schools Educational Foundation (CCSEF) makes academic and enrichment opportunities/competitions available to students. Math Field Day and Robotics are two of the opportunities that the CCSEF supports. Both are covered by local media and are live-streamed. Local board members are present at many AIG events and activities involving gifted students.

The Cleveland County Arts Council provides special programming to students, including gifted students. Partnerships that enhance AIG programs include local businesses, the Dover Foundation, the Cleveland County Schools Educational Foundations, Gardner-Webb University, Cleveland Community College, Cleveland County Arts Council, Albemarle, Dover Foundation,Hospice, Nippon, Laughlin's Furniture, Burlington, Shelby Rotary, Office Max, area churches, and local media. The AIG department also collaborates with the district's Career and Technical Education (CTE) department to offer work shadow or internship opportunities with local businesses. These partnerships provide students 21st century academic and enrichment opportunities as well as scholarship opportunities for seniors.

The AIG department will work to expand and strengthen partnerships with businesses and organizations during the 2025-2028 plan cycle. We will continue to provide extracurricular opportunities such as Duke Pre-College, and will continue to support AIG Specialists who are applying for Piedmont Electric Bright Ideas grants, Donors Choose, and other nonprofits.

* **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.

Each school has a Needs Determination Team that may include an administrator, the AIG teacher, a school counselor, and several teachers. This team meets to discuss student needs as they apply to services stipulated by our plan.

District-wide, a diverse group of stakeholders, including parent/guardian representatives are involved in the AIG plan revisions. Additionally, parents/guardians of AIG students participate in the DEP process and support students in extracurricular activities.

* **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.

Sharing information about the AIG policies, plan, and program with stakeholders is a priority for Cleveland County Schools. K-5 teachers meet with parents at the beginning of each year to discuss and sign DEPs. The AIG Specialists may hold a yearly information session for families at their schools and update their staff at a beginning-of-year faculty meeting, as needed. These sessions outline the screening, referral, and identification process, including identification criteria, as well as the service options.

Information about the AIG program is also made available at Parent Teacher Conference Nights, as well as through apps like ClassDojo. Additionally, comprehensive information about the AIG program is available to all families and community members on the Cleveland County Schools website. Many of our forms and parent/guardian letters have been translated into Spanish.

Elementary Schools have a presentation at a beginning of the year staff meeting that details our AIG program guidelines. The AIG Specialist keeps staff informed of placement and service policies and relays staff development opportunities. Parent contacts are made through a variety of methods, including class

newsletters, notes, webpages, texts, emails, phone messages, Twitter, Class Dojo, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Schools have ESL translators available.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Continue to build time with other organizations to incorporate outside support

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	1
*	1
*	1

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	

Cleveland County Schools (230) 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.

Cleveland County Schools develops and maintains a three-year comprehensive AIG plan that supports and assures the incorporation of programs and services that are legislated by the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction. The plan is reviewed and revised by a committee of stakeholders as mandated by the state, every three years. At that time, each component of the plan is discussed and necessary revisions are made to ensure the continuation of programs and services addressing the unique academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the gifted learners. Cleveland County Schools AIG department uses multiple sources of data to assist with program and plan reviews and revisions including:

Student, parent, teacher, and administrator survey results

Advisory Board's feedback

Standardized Test Scores including End-of-Grade/ End-of-Course/Advanced Placement test results

Students' classroom performance

Cleveland County's vision for academic success

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools is committed to ensuring the implementation of our AIG plan. The identification processes are consistent across the county. The AIG Specialists meet together to plan, develop, and strategize ways to maximize teaching/learning opportunities for identified students. As referred to in other parts of this plan, research-based programs, resources, and units of study are utilized in each school at each grade level.

Teachers who are responsible for the referral, testing, and placement processes are properly trained to ensure consistency in identification.

All procedures are shared with regular classroom teachers, administrators, parents, and all other stakeholders on a yearly and as-needed basis. This information is also available on the AIG website.

The Cleveland County Schools AIG Director serves as a member of the district level instructional team, allowing for direct sharing of program information and monitoring of program implementation.

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

The Cleveland County Schools AIG Director oversees the expenditures of the state funds and works collaboratively with the Cleveland County Schools Finance Department to ensure that all allocated funds are appropriately dispersed. State funds allocated for the local AIG program are used in the following ways:

AIG Licensed teachers' salaries and benefits

Curriculum development, resources, and materials

AIG/Advanced Placement resources

Technology materials

Workshop and AIG Conferences expenses

Field trips (as related to gifted education)

* **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.

On a yearly basis, Cleveland County Schools analyzes and shares student performance growth data in grades K-12 with all stakeholders including the local school board, central office personnel, school administrators, teachers, and parents. We look both at yearly growth and growth over time. AIG Specialists and regular classroom teachers use this data to plan and implement appropriate educational opportunities for gifted learners. The growth data we analyze and share includes:

End of Grade Tests results in reading, math, and science

NC Check-Ins results in reading, math, and science

County benchmark scores in math and reading

Quarterly classroom performance data (report cards)

Chronically absent students

Informal/formal assessments

Teacher-led conferences with students, identifying areas of strength and weaknesses

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools AIG Department has worked diligently to be more inclusive of underrepresented populations. The Nurturing Program in our elementary schools for grade K-2 gives opportunities to identify students who demonstrate gifted potential and eventually many of these students meet the criteria for placement into the gifted program starting in grade 3. As a result, our percentage of identified minority and low socioeconomic students is on the rise.

Annually, we support and encourage the representation and retention of underrepresented populations in our local AIG program in the following ways:

Implementing our Nurturing Program for grades K-2 to include minority and low socioeconomic students who display gifted tendencies

Work with teachers to identify English Language Learners who are very strong mathematically

Work with special education teachers to identify students who have dual exceptionalities and offer accommodations to ensure successful learning experiences

Utilize alternative assessments and nonverbal test, such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test and/or the Cognitive Abilities Test, to assist in the identification of students

Offer accelerated services such as grade and/or content acceleration, Early College, AP coursework, Career and College Promise, etc. for highly gifted students

Encourage student participation in extracurricular opportunities that support academic excellence such as the Cleveland County Book Challenge, Robotics, Math Team, Governor’s School, etc.

* **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.

All AIG Specialists in Cleveland County who currently serve students in grades K-5 are either AIG licensed or are actively pursuing licensure from an accredited university. Teachers work with the AIG Director and Human Resources Department in regards to AIG licensure and other Professional Development requirements.

Teaches in grades 9-12 who teach AP classes may attend College Board Summer Institutes for their respective disciplines.

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools students, parents, teachers, and administrators are given opportunities to complete surveys to share positive aspects as well as points for growth. All stakeholders are also welcome to provide feedback through informal meetings and conferences on an as-needed basis. We will use this information to ensure the implementation and effectiveness of our AIG program. We will make the resulting information available to our stakeholders through:

Scheduled parent meetings

Faculty meetings

Principal/Assistant Principal meetings

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

Cleveland County Schools AIG Department recognizes the need to disseminate program evaluation data to parents/guardians and other stakeholders. Since this data is used to evaluate and revise the local plan and programs, it is imperative that this data is readily accessible to stakeholders. We accomplish this task by sharing data with the following groups:

Staff members at individual schools, including Principal and Assistant Principals

Instructional Committee of the Cleveland County Board of Education

Information sessions and informative documents for parents and families

* **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.

Cleveland County Schools AIG Department protects the rights of AIG students by requiring parental consent for student identification and placement, providing parents an online copy of Cleveland County Schools Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, housing AIG students' folders and personal information in locked file cabinets, and securing all electronically transmitted student information.

In the event parents/guardians disagree with a decision, Cleveland County Schools AIG Department has leveled procedures for resolving grievances. This begins at the school level with a meeting with the Needs Determination Team (NDT) and proceeds to an administrative review at the system level, including the Director of the AIG Program.

The following policies, forms, and processes are used to safeguard students' rights:

Previous Next Print
Share Menu
Book
Cleveland County Board of Education Policy Manual
Section

1000 - Governing Principles
Title
STUDENT AND PARENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
Code
1740
Status
Active
Legal
G.S. 115C-45(c); 126-16; 150B-43 et seq.
Adopted
February 13, 2017
Last Revised
April 12, 2021

The Cleveland County Board of Education strives to resolve concerns and complaints of students and parents whenever possible. To this end, the Board has provided opportunities for students and parents to express their concerns through processes established in Board policies. Policy 1742/5060, Responding to Complaints, identifies these different processes, including a mechanism for resolving complaints in an informal manner.

While the Board encourages resolutions of complaints through informal means, it recognizes that, at times, a formal process may be necessary for certain types of complaints or if the informal process did not produce satisfactory results. This policy provides a complaint procedure that may be used as described below.

Any parent or student who has questions about the options for proceeding with a complaint or concern may contact the principal or Superintendent for further information and copies of all applicable Board policies.

- DEFINITIONS
  - Grievance
    A grievance is a formal written complaint that a student or parent has been adversely affected by a final administrative decision and that the decision violated a specified federal law, State law, State Board of Education policy, State rule, or local board policy. The term "grievance" does not include any matter for which the method of review is prescribed by law, for which there is a more specific Board policy providing a process for addressing the concern, or upon which the Board is without authority to act. Recommended decisions are not grievable.

  - Grievant
    The grievant is the student or parent/guardian of a student making the claim.

  - Parent
    All references to parent include a student’s parent, legal guardian, legal custodian, or another caregiver adult authorized to enroll a student under policy

  - Final Administrative Decision
    A final administrative decision is a decision of a school employee from which no further appeal to a school administrator is available.

  - Days
    Days are working days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, vacation days, or holidays, as set forth in the school calendar, unless otherwise specified in this policy. In counting days, the first day will be the first full working day following the receipt of the grievance.

For any time period provided by this policy, receipt of notification may occur through hand delivery, regular mail, or email.

- TIMELINESS OF PROCESS
  Failure by a school system official at any step to communicate a decision within the specified time limit will permit the grievant to appeal the grievance to the next step unless the official has notified the grievant of the delay and the reason for the delay, such as the complexity of the investigation or report. The official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the grievant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of the grievant's legal rights are not permitted.

  Failure by the grievant at any step of the process to appeal a grievance to the next step within the specified time limit will be considered acceptance of the decision at the current step, unless the grievant has notified the appropriate school system official of a delay and the reason for the delay and the official has consented in writing to the delay.

- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
  - No reprisals of any kind will be taken by the Board or by an employee of the school system against any grievant or other student or employee because of his or her participation in a grievance filed and decided pursuant to this policy.
  - All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
  - Grievances will generally be handled on an individual basis, rather than as a group. If grievants request to be heard as a group, the Board and school officials may grant or deny that request at their discretion.
  - A grievance may be voluntarily withdrawn at any level. Once a grievance is withdrawn, it cannot be reopened. If at any time during the grievance process the school system grants the relief request, the grievance shall be terminated at that time.
  - The student may be represented by a non-parent advocate or attorney at a Level 3 hearing before the Board of Education. No attorneys or advocates may attend the Level 1 meeting with a principal. If the grievant intends to be represented by legal counsel at Level 3, he or she must notify the office of the Superintendent in advance so that school personnel and/or the Board also will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel. At any meeting or hearing during the grievance process, a student grievant may be accompanied by a parent.

- PROCESS FOR GRIEVANCE
  - Filing a Grievance
    - A grievance must be filed as soon as possible but no later than thirty (30) days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the grievance. Grievances filed after thirty (30) calendar days will be reviewed by the school system as a complaint outside the grievance process.
    - All grievances must be submitted to the school principal, except:
      Grievances regarding transportation issues should be directed to the Director of Transportation.

      Grievances regarding final administrative decisions of central office staff should be directed to the Executive Director of Human Resources, who will direct the grievance to the appropriate member of the District Leadership Team. The designated administrator will follow the Level 1 grievance procedure in responding to the grievance.
    - A student or parent who has a grievance must provide the following information in writing: (1) the name of the school system employee or other individual whose decision is at issue; (2) the specific decision(s) at issue; (3) any Board policy, state or federal law, state or federal regulation, or State Board of Education policy or procedure that the parent or student believes has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated; and (4) the specific resolution desired. If there is not a specific administrative decision at issue and no concern that state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, then the procedure established in policy 1742/5060 is appropriate, and the principal

shall address the concern following that policy.

- Even if the principal is the employee whose decision is at issue, the student must submit the grievance first to the principal in order for the principal to address the issue within the formal process.

- Level One
  - The principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the student and/or parent within ten (10) school days after the grievance has been filed with the principal. The student may be accompanied by a parent.
  - The principal shall conduct any investigation of the facts necessary before rendering a decision.
  - The principal shall provide a written response to the written grievance within ten (10) days of the meeting. The response will include the principal's decision regarding resolution of the grievance and the basis for the decision. In responding, the principal may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.
  - A copy of the grievance and the principal's response will be filed with the Superintendent or designee. The principal should maintain a record of the grievance, including the grievance, response, and any investigative or supporting documents provided by the grievant or relied upon by the principal. These documents should be forwarded to the Superintendent in the event of an appeal.

- Level Two
  - If the grievant is dissatisfied with the principal's decision, the grievant may appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The appeal must be made in writing within ten (10) days of receiving the principal's decision and should specify the reasons for appeal.
  - The Superintendent or designee may review the written documents, gather any additional information he or she deems necessary, and respond in writing to the grievant. The Superintendent may affirm, reverse, or modify the principal's decision. The Superintendent shall provide a written response within thirty (30) days after receiving the Level 2 grievance. In responding, the Superintendent may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.

- Level Three
  If the grievant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, the grievant may submit a written appeal to the Board of Education within ten (10) days. Level 3 grievance requests should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, who will forward the information to the Board Chair.
  - Upon receipt of the appeal, the Board Chair shall appoint a panel of Board members to hear and decide the appeal. When possible, the full Board shall serve on the panel, but in no case shall there be fewer than three (3) members of the Board to hear and decide the grievance.
  - The panel shall make reasonable efforts to meet and consider the appeal within twenty (20) days after the chairperson refers the grievance to the panel. Notice of the appeal hearing will be given to the parties.
  - The panel shall review the grievance on the record unless it determines that additional information may be presented. No new evidence, written or verbal, may be presented without the prior knowledge and consent of both parties. Each party may make a brief oral presentation of no more than fifteen (15) minutes to summarize his or her position. The panel has the authority to ask questions, extend time limits, exclude extraneous or duplicative information, and otherwise maintain an efficient and fair appeal hearing. The hearing will be recorded and shall be held in closed session.
  - The Board panel may affirm, reverse or modify the decision of the Superintendent.
    The Level 2 decision will be reversed only if the decision was:

      in violation of constitutional provisions;

in excess of the statutory authority or jurisdiction of the school system;
made upon unlawful procedure;
affected by other error of law;
unsupported by substantial evidence in view of the entire record as submitted; or
arbitrary or capricious.

Substantial evidence refers to relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion.

- The panel will provide a final written decision within twenty (20) days of the Level 3 hearing unless the panel determines that additional time is needed for further review. The decision of the Board panel shall be final.

- PROCESS FOR APPEALS OF NON-GRIEVANCES
  - If student or parent believes he or she was aggrieved by a final administrative decision but the complaint does not meet the definition of "grievance" in this policy because it does not allege a violation of a specified law or policy, the student or parent may still submit the complaint to the principal, and the principal will respond as provided under Level 1 of this Policy. If the complainant is not satisfied with the principal's response, the complainant may request review by the Superintendent as provided in Level 2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's response, the complainant may request a discretionary Board hearing by filing a written appeal within ten (10) days. The appeal shall state the specific reason(s) why a hearing is necessary and shall be submitted to the Superintendent.

  - The Superintendent shall forward timely appeals for a discretionary hearing to the Board Chair and Vice Chair. The Board Chair and Vice Chair will determine whether a discretionary hearing will be granted.

  - If the Chair or Vice Chair approves the request for a discretionary hearing, the grievance will be provided notification of the scheduled discretionary hearing. A discretionary hearing will follow the same procedures as a Level 3 hearing.

  - If the Board Chair and Vice Chair both deny the request for a discretionary hearing, the decision of the Superintendent will be final and the grievant will be notified of the decision to deny the appeal for a discretionary hearing.

- NOTICE
  The Superintendent or designee is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents and school system employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating grievances.

- RECORDS
  Appropriate records shall be maintained in accordance with state and federal law.

Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

Increase PLC Time and collaboration between AIG Specialists

Sources of Evidence:

Cleveland County Schools AIG Website

PLC Meetings and minutes

Yearly reports of testing and accountability

Board approval of plan

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	1
*	1
*	1

Documents

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

Local Board of Education Approval

Cleveland County Schools (230) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:
05/12/2025

AIG Related Documents

Cleveland County Schools (230) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

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

Cleveland County Schools (230) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition